



From Text to Action: Contextualizing Qur'anic Learning for Environmental Character in Aceh

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ABSTRAK

Karakter cinta lingkungan semakin diposisikan sebagai kewajiban keagamaan dalam pendidikan Islam, namun mekanisme yang menjadikan pembelajaran Al-Qur'an berubah menjadi perilaku ekologis masih minim bukti empiris. Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana pembelajaran Al-Qur'an dikontekstualisasikan di SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon, Gayo Lues, Aceh, serta mengapa nilai-nilai lingkungan yang dikandungnya belum terwujud dalam perilaku siswa yang konsisten. Penelitian kualitatif deskriptif dengan rancangan studi kasus ini dilaksanakan pada Mei hingga Oktober 2025 terhadap dua belas partisipan, yaitu kepala sekolah, wakil kepala sekolah bidang kesiswaan, dua guru Pendidikan Agama Islam, dan delapan siswa kelas VII sampai IX, melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara semi-terstruktur, serta telaah dokumen berupa rencana pembelajaran, jadwal pelajaran, dokumen anggaran, dan struktur organisasi sekolah. Data dianalisis melalui reduksi, penyajian, dan verifikasi, kemudian diuji dengan triangulasi sumber dan metode serta pengecekan anggota. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran Al-Qur'an masih didominasi tahsin dan tahfiz, sementara ayat-ayat ekologis hanya disisipkan secara insidental tanpa disertai inkuiri, proyek, maupun refleksi terstruktur. Pemahaman siswa bersifat verbalistik: mereka mengingat kaidah moral umum tetapi tidak mampu menautkannya pada dalil naqli yang spesifik. Perilaku peduli lingkungan yang muncul lebih didorong oleh aturan sekolah dan tekanan teman sebaya daripada kesadaran spiritual, dan capaian hafalan tidak menunjukkan keterkaitan yang teramat dengan kepedulian lingkungan. Hambatan yang ditemukan bersifat sistemik dan bekerja serentak pada level kelas, antarprogram, kelembagaan, dan budaya. Penelitian ini menawarkan model Sekolah Qur'ani-Ekologis yang memautkan teks, konteks, dan tindakan dalam satu siklus pembelajaran yang dinilai secara autentik.

Kata Kunci: Karakter Cinta Lingkungan; Pembelajaran Al-Qur'an; Pembelajaran Kontekstual; Pendidikan Agama Islam

ABSTRACT

Love of the environment is increasingly framed as a religious obligation within Muslim education, yet the mechanism by which Qur'anic instruction becomes ecological conduct remains poorly evidenced. This study examines how Qur'anic learning is contextualized at SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon, Gayo Lues, Aceh, and why the environmental values it carries have not translated into consistent student behavior. A descriptive qualitative case study was conducted between May and October 2025 with twelve participants comprising the principal, the vice-principal for student affairs, two Islamic Religious Education teachers and eight students from grades VII to IX, drawing on participant observation, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis of lesson plans, timetables, budget documents and the school organizational chart. Data were analyzed through reduction, display and verification, and were tested through source and method triangulation together with member checking. The findings show that Qur'anic instruction remains dominated by recitation and memorization, with ecological verses inserted incidentally and rarely followed by inquiry, project work or structured reflection. Students' understanding is verbalistic: they recall general moral rules but cannot ground them in specific scriptural evidence. Pro-environmental behavior, where it appears, is driven by school regulations and peer expectation rather than by spiritual conviction, and memorization achievement bears no observable relation to environmental care. The constraints are systemic rather than individual, operating simultaneously at classroom, inter-program, institutional and cultural levels. The study proposes a Qur'anic-Ecological School model that binds text, context and action into a single assessed learning cycle.

Keywords: *Contextual Teaching and Learning; Environmental Character; Islamic Religious Education; Qur'anic learning*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Environmental degradation has ceased to be a distant policy concern and has become a condition that shapes the daily experience of schooling. Indonesian education policy has responded by placing care for the environment among the eighteen-character values derived from the mandate of Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which obliges schools to develop learners who are faithful, morally upright, intelligent and responsible. Care for the environment is defined in that policy vocabulary as a disposition and a pattern of action that consistently seeks to prevent damage to the surrounding environment and to repair the damage already done (Ainissyifa, 2014). Framing the value in this way is significant, because it locates environmental education not in a single subject but in the moral formation of the learner as a whole.

Religious traditions are frequently invoked as moral resources for this task. The claim is not uncontested: White (1967) famously argued that Abrahamic anthropocentrism helped licence the exploitation of nature, and the half-century of scholarship that followed has been in large part a series of replies to that charge. Within Islamic thought, the reply has taken the form of a recovery of an ecological ethic grounded in the doctrines of divine unity, of the human being as trustee, and of the balance written into creation (Nasr, 1968; Ozdemir, 2003). The Qur'an states that corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what human hands have earned (Q.S. al-Rūm [30]: 41) and forbids causing corruption on the earth after it has been set in order (Q.S. al-A'raf [7]: 56). Read together, such verses position ecological restraint as an act of worship rather than as civic hygiene. In Indonesia, this theological repertoire has been mobilised in fatwas, in mosque-based conservation programmes and in Islamic school curricula (Mangunjaya & McKay, 2012; Bagir & Martiam, 2016).

The availability of an ecological theology, however, does not by itself produce ecological conduct. Environmental education research has documented for decades that knowledge, attitude and behaviour are only loosely coupled, and that the assumption of a linear progression from awareness to action is empirically untenable (Hungerford & Volk, 1990; Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Stern, 2000). The same disjunction appears in Islamic religious education, where mastery of a text is often treated as evidence of its internalisation. A student who can recite a verse forbidding corruption on earth has demonstrated a linguistic and mnemonic achievement; whether that achievement carries any moral weight in the corridor outside the classroom is a separate empirical question, and it is one that studies of Qur'anic learning rarely pose directly.

Pedagogically, the most commonly proposed bridge between text and conduct is contextual teaching and learning, which holds that knowledge becomes meaningful only when learners connect academic content to the circumstances of their own lives, and which specifies constructivism, questioning, inquiry, learning community, modelling, reflection and authentic assessment as its constituent components (Johnson, 2002; Nurjanah, 2023). This pedagogy pairs naturally with Lickona's (1991) account of character as the joint operation of moral knowing, moral feeling and moral action,

since both frameworks insist that cognition alone is an insufficient basis for conduct. Neither framework, however, explains why a school that endorses both may nevertheless fail to enact them, and for that question a broader lens is required: Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model, which distributes the determinants of development across the immediate setting, the linkages between settings, the institutional decisions that reach the learner indirectly, and the cultural expectations that envelop them all.

These general problems acquire a specific shape in Aceh. As the only Indonesian province that formally implements Islamic law, Aceh possesses an unusually strong warrant for religiously grounded environmental education, reinforced by a durable communal tradition of gotong royong. Gayo Lues Regency, situated in the highlands, combines this religiosity with an agrarian economy and, in recent years, with the same intensity of digital consumption found elsewhere in the country. SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon is representative of the resulting configuration. Its vision explicitly names both piety and environmental care; it runs a weekly *Jum'at Bersih* clean-up and a school greening program; and it teaches Islamic Religious Education under a national curriculum. Preliminary observation nonetheless suggested that these elements operate in parallel rather than in combination, with classroom instruction concentrated on recitation and memorization while environmental activity proceeds as an administrative routine.

A considerable body of Indonesian scholarship has examined the components of this configuration separately. Ahsanulhaq (2019) demonstrated that consistent habituation can form religious character; Ainissyifa (2014) argued that Islamic character education must integrate the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains; Harlistyarintica (2017) and Jamhariani (2020) showed that environmental character can be cultivated through creative waste-management and habituation activities in primary settings; and Ahada and Zuhri (2020) linked pupils' environmental attitudes to their comprehension of religious teaching on conservation. Closer to the present concern, Khoiriyah et al. (2024) reported that a contextual approach to teaching the Qur'an and Hadith raised learners' social and ecological awareness, while Mudrika et al. (2025) emphasized the role of the educational environment in forming Qur'an-based character. Model-oriented studies have proposed project-based learning (Rahman & Firdaus, 2022), the integration of local wisdom (Sari, 2023), mosque-centered ecological program (Purnomo, 2021), holistic religious instruction (Hidayati, 2020) and authentic assessment of dispositions (Setiawan, 2024).

What this literature has largely not done is examine a case in which the conditions for success are nominally present and the outcome is nevertheless absent. Most available studies are success narratives: they describe an intervention and report its effects. Yet the practical question facing the majority of Indonesian schools is not how a well-designed program works, but why a school with a supportive vision, committed teachers, adequate green space and an established clean-up routine still produce students whose environmental behavior is regulatory rather than devotional. Answering that question requires a negative case and an analytic frame capable of locating failure at more than one level simultaneously.

The present study addresses that gap in three ways. First, it treats SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon as a critical negative case in which transmission of the text occurs without transformation of conduct, and it documents the mechanism of that disjunction rather than merely recording its existence. Second, it combines contextual teaching and learning, Lickona's tripartite model of character and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory into a single analytic sequence that moves from

pedagogical design, through the components of character actually formed, to the systemic conditions that constrain them. Third, it formulates the disjunction conceptually as a rupture between text (nash), context (waqi') and action ('amal), and uses that formulation to derive a transferable model of Qur'anic-ecological schooling.

Accordingly, this study pursues four questions. It asks how contextual Qur'anic learning is actually delivered at SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon; what level of understanding students have attained regarding Qur'anic values concerning the environment; what affect that learning has had on the formation of environmental character; and which factors enable and constrain that formation. Theoretically, the answers are intended to refine understanding of how religious text becomes moral conduct in school settings. Practically, they are addressed to teachers of Islamic Religious Education designing more applicable lessons, to school leaders seeking to align religious and environmental programs, and to district education authorities and teacher-training institutions responsible for the instruments and the preparation that such alignment requires.

II. METHOD

This study adopted a descriptive qualitative design with a single-case orientation, chosen because the object of inquiry is a process of meaning-making embedded in an institutional setting and is not reducible to measurable variables (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018). The case was bounded by site, by participant group and by period: Qur'anic learning and its relation to environmental character at one junior secondary school, as enacted and understood by those directly involved, during a single academic semester. The purpose was not to test the effect of an intervention but to reconstruct how the participants organise, experience and account for the relationship between religious instruction and environmental conduct.

Fieldwork was conducted at SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon, located on Jalan Tgk. Muhammad Luddin, Bustanussalam Village, Blangkejeren District, Gayo Lues Regency, Aceh Province, between May and October 2025. The school was selected purposively on three grounds: its vision statement names environmental care explicitly, it operates established environmental programs, and it delivers Islamic Religious Education under the standard national allocation. These features make it an instance of the ordinary Indonesian school rather than an exemplary one, which is precisely what the research question requires.

12 participants were recruited through purposive sampling on the criterion of direct involvement in either Qur'anic instruction or the school's environmental programs. The group comprised the school principal, referred to below as P; the vice-principal for student affairs, referred to as VP; two teachers of Islamic Religious Education, T1 and T2; and eight students drawn proportionally from grades VII, VIII and IX and designated S1 to S8. The principal, the vice-principal and both teachers were interviewed individually in semi-structured sessions of thirty to sixty minutes, which allowed policy rationales and pedagogical reasoning to be probed in depth. Both teachers were additionally observed while teaching. The students were interviewed in small unstructured groups in order to reduce the asymmetry of the interview situation and to encourage candor, and their conduct was observed during lessons, breaks and clean-up activities. Sampling across three grade levels was intended to capture variation in age and in length of exposure to the school's programs rather than to support statistical generalization.

Three techniques generated the data. Participant observation covered Islamic Religious Education lessons, the weekly Jum'at Bersih activity, and unstructured student conduct in the school grounds, with

attention to the language teachers used when correcting environmental misbehavior. Semi-structured interviews explored participants' accounts of instructional practice, their understanding of ecological verses, and their explanations for the gap between the two. Documentary analysis examined lesson plans for grades VII and VIII, the class timetable, the school income and expenditure plan, the organizational chart, wall-magazine and poster displays, and photographic records of school activities. Documents were treated as evidence of institutional priority rather than as a description of practice, and were read against what observation and interview had established.

Analysis followed the interactive model of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing with verification (Miles et al., 2014), operating concurrently with data generation rather than after it. Reduction involved coding field notes and interview transcripts and consolidating the codes into four thematic categories corresponding to the research questions: instructional delivery, student understanding, effect on character, and enabling and constraining conditions. Display took the form of thematic narrative accounts supported by verbatim extracts, which permitted patterns and deviant instances to be inspected side by side. Conclusions were drafted provisionally after each field episode and progressively verified against subsequently generated material, so that the final account rests on a converging rather than a single line of evidence.

Trustworthiness was pursued through four procedures. Source triangulation compared the accounts of teachers, students, the principal and the vice-principal, treating divergence between them as analytically informative rather than as error. Method triangulation set interview claims against observed conduct and documentary evidence, a step that proved decisive: several claims about integration between religious and environmental programs were sustained as aspiration but not as practice once lesson plans and the organizational chart were examined. Member checking returned the researcher's interpretations to key participants for confirmation of meaning. Prolonged engagement across a six-month period reduced the risk that observed conduct reflected the presence of the researcher rather than the ordinary life of the school (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Ethical practice followed the conventions of educational fieldwork. Institutional permission was obtained from the school leadership, participation was voluntary and could be withdrawn at any point, and the purpose and use of the data were explained to participants before each encounter. Parental or guardian consent was secured for student participants, and student accounts are reported under codes without reference to class group or any other identifying detail. Two limitations of the design should be acknowledged at the outset. Because the study is confined to one school over one semester, its findings are analytically rather than statistically generalizable, and their transferability depends on the resemblance of other settings to the one described. Because the researcher is affiliated with a local teacher-training institution and is known to some participants as a member of the same religious community, the possibility of socially desirable responses cannot be eliminated; triangulation against observed conduct was employed specifically to counter it.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon is a state junior secondary school that delivers the national curriculum while presenting itself as an institution shaped by Islamic values and by the cultural conventions of the Gayo highlands. Its vision statement commits the school to producing learners who are faithful, pious, morally upright, intelligent, skilled, environmentally conscious and capable of competing globally; environmental care is therefore not an addition to the school's stated purpose but a component of it. The school occupies a site that includes classrooms, a library, a prayer room, open green space, a garden and segregated waste bins, and it operates two standing environmental programs: the weekly *Jum'at Bersih* clean-up and a periodic tree-planting activity. On paper, the policy foundation for integrating Qur'anic values with environmental character formation is unusually secure.

The human resources are correspondingly favorable. Both teachers of Islamic Religious Education displayed evident commitment to their subject and articulated, without prompting, the view that care for the environment belongs within religious instruction. What they lacked was not conviction but repertoire: neither could describe a lesson design that would move students from a verse to an investigation to an action and back to a reflection, and neither had encountered a model lesson plan that attempted it. The physical resources present a parallel pattern. Green space and a garden are available but are used as amenity rather than as instructional material; segregated bins are installed but are used inconsistently, because the discrimination they require has never been taught as a religious practice.

The setting therefore possesses a latent capacity that its current organization does not realize. The school grounds could function as what might be called a living laboratory for Qur'anic instruction on the environment, in which the garden, the waste stream and the water supply become the referents of ecological verses. Realizing that capacity requires no additional facilities. It requires an instructional design that treats the school's physical and social environment as the context to which the text is to be related, and it is precisely this design that the following sections show to be absent.

Interviews with T1 and T2, corroborated by student accounts and by the principal, established that Qur'anic instruction at the school remains organized around recitation and memorization. Both teachers reported that environmental values enter the lesson incidentally, most often when the syllabus reaches verses concerning the creation of the heavens and the earth, and that these moments are not followed by any project or subsequent activity in the school grounds. Students described the same pattern from the other side: what they learn about the environment stops at the classroom door and does not connect to what they do afterwards. The convergence of teacher and student accounts on this point is notable, since the two groups had no interest in converging on it.

Observation confirmed the pattern and specified it. The dominant classroom methods were exposition and rotational recitation; instruction proceeded from teacher to student with few openings for student-initiated inquiry. The *Jum'at Bersih* activity, observed on several occasions, ran as an administrative routine detached from curricular content, and was not accompanied by any framing that would present it as an exercise of religious responsibility. Documentary analysis supplied the third strand. The lesson plans for grades VII and VIII specify achievement indicators in the cognitive and psychomotor domains, that is, comprehension of meaning and correctness of recitation and memorization, whereas the affective domain of environmental concern appears nowhere as an assessed target. What is not assessed is not, in practice, taught.

Read against the components of contextual teaching and learning, the deficits are specific rather than general. Constructivism is absent because knowledge is delivered rather than assembled; inquiry is absent because no lesson invites students to investigate an environmental problem in their own surroundings; the learning community is confined to the class rather than extended to the school as a collective; modelling is limited to correct recitation rather than to ecological conduct; and reflection and authentic assessment do not occur at all, since evaluation terminates with a recitation or memorization test. Only questioning survives, and it survives in the attenuated form of comprehension checks. The point matters because Khoiriyah et al. (2024) found the contextual approach effective in raising ecological awareness only where it was accompanied by discussion of actual cases and by genuine social projects, which is exactly the condition unmet here.

The teachers' own explanations locate the constraint in time and in mental categories rather than in motivation. T1 recalled a tree-planting activity conducted once in the school grounds, during which the class discussed the hadith encouraging the planting of a seedling even as the Hour arrives; students responded with visible enthusiasm. The activity was not repeated, because the lesson allocation could not absorb the planning it required and because the pressure to reach targets in fluency and in the memorization of juz 'Amma reasserted itself. More revealing was T1's account of the underlying obstacle: a habit of mind that files religious instruction and environmental concern as separate domains, compounded by the absence

of any exemplar lesson plan that joins them. The constraint, in other words, is not that teachers reject integration but that they have never seen it modelled.

This categorical separation is itself a documented feature of Indonesian Islamic education. Idris (2018) identifies the persistent dichotomy between religious and general knowledge as a structural problem of the field, and the classroom consequence observed here is a direct instance of it. The irony is that the dichotomy is theologically unwarranted. The Qur'an's repeated invitation to contemplate natural phenomena as signs positions the study of the created order as continuous with, rather than adjacent to, the study of revelation, and it is precisely this continuity that an ecological reading of the text is meant to recover (Nasr, 1968; Ozdemir, 2003). Where teachers do not hold an integrative epistemology, contextualization cannot become programmatic; it can only occur, as it does here, sporadically and at individual initiative.

At the level of leadership, P affirmed the importance of connecting Qur'anic learning to environmental character and identified it as consistent with the school's vision, while acknowledging that implementation would require a more comprehensive strategy than currently exists. The school has the programs; what it does not have is a mechanism for joining them to classroom content, and P identified training or workshops in applicable contextual models as the missing input. The gap between endorsement at the level of vision and provision at the level of instrument is, as the later analysis shows, characteristic of this case at every level.

Interviews with students across the three grade levels revealed an understanding of Qur'anic teaching on the environment that is basic and verbalistic. Students readily produced general principles, such as the prohibition on littering and the obligation to maintain cleanliness, but could not identify the specific scriptural evidence on which those principles rest, and none was able to state and explain the relevant passages of *Sūrat al-A'raf*. T2 confirmed the pattern from the teacher's vantage point: students can name the concept of the human being as trustee on earth, but when asked what concrete actions that trusteeship entails, they do not proceed beyond elementary examples.

Observation of student conduct during break periods exposed the practical consequence. Several students who answered correctly when asked orally about the obligation to keep the environment clean were subsequently observed discarding snack wrappers on the ground. Documentary evidence pointed the same way: in written test scripts, the majority of students responded to a question about the relation between a given verse and environmental conservation by writing a general moral statement, without citing the verse itself. Knowledge, conduct and assessed performance thus converge on a single conclusion, namely that what students hold is a moral sentiment loosely associated with religion rather than a scripturally anchored ethical position.

In the terms of Lickona's (1991) analysis, students have reached the threshold of moral knowing without crossing it. Moral knowing includes not only awareness of a value but knowledge of its grounds and the capacity to reason from them to particular cases; general awareness unsupported by grounds does not generate moral feeling, and without moral feeling the transition to moral action has no motive force. This is the same disjunction that the environmental education literature terms the value-action gap, in which possession of correct knowledge and even of favorable attitudes predicts behavior only weakly, because the intervening variables of felt responsibility, perceived efficacy and situational opportunity have not been addressed (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Hungerford & Volk, 1990). Mudrika et al. (2025) reach a compatible conclusion from within Qur'anic studies, arguing that contextual interpretation of ecological verses is necessary if the values they carry are to become ecological consciousness rather than remaining textual information.

Individual accounts illustrate the texture of this partial understanding. S3, a grade VII student, knew the hadith identifying cleanliness as part of faith but could not name a Qur'anic verse forbidding corruption on land and sea, explaining that the verse had been mentioned once in passing during a sermon. S6

connected Qur'anic memorization to piety in general terms, reasoning that a student who diligently memorizes the Qur'an would not misbehave or damage the school's plants, without identifying any specific ecological passage. Such responses indicate that the association between religion and environmental care is being formed inferentially, from the general prestige of religious practice, rather than exegetically, from engagement with particular verses.

T2 elaborated the ceiling of this understanding. Students grasp trusteeship as a theoretical proposition, but when asked to specify actions that would discharge it, they offer only the simplest instances, such as refraining from littering. Neither long-term conservation nor the systemic prevention of environmental harm enters their range of response. T2 added an observation that anticipates the following section, namely that the genuine indicator of understanding is behavioral consistency outside the classroom, and that it is on this indicator that the shortfall is most visible.

The school's visual environment reinforces the same limitation. Wall magazines and posters on environmental themes display slogans of a generic and secular character, unaccompanied by any Qur'anic verse or hadith that would supply their warrant. The religious register is thus absent from the very medium through which the school communicates environmental expectation most frequently, and an available means of strengthening scriptural grounding goes unused. Samniah's (2016) work on reading comprehension is pertinent here: strengthening students' grasp of ecological evidence depends on Qur'anic literacy in both its textual and its contextual dimensions, and neither is served by the oral repetition of moral generalities.

The interview data converge consistently on a single finding: the environmentally considerate behavior that students display is motivated by compliance with school regulations and by regard for the judgement of peers, not by a spiritual awareness derived from the Qur'an. T1 acknowledged that attitudinal change following a lesson is temporary and dissipates in the absence of repeated action and habituation. VP stated the point in its strongest form, reporting no discernible relationship between active participation in Qur'anic memorization and the level of a student's concern for the school environment.

Observation of disciplinary practice corroborates this. When correcting a student who had littered, duty teachers characteristically invoked the language of school rules rather than the language of religious value, so that the environment is constituted for students as a domain of regulation rather than of worship. The *Jum'at Bersih* activity is conducted without any reflective session connecting physical work to Qur'anic teaching, with the predictable result that students experience it as a school obligation rather than as an act of devotion. The school thus teaches, through its routines, precisely the dichotomy that its vision statement disclaims.

Students' own accounts of motivation make the mechanism explicit. Asked why they refrain from littering, most answered spontaneously in terms of school regulations and of embarrassment before their peers, and none referred to a verse studied in class. S5 recounted that material on gratitude for divine favor, delivered during an intensive Ramadan program, had briefly prompted a resolve not to pollute water and soil, but that the resolve faded because nothing subsequent reinforced it. The episode is instructive: the affective response that Lickona identifies as moral feeling was in fact elicited, but it decayed for want of a structure that would convert it into repeated action.

T1 was candid about the limits of what could be attributed to instruction. Consistent behavioral change across a cohort could not be identified as a direct effect of Qur'anic learning about the environment; what occurred instead was a heightened carefulness lasting a day or two after a lesson on verses forbidding corruption, followed by a return to prior habit. T1 summarized the pedagogical diagnosis in a phrase that captures the entire case: the teaching that takes place informs rather than involves, and the moral content of the verses therefore evaporates in the absence of action and habituation. This is a teacher's formulation of what the research literature describes as the failure of knowledge-transmission models to alter behavior (Hungerford & Volk, 1990).

The most analytically significant finding in this section concerns memorization. VP reported that no observable difference in environmental concern distinguishes students active in the tahfiz program from their peers, and that students with high memorization attainment had been found discarding waste from classroom windows. This is not an argument against memorization, which serves purposes of its own, but it is decisive against the assumption that quantitative mastery of the text automatically yields qualitative practice of its values. That assumption is widespread in Indonesian Islamic schooling and functions as a substitute for instructional design: if memorization is believed to produce character, no further pedagogical work appears necessary. The present case indicates that the belief is unfounded and that the intervening design must be supplied deliberately.

Interpreted through the contextual and character frameworks jointly, the weakness of effect follows from the absence of value transformation alongside textual transmission. Harahap (2023) argues that Qur'an-based environmental education fails to form character where it is not accompanied by an applicable model of instruction, and the present case supplies a detailed instance of that failure. Alternative designs already exist in the literature and could be adapted here: the mosque-centered ecological program proposed by Purnomo (2021) and the holistic model advanced by Hidayati (2020) both organize religious learning around sustained collective practice rather than around episodic exposition.

Triangulation across the four participant groups indicates an asymmetry between the conditions that favor environmental character formation and those that impede it: the former are largely potential, whereas the latter are actual and systemic. On the enabling side, the school's vision and mission furnish an explicit policy warrant for combining religious and environmental objectives; both Islamic Religious Education teachers are committed to improving the quality of their instruction and receptive to integration; the school possesses a prayer room, open green space and a garden adequate for outdoor learning; the surrounding Gayo community sustains a religiously inflected tradition of gotong royong that supplies a cultural template for collective environmental work; and the school budget provides for the upkeep of environmental facilities. Each of these constitutes a resource that could be mobilized, and none of them is currently mobilized for instructional purposes.

The constraining conditions are of a different order, because they operate on practice directly rather than potentially. Instruction remains conventional and textual; the syllabus for Qur'anic learning contains no systematic point of entry for environmental themes; the allocation for Islamic Religious Education is two lesson hours per week per class, against a demanding set of reading, writing and memorization targets; students' attention is heavily contested by mobile devices and their intrinsic environmental motivation is correspondingly weak; and, most consequentially, the school's religious and environmental programs are structurally separated. These constraints are not independent of one another. The time allocation makes project work appear infeasible; infeasibility discourages teachers from seeking integrative models; the absence of such models reinforces the perception that religion and environment are distinct domains; and the structural separation of the two programs institutionalizes that perception.

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model allows these conditions to be located precisely. At the level of the immediate setting, teacher commitment and physical facilities are insufficient to offset limited time and the absence of innovative instructional models. At the level of the linkages between settings, the disconnection between classroom learning and the *Jum'at Bersih* program produces a fragmentation that weakens internalization, which accords with the finding of Khoiriyah et al. (2024) that strong articulation between classroom and field activity contributes materially to the effectiveness of character formation. At the institutional level that reaches students indirectly, curriculum policy and budget allocation do not favor the development of contextual instruction, consistent with Setiawan's (2024) argument for authentic assessment systems and Purnomo's (2021) case for dedicated funding of integrative programs. At the level of the surrounding culture, the strong religiosity of Acehnese society constitutes considerable social capital that remains unrealized in the face of consumer culture and intensive device use among adolescents.

Documentary evidence renders these constraints concrete rather than merely reported. The official timetable allocates two lesson hours per week for Islamic Religious Education in each class, a modest provision measured against the density of reading, writing and memorization targets to be achieved. The school income and expenditure plan allocates funds for the maintenance of environmental facilities, including fertilizer and cleaning equipment, but contains no budget line for instructional development, for teacher training in contextual methods, or for the production of integrative teaching media. The distinction is instructive: the school funds the environment as an object of maintenance but not as an object of instruction, and teachers' complaints about resource constraints are thereby confirmed from the institution's own records.

The organizational chart supplies the structural counterpart. *Jum'at Bersih* falls under the coordination of the vice-principal for student affairs, while Islamic spiritual guidance and Islamic Religious Education fall under separate coordination. A student who cleans the school grounds on Friday and studies an ecological verse on Tuesday is being addressed by two different parts of the institution that do not communicate, and the separation of religion from environment is thereby enacted administratively before it is ever articulated pedagogically. Integration accordingly requires more than individual teacher initiative; it requires a reorganisation of programme coordination at the level of school management, so that the two domains can be synchronised formally and durably.

The dominance of systemic over individual constraints has an implication that extends beyond this school. Character formation cannot be assigned to a single subject or a single teacher, since the conditions that determine its success are distributed across the institution. Idris (2018) notes that Islamic and Lickonian accounts of character education converge in treating the whole school environment as the unit of analysis rather than the classroom alone, and the present case illustrates why. The *Jum'at Bersih* program succeeds by the measure of participation and fails by the measure of internalization, precisely because Islamic Religious Education is not formally implicated in it. Yunarti's (2014) emphasis on habituation and exemplary conduct is pertinent for the same reason: when duty teachers correct students in the register of regulation rather than of value, the modelling that students receive from the adult community as a whole contradicts what a single subject teacher may assert in class.

Taken together, the findings support a synthesis that differs from the explanation the school itself would offer. The failure to form environmental character at SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon is not attributable to an absence of values or of teaching material, both of which are abundantly available, nor to a deficit of goodwill among staff. It is attributable to the weakness of an instructional design that would connect three elements which the present arrangement keeps apart: the text (*nash*), the context (*waqi'*) and the action (*'amal*). Instruction currently delivers the first, gestures occasionally at the second and consigns the third to a program administered elsewhere in the institution. Where the three are separated, memorization can increase indefinitely without any corresponding change in conduct, which is precisely the pattern the vice-principal reported.

Formulating the problem in this way clarifies what an adequate design must accomplish. The three elements must operate as a single cycle rather than as three parallel activities: comprehension of a verse, followed by reflection on an actual environmental condition, followed by concrete action, followed by an authentic evaluation that returns to the verse. Each transition in that cycle corresponds to a component of contextual teaching and learning and to a stage in Lickona's progression from knowing through feeling to action, and the cycle as a whole is what neither framework specifies operationally for religious instruction.

On this basis the study proposes a Qur'anic-Ecological School model, framed as a conceptual sequence adaptable by schools of similar character. Its first phase is the contextualization of content, in which the teacher identifies Qur'anic passages germane to an environmental issue actually present in the school, such as waste management, water conservation or the maintenance of green space, rather than to environmental issues in general. Its second phase is exploration and inquiry, in which students observe the identified problem directly in the school grounds and formulate reflective questions that connect the

observed condition to the passage under study, thereby supplying the constructivist and inquiry components absent from current practice.

The third phase is collaborative action, in which students carry out a concrete project, whether tree planting, a campaign to reduce plastic waste, or the operation of a school waste bank, integrated with the existing *Jum'at Bersih* program and supervised jointly by the teacher of Islamic Religious Education and colleagues in science and social studies. Integrating rather than duplicating the existing program is essential, since it converts an established administrative routine into curricular content at no additional cost in time. The fourth phase is reflection and authentic assessment, in which students revisit the passage in the light of what they have done and are evaluated through rubrics addressed to disposition and conduct rather than through recitation and memorization tests alone. This phase carries the greatest weight, because assessment determines what teachers and students treat as the real object of the lesson.

Implementation would require support at the level of school policy in three respects: the constitution of a cross-subject team, the provision of integrated teaching modules, and continuing professional development for teachers. These requirements follow directly from the constraints documented above and address them at the level at which they operate. Where they are met, the structural separation between religious and student-affairs programming diminishes, and Qur'anic values concerning the environment acquire a route into conduct that does not depend on the improbable assumption that textual mastery will produce character of its own accord.

Theoretically, the study indicates that the effectiveness of Qur'anic learning in forming character cannot be assessed through cognitive attainment alone, but requires the joint operation of moral knowing, moral feeling and moral action (Lickona, 1991) and the fulfilment of the components of contextual teaching and learning (Johnson, 2002). The case demonstrates what happens when specific components fail: with reflection and authentic assessment absent, and with the affective domain unrepresented in lesson planning, the transformation of value into durable character is arrested at the first stage. The study also contributes a formulation of the failure that is specific to religious instruction, namely the rupture between text, context and action, and it identifies a phenomenon that warrants further investigation, namely the absence of any observable relation between memorization attainment and ethical conduct in the domain that the memorized text addresses.

Practically, the most immediate implication concerns lesson planning. A comparison between the current content of Islamic Religious Education lesson plans and the requirements of contextual instruction reveals a consistent imbalance. Cognitive indicators dominate, in the form of naming and comprehending the meaning of verses, and these should be retained as the necessary basis of knowledge. Psychomotor indicators also dominate, in the form of fluent recitation and memorization, and these should be extended to encompass environmental practice as a further class of skilled performance. The affective domain is minimal or entirely unstated and should become the principal indicator, expressed as a disposition of environmental care that is described in observable terms. Assessment consists of written tests of memorization and recitation and should be supplemented by authentic instruments, specifically the systematic observation of conduct and the compilation of project portfolios. Restated in this way, the reform of the lesson plan is not an administrative revision but the mechanism by which the affective domain becomes teachable.

A second practical implication concerns collaboration across subjects. Joint planning between teachers of Islamic Religious Education and colleagues in science and social studies would allow environmental projects to carry scientific and religious content simultaneously, so that students encounter an environmental problem as an object of both empirical and spiritual reasoning. Such collaboration also distributes the burden of character formation across the staff, which the ecological analysis above identifies as a structural necessity rather than a matter of convenience.

A third implication addresses policy beyond the school. District education offices and the local office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs are positioned to produce technical guidance and exemplar teaching materials that integrate Qur'anic values with environmental competence explicitly, and the evidence presented here suggests that the absence of such exemplars is a binding constraint on teachers rather than a marginal inconvenience. Teacher-training institutions, including IAIN Takengon, bear a corresponding responsibility in the preparation of prospective teachers, since the categorical separation of religious from environmental knowledge observed in this school is acquired long before a teacher enters a classroom. Provision at these levels would accelerate the replication of contextual models not only at SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon but across schools in Gayo Lues and in other parts of Aceh facing comparable conditions.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study set out to determine how Qur'anic learning is contextualized at SMP Negeri 1 Blangpegayon and why it has not produced consistent environmental character among students. The delivery of contextual Qur'anic learning was found to be neither optimal nor systematic, remaining dominated by exposition, recitation and memorization, with environmental values entering instruction incidentally and without inquiry, project work or reflection. Students' understanding of Qur'anic teaching on the environment stands at a basic and verbalistic level, marked by ready recall of general principles alongside an inability to identify specific scriptural evidence or to connect it to concrete action. The effect of this learning on environmental character is correspondingly weak: the considerate behavior students display is driven by compliance with school regulations and by peer expectation rather than by internalized religious conviction, and attainment in memorization shows no observable relation to environmental care. The conditions that favor character formation, comprising the school's vision, its teachers' commitment, its physical facilities and the surrounding religious culture, remain potential, whereas the conditions that impede it are systemic and operative, comprising restricted time, the absence of contextual models, the lack of any assessment of disposition, and the structural separation of religious from environmental programming.

The broader claim these findings support is that the presence of ecological values in a sacred text does not by itself form ecological character. Character emerges where instruction is designed to bind the text to the learner's actual circumstances and to action taken within them, and where that action is evaluated as seriously as recitation is evaluated. Stated conceptually, the case documents a rupture between text, context and action, and the Qur'anic-Ecological School model proposed here is an attempt to specify how the three might be rejoined within the constraints under which ordinary schools operate.

Three lines of action follow. Teachers of Islamic Religious Education should develop lesson designs that connect Qur'anic environmental values to project-based activity, such as greening or waste management, accompanied by authentic assessment of disposition and conduct. School leaders should establish collaborative programs that unite religious guidance with environmental activity through a cross-subject team and integrated teaching modules, thereby addressing at the level of management a separation that no individual teacher can overcome. District education authorities and teacher-training institutions such as IAIN Takengon should strengthen the preparation of prospective teachers and provide graduated professional development in contextual methodology grounded in Islamic values.

The study is limited to a single school over a single semester, and its findings are therefore contextual and analytically rather than statistically generalizable. Further research might extend the scope to multiple schools with differing characteristics, employ classroom action research to test the effectiveness of the proposed model under implementation conditions, and develop and validate authentic assessment instruments that measure environmental character grounded specifically in Qur'anic values. The relationship between memorization attainment and ethical conduct, which this study found to be absent in

the environmental domain, also merits dedicated investigation across a larger sample, since much of Indonesian Islamic schooling is organized on the assumption that the relationship holds.

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