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## COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION: THE #LESSWASTE HABIT FORMATION BY THE YUKNGAJI CLUB AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION EFFORT

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### Abstract

This study explores the YukNgaji community's #LessWaste campaign as a community-driven Islamic ecotheology model. Amid environmental crises requiring sustainable action, the initiative bridges Islamic stewardship (*khalifah*) and responsibility (*amanah*) with ecological awareness. Using qualitative methods—virtual ethnography, community-based education theory, and Living Qur'an-Hadith analysis—data were gathered via observations, interviews, and digital content assessment. Results indicate #LessWaste effectively integrates Islamic ecological values through digital activism and offline practices (e.g., waste donation, reusable items). The campaign functions as both an environmental movement and adaptive educational platform, engaging Muslim youth with modern challenges. It highlights hybrid activism's role in Islamic education, suggesting applicability across diverse Muslim communities. Future studies should test similar frameworks in varied socio-cultural contexts to evaluate sustained behavioral change.

**Keywords:** YukNgaji club; less waste; Islamic ecotheology; education; hybrid activism

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji kampanye #LessWaste komunitas YukNgaji sebagai model ekoteologi Islam berbasis komunitas. Menghadapi krisis lingkungan yang mendesak kebutuhan aksi berkelanjutan, inisiatif ini menghubungkan prinsip stewardship (*khalifah*) dan tanggung jawab (*amanah*) dalam Islam dengan kesadaran ekologis. Dengan metode kualitatif—meliputi etnografi virtual, teori pendidikan berbasis komunitas, dan analisis Living Qur'an-Hadith—data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipan, wawancara dengan anggota kunci, dan analisis konten digital. Hasil menunjukkan #LessWaste berhasil mengintegrasikan nilai ekologis Islam melalui aktivisme digital dan praktik offline seperti donasi sampah serta penggunaan barang reusable. Kampanye ini berfungsi ganda sebagai gerakan lingkungan dan platform pendidikan adaptif yang melibatkan generasi muda Muslim dengan isu kontemporer. Temuan menggarisbawahi peran aktivisme hibrid dalam pendidikan Islam serta potensi replikasinya di komunitas Muslim beragam. Studi lanjutan disarankan untuk menguji model serupa dalam konteks sosiokultural berbeda guna menilai dampak jangka panjang pada perubahan perilaku berkelanjutan.

**Kata kunci:** Komunitas YukNgaji; less waste; ekoteologi Islam; pendidikan; aktivisme hibrid

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## Introduction

Following the dissolution of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI), its affiliated club established YukNgaji community, where they advocate Islamic teachings in more substantive approach through community-based education on natural conservation.

David Wallace-Wells, in *The Uninhabitable Earth*, notes that ecological disasters that once occurred over decades or centuries are now happening more frequently and intensely (Wallace-Wells, 2019). Phenomena such as major floods, extreme heat waves, wildfires, and rapid glacier melt illustrate that environmental changes are unfolding at an unprecedented pace. The interval between one disaster and the next is shrinking, creating a new reality in which the impacts of the environmental crisis are more tangible and urgently need to be addressed.

Research indicates that during the COVID-19 pandemic, when human activities drastically decreased, the environment experienced significant improvement. For example, in China, lockdowns and reduced industrial activity led to a 25% drop in carbon emissions and up to a 50% reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions. Scientists estimate that this reduction in emissions saved approximately 77,000 lives in the first two months of the pandemic (Zhang et al., 2020). This phenomenon demonstrates that nature would remain evergreen without human interference, but not the other way around. Therefore, all forms of excessive exploitation of nature can only lead to two scenarios: 1) nature reacts with its defense mechanisms, potentially endangering humans, or 2) environmental degradation becomes so severe that it threatens the survival of both humanity and the ecosystem itself (Fatimah & ., 2020; Judijanto & Adiwjaya, 2024). There is no third option where humans can thrive while nature deteriorates, as human existence is intrinsically dependent on the balance and health of natural ecosystems.

The environmental crisis is not merely a scientific issue but also a moral and spiritual matter that demands deep reflection. Seyyed Hossein Nasr argues that the triumph of humanism, which absolutizes human power over the Earth, has led to massive and colossal exploitation of nature in the name of human rights (Nasr, 1990). In the tradition of Islamic thought, the relationship between humans and nature is not only understood within an ecological framework but also within a broader theological dimension. This perspective has fostered the development of eco-theological studies, which reflectively link environmental issues with the concept of servitude to God. Muslim scholars have extensively explored this idea, emphasizing that preserving the balance of ecosystems is not merely a social responsibility but also a religious obligation deeply rooted in Islamic sacred texts (Manik, 2023; Sholihin, 2025; Ubab, 2022).

The enthusiasm of Muslim scholars regarding environmental issues extends beyond theoretical discussions and reinterpretations of Qur'anic verses and Hadiths. It is also reflected in tangible actions that promote ecological awareness and concrete contributions to environmental conservation. This effort is evident in various Muslim communities that promote community-based education. It integrates Islamic values with ecological movements.

The escalating environmental crisis resulting from uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources has emerged as one of humanity's most significant challenges in the modern era. The impacts of climate change, pollution, deforestation, and inadequate waste management have been widely observed, including in Muslim-majority nations such as Indonesia. As the world's largest

Muslim-populated country, Indonesia faces substantial challenges in integrating environmental consciousness into daily societal practices, particularly within the contexts of Islamic education and religious outreach (*dakwah*) (Sembiring, 2024).

In Islam, the universe is regarded as a sacred trust (*amanah*) requiring responsible stewardship. The Qur'anic concept of *khalifah* (human vicegerency on Earth) emphasizes humanity's role as environmental custodians rather than unrestrained exploiters of natural resources. Scriptural foundations for Islamic eco-theology are evident in verses such as QS. Al-A'raf:31, which calls for moderation in consumption, and QS. Al-Baqarah:205, warning against environmental destruction (Aripin & Mardani, 2022). However, translating these theological principles into daily practices encounters persistent challenges, particularly in fostering collective ecological awareness among Muslim communities.

The concept is rooted in the philosophy of John Dewey, a progressive philosopher and educator who emphasized the significance of experiential learning. In his seminal work *Democracy and Education*, Dewey argued that education should be practical and directly relevant to real-life contexts, enabling students to comprehend their societal roles. He posited that schools should not function as isolated institutions but rather integrate into the broader community, where students engage in direct interactions and address real social problems. Dewey further asserted that education must adopt a democratic framework, empowering learners to participate in decision-making processes and cultivate critical thinking skills. Through this approach, Competency-Based Education extends beyond academic mastery to foster character development, social skills, and an awareness of individual responsibilities within communities. Dewey's ideas laid the foundation for participatory educational methodologies that prioritize community engagement in learning processes (Dewey, 2024).

Similar to Rabindranath Tagore, an Indian philosopher, poet, and educator, who developed a community-based educational concept emphasizing freedom, creativity, and the intrinsic connection between humanity and nature. In his approach, implemented at Visva-Bharati – the institution he founded in 1921 – Tagore rejected the rigid colonial education system centered on rote memorization. He Advocated for an organic, interactive educational framework rooted in the daily life of communities (Mukherjee & Koshal, 2020).

Tagore argued that schools should not operate as isolated institutions but rather serve as community hubs fostering lifelong learning through arts, cultural practices, and environmental exploration. He emphasized cultivating harmony between humans and nature, teaching students to derive knowledge from direct experiential engagement rather than relying solely on textbooks. Thus, the Community-Based Education model advanced by Tagore not only nurtured intellectual development but also instilled profound social and spiritual consciousness, aligning with progressive educational philosophies that prioritize equilibrium between individual autonomy and societal responsibility (Choudhary et al., 2024).

One examples of such a movement is the preacher community *CariUstadz.id*, which collaborates with Greenpeace—a global environmental organization focused on environmental protection and sustainability—to educate preachers so that the pulpit is not only a space for religious counsel but also a medium for promoting "green da'wah" (Choironi & Ferdiansyah, 2023). A similar initiative is undertaken by *Laskar Hijau*, a community actively involved in

conserving Mount Lemongan in Lumajang, restoring the region's ecological balance through reforestation and environmental education (Thobroni et al., 2024). Meanwhile, *Masjid Jogokariyan* in Yogyakarta has revolutionized mosque management standards with a more sustainable concept, building synergy between the mosque, the community, and the surrounding environment (Achmad, 2024).

Among young people, eco-theological awareness is increasingly growing through study communities such as YukNgaji, which promote the #LessWaste movement as part of an Islamic lifestyle. With a relevant and social media-based approach, this community encourages the younger generation to be more mindful of the impact of excessive consumption and the importance of sustainability practices in daily life. These various movements demonstrate that Islamic values regarding environmental care are not only embedded in academic discourse but also translated into tangible practices with broad impact.

This writing focuses on the #LessWaste ecological movement initiated by the YukNgaji community, employing the John Dewey's approach, Rabindranath Tagore's model of public education as well as Thomas Lickona's view on the internalisation of values in the context of community-based education as its analytical theory and framework. This research adopts a descriptive-qualitative method with a phenomenological lens. Primary data is collected through observations and interviews, involving two types of informants: central administrators and community members of YukNgaji. Meanwhile, secondary data is gathered from previous research reports and various literature related to the research theme accessed through libraries and the internet. The uniqueness of YukNgaji lies in its hybrid activism model that balances digital space and real-world action. Their movement goes beyond mere clicktivism—such as raising awareness through social media campaigns—and is also realized through direct actions in mosques within the community's reach.

In addition, YukNgaji has the potential to continuously amplify "green sermons" sustainably. This is supported by their weekly study system, which is attended by a relatively stable and loyal congregation (Abzar Duraesa & Ahyar, 2021). Before the #LessWaste campaign emerged in early 2020, the community had already built a foundation of collective awareness through studies on monotheism, brotherhood, and other Islamic issues. The structured study patterns and strong bonds among community members are factors that enable ecological ideas within YukNgaji to develop consistently and sustainably.

A literature review reveals that studies on the Living Qur'an-Hadith approach in eco-theological issues have been widely conducted by previous scholars. To mention a few recent ones: Faisol Nasar and Moh. Barmawi conducted a study on living Qur'an, highlighting ecological verses that contribute to raising awareness in flood-prone areas (Madi & Barmawi, 2022). Nur Tata, Fatimah, and Umi Aflaha examined the implementation of the eco-theological paradigm at An-Nur Islamic Boarding School in Yogyakarta, with findings including the establishment of an independent waste management unit (UPT ASRI) and a ban on bringing plastic waste into the boarding school environment (Tata et al., 2024). Zainun Lutfiah conducted a similar study on a hadith narrated by Muslim, which was promoted by the Fadlun Minalloh Islamic Boarding School as part of environmental preservation efforts (Lutfiah, 2022). These studies generally focus on how Islamic values in the Qur'an and hadith are practiced in environmental movements, both

individually and collectively, and how Islamic teachings encourage ecological awareness within various Muslim communities.

A case study from Millburn, New Jersey, demonstrates that community-based programs can address environmental education challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic by leveraging informal networks and local organizations to enhance environmental awareness (Iyengar & Shin, 2022). By actively engaging communities in environmental education and initiatives, this approach not only enhances ecological literacy but also strengthens social cohesion and collective responsibility toward environmental sustainability.

Moreover, community-based initiatives involving university students and local residents in community-based learning have demonstrated effectiveness in enhancing environmental awareness and fostering behavioral changes that support healthy lifestyles and harmony with nature (Oe et al., 2022). Thus, community-based education, particularly when integrating religious values, plays a pivotal role in cultivating environmental consciousness and promoting eco-friendly behaviors within Muslim communities.

Academic investigations into the efficacy of community-based educational models like *YukNgaji*'s approach to fostering eco-theological awareness remain limited. The interplay between Islamic values, community education, and environmental sustainability practices requires deeper scholarly examination. This study therefore aims to explore how the *YukNgaji* community internalizes eco-theological values in its outreach efforts and evaluates the effectiveness of this model in cultivating ecological awareness among its members.

As for studies specifically discussing the *YukNgaji* community, most focus on their da'wah model and strategy (Aula & Abas, 2020; Mutiarani et al., 2024; Suciati et al., 2019). Meanwhile, Duraesa and Ahyar propose a thesis that the community's typology is populist and identity-based. *YukNgaji* particularly appeals to young people who are newly acquainted with Islam (hijrah) and are searching for a stronger religious identity. Their da'wah model, which adapts to digital trends and popular culture, is a key factor in attracting and retaining their congregation (Abzar Duraesa & Ahyar, 2021).

When examining previous research, the following studies can be highlighted. First, the study by (Veress et al., 2024), titled "The Roles of Community-based Organizations in Socializing Sustainable Behavior: Examining the Urban Case of Budapest, Hungary" emphasizes the role of community-based organizations in shaping social norms and expectations toward sustainable living practices. The research primarily focuses on how urban community-based organizations in Budapest contribute to raising awareness, influencing daily practices, and creating social interaction spaces free from consumption-oriented agendas. It also identifies three core functions of these organizations—translation, reinforcement, and contribution—as mechanisms for sustainable behavioral change.

Another relevant study by (Studer et al., 2023), "Review of Community-Based Conservation Initiatives for Protecting a Primary Atlantic Forest Remnant: A Case Study," underscores the importance of forest conservation through collaboration with local communities. It investigates how conservation efforts can align with improving the welfare of marginalized communities to establish sustainable ecosystems and protect biodiversity. Community-based environmental

education is highlighted as a critical element in fostering collective awareness of human-nature relationships. The study further emphasizes the role of Capacity Development (CD) in empowering communities through interactive and participatory educational strategies.

Among numerous relevant prior studies, these two were selected due to their relatively recent publication dates, ensuring contemporary relevance. While these studies provide valuable insights into how community-based organizations contribute to sustainability transitions, certain aspects remain underexplored. First, they do not explicitly link community education concepts to the internalization of sustainability values. Second, their urban context focus leaves gaps in understanding how similar approaches might apply to Muslim communities with distinct cultural and religious frameworks.

This study seeks to fill existing research gaps by examining how community-based education within an Islamic framework—specifically through the YukNgaji movement—encourages sustainable daily habits. It strengthens the link between John Dewey's experiential learning theory, Rabindranath Tagore's concept of harmony between humans and nature, and the practical activities of the YukNgaji community. Thus, beyond analyzing the general role of community-based organizations, this research explores how Islamic values and experiential education intersect to promote environmentally conscious and sustainable behaviors.

Drawing from the literature review, this study identifies a gap in previous research, particularly regarding YukNgaji's eco-theological campaign. There has been little investigation into the Qur'anic verses and hadiths that underpin the #LessWaste campaign and how these religious texts are interpreted and applied through community-based education. Consequently, this research aims to explore how the YukNgaji community understands and integrates Islamic teachings to enhance ecological awareness among its members.

## Method

This study employs a qualitative approach, integrating community-based education theory with Dewey's internalization theory (Harfitt & Chow, 2020), as well as the educational philosophies of Tagore and Lickona. Additionally, it adopts virtual ethnography to analyze the #LessWaste campaign within the YukNgaji community. While community-based education critically examines social participation and engagement, virtual ethnography enables an in-depth exploration of social phenomena in digital environments, providing insights into interaction patterns, identity construction, and participatory dynamics within online communities. These methods were chosen due to YukNgaji's integration of digital activism with real-world actions, which facilitates the dissemination of Islamic eco-theological messages beyond mere online communication and mobilization. This research specifically investigates how Islamic eco-theological values are communicated, internalized, and practiced within a community-based education framework through social media interactions and offline activities.

As outlined by (Boellstorff et al., 2012), virtual ethnography involves participatory observation in digital spaces, interviews with community members, and analysis of textual and multimedia content produced within online ecosystems. For this study, data collection included systematic observation of YukNgaji's official Instagram account, focusing on comment interactions, content

dissemination of the #LessWaste campaign, and the digital community's response. Additionally, discussions within YukNgaji's online groups—primary platforms for organizing offline activities and reinforcing campaign values—were analyzed to understand how digital discourse influences real-world engagement.

To strengthen methodological rigor, the study details the number of participants involved, the duration of digital ethnographic observation, and the criteria used for selecting key informants. Participant selection focused on active contributors within YukNgaji's online platforms, including campaign organizers, digital content creators, and engaged followers who demonstrate consistent participation in environmental initiatives. The duration of virtual ethnographic observation spanned six months, allowing for the identification of patterns in digital engagement, message dissemination, and behavioral shifts among members.

The methodology also incorporates the concept of *hybrid activism*, which bridges online and offline social mobilization (Ng & Carley, 2022). YukNgaji's #LessWaste campaign exemplifies how social media functions not only as a platform for awareness but also as an organizational tool for tangible environmental initiatives, such as waste charity programs, environmental-themed studies, and mosque-based waste reduction efforts. By leveraging interactive social media features, the community fosters sustained participation and cultivates strong emotional connections among members, enhancing the effectiveness of their eco-theological messaging.

Furthermore, virtual ethnography provides a framework for understanding how Islamic environmental teachings are contextualized in digital spaces and how the concept of *khalifah fil ardh* (stewardship of the earth) underpins this eco-theological campaign. By analyzing YukNgaji's communication strategies and social media content, this study identifies *da'wah* methodologies that promote environmental consciousness among young Muslims. Narrative analysis of campaign materials, such as the *Guardians of the Earth* comic series and digital posters, reveals how Islamic eco-theological representations are constructed in accessible and engaging formats for target audiences.

The data analysis process follows a systematic thematic approach, categorizing digital ethnographic data into key themes related to eco-theological discourse, social engagement, and behavioral adaptation. Coding and thematic analysis were employed to identify recurring motifs in digital discussions, visual materials, and community interactions. This structured approach ensures that the study provides a nuanced understanding of how religious teachings influence environmental behavior.

Aligned with virtual ethnography principles, this research emphasizes active engagement within the digital community to gain a comprehensive understanding of YukNgaji members' experiences and perceptions of the #LessWaste campaign. Beyond observation and media analysis, this approach offers broader insights into how modern Muslim communities interpret and implement eco-theological principles in the digital age, demonstrating the intersection of faith, environmental responsibility, and digital activism.

## Results and Discussion

### Islamic Ecotheology Discourse

Ecology is generally defined as the science that studies the reciprocal relationship between living beings and their environment. Over time, ecological approaches have often been structural and tend to be anthropocentric, positioning humans as the center and primary purpose of nature's existence. This perspective leads to the assumption that nature is merely created to serve human needs, ultimately paving the way for environmental exploitation and destruction without considering ecological balance. In response to this paradigm, the discourse of ecotheology emerged, aiming to view nature more fairly—not only as an object for human use but also as an entity with rights to be protected and preserved. Ecotheology emphasizes that humans have a moral and spiritual responsibility to care for nature as part of their devotion to God (Sholihin, 2025).

According to Fazlur Rahman, the awareness that nature is God's creation given to humans not merely as a resource but also as a place to live, a means of worship, and a field of good deeds in preparation for the afterlife, is part of piety (Firas et al., 2024). In the perspective of Islamic ecotheology, preserving nature is not only an ecological responsibility but also a form of spiritual obedience. Humans are expected not only to utilize nature but also to care for it as a trust from God, in line with the principle of *khalifah fil ardh* (stewardship of the earth) inherent in humanity.

The narrative of ecotheology in Islam generally refers to verses that emphasize human responsibility towards nature. The verse about humans as *khalifah* on earth (QS. Al-Baqarah: 30) is often cited to affirm the role of humans as responsible managers of the ecosystem. Additionally, the prohibition against damaging nature (QS. Al-A'raf: 56) and the warning that corruption on land and sea is due to human actions (QS. Ar-Rum: 41) provide strong theological foundations for building ecological awareness. The Qur'an also emphasizes the principle of balance by commanding not to be excessive in utilizing natural resources (QS. Al-An'am: 141). This verse lays the foundation for the concept of sustainability and wise resource management to avoid disrupting the balance that Allah has established in the universe (Andi Eki Dwi Wahyuni et al., 2024; Said et al., 2023).

Among the collections of hadiths often used as references in eco-theological campaigns are those emphasizing cleanliness, sustainability, and environmental care. One frequently quoted hadith is "*Purity is part of faith*", a narration from Muslim that emphasizes cleanliness—both physical and environmental—as a fundamental aspect of Islamic teachings (Annaisaburi, 2006). Additionally, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) reminded not to waste water, even when performing ablution by a flowing river, reflecting the principle of resource conservation (Majah, 2020). Another relevant hadith encourages planting trees as part of *sadaqah jariyah* (ongoing charity). The Prophet (pbuh) said: "*Whenever a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and a human, animal, or bird eats from it, it is regarded as a charity for him*" (Khalik & Ansari, 2021). This hadith not only highlights the ecological benefits of greening but also links it to sustainable spiritual values. Conversely, Islam also prohibits destructive actions towards nature, such as the hadith forbidding the arbitrary cutting of trees, particularly in the context of war (Hanbal, 2001). These hadiths serve as the foundation for various eco-theological campaigns that advocate for a balance between the



utilization and preservation of the environment from an Islamic perspective (Kholis & Aulassyahied, 2022).

In providing an eco-theological reinterpretation of these texts, Muslim scholars do not adhere to a uniform approach. Some apply the *ma'ānī al-ḥadīṣ* approach, focusing on the meaning of hadiths within their historical and linguistic contexts (Akmaluddin, 2017). Others adopt *fiqh al-maqāṣid*, examining the texts through the lens of the objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid syarī'ah*), positioning environmental issues within Islam's primary mission to preserve the public good (*maslahah*) (Rahman & Mutakin, 2023). There are also those who employ Fazlur Rahman's double-movement approach, tracing the historical context of hadiths and then expanding them into universal principles applicable in modern contexts (Firas et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the interconnective approach typical of UIN Sunan Kalijaga attempts to bridge theological, sociological, and scientific perspectives in understanding religious texts related to ecology (Kholis & Aulassyahied, 2022).

Despite the diverse methods used, all of these approaches share a common goal: to cultivate environmental awareness within the framework of Islamic spirituality. When traced systematically, this awareness begins with *tawḥīd* (monotheism), the belief that both humans and nature are creations of God that submit to His laws. From this *tawḥīd*-based consciousness emerges an understanding of the *khilāfah* (stewardship) duty, wherein humans are entrusted as caretakers and guardians of the earth. This stewardship necessitates the principles of *amānah* (trustworthiness) and *'adālah* (justice), requiring humans not to exploit natural resources arbitrarily (Interview with Muhammad Islamil, November 17, 2024). Ultimately, all of this leads to the principle of *mīzān* (balance), which is the awareness that every human action towards the environment will be held accountable, even the most trivial forms of exploitation.

Thus, Islamic eco-theology not only offers a moral perspective on environmental issues but also provides a strong theological foundation for tangible actions in maintaining ecological balance. These principles become particularly relevant when applied within community-based social movements, integrating environmental awareness into everyday religious practices. One such community embodying this spirit is *YukNgaji*, a da'wah movement that combines online collectivism and offline activism to cultivate an Islamic lifestyle among urban youth (Interview with Irfan Arham, 15 December, 2024). To understand how eco-theological campaigns are implemented within this community, it is essential first to explore their background, vision, and da'wah strategies.

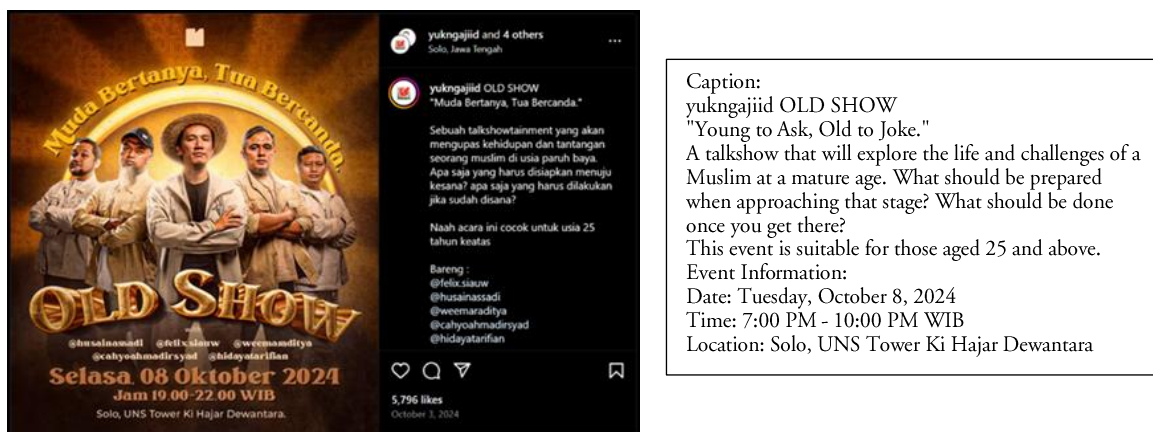
### ***YukNgaji* Community: Community-based Education in the Era of Digitalization**

According to Andre Moewashi's research (2023), the *YukNgaji* community is perceived as a strategic initiative by exponents of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) following the organization's dissolution by the Indonesian government through Government Regulation in Lieu of Law (Perppu) No. 2 of 2017. However, this perspective remains contested. Interviews with Nindie Hanjarsari (a central board member of *YukNgaji*) and Annisa Mujadilah (a community member) clarified that the community predates HTI's official disbandment, having been established in 2015. Founded by figures previously affiliated with HTI, such as Felix Siau and Hussain Assadi, *YukNgaji* capitalized on the *hijrah* (religious revival) trend among urban youth as a platform for

*dakwah* (Islamic proselytization). Its primary focus is promoting an Islamic lifestyle through engaging social media content and offline activities, deliberately avoiding explicit references to the caliphate agenda. This approach successfully resonated with young audiences drawn to its message of personal and spiritual transformation (Haq, 2023).

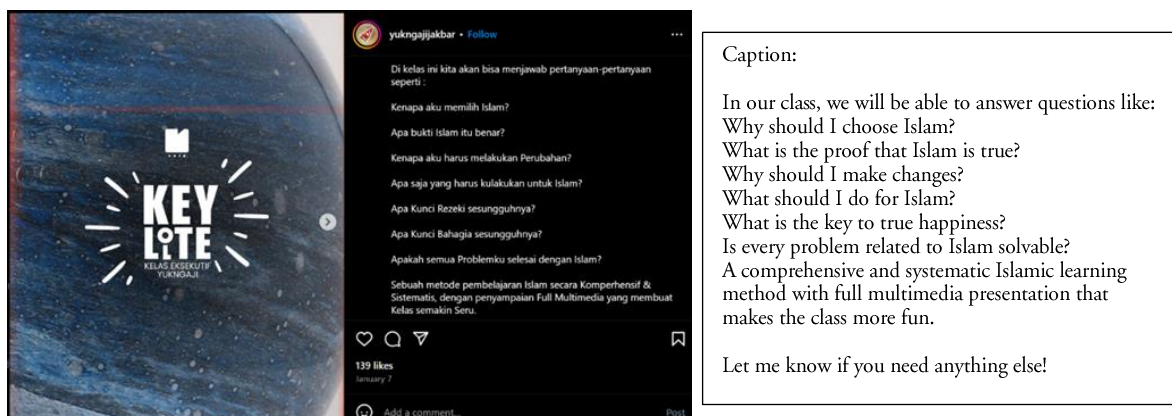
The methodological and ideological roots of the YukNgaji community cannot be entirely disentangled from HTI's influence. While the community does not overtly associate itself with HTI, its *dakwah* strategies—such as *halaqah* (study circles) and individualized mentoring—mirror HTI's operational patterns. Furthermore, the community's emphasis on gradual Islamic personality development, which in some cases aligns with broader support for Islamic leadership concepts, suggests YukNgaji has adapted to government regulations while maintaining its ideological vision in a more flexible and publicly acceptable format (Aswar, 2022).

Beyond its *halaqah*-based educational strategies and mentoring programs, YukNgaji's approach is also shaped by the phenomenon of popular Islam or Islamic pop culture. By packaging Islamic values in accessible and relatable formats for urban youth (community-based education), the group cultivates a relaxed, inclusive, and youth-friendly image distinct from conventional *dakwah* methods perceived as formal and exclusionary.



(Source: Instagram @yukngajiid, 2024)

Figure 1. Digital poster by YukNgaji promoting a religious study session



(Source: Instagram @yukngajikbar, 2024)

Figure 2. YukNgaji Offline Mentoring Program

A defining feature of YukNgaji is its *clicktivism*—a form of digital activism leveraging visual appeal and social media engagement (see figure 1 and 2). Their digital posters for study sessions, designed with vibrant graphics and attention-grabbing titles, frame religious gatherings as trendy lifestyle events rather than rigid religious forums (Interview with Nur Aini, January 21, 2025). Their video content further exemplifies adaptability to trends, incorporating contemporary issues, films, music, memes, and viral phenomena to ensure relevance and freshness (Abzar Duraesa & Ahyar, 2021).

With high-quality content tailored to young audiences, YukNgaji's clicktivism has achieved significant traction. Its social media following—840,000 Instagram followers and 565,000 YouTube subscribers as of 2024—far surpasses other youth-oriented *dakwah* movements. Hashtags like #lesswaste, promoted as part of their environmental campaigns, frequently trend on social media, demonstrating their content's shareability and algorithmic optimization (Interview with Annisa Mujadilah, February 9, 2025).

Beyond digital activism, YukNgaji extends its influence offline through initiatives such as disaster relief fundraising, participation in solidarity actions for the Israel-Palestine conflict, and intensive *hijrah* mentoring programs (Interview with Amir Salim, December 19, 2024).

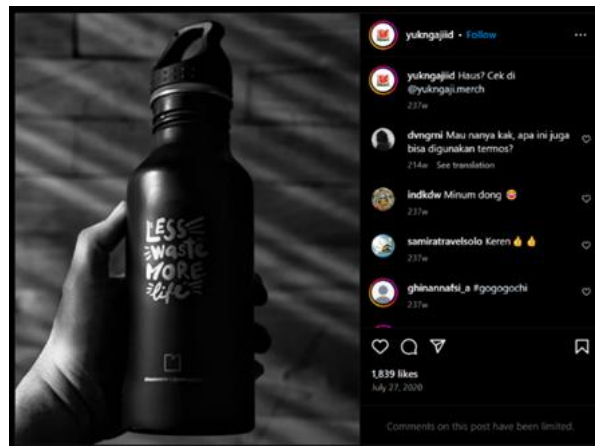
Moreover, one of the significant campaigns highlighted in this journal is the green movement #lesswaste, which promotes environmental awareness within the framework of Islamic values. Mass mobilization in these initiatives is notably effective because the YukNgaji community has branches in various regions, each managed by local youth (Rohman et al., 2023; Salagi, 2023; Sopian, 2020). With this decentralized model, each area can adapt strategies and activities according to its local character, allowing the movement not only to achieve broad reach but also to become more grounded and easily accepted by surrounding communities.

With its combination of digital strategy and real-world action, the YukNgaji community can be categorized as a form of hybrid activism—a movement that is not only active on social media through clicktivism but also demonstrates strong mobilization power in the real world. They leverage digital algorithms to build a solid online community while simultaneously driving concrete social, educational, and environmental actions. This model enables their da'wah to go beyond mere virtual virality, creating tangible impacts in society and establishing YukNgaji as an example of contemporary da'wah that is both adaptive and relevant.

### The #LessWaste Campaign by the YukNgaji Community-based education

Based on an interview with one of YukNgaji's administrators, the slogan "Less Waste, More Life," which means "fewer waste, more life," was popularized by the community from late 2019 to early 2020. This campaign stemmed from YukNgaji's desire to demonstrate that Islamic movements are not solely focused on religious aspects but also have tangible social impacts. The informant added that, at the time, environmental issues were gaining significant attention among activists, with many figures and environmental movements starting to rise (Interview with Irfan Arham, 15 December, 2024). YukNgaji leveraged this momentum according to their "riding the wave" strategy, consistently aligning their messages with current issues to ensure broader acceptance of their da'wah (Islamic outreach).

The movement draws from Islamic teachings that promote balance and responsibility towards the earth as a trust from God. Through various studies and community activities, YukNgaji encouraged its members to reduce single-use plastics, utilize recycled items, and adopt a more eco-friendly lifestyle (Interview with Amir Salim, February 25, 2025). The slogan was eventually shortened to the hashtag #LessWaste, which became the movement's main identity across digital platforms and offline activities. This hashtag was also immortalized in YukNgaji's official merchandise as a means to strengthen branding and expand the reach of their campaign, see figure 3.



(Source: Instagram @yukngajiid, 2020)

**Figure 3.** Drinking tumbler with the YukNgaji logo and the LessWaste slogan

In promoting the #LessWaste movement, YukNgaji maintained its pop-out and relatable preaching style for young audiences. The campaign was presented in various content formats, such as digital posters, short videos, webinars, and offline activities that were massively promoted through social media. The uniqueness of this strategy was further strengthened by collaborations with popular preachers like Hanan Attaki, Oemar Mita, Abdul Somad, and Felix Siau. The presence of these four figures not only expanded the campaign's reach but also reinforced its message, considering each has a dedicated and loyal follower base (Interview with Amir Salim, February 25, 2025). They became symbols of the #LessWaste movement, which then evolved into the broader #BarisanBangunNegeri campaign, indicating that the environmental spirit promoted by the initiative extended beyond ecological issues to social activities, such as social donations, distribution of basic necessities, and fundraising and charity for marginalized Muslim communities.

The effectiveness of this campaign is evident from its tangible impact on the ground. Collaboration with several mosques led to the "Less Waste Mosque" initiative, where participating mosques function as waste banks. Through this concept, the surrounding community can donate recyclable household waste, such as plastic bottles and cardboard. Instead of passively waiting for mosques to show interest, the YukNgaji community also actively offers to conduct cleaning activities at the mosques, fostering closer interaction with the local community, see figure 4.

In addition to on-the-ground actions, documenting activities with proper equipment serves as a distinct strategy to capture the attention of digital audiences. High-quality photos and videos shared on social media effectively boost engagement, transforming the campaign from merely a

social movement into a phenomenon that gains wide attention on digital platforms. Consequently, this strategy is effective in reaching audiences, promoting behavioral change among urban Muslims, and establishing YukNgaji's image as a community that concretely integrates Islamic values with environmental awareness.



(Source: Instagram @yukngajiid, 2020)

Figure 4. The #LessWaste Campaign Supported by Public Figures Outside the YukNgaji Community

### Scriptural Principles Supporting the #LessWaste Campaign by YukNgaji

To summarize this point, the researcher used two primary sources as references. First, interviews with three informants, namely two central administrators of YukNgaji who understand the ins and outs of the #LessWaste campaign and a YukNgaji member from West Jakarta who participated in various community activities. Second, observations of various posts on the official @yukngajiid page, which serves as the main portal for highlighting campaign activities in various regional branches. Additionally, the researcher also found an educational comic titled *Guardians of the Earth* (Pelindung Bumi) volumes 1 and 2, published in 2021 by Al-Fatih Press, YukNgaji's internal publisher. According to the official statement on Al-Fatih Press's page, this comic tells the spirit of #LessWaste in the effort to save the earth, written by Felix Siauw and illustrated by YukNgaji's internal artist team with the Instagram account @myodauz. After accessing both volumes, the researcher found that the narrative in this comic aligns with the eco-theological theme promoted by YukNgaji, complete with quotes from verses and hadiths that support their environmental campaign messages.

What is interesting to note is the absence of direct quotes from verses or hadiths in the content of Instagram @yukngajiid. Most of the video and photo uploads focus more on the content hook that highlights the essence of activities, social impact, and activity documentation, without explicitly including religious texts. Likewise, in the captions, the researcher found that the narratives used tend to be factual, describing real actions without directly including religious references. It is possible that these narratives are interpretations or understandings of certain verses and hadiths but are packaged in a more practical and easily understood form. Additionally, some captions only contain invitations or mentions from YukNgaji's central management to regional branches to participate in the same program, showing a more dynamic communication pattern compared to a normative or textual approach.



This narrative demonstrates that although there are no explicit quotations of Quranic verses or hadiths, Islamic values remain the primary foundation of the conveyed message. The main focus of this post is to build a collective awareness among Muslims about their role in protecting the environment, in line with the concept of Islam as a religion of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (mercy to all worlds). Indirectly, this content can be associated with Islamic teachings on human responsibility as *khalifah* (steward) on earth (QS. Al-Baqarah: 30) and the command to avoid corruption on earth (QS. Al-A'raf: 56). Thus, YukNgaji's approach to delivering Islamic moral messages prioritizes social narratives and participatory calls to action, which can be categorized as a form of *Living Qur'an* in an ecological context.

The researcher then confirmed the interpretation of these verses with three informants from the YukNgaji community, consisting of two administrators and one member. All three agreed that the concept of humans as stewards on earth is indeed one of the fundamental principles in the #LessWaste campaign they run. One of the administrators, emphasized that the human role as a *khalifah* not only means managing the earth but also includes the dimension of servitude to God and service to the environment as fellow creations of God (interview with Nindie Hanjarsari, January 12, 2025). This perspective shows that YukNgaji's environmental movement is not only pragmatic but also has a strong theological foundation in Islamic teachings.

The researcher concludes that the absence of direct quotations of sacred texts in YukNgaji's social media content is due to two main factors related to communication strategy and audience characteristics. First, YukNgaji prioritizes practicality in presenting messages through concise and easily understood content. This approach is based on considerations of communication effectiveness on social media, where studies show that user attention spans are becoming shorter. Therefore, a direct and practical delivery is considered more effective in capturing the audience's attention and ensuring the message is well received.

In addition, this strategy also aims to reach a broader segment, especially young people who do not yet have a strong attachment to Islamic studies. One of the informants in this study, explained that the approach without explicit Quranic verses and hadith quotations is actually an attraction for YukNgaji's target audience (Interview with Annisa Mujadilah, February 9, 2025). She stated, "What makes YukNgaji's posts interesting is precisely because there are no verses or hadiths. The target audience is people or young individuals who are not yet engaged in Islamic studies. If there were religious references from the start, it would feel too segmented. Later, when they attend the events, that's when the verses and hadiths are presented by the ustadz or speakers."

Thus, the absence of sacred text quotations does not imply a disregard for religious evidence but is rather part of a more inclusive and gradual communication strategy in delivering the message of community-based education.

Secondly, the verse about humanity's role as stewards (*khalifah*) on earth is already a familiar concept to YukNgaji's target audience, particularly those who have previously participated in *halaqah* or Islamic study circles. This familiarity is linked to YukNgaji's methodological roots, which have a historical connection to the *dakwah* (preaching) of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI). In HTI's preaching tradition, the concept of *khilafah* (caliphate) is understood as a transnational Muslim leadership and forms a foundational teaching in their *halaqah* sessions (Hayati, 2017). This perspective aligns with the thought of Taqiyyuddin an-Nabhani, the founder of Hizb at-Tahrir

globally, who emphasized the urgency of establishing a *khilafah* as the ideal Islamic governance system (Juhari & Malikah, 2021; Setia, 2021).

Therefore, YukNgaji's decision not to always quote sacred texts directly in the #LessWaste campaign reflects a communication strategy that considers both message effectiveness and the audience's background understanding. Rather than focusing on explicit religious evidence, they adopt a more practical and applicable approach to encourage active participation in the environmental conservation movement. However, this does not negate the emphasis and direct citation of green campaign religious texts in more clandestine settings, such as *halaqah*. In these more closed and exclusive study sessions, eco-theological concepts are often elaborated with direct references to Quranic verses and hadith that affirm human responsibility as stewards of the earth.

This is reflected in the responses of the informants, who affirmed that theological understanding of environmental conservation is an integral part of *halaqah* discussions. They revealed that in these forums, Quranic and hadith evidence is not only presented textually but also contextualized into everyday life, especially in practicing a low-waste lifestyle (#LessWaste). Thus, while YukNgaji's social media strategy focuses on practical and applicative approaches, within the scope of *halaqah*, sacred text-based arguments remain a fundamental basis for fostering faith-based environmental awareness.

In addition to *halaqah*, eco-theological narratives are also present in other media produced by YukNgaji, such as the comic *Guardians of the Earth*. According to information obtained from Annisa Mujadilah, this comic is one of the educational tools promoting the #LessWaste spirit. Unlike Instagram posts or YouTube videos that are freely accessible, this comic is not a standard issue handbook within the YukNgaji community. However, this does not diminish its relevance to the environmental conservation values being promoted.

*Guardians of the Earth* depicts the journey of Felix Siauw and his family on a road trip. Throughout the journey, they encounter various phenomena that serve as starting points for discussing Islamic values (Siauw & Myodauz, 2021). The comic not only highlights eco-theological aspects, such as the importance of proper waste disposal, reducing plastic use, and water conservation, but also covers other aspects of Islamic life, such as worship practices, halal food laws, and issues surrounding Baitul Maqdis. The delivery of these values tends to follow a hierarchical structure, where Felix Siauw, as the father, plays an authoritative role in advising his children. Through this narrative approach, *Guardians of the Earth* serves as a medium that internalizes Islamic teachings gradually and contextually, including in terms of environmental awareness.

The eco-theological message in this comic is also reinforced by direct references to sacred texts. One of the verses quoted is QS. Al-An'am [6]:165:

"And it is He who has made you successors upon the earth and has raised some of you above others in degrees [of rank], to test you through what He has given you..."

This explicit use of religious texts underscores the theological foundation of YukNgaji's environmental campaign, offering a more direct approach compared to their social media content, where the delivery is often more subtle and adapted to the general public.

Additionally, the comic also cites QS. Ar-Rum [30]:41:

"Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness]."

This verse is often associated with the impact of excessive exploitation of nature, leading to environmental crises such as pollution and climate change. By including this verse, *Guardians of the Earth* aims to instill an understanding that environmental damage is not merely a natural phenomenon but also a consequence of irresponsible human actions.

In addition to Qur'anic verses, the comic also features a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad that emphasizes the importance of human contribution to environmental preservation: "If a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and a bird, person, or animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift (*sadaqah*) for him."

This hadith provides a moral incentive for Muslims to engage in reforestation and nature conservation. By planting a tree, one not only helps maintain environmental balance but also earns ongoing rewards (*pahala jariyah*).

### Living Qur'an-Hadith: Actualization of Eco-Theological Values by the YukNgaji Community

Based on interviews with informants, there are three main practices in the #LessWaste campaign by the YukNgaji community that have high retention and are still ongoing among regular attendees of the study sessions. These practices not only become habits but also reflect the actualization of Islamic teachings in everyday life regarding environmental awareness.

#### Trash Charity (*Sedekah Sampah*)

The trash charity program is one of the long-standing initiatives still running at Al-Hakim Mosque in BSD, which previously collaborated with YukNgaji in 2020 to transform the mosque into a more eco-friendly place of worship, see figure 5. Currently, the program is independently managed by the Mosque Prosperity Council (DKM) with a flexible trash collection schedule to accommodate the local community (Interview with Nindie Hanjasari, January 12, 2025). This practice not only educates congregants on waste sorting and reduction but also internalizes the concept of charity in a broader sense—not merely through material or financial contributions but also by contributing to environmental cleanliness and sustainability.

#### Study Session Water Tumbler

During a visit to the YukNgaji Headquarters in Bogor, the researcher observed that every attendee brought their own water tumbler to the study sessions. At the venue, a water dispenser was provided, allowing participants to refill their drinks without needing single-use plastic bottles. This culture of bringing a tumbler has persisted due to several factors, including easy access to drinking water and the availability of official YukNgaji merchandise in the form of community-branded tumblers. By owning a YukNgaji-branded tumbler, attendees not only feel more connected to the community but also incorporate this habit into their personal identity.



## Decluttering: Organizing and Letting Go of Unnecessary Items

One of the community members introduced the concept of *decluttering* within the context of the #LessWaste movement at YukNgaji. This concept involves organizing and removing items that are no longer needed at home, either by selling pre-loved goods that are still in good condition or by donating them to those in need (Interview with Muhammad Islamil, November 17, 2024). Annisa Mujadilah added that this practice is rooted in the Islamic principle of *hisab* (accountability), which emphasizes that the more possessions a person has, the longer and more burdensome their reckoning will be in the afterlife. Thus, decluttering is not merely seen as an act of minimalism or material management but also as a form of spiritual reflection on one's responsibility towards their belongings.

These three practices demonstrate that YukNgaji's #LessWaste initiative is not merely a temporary trend but has become an integral part of the daily lives of its congregation as an expression of an Islamic lifestyle. By blending eco-theological values with tangible practices, this community shows that Islamic teachings on balance and responsibility towards nature can be implemented in simple yet sustainable ways.

## Beyond Green Campaign: Long-Term Strategy in the YukNgaji Movement

Although the #LessWaste campaign initiated by the YukNgaji community appears to be an independent eco-theological movement focused on environmental issues, there are indications that this initiative is part of a larger long-term strategy. This strategy seems to be aimed at maintaining and expanding the influence of Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) ideology through non-conventional approaches. Instead of directly promoting the caliphate narrative, the community utilizes popular themes among young people, such as environmental issues, to build an inclusive image that aligns with current trends.

The decision to highlight environmental campaigns as part of YukNgaji's programs is not merely a response to the rising ecological discourse but also reflects the movement's adaptation to the socio-political landscape following HTI's disbandment. Given the increasingly limited formal preaching space for HTI, the #LessWaste movement serves as a safe and effective medium to maintain public presence without appearing overly HTI-centric. Thus, this campaign is not just an invitation to adopt an eco-friendly lifestyle but also part of a broader masterplan to sustain the existence and influence of the caliphate ideology in a more flexible and publicly accepted format.

At this point, it is crucial to examine whether the fragmentation of the caliphate spirit within the YukNgaji community remains persistent or is still ongoing. The seemingly neutral and socially-based campaign could be a way to implicitly convey the message that "we are not always talking about the caliphate." However, behind the environmental narrative, there remains a thread connecting the community's activities with the idea that the fundamental solution to various issues—including environmental concerns—is the establishment of ideal Islamic leadership. This principle aligns with HTI's doctrine that systemic change can only occur if leadership changes on a larger scale, specifically through the caliphate.

Moreover, YukNgaji's preference for always being viral and aligning with social media trends indicates a strategic communication pattern. It is not merely about gaining popularity but also about ensuring their da'wah (preaching) message reaches a broader audience. This is where the

riding the wave approach plays a crucial role. By adopting popular issues, YukNgaji not only aims to attract young audiences but also subtly guides them toward a bigger vision of Islamic leadership. As highlighted by some informants, the #LessWaste activities are not just about ecology but also about who delivers the message and how it is positioned within a larger, more strategic narrative.

## Conclusion

This study highlights the contributions of the YukNgaji community in developing community-based education that integrates Islamic teachings with ecological awareness through the #LessWaste campaign. This movement demonstrates how Islamic values, such as the concepts of *khalifah fil ardh* (human stewardship of the Earth), *amanah* (responsibility), and *mizan* (balance), can be applied in daily practices to promote sustainable behavior. The integration of digital da'wah strategies and on-ground community activities enables this movement to reach a broad audience, particularly Muslim youth who are familiar with social media. Thus, YukNgaji serves not only as a platform for religious learning but also as an adaptive social transformation platform that remains relevant to contemporary challenges.

The long-term impact of this movement holds potential for expanding its influence to broader communities by tailoring campaign approaches to diverse social and cultural contexts. The hybrid activism model, which combines digital strategies and direct engagement, creates opportunities for other Muslim communities to replicate similar concepts in social, educational, and environmental domains. Furthermore, the sustainability of this movement could be strengthened through strategic partnerships with religious institutions, educational organizations, and environmental groups to broaden the scope and effectiveness of campaigns.

The unique contribution of this research lies in its exploration of how community-based education within an Islamic context can serve as a dynamic tool for social change through ecotheological approaches and digital activism. However, the study has limitations in its sample scope and focus on the YukNgaji community without comparative analysis with similar movements. Therefore, further research is recommended to explore how analogous models might be implemented in Muslim communities with differing cultural or structural backgrounds. Additionally, future studies could deepen the analysis of the long-term effectiveness of internalizing ecological values in daily religious practices.

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