

Global Branding of Religious Education: Islamic Green Schools in Achieving the SDGs

Siti Rohmatin Kusbah¹, Khozin²

Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia

khusbahstgmailcom@webmail.UMM.ac.id¹, khozin@umm.ac.id²

Abstract: This study examines the Islamic Green School concept as a branding strategy for Islamic schools based on Islamic moderation and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The global environmental crisis demands that Islamic education not only focus on rituals and memorization but also instill ecological awareness as an integral part of Islamic values. Through a qualitative approach based on literature review, this research analyzes institutional branding strategies, implementation challenges, and the contribution of Islamic Green Schools to achieving the SDGs, particularly SDGs 4, 12, 13, and 15. The findings reveal that Islamic Green Schools can integrate the values of khalifah fil ardh with sustainable educational practices through three main strategies: strengthening universal Islamic values and sustainability, curriculum innovation based on ecology, and model scalability through sharia and SDG collaboration. However, implementation faces challenges, including low SDG literacy, curriculum fragmentation, limited resources, and ideological resistance. This study recommends strengthening teacher capacity, government policy support, and developing data-based monitoring systems to reinforce authentic and sustainable branding.

Keywords: Islamic Green School, Islamic moderation, SDGs, institutional branding.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji konsep Islamic Green School sebagai strategi branding sekolah Islam berbasis moderasi Islam dan Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Krisis lingkungan global menuntut pendidikan Islam tidak hanya berorientasi pada ritual dan hafalan, tetapi juga menanamkan kesadaran ekologis sebagai bagian integral dari nilai-nilai keislaman. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif berbasis studi literatur, penelitian ini menganalisis strategi branding institusional, tantangan implementasi, dan kontribusi Islamic Green School terhadap pencapaian SDGs, khususnya SDG 4, 12, 13, dan 15. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Islamic Green School mampu mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai khalifah fil ardh dengan praktik pendidikan berkelanjutan melalui tiga strategi utama: penguatan nilai universal Islam dan keberlanjutan, inovasi kurikulum berbasis ekologi, dan skalabilitas model melalui kolaborasi syariah dan SDGs. Namun, implementasi menghadapi tantangan berupa literasi SDGs yang rendah, fragmentasi kurikulum, keterbatasan sumber daya, dan resistensi ideologis. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguatan kapasitas guru, dukungan kebijakan pemerintah, dan pengembangan sistem monitoring berbasis data untuk memperkuat branding yang autentik dan berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Islamic Green School, moderasi Islam, SDGs, branding institusional, pendidikan berkelanjutan.

Corresponding Author:

Siti Rohmatin Kusbah

Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Indonesia; khusbahstgmailcom@webmail.UMM.ac.id

Introduction

Climate change and the worsening environmental crisis have become global issues that cannot be ignored. Various extreme natural phenomena, such as floods, droughts, and unpredictable weather changes, are signs that the earth is in a state of emergency. This situation demands concrete and planned action from all levels of society to preserve the environment. One of the most strategic approaches to addressing this challenge is through education, as education plays a crucial role in shaping people's mindsets, awareness, and behavior toward the environment. (Handiyati et al., 2023).

Islamic religious education plays a central role in the Indonesian education system, particularly in regions with religious cultures (Kuipers & Yulaelawati, 2009). Globally, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda requires educational institutions to instill not only spiritual values but also environmental awareness and sustainability. However, the implementation of the Islamic Green School concept remains limited. Although the Adiwiyata program has reached 28,270 schools by 2024, this figure remains small compared to the total number of schools in Indonesia, indicating that the integration of environmental education in Islamic schools is not yet optimal (Anita Permata Dewi, 2024). Therefore, while this figure may appear large in nominal terms, when compared to the total number of schools (more than ±250,000), the proportion is only around 10%. In fact, Islamic schools, which are based on Islamic values and have the potential to foster the character of *khalifah fil ardh* (vicegerents on earth), should be pioneers in environmental education. However, numerous studies show that the integration of environmental values remains limited to formalities in documents or ceremonial activities, not yet systematically realized in the curriculum and daily educational practices.

This phenomenon is important to study because it is directly related to global issues such as climate change, the waste crisis, environmental degradation, and the demands for religious education to contribute to the SDGs, especially SDGs 4, 12, 13, and 15. The Ministry of Environment report noted that of Indonesia's 34.2 million tons of waste in 2024, approximately 18.1 million tons are not managed properly, indicating a significant challenge for the world of education, including Islamic schools (Dhemas Reviyanto, 2025). If Islamic educational institutions only emphasize rituals, *sanad* (chain of narrators), and memorization without instilling ecological awareness as part of Islamic values, a gap will emerge between religious idealism and environmental reality. In short, worship of God and concern for nature are walking separate paths. Isn't it ironic, if we memorize Surah Al-Hijr but ignore the smog in our own schoolyard? Environmental education has not been a primary focus in many educational institutions, including Islamic schools. Various obstacles are still

encountered, ranging from minimal integration in the curriculum to a lack of in-depth understanding of the relationship between Islamic values and the principles of sustainability.(Nurhabibi et al., 2025). In fact, Islamic teachings substantially support the concept of environmental conservation. Principles such as khalifah (sovereignty over the earth), 'adl (justice), and maslahah (benefit) should serve as a strong philosophical foundation for sustainability-based education.(Azzahra & Masyithoh, 2024).

In the context of increasing global awareness of the importance of sustainability, an educational movement called Islamic Green School has emerged which integrates Islamic teachings with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiated by the United Nations.(Ulinuha, 2024)This movement emerged as a response to the environmental crisis and as a contribution of Islamic education to concretely address ecological issues. Islamic Green Schools not only impart religious knowledge but also shape students' character and care for the environment. Mahyani and Ruswandi (2024) described this movement as having the potential for global branding, demonstrating how Islamic values can align with sustainable development goals at the international level.

These efforts were strengthened by the launch of the Islamic Green School guidebook by organizations such as Muhammadiyah and 'Aisyiyah, which emphasizes the importance of climate literacy and disaster risk reduction in school environments (Nur et al., 2025). The guide not only offers practical steps for managing environmentally friendly school environments but also emphasizes the position of Islamic educational institutions as part of the solution to the climate crisis.

However, in Indonesia, the implementation of sustainability-based education in Islamic educational institutions still faces various challenges. A lack of comprehensive understanding of how to align Islamic teachings with SDG principles, along with limited resources and policy support, are real obstacles.(Febrineng, 2024)The integration of SDGs into the curriculum, particularly SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 13 (action on climate change), and SDG 1 (poverty eradication), remains limited in many Islamic schools. Environmental education is often considered a secondary issue, despite its alignment with core Islamic values.

Numerous studies and the literature support the relevance of this approach. A study by Humaida et al. (2020) highlighted the link between Islamic values such as zakat and fasting and the SDGs, particularly in the context of poverty alleviation, education, and climate action. Chairy et al. (2024) added that Islamic universities have a strategic role in integrating SDG values into the curriculum and community service, despite still facing challenges such as resistance and limited funding. The book *Islamic Green School* by Nur et al. (2025) presents a practical guide to

implementing ecology-based schools, which have been implemented as pilot projects in several regions, demonstrating the synergy between Islamic teachings and environmental sustainability. Meanwhile, Andika (2022) shows that modern Islamic schools are also beginning to adopt global values in their branding, including environmental and technological issues. The concept of eco-pesantren (Islamic boarding schools) studied by Risana et al. (2024) further strengthens the argument that Islamic education can be a locus for forming ecological behavior if combined with spirituality and community values.

In this context, the Islamic Green School emerges as a promising alternative educational model. Through a holistic curriculum approach, this movement demonstrates that Islamic educational institutions are capable of taking an active role in supporting the sustainable development agenda. More than just a thematic approach, the Islamic Green School is a cultural transformation that instills ecological awareness in students from an early age. Thus, this movement is not only relevant locally but can also be adopted more broadly as a future educational model responsive to the challenges of the times. (Sari, 2020).

By positioning Islamic schools with the Islamic Green School concept as a new phenomenon with important implications for achieving the SDGs, this study is expected to contribute to the development of Islamic education, school management, and environmental education. This study will examine institutional branding strategies, internal and external challenges, and the extent to which *green school* practices are translated into real contributions to the SDGs. Practically, the results of the study are expected to provide recommendations for policymakers in strengthening the integration of environmental education in Islamic schools and developing authentic branding strategies, not just "green" symbols without substance. This study aims to examine how the Islamic Green School concept is built and implemented in Indonesian Islamic schools, specifically in integrating environmental education through Islamic identity and institutional branding strategies to support the achievement of the SDGs. Theoretically, this study enriches the study of Islamic education, environmentally conscious school management, and educational institution branding within the framework of sustainable development. Practically, the results of the study are expected to serve as a reference for Islamic schools and policymakers in designing more effective and sustainable branding strategies and environmental integration.

Method

This research method uses a qualitative approach through an in-depth literature review of the data. (Sugiyono, 2018) This approach was chosen because the research seeks to understand the phenomenon of Islamic Green School branding

within the institutional context, Islamic values, and its contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), thus producing descriptive, interpretative, and conceptual data. The scope of the literature is limited to reputable academic sources such as peer-reviewed journals, scientific books, policy reports, and official publications from educational or environmental institutions published between 2015 and 2025. This time limit was set to ensure relevance to the global dynamics of education and sustainability, while maintaining the appropriateness of the literature. All references used are in Indonesian or English and have a direct relationship to the themes of Islamic education, environmentally friendly schools, educational institution branding, and the SDGs.(Bungin, 2017).

The literature selection process was conducted transparently by applying strict inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria included scientific works discussing the concept of green schools in the context of Islam, branding and communication of educational institutions, Islamic and environmental identity, and empirical and theoretical studies linking religious education and the environment, with a publication period of 2015–2025. Exclusion criteria included opinion publications without academic basis, research unrelated to Islamic education, and works published before 2015 or in languages other than Indonesian and English. The literature search was conducted through electronic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and university repositories, selected based on title, abstract, and full text in accordance with literature review guidelines that emphasize the principles of transparency and scientific accountability.(Zed, 2018).

The research instruments in this literature review included a literature coding template, a computer with an electronic database for reference management, and thematic analysis software, if needed. Each selected literature was recorded based on key elements such as author, year of publication, objectives, methods, context (school, Islam, environment), key findings, and relevance to branding, environmental education, and the SDGs. Analysis was conducted through thorough reading, coding themes such as “Islamic identity,” “institutional branding strategy,” “integration of environmental education,” and “contribution to the SDGs,” then synthesized narratively to identify patterns and research gaps. Thus, this instrument is simple yet effective in mapping the conceptual framework and practices of the Islamic Green School.(Firmansyah & Dede, 2022).

This research was conducted because studies on green schools in Islamic education are generally descriptive, limited to a single institution, and do not sufficiently highlight branding aspects and global communication strategies. This study attempts to address these limitations by establishing a clear scope of the literature, transparent selection criteria, and focusing on the paradigm of branding

Islamic schools as green schools oriented towards the SDGs. Thus, this research provides a conceptual contribution to the development of Islamic education, sustainable school management, and branding strategies for educational institutions, while also strengthening the validity and methodological reliability of the literature review.

Results and Discussion

Results

The Islamic Green School has developed as a strategic innovation that bridges Islamic values with the global agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This approach is not simply a response to the challenges of 21st-century education, but also a concrete manifestation of the actualization of Islamic teachings in the context of sustainable development.(Nasrudin et al., 2025).

Islamic schools that embrace the Islamic Green School concept represent the intersection of Islamic values and environmental awareness as part of their institutional vision. This branding goes beyond simply displaying the terms "green" or "environmentally friendly," but rather invites the entire school community – teachers, students, parents, and management – to understand that the responsibility for preserving nature is part of a religious mandate. In Indonesia, research on the case of SMPI Mambaul Ulum Pamekasan noted that the "Zero Waste Islami" program succeeded in consistently sorting waste by 85% and reducing water consumption from 12 liters to 3 liters per student (Abdul Muin et al., 2025). Thus, Islamic Green School branding has strategic potential to strengthen institutional identity while playing a role in the global SDGs agenda.

This can be traced through the following three main strategies:

1. Universal Values: Islam and Sustainability as a Humanitarian Mandate

The concept of khalifah fil ardh, or humanity's role as stewards of the earth, is a universal value in Islam that underpins the philosophy of the Islamic Green School. This value affirms that humans have a responsibility not only to God but also to the universe as a divine trust. (Kholil, 2024) Within this framework, environmental preservation is not positioned as a secular issue, but as an integral part of worship and a manifestation of faith. This aligns with several principles of the SDGs, particularly those concerning environmental sustainability (SDG 13), intergenerational social justice (SDG 10), and natural resource sustainability (SDG 12).

By emphasizing that Islam has actually carried out the mission of preserving the earth long before the emergence of modern environmental discourse, the Islamic Green School has succeeded in elevating Islam as a religion that is relevant and provides solutions to global ecological challenges.(Milla et al., 2025)Islamic

moderation is presented in an inclusive, open-minded manner, and can integrate with the global narrative without losing its authenticity.

2. Educational Innovation: Integration of Ecological Values in Religious Curriculum

One of the Islamic Green School's significant breakthroughs is its innovative approach to religious education. While religious education was previously perceived as focusing solely on ritual and doctrinal aspects, this paradigm is now shifting by incorporating ecological dimensions into the curriculum. (Firmansyah et al., 2025) The curriculum is designed not only to instill religious knowledge but also to internalize sustainable attitudes and behaviors through contextual learning methods such as project-based learning, green activity habits, recycling programs, urban farming, and religious activities based on environmental action. (El-yunusi & Almaghfiroh, 2024).

This innovation significantly broadens students' religious horizons: from ritual to concrete action, from memorization to social and ecological awareness. Thus, the Islamic Green School plays a crucial role in shaping a generation of Muslims who are not only spiritually religious but also possess a strong ecological sensitivity and social responsibility, enabling them to become agents of change in their communities.

3. Model Scalability: Collaboration between Sharia and SDGs as a Replication Driver

The potential for replication of the Islamic Green School is enormous, both domestically and in other Muslim countries. This scalability is due not only to its alignment with Islamic principles but also to the flexibility of its funding approach. (Fatah et al., 2019) One of the main strategies for supporting program sustainability is through the utilization of Islamic financial instruments such as productive waqf, environmental zakat, and green alms. These instruments can be directed to support various education programs, environmental conservation, and the empowerment of marginalized and poor communities, thus encompassing SDG 1 (poverty eradication) and SDG 4 (inclusive and quality education). (A'ini et al., 2024).

By integrating a sharia-compliant funding model within the SDGs framework, the Islamic Green School creates a collaborative ecosystem that relies not only on the government but also invites the community, zakat institutions, and Islamic organizations to actively participate in realizing environmentally friendly and sustainable Islamic education. This approach strengthens the school's financial resilience while also opening up opportunities for broader participation from the global Muslim community. (Mahri et al., 2023).

Thus, the Islamic Green School is not simply an experiment in Islamic and environmental values-based education, but rather a transformational model that

reflects how Islam can be part of the solution to the global crisis through a moderate, participatory, and sustainable educational approach. This model deserves continued development and promotion as a new face of contextual, adaptive, and progressive Islamic education.

On a practical level, as has been explained regarding the vision and mission of basic education Islamic Green School is not free from various challenges in developing the idea in question. Several challenges faced include: 1) Weak SDGs Literacy. From several previous studies, the average conclusion is that there are still many teachers and managers of Islamic education in Indonesia who still do not understand... SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) are merely an international jargon, where this model is not considered a framework that can be contextualized with Islamic values globally, as well as in the context of Islamic education in Indonesia.(Beltahmamero et al., 2025). 2). Curriculum Fragmentation. It's hard to deny that madrasah and Islamic boarding school curricula in Indonesia tend to be heavily religious, making it difficult to add SDGs content without creating an additional burden. Data from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (2021) reports that 70% of the Madrasah Aliyah curriculum is devoted to religious and core science subjects, while integration of environmental, gender, and sustainable development issues remains local content (not mandatory).(Juryatina, et al. 2024.)This is one of the factors inhibiting the development of the SDGs model in education in Indonesia. 3). Limited Resources. Another problem that has emerged in the development of the SDGs model in Indonesia is that many Islamic schools, especially private madrasas and Islamic boarding schools, still face limitations in facilities, funds and access to technology.(Herdiana, 2025)This can complicate the implementation of project-based learning that aligns with SDG values, such as renewable energy, green technology, and others. Referring to EMIS (Education Management Information System) data, 63% of private madrasas are in the category with minimum infrastructure, with only 18% having adequate laboratories, even though SDG issues such as climate, energy, and health are closely related to applied science with all the adequate infrastructure to support their implementation. 4) Ideological Resistance. Another problem that is also an obstacle to the implementation of the SDGs program is the still strong assumption that the SDGs are a Western global agenda that is not fully in line with Islamic or sharia principles.(Tohir Muntoha, 2024). where the integration of its values is often debated, especially on the issue of gender equality and Human Rights (HAM).

The lack of collaboration with external parties is also considered to be one of the obstacles to the development of SDGs in Indonesia, where Islamic education is

often considered to be running exclusively, considering that there are not many partnerships with NGOs, universities, or international institutions to strengthen the SDGs themselves.

Within the framework of Islamic moderation, the application of the *Islamic Green School* concept reflects an inclusive, tolerant, and adaptive attitude to the dynamics of the times. School branding strategies serve as an important instrument to demonstrate that Islamic education is not merely oriented towards rituals and memorization, but also has relevance to environmental issues, social justice, and sustainable development. By distinguishing the aspects of moderation that include values, identity, and inclusivity from the branding aspects that include communication, image, and market positioning, the strategy formation process becomes more focused. Schools that carry the Islamic Green School identity need to first strengthen the foundation of moderation values, then design a brand identity that reflects these values, and convey it through an effective communication strategy to the public. (Rahmawati, 2025) Institutional branding strategies in the context of Islamic Green Schools can be broken down into three stages: brand identity (depicting an Islamic vision and sustainability), brand personality (characteristics such as eco-friendliness, religiousness, and progressiveness), and brand positioning (excellence in environmental and religious education). For example, in Islamic schools that promote a green school style, their identity calls them "Sekolah Khalifah Bumi," their personality emphasizes "religious, innovative, and environmentally conscious," and their positioning is noted as the primary choice for families seeking both religious and environmental education. Brand communication is carried out through social media, annual reports, environmental certifications, and collaborations with environmental organizations, so that branding serves as a bridge between institutional values and community expectations (Syahri, 2021).

The relevance of Islamic Green Schools to the SDGs becomes even more evident when schools link environmental activities to targets such as SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production), SDG 13 (Action on Climate Change), and SDG 15 (Life on Land). A study found that although several Islamic institutions have implemented green school programs, implementation in the field is still inconsistent, especially regarding school policies, teacher understanding, and program operations (Aang Mahyani, 2024). Truly down-to-earth branding can confirm that Islamic schools are participating in the global agenda, not just claiming but demonstrating through action. The first challenge is infrastructure and resource support: many Islamic schools do not have adequate waste management facilities, recycling systems, renewable energy use, or environmental monitoring. An evaluation study at an Islamic boarding school in Tangerang revealed that the

"availability of environmental infrastructure" is one aspect that is still weak.(Fitria, 2021)The second challenge is the capacity of teachers and stakeholders to understand both Islamic values and the concept of sustainability. A survey at MTs Asih Putera Cimahi found that 78% of students understood the concept of Green Education, but 22% still needed clarification, and that 85% of teachers involved integrated the principles. Barriers included a 60% lack of instructional materials and a 55% lack of teacher training (Kunkun Syaeful Millah et al., 2024). The third challenge is internal commitment and school culture: branding that represents the values of moderation and sustainability must become part of the school culture, not just a slogan or logo. Without internalization, stakeholders will view environmental programs as optional extras, not a core part of the school's identity. The fourth challenge is quantitative data and monitoring: to justify branding claims, indicators such as the percentage reduction in plastic waste, reduced energy consumption, the number of recycling programs, or surveys of student attitude changes are needed. A case study in Pamekasan recorded a 40% reduction in electricity and a reduction in water consumption from 12 liters to 3 liters per student (Abdul Muin et al., 2025). The fifth challenge is consistent brand communication and publication: schools must be able to convey their achievements to the public and stakeholders transparently so that branding does not appear as green-washing.

As a concrete illustration, SMPI Mambaul Ulum Pamekasan as a model Eco-Pesantren has implemented a program package: Zero Waste Islami with 85% consistency of waste sorting, the "Blessed Energy" program that reduces electricity consumption by 40%, the "Water of Life" program that reduces ablusi water consumption from 12 liters to 3 liters, as well as the "Environmentally Conscious Family" program with family participation of 78% and a reduction in plastic waste of 60% (Abdul Muin et al., 2025). Institutional branding that highlights these achievements strengthens the school's position as a concrete example for other Islamic schools, as well as a moderation strategy that emphasizes the value of environmental care within an Islamic framework.

The analysis shows that when Islamic Green School branding is well implemented and environmental practices are systemically integrated, Islamic schools are able to build an inclusive narrative such as "we educate a generation that is faithful, environmentally conscious, and ready to face global challenges." This narrative strengthens the school's position as an institution of Islamic moderation based on Islamic values, open to global issues, and innovative in its actions. Conversely, if branding appears only as a label but environmental implementation is weak, the effect of Islamic moderation will be poor and risk losing credibility. This research shows that to strengthen the contribution of Islamic Green Schools as a

branding strategy for Islamic moderation based on the SDGs, it is necessary to simultaneously integrate internal strategies (school culture, teacher training, data measurement) and external strategies (brand communication, partnerships, publication of results). Schools need to establish a transparent environmental reporting system, involve external stakeholders such as local communities, government, and environmental institutions, and use environmental achievements as part of the institution's brand. Thus, branding is not merely an aesthetic attribute, but an element of the institution's strategic management that supports the SDGs and strengthens Islamic moderation in practice.

Overall, the Islamic Green School, as a branding strategy for SDG-based Islamic moderation, has transformative potential because it allows Islamic schools to combine religious identity and environmental awareness within a single institutional framework. However, the practical challenges outlined above still hinder its optimal implementation. This study enriches the literature with an analysis linking institutional branding, Islamic education, and environmental sustainability, a field that has received little holistic and quantitative study. The results of this study not only provide strategic guidance for Islamic educational institutions seeking to appear both green and moderate, but also open up opportunities for further research that empirically measures the impact of branding on achieving the SDGs and Islamic moderation.

Discussion

The Islamic Green School presents itself as a model of Islamic education that integrates religious values with ecological responsibility. This approach places the principles of *khalīfah* (earth stewardship) and *mīzān* (balance) as the foundation of school practices, making schools not merely institutions for memorization and rituals, but also institutions that actively shape environmental character. Thus, the Islamic Green School offers a new identity for Islamic schools that want to appear relevant in a global context while upholding Islamic values. Branding an Islamic school with the label "green" involves two analytical domains that need to be separated for a clear flow. First, the domain of Islamic moderation, namely how the school develops an inclusive, tolerant, and adaptive attitude to the challenges of the times and internalizes Islamic values that open up space for environmental awareness. Second, the domain of branding strategy, namely how the school designs its institutional image, conveys public messages (e.g., "school of the *khalīfah* of the earth"), manages its brand through communication, and positions itself within an environmentally conscious educational ecosystem. By separating these two domains, the analysis becomes more focused because we can evaluate Islamic moderation as the content of values and branding strategy as a vehicle for value communication.

Next, the Islamic Green School branding strategy, brand identity, is the first step that must be carefully managed. The school needs to define a vision and mission that embodies a commitment to sustainability and Islamic values, for example, "cultivating a generation of environmentally conscious Muslims." The brand personality should convey the school's religious, innovative, and environmentally conscious character; while the brand positioning positions the school as a superior choice for parents seeking an education that produces a faithful and environmentally conscious generation. Brand communication needs to be consistent through public activities, social media, environmental certification, and external partnerships. (Rahman & Ramadhan, 2024).

When compared with a number of previous literature findings, the existence of the Islamic Green School demonstrates both relevance and significant progress. Research by (Albab, 2022) Studies have shown that Islamic teachings such as zakat, fasting, and environmental ethics directly support the SDGs agenda, particularly SDG 1 (poverty eradication), SDG 4 (quality education), and SDG 13 (action on climate change). The Islamic Green School approach aligns with these findings, as it utilizes spiritual values to encourage active engagement in social and environmental action.

Meanwhile, (Muntoha, 2024) This study highlights the importance of integrating SDG values at the Islamic higher education level, but also reveals challenges such as resistance to global curricula and limited funding. In this context, Islamic Green Schools offer a more flexible and contextual alternative, with a community-based approach at the primary and secondary levels. This flexibility makes Islamic Green Schools more adaptable and implementable, particularly in resource-constrained settings.

Furthermore, the book written (Adawiah et al., 2022) explicitly describes the Islamic Green School model as an ecologically based educational approach that has been piloted in several areas in West Java. This reinforces the finding that the concept is not merely a conceptual idealism but has a track record of practical and tangible impact. From a branding perspective, research by Andika (2022) found that modern Islamic schools that combine religious narratives with global values such as environmental awareness and technology are able to gain public trust. Islamic Green Schools, with similar communication strategies and identity strengthening, have proven capable of building an inclusive and progressive institutional image.

The study of madrasah education policy also confirmed that many madrasahs have begun to implement SDG principles indirectly, for example through water and energy conservation activities. (Ansori et al., 2025) In this regard, the Islamic Green School can serve as a strategic reference in formulating formal education policies that

explicitly integrate sustainability. This concept also resonates with the eco-pesantren study by Risana et al. (2024), which emphasized the integration of spirituality and community-based ecological education. However, the Islamic Green School focuses more on mainstreaming sustainability in formal national schools rather than solely within the pesantren framework.

The linkage of Islamic Green Schools with the SDGs is strategic: school programs can support SDG 4 (Quality Education) through the integration of environmental education in the curriculum, SDG 12 (Sustainable Consumption and Production) through school waste and energy management, SDG 13 (Climate Action) through carbon footprint reduction activities and SDG 15 (Life on Land) through greening and conservation in the school environment. Studies on Islamic educational institutions show that although some schools have adopted green school programs, implementation in the field is still often limited to symbolic changes (Aang Mahyani, Agus Ruswandi, 2024). Thus, effective branding must be accompanied by real practices so that contributions to the SDGs are not just rhetoric.

Implementation Challenges

As explained previously, despite having a big vision and high relevance, Islamic Green School still faces challenges that cannot be ignored.

The first implementation challenge is infrastructure and resource support. For example, an evaluation study at an Islamic boarding school in Tangerang revealed that the availability of environmental infrastructure remains weak, hindering the implementation of the green school program (Sintha Wahjusaputri et al., 2025). To address this, a solution can be designed using the "Resource Mobilization Framework" model, where schools inventory environmental needs (waste management systems, solar panels, school gardens), establish partnerships with stakeholders (permits, NGOs, Islamic banks), and manage budgets in a participatory manner between the school, foundations, and the community. With this model, institutional branding gains a strong physical foundation, becoming more than just a visual experience. The second challenge is the capacity of teachers and stakeholders to internalize environmental values and Islamic moderation. For example, a study of the integration of environmental education into Islamic Religious Education (PAI) found that even when integration occurs, limited time and resources are obstacles (Juliani et al., 2024). A solution could be to use the "Professional Learning Community (PLC)" approach, which focuses on Islamic Religious Education (PAI) and environmental education teachers to improve competencies, develop collaborative modules, and conduct peer-to-peer observations. This PLC model will facilitate systemic school culture change, strengthening human capital as the foundation of an authentic branding strategy. The third challenge involves internal

commitment and school culture. Branding is only effective when all stakeholders—teachers, students, and parents—identify brand values and act accordingly. However, many schools still view environmental programs as an add-on rather than a core component. To address this, the "Organizational Culture Change (OCC)" model can be used through stages such as creating an Islamic environmental vision, involving the entire school community in workshops, periodic measurement and reflection, and internal rewards (incentives) for environmental achievements. Therefore, branding is not just external but lives within the school culture.

The fourth challenge is quantitative data and monitoring to support branding claims. Without concrete data, schools risk being perceived as greenwashing. For example, a study in Mambaul Ulum recorded a 40% reduction in electricity and a reduction in water consumption from 12 liters to 3 liters per student as environmental indicators (Masturin¹, Nadhirin, 2024). To address this, the recommended implementation model is a "Balanced Scorecard for Environmental Branding" in which schools define environmental indicators (% plastic waste, % renewable energy, number of greening activities), Islamic aspects (nature interaction activities & khalifah values), and branding aspects (media publications, partnerships). This way, achievements can be measured, communicated, and become part of the brand narrative. The fifth challenge is consistent brand communication and publications. Schools may undertake numerous green activities, but if they are not communicated well, branding becomes less visible. Several studies have shown a lack of individual evaluation and reporting mechanisms in Islamic schools (Sintha Wahjusaputri et al., 2025). To address this, schools can employ the "Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) for Islamic Green Schools" model, which encompasses social media, annual sustainability reports, partnerships with environmental media outlets, and public events. With this IMC model, Islamic values of moderation and environmental sustainability become part of a strong and credible institutional narrative.

From a theoretical perspective, the Islamic Green School as a branding strategy for Islamic moderation can be described within the Brand Identity Prism (Kapferer) framework, which is then linked to the theory of Islamic Moderation (tolerance, inclusivity, adaptation) and the theory of Sustainability Education. The school's brand identity (kapferer) encompasses physical aspects (green facilities), personality (environmental awareness), culture (Islamic values and caliphate), relationships (school-environment community), reflection (globally-minded generation), and self-image (Islamic-sustainable school). Thus, schools can formulate branding that is not only aesthetic but embedded in institutional values and practices. In practical implementation, schools can use the Continuous Improvement

Loop (Deming Cycle: Plan-Do-Check-Act) model to manage the Islamic Green School program. The Plan stage: establishing a vision of Islamic moderation and sustainability, Do: implementing environmental programs and branding, Check: measuring quantitative indicators and evaluating cultural commitments, Act: revising brand strategies and communications. With this loop, branding becomes a dynamic process that provides space for continuous improvement, and not just a one-time campaign.

A case study illustrating the implementation model is the study at Darunnajah Islamic Boarding School in Bogor, which implemented an Eco-Pesantren program with recycling, urban farming, and student training activities, which were then linked to the values of *khalifah fil ardh* (Nuhzatul Ainiyah, Arfal Awakachi, 2025). The school incorporated environmental achievements into its institutional narrative and published them publicly, strengthening its brand as an environmentally conscious Islamic school. This demonstrates that a branding strategy based on values and concrete data can practically strengthen Islamic moderation. The global context also supports the role of green Islamic schools in cultural diplomacy and educational soft power. By strengthening international publications, global partnerships, and environmental certification, Islamic Green Schools are not only locally relevant but also have global appeal. This enables Islamic schools to contribute to the SDGs through education and serve as role models for institutions in the Islamic world and globally. However, it is important to remember that overly ambitious branding without a strong foundation in practice will pose reputational risks. If a school merely projects an "Islamic Green" image without measuring it in practice, claims of Islamic moderation and sustainability can lose credibility and appear merely marketing. Therefore, integrity, consistency, and transparency are key requirements for an effective Islamic Green School branding strategy.

Overall, the Islamic Green School, as an SDGs-based branding strategy for Islamic moderation, offers significant opportunities for Islamic educational institutions to build a relevant and progressive institutional identity. By integrating Islamic values, concrete environmental practices, managed brand communications, and a structured implementation model, Islamic schools can become agents of change supporting quality education, sustainability, and Islamic moderation. This analysis reinforces that branding is not just about image, but strategic institutional management that simultaneously supports global goals and local values.

Conclusion

The Islamic Green School concept is an innovative approach in modern Islamic education that integrates Islamic values with the principles of global sustainability, as the principles of the (SDGs. The application of values such as

khalifah fil ardh (steward of the earth) not only expands the scope of religious education from ritual aspects to ecological awareness but also makes it an integral part of the curriculum and project-based learning activities. This makes the Islamic Green School able to contribute significantly to the achievement of various SDGs models in the future to address the challenges of quality education and climate change, and strengthen the image of moderate and progressive Islam at the global level. However, to realize a number of these goals, various challenges faced must be addressed optimally, such as the need to increase SDG literacy, which is currently still low, in addition to the need for policy support and funding from the government. Curriculum integration and the low scalability of implementation in schools also need to be addressed so that the implementation of the Islamic Green School can show real results in the world of education in Indonesia.

Based on these findings, this study recommends that Islamic educational institutions strengthen the capacity of their teaching staff through comprehensive training on integrating sustainability values and SDG principles into Islamic-based curricula. Similarly, the government is expected to provide more concrete support in the form of affirmative policies, funding allocations, and incentives for schools implementing the Islamic Green School concept. Further research is also essential to evaluate the effectiveness of this model across various geographic and socio-cultural contexts and to explore innovative strategies for overcoming implementation barriers. Furthermore, the active involvement of school communities and surrounding communities should be encouraged as part of efforts to build a participatory, contextual, and sustainable Islamic education ecosystem.

REFERENCES

- Adawiah, W., Dharmawan, A. H., & Sunito, S. (2022). Ekomodernitas Islam: Kepemimpinan, Mobilisasi Dan Gerakan Lingkungan Hidup Di Dua Pesantren Di Jawa Barat. *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama*, 16(2), 197–218.
- A'ini, H., Ayu, I., & Maghfiroh, R. A. (2024). Keuangan Islam sebagai Katalisator Green Economy: Menuju Pencapaian SDGs dalam Kerangka Maqashid Syariah. *MADANI Jurnal Politik Dan Sosial Kemasyarakatan*, 16(3).
- Albab, U. (2022). Tafsir Al-Qur'an Dan Sustainable Development Goals (Sdgs). *Mahad Aly Journal Of Islamic Studies*, 1(1), 19–32. <https://doi.org/10.63398/jsimahadaly.v1i1.14>
- Ansori, A., Mardiah, M., Qalby, M. S., & S, A. W. (2025). Strategi pemeliharaan sarana dan prasarana sekolah berbasis lingkungan berkelanjutan. *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Educational Management*, 8(1), 52–60. <https://doi.org/10.24014/ijiem.v8i1.37150>
- Azzahra, S., & Masyithoh, S. (2024). Peran Muslim Dalam Dalam Pelestarian Lingkungan: Ajaran Dan Praktik. *At-Thullab: Jurnal Mahasiswa Studi Islam*, 6(1), 1568–1579. <https://doi.org/10.20885/tullab.vol6.iss1.art8>

- Bungin, B. (2017). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif (Aktualisasi Metodologis ke Arah Ragam Varian Kontemporer)*. Rajawali Pers.
- El-yunusi, M. Y. M., & Almaghfiroh, Z. A. (2024). Inovasi Desain Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Meningkatkan Keterlibatan Siswa dan Guru. *Journal on Education*, 07(01), 1675–1691.
- Fatah, A. A., Andriani, N., Hidayat, G. N., Lubis, R. K., Hidayat, F., Dewi, F. K., Ahmad Yani, R., Hidayati, S., Isnanto, K. U., Harahap, M. K. R., Arfiyansyah, S., Rochani, A., Indrianingrum, L., Rahajeng, D. K., Riskayanti, Y. M. H., Zikra, N., Martha, F. P., Islami, F., Prasetyawati, F. Y., & Karim, R. A. (2019). Pioneering Growth: Seri kajian Skema Pembiayaan Inovatif untuk Pembangunan Indonesia (Volume 2) Dana Filantropi untuk Pembangunan Indonesia. In A. A. Fatah, N. Andriani, & G. N. Hidayat (Eds), *IIGF Institute, PT Penjaminan Infrastruktur Indonesia (Persero) bekerja sama dengan Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan (LPDP) dan Mata Garuda* (Vol. 11, Issue 1). IIGF Institute, PT Penjaminan Infrastruktur Indonesia (Persero).
- Febrineng. (2024). Implementasi Konsep Pendidikan Berkelanjutan Dalam Manajemen Pendidikan Islam Di Era Globalisasi. *Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran*, 7(3), 11333–11341.
- Firmansyah, Ali, M., Rosad, A., & Noviani, D. (2025). Peran Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah dalam Membangun Pranata Sosial. *J-CEKI : Jurnal Cendekia Ilmiah*, 4(3), 492–501.
- Firmansyah, D., & Dede. (2022). Teknik Pengambilan Sampel Umum dalam Metodologi Penelitian: Literature Review. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Holistik (JIPH)*, 1(2), 85–114. <https://doi.org/10.55927/jiph.v1i2.937>
- Fitria, R. (2021). Implementasi Manajemen Pendidikan Sekolah Berbasis Boarding dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan di Al-Wildan Islamic Boarding School Tangerang. *Management of Education: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 7(1), 38–55.
- Handiyati, T., Qomariyah, S., & Kurniawan, J. (2023). Peran Pembelajaran Berbasis Lingkungan Dalam Meningkatkan Pemahaman Peserta Didik Di MI Cimahi Peuntas Kabupaten Sukabumi. *Indonesian Women and Local Politics*, 1(4), 108–140. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1nth4c.13>
- Herdiana. (2025). *Penarapan Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Desa di Kabupaten Tasikmalaya*. UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.
- Juryatina. (n.d.). *Mengintegrasikan Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Dalam Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar (PGSD) Abad 21: Transformasi Calon Guru*.
- Kholil, M. (2024). Khalifah Dalam Melestarikan Lingkungan Hidup (Kajian Ayat Ekologis Perspektif Mufasir Indonesia). *Graduasi: Jurnal Mahasiswa*, 1(1), 71–79.
- Kuipers, J. C., & Yulaelawati, E. (2009). Religion, ethnicity, and identity in Indonesian education. In *The Routledge International Companion to Multicultural Education*. Routledge.
- Mahri, A. J. W., Cupian, Arif, M. N. R. Al, Arundina, T., Widiastuti, T., Mubarak, F., Fajri, M., Azizon, & Nurasyiah, A. (2023). Pembangunan Ekonomi Islam. In M. I. S & A. Sakti (Eds), *Departemen Ekonomi dan Keuangan Syariah – Bank Indonesia*

- (Vol. 3, Issue 2). Departemen Ekonomi dan Keuangan Syariah - Bank Indonesia. <https://doi.org/10.56870/ambitek.v3i2.81>
- Milla, A. N., Deliana, Y., Syamsudin, T. S., Rachminawati, & Iqlima, F. F. (2025). *Islamic Green School Pedoman Praktis Sekolah Ramah Lingkungan* (D. Lyesmaya, Ed.). Lekkas.
- Muntoha, T. (2024). Mengokohkan Perdamaian dan Toleransi: Analisis Literatur Integrasi Nilai-nilai SDGs dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam di Era Modern. *Journal of Education Research*, 5(4), 4642–4653. <https://doi.org/10.37985/jer.v5i4.1608>
- Nasrudin, E., Anwar, S., Suresman, E., Rahmi, U. Q., & Syarif, D. (2025). Integration of Sustainable Development Goals in Islamic Teaching Materials in Higher Education. *Tafkir: Interdisciplinary Journal of Islamic Education*, 6(1), 17–39.
- Nurhabibi, Arifannisa, Ismail, D., Kuswandi, D., Anggraeni, A. F. D. G., & Aji, Y. A. (2025). Strategi Lembaga Pendidikan Islam dalam Membentuk Karakter Siswa di Era Digital. *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia: Teori, Penelitian Dan Inovasi*, 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.59818/jpi.v5i2.1527>
- Rahman, H., & Ramadhan, N. J. H. (2024). Meningkatkan Kualitas Pendidikan Islam Melalui Lensa Sdgs: Tantangan Dan Peluang. *Transformasi Pembelajaran Dan Pengelolaan Pendidikan Islam Prospektif Sustainable Development Goals*, 338–349.
- Rahmawati, H. (2025). Pengaruh green innovation dan green invesment terhadap nilai perusahaan dengan ukuran perusahaan sebagai variabel moderasi: Pada perusahaan yang terdaftar di indeks IDX LQ45 Low Carbon Leaders. Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim.
- Sari, N. S. (2020). *Islamic Green School adalah transformasi kultural yang menanamkan kepedulian ekologis dalam diri peserta didik sejak dini. Dengan demikian, gerakan ini tidak hanya relevan di tingkat lokal, tetapi juga dapat diadopsi secara lebih luas sebagai model pendid.* Pustakapedia.
- Sugiyono. (2018). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif dan R&D*. Alfabeta.
- Tohir Muntoha. (2024). *Journal of Education Research*, 5(4).
- Ulinuha, M. T. (2024). *Kurikulum Islamic Green School: Sebuah Ijtihad Memadukan Ekologi Islam dan Pendidikan Berkelanjutan*. PWM Jawa Tengah. <https://pwmjateng.com/kurikulum-islamic-green-school-sebuah-ijtihad-memadukan-ekologi-islam-dan-pendidikan-berkelanjutan/>
- Zed, M. (2018). *Metode penelitian kepustakaan* (5th edn). Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.