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Interreligious Ecotheology for Islamic Religious Education: A Comparative-Hermeneutical Study of Nasr, Al-Qaradawi, Boff, and Pope Francis

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study examines convergent ecological principles in Islamic and Catholic theological thought and explores their conceptual implications for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) in Indonesia. **Methods**:This qualitative library research employs a comparative-hermeneutical approach to selected works by Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Leonardo Boff, and Pope Francis, supported by relevant academic literature and theological references. **Findings**: The analysis identifies five areas of qualified convergence: the value of nature beyond instrumental use, human responsibility, the moral and social dimensions of ecological degradation, ethical limits on exploitation, and socio-ecological justice. However, the four thinkers differ in their theological foundations and emphasis, particularly in addressing social injustice. These principles are synthesized into four educational orientations for PAI: theological grounding, ecological morality, contextual pedagogy, and interreligious praxis. **Research Implications**: The proposed framework provides a conceptual reference for integrating ecological responsibility into PAI objectives, learning materials, and pedagogical practices while maintaining Islamic doctrinal foundations. Its applicability and educational effects require expert validation and empirical investigation. **Originality**: This study advances Islamic environmental education scholarship by connecting comparative Islamic–Catholic ecotheological analysis with a structured educational framework that links theological principles to pedagogical orientations without equating distinct religious doctrines.

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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary ecological crisis has become one of the most urgent challenges facing humanity. Climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, water pollution, and the excessive extraction of natural resources increasingly affect public health, economic security, social stability, and the future of coming generations. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change emphasizes that climate-related risks are intensifying and that effective responses require not only technological innovation but also changes in institutions, social practices, and patterns of development (Change, 2023). This broader diagnosis is important because environmental destruction cannot be reduced to a technical malfunction. It also reflects human choices, dominant models of consumption, and ways of interpreting the relationship between humanity and the natural world. The ecological crisis therefore demands scientific, political, ethical, spiritual, and educational responses.

Religious traditions can contribute to this multidimensional response because they shape moral imagination, communal practices, and understandings of human responsibility. Within Islam and Catholicism, nature is not merely raw material for unrestricted human use, but creation entrusted by God. The Qur'an presents human beings as *khalifah*, prohibits *fasad* on the earth, and condemns *israf*, while the biblical tradition describes humanity as called to cultivate and preserve creation. These teachings suggest that ecological care belongs to religious responsibility rather than standing outside it. Recent research likewise indicates that environmental commitment among religious communities becomes meaningful when theological convictions are translated into ethical interpretation, institutional support, and concrete practices (Daw, Girardi, & Riva, 2023; Yoo & Kim, 2023). Religion may therefore provide not only abstract values, but also narratives and communities capable of forming ecological responsibility.

This theological engagement has contributed to the development of ecotheology, which examines the relationship among God, human beings, and nature in response to ecological degradation. Ecotheology emerged partly from criticism of interpretations that placed humanity above the rest of creation and treated dominion as permission for unlimited exploitation (White, 1967). In the Islamic intellectual tradition, Seyyed Hossein Nasr argues that modern environmental destruction is rooted in the desacralization of nature and the loss of a spiritual vision of the cosmos. Modernity, in his analysis, reduces nature to measurable matter and economic resources, separating scientific knowledge from metaphysical meaning (Nasr, 1968, 1989, 1996). Recent Indonesian scholarship continues to identify Nasr's critique of anthropocentrism and desacralization as relevant for religious responses to ecological crisis (Wasil & Muizudin, 2023).

Yusuf al-Qaradawi develops a distinct Islamic approach grounded in religious ethics and Islamic law. His ecological thought connects environmental protection with *khalifah*, *amanah*, *maslahah*, moderation, and the prohibition of *fasad* and *israf*. Whereas Nasr emphasizes metaphysical and spiritual reconstruction, al-Qaradawi translates ecological responsibility into moral duties and legal-ethical principles governing the use of natural resources (Al-Qaradawi & Research Managment Centre, 2022). This distinction is significant because Islamic ecotheology cannot be reduced to a single conceptual language. Nasr highlights the sacred order of the cosmos, while al-Qaradawi stresses accountable human action within the normative framework of Islam. Together, they show that the ecological crisis concerns both worldview and conduct.

Catholic ecological thought also offers complementary perspectives. Leonardo Boff interprets ecological destruction as part of a wider civilizational crisis involving poverty, inequality, and the fragmentation of the community of life. His connection between the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor places environmental suffering within structures of social injustice and presents care as a foundational ethical category (Boff, 1995; Boff & Berryman, 1997). Pope Francis develops a related, though not identical, vision through integral ecology in *Laudato Si'*. He criticizes the technocratic paradigm, consumerism, and the culture of waste, while insisting that environmental, social, economic, and spiritual problems are inseparable (Francis, 2015). Contemporary studies show that integral ecology is increasingly being translated into educational strategies, institutional planning, and the formation of ecological attitudes in Catholic settings (Palos Rey & Diez Bosch, 2024; Sánchez-Camacho & Villegas Moreno, 2024).

These Islamic and Catholic perspectives use different theological vocabularies, but they challenge the same reduction of nature to an object of possession. Nasr speaks of the sacred cosmos; al-Qaradawi emphasizes *khalifah*, *amanah*, and moral limitation; Boff describes the earth as a community of life; and Francis speaks of the common home and integral ecology. Their approaches should not be treated as identical, because each emerges from a particular theological tradition, intellectual genealogy, and normative structure. Nevertheless, their differences do not prevent meaningful comparison. Instead, they provide the basis for an interreligious ecotheology that respects doctrinal boundaries while identifying shared ecological responsibilities.

The educational significance of this dialogue is particularly important for Islamic Religious Education, or *Pendidikan Agama Islam* (PAI). PAI is not limited to the cognitive transmission of doctrines. It also aims to form faith, moral character, social responsibility, and patterns of action. Ecological responsibility can therefore be integrated into *akidah*, *akhlak*, Qur'anic interpretation, Islamic jurisprudence, worship, and character education. Such integration would allow environmental care to be understood not as an additional secular topic, but as an expression of responsibility before God and creation. In this perspective, avoiding waste, protecting ecosystems, resisting destructive practices, and defending vulnerable communities become manifestations of religious character.

Recent studies in Indonesian Islamic education demonstrate growing interest in this direction. Karman et al. (2023) examine Qur'anic learning based on Islamic ecotheology and its relationship with environmental transformation and conservation practices in *pesantren* communities. Lutfauziah et al. (2023) focus on curriculum development grounded in Islamic environmental values, demonstrating how ecological education can be organized through learning outcomes, teaching materials, problem-based activities, and practical evaluation in Islamic boarding schools. At the school level, Prajoko and Humaedah (2024) and Ratnasari et al. (2025) highlight the role of routine activities, teacher example, school culture, and practical ecological programs in forming social and environmental care. Collectively, these studies demonstrate that Islamic educational institutions can translate ecological values into learning activities and institutional practices. However, their primary contributions concern educational implementation, curriculum integration, and environmental character formation rather than a systematic comparative examination of the theological foundations underlying these practices.

A related concern appears in research examining the position of environmental education within Islamic Religious and Character Education. Rohman et al. (2024) identify that environmental education remains stronger in the affective domain than in systematic cognitive integration, resulting in ecological themes being incorporated into existing learning materials without a sufficiently coherent ecotheological foundation. This limitation indicates that environmental practices and character formation need to be supported by a more integrated conceptual

understanding of the relationship between theology, human responsibility, and nature. The publication of *Ekoteologi: Mengamalkan Iman, Melestarikan Lingkungan* by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs further demonstrates the institutional relevance of connecting faith and environmental care in Indonesia (I, 2025). Similarly, Febrianingsih et al. (2025) examine ecotheology within the politics and policy of Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia, highlighting emerging environmental initiatives alongside persistent curricular and teacher-capacity challenges. While these contributions clarify the educational and institutional significance of ecotheology, they do not fully address how comparative theological perspectives can be synthesized into a conceptual orientation for PAI.

Research on Nasr and al-Qaradawi provides another important foundation for this study. Nasr's ecological thought emphasizes the spiritual crisis underlying environmental destruction, whereas al-Qaradawi's approach highlights religious obligations, moderation, and the ethical regulation of human interaction with nature. Wasil and Muizudin (2023), for example, demonstrate the continuing relevance of Nasr's criticism of anthropocentrism and the desacralization of nature in contemporary ecological discourse. These perspectives provide complementary resources for understanding Islamic environmental responsibility. Nevertheless, their different conceptual emphases also reveal the need to connect metaphysical ecological awareness with practical ethical obligations in religious education. In particular, the educational implications of placing these two approaches in conversation with ecological perspectives originating outside the Islamic tradition remain insufficiently elaborated in the literature considered in this study.

A comparable distinction can be identified in scholarship on Catholic ecotheology. Boff's ecological perspective emphasizes the relationship between environmental degradation, poverty, social inequality, and the ethics of care, whereas Pope Francis develops a more comprehensive framework through integral ecology, connecting environmental, social, economic, and spiritual dimensions (Boff, 1995; Boff & Berryman, 1997; Francis, 2015). Studies by Palos Rey and Diez Bosch (2024) and Sánchez-Camacho and Villegas Moreno (2024) illustrate the educational and institutional relevance of Catholic ecological thought. However, these contributions primarily examine the interpretation or application of Catholic ecological perspectives within their respective educational and institutional contexts. Their relationship with Islamic ecotheological concepts and the possible implications for Islamic Religious Education has not been sufficiently developed within the literature examined here.

The comparison of these previous studies reveals three related limitations. First, research on Islamic ecotheology and PAI has primarily emphasized curriculum implementation, environmental character formation, *pesantren* practices, and institutional policies. Although these studies provide important practical insights, they do not sufficiently establish a comparative theological foundation that connects ecological responsibility with different dimensions of Islamic thought. Second, scholarship on Nasr and al-Qaradawi provides important but distinct conceptual foundations, particularly concerning the spiritual significance of nature and the ethical responsibilities of human beings, without fully articulating their relationship with Catholic ecotheological perspectives. Third, studies of Boff and Pope Francis have developed significant insights into ecological justice, the community of life, and integral ecology, but their potential contribution to the conceptual orientation of Islamic Religious Education remains underexplored. Consequently, the unresolved issue is not simply the absence of studies discussing these four thinkers individually, but the lack of a sufficiently integrated comparative-hermeneutical analysis that identifies their theological differences, carefully examines their areas of convergence, and interprets their educational relevance within an Islamic framework.

Addressing this gap requires an interreligious perspective that does not assume doctrinal equivalence between Islam and Catholicism. Rather, it requires a comparative approach that distinguishes each thinker's theological position while examining the ecological responsibilities that can be brought into constructive dialogue. Such an approach is important because existing Islamic ecotheological discussions, although valuable in grounding environmental responsibility in Islamic teachings, may remain limited when ecological problems are examined exclusively through a single theological tradition. A carefully constructed interreligious comparison can broaden the ethical and social dimensions of ecological reflection without replacing the theological foundations of PAI or weakening its Islamic identity. In this way, interreligious engagement becomes a means of critical enrichment and educational reflection rather than theological assimilation.

The contribution of this study lies in developing a comparative-hermeneutical synthesis of the ecological thought of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Leonardo Boff, and Pope Francis and interpreting its relevance to Islamic Religious Education. Rather than proposing a new curriculum or claiming to establish a fully developed instructional model, the study identifies the distinctive theological emphases of the four thinkers, examines their convergent and divergent ecological principles, and formulates four conceptual orientations for PAI: theological grounding, ecological morality, contextual pedagogy, and interreligious praxis. These orientations provide an analytical connection between theological understanding, moral responsibility, educational reflection, and cooperation across religious boundaries. The concept of human beings as responsible moral subjects

serves as an interpretive axis connecting these dimensions, rather than as a claim that the four thinkers share an identical theological position. Accordingly, the originality of this study lies in the structured relationship it establishes between comparative ecotheological interpretation and the conceptual orientation of Islamic Religious Education.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the ecological thought of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Leonardo Boff, and Pope Francis; identify their principal theological convergences and differences; and formulate their conceptual implications for Islamic Religious Education in Indonesia. The study argues that human beings should not be understood as absolute owners of nature, but as moral subjects accountable before God, other human beings, future generations, and the wider community of creation. Human distinctiveness, from this perspective, does not legitimize domination but establishes responsibility. On this basis, interreligious ecotheology can contribute to a conceptual orientation for PAI that connects Islamic theological understanding with ecological responsibility, social sensitivity, contextual learning, and constructive cooperation across religious boundaries.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed qualitative library research using a comparative-hermeneutical approach. This approach was selected to examine and compare the ecological thought of four influential religious thinkers: Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Leonardo Boff, and Pope Francis. The study focused on their theological foundations, understandings of human responsibility toward nature, ecological ethics, and the relationship between environmental concerns and social responsibility. The comparative-hermeneutical approach enabled the researcher to interpret each thinker's ideas within their respective religious, philosophical, and intellectual contexts before identifying similarities, differences, and possible points of convergence.

The hermeneutical dimension was informed by Gadamer's (2004) understanding of interpretation as a process of engaging with texts and their historical contexts. Meanwhile, the comparative dimension was supported by the perspective of comparative theology, particularly Clooney's (2010) emphasis on learning across religious boundaries through careful engagement with the intellectual and theological traditions of other religions. Panikkar's (1999) concept of intrareligious dialogue also provided a conceptual foundation for understanding encounters between religious perspectives without eliminating their distinctive identities.

This research was conceptual rather than empirical. It did not involve field observations, interviews, classroom interventions, or the implementation of a developed curriculum. Instead, the implications for Islamic Religious Education (PAI) were formulated through an interpretive synthesis of the ecological perspectives of the four thinkers. Therefore, the educational orientations presented in this study represent conceptual contributions derived from comparative analysis rather than an empirically validated educational model.

Literature Search and Selection

The literature was identified through searches of scholarly journal publications, academic books, DOI-linked publications, institutional publications, and official religious documents. The search focused on literature discussing ecotheology, environmental ethics, interreligious perspectives, and the relationship between ecological awareness and religious education. The search employed combinations of English keywords, including *interreligious ecotheology*, *Islamic ecotheology*, *Islamic Religious Education*, *environmental ethics in Islam*, *Islamic environmental education*, *Seyyed Hossein Nasr and ecology*, *Yusuf al-Qaradawi and environmental conservation*, *Leonardo Boff and ecological theology*, and *Pope Francis and integral ecology*. Indonesian keywords included *ekoteologi Islam*, *pendidikan agama Islam dan lingkungan*, *etika lingkungan Islam*, and *pendidikan ekologi*.

The selected literature covered publications from 1967 to 2025. This range reflects the publication years of the foundational and contemporary works included in the study, rather than a claim that all literature was retrieved through a database search conducted during that entire period. Foundational publications were included because the research required direct engagement with the original ecological and theological arguments of the four thinkers. Contemporary publications were also examined to understand recent developments in ecotheological studies, interreligious ecological engagement, and the integration of environmental values into religious education.

The selection of literature was guided by four inclusion criteria. First, the source addressed the relationship between religion, human beings, and the natural environment. Second, it discussed ecological theology, environmental ethics, or environmental responsibility from Islamic or Christian perspectives. Third, it examined the ecological ideas of at least one of the four selected thinkers. Fourth, it discussed the relevance of ecological values to religious education, curriculum, or educational practice.

Sources were excluded when they were unrelated to the research questions, lacked identifiable scholarly or institutional credibility, or did not provide sufficient conceptual information for comparative analysis. The selected literature was subsequently classified into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources consisted of the

original works of Nasr, al-Qaradawi, Boff, and Pope Francis. Secondary sources included scholarly articles and academic publications discussing ecotheology, interreligious ecological perspectives, environmental education, and Islamic Religious Education.

Sources of Data

The primary data consisted of the principal works of the four thinkers. These sources were selected because they provide the main theological, philosophical, and ethical foundations for understanding their respective ecological perspectives. The primary sources and their analytical focuses are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Primary Sources and Analytical Focus

Thinker	Primary Sources	Analytical Focus
Seyyed Hossein Nasr	*The Encounter of Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* (1968); *Knowledge and the Sacred* (1989); *Religion and the Order of Nature* (1996).	The sacred character of nature, the spiritual crisis of modern humanity, desacralization, the relationship between human beings and nature, and the restoration of spiritual awareness in environmental ethics.
Yusuf al-Qaradawi	*Riʿāyat al-bīʾah fī sharīʿat al-Islām* (2001); *Conservation of the Environment in Islamic Law* (Al-Qaradawi & Research Managment Centre, 2022).	Human beings as khalifah, amanah, maslahah, environmental preservation as a religious responsibility, moderation, prevention of fasad, and the prohibition of israf.
Leonardo Boff	*Ecology & Liberation: A New Paradigm* (1995); *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor* (1997).	The relationship between ecological destruction and social injustice, ecological liberation, care for the Earth, poverty, and the interconnectedness of human and non-human life.
Pope Francis	*Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* (2015); *Laudate Deum: Apostolic Exhortation to All People of Good Will on the Climate Crisis* (2023).	Integral ecology, the technocratic paradigm, consumerism, ecological conversion, climate change, and collective responsibility for the common home.

Secondary sources included studies on Islamic ecotheology, religious environmental education, and contemporary Christian ecological thought. These included research by Karman et al. (2023), Lutfauziah et al. (2023), Rohman et al. (2024), Wasil and Muizudin (2023), Febrianingsih et al. (2025) , Albareda-Tiana et al. (2024), Daw et al. (2023), Kiem (2024), and Sánchez-Camacho and Villegas Moreno (2024). These publications were used to contextualize the primary texts and identify the relationship between previous ecotheological research and the conceptual contribution of the present study.

Relevant Qur'anic and biblical themes were also considered as supporting theological contexts. Qur'anic concepts concerning human stewardship, responsibility, balance, and environmental preservation were examined in relation to Islamic ecological thought, with reference to Shihab's (2002) *Tafsir Al-Mishbah*. These religious texts were used as contextual references rather than as an independent object of systematic scriptural exegesis.

Data Collection Technique

Data were collected through documentary analysis of the selected primary and secondary literature. The unit of analysis consisted of textual passages, including sentences and paragraphs, that contained relevant theological, ethical, ecological, and educational arguments. The researcher identified passages concerning the relationship between human beings and nature, the sacred character of creation, environmental responsibility, ecological justice, social suffering, and the implications of ecological awareness for religious education.

The relevant information was organized according to the author's name, publication year, source title, textual content or paraphrased proposition, thematic category, and interpretive notes. The original works of the four thinkers were prioritized as the main sources for identifying their arguments. For al-Qaradawi's work, the original Arabic publication (2001) and its English translation (2022) were treated as two language editions of the same original work, not as independent intellectual sources. The English translation was used to facilitate the interpretation of the original arguments.

Official documents by Pope Francis were examined through their published paragraph numbering to facilitate the identification of relevant arguments. In particular, *Laudato Si'* (2015) and *Laudate Deum* (2023) were used to examine the relationship between environmental degradation, social responsibility, and the climate crisis. The use of paragraph references also provided a more consistent means of locating relevant passages in these official documents.

Data Analysis Technique

The data were analyzed through five interconnected stages.

First, individual hermeneutical reading was conducted to understand the ecological arguments of each thinker within their respective religious, philosophical, and intellectual contexts. This stage examined the central concepts, assumptions, and normative orientations underlying each perspective. Nasr's metaphysical and spiritual approach, al-Qaradawi's Islamic ethical and juridical approach, Boff's liberation-oriented ecological theology, and Pope Francis's concept of integral ecology were examined independently before comparison.

Second, thematic coding was conducted by identifying recurring concepts and arguments in the selected textual passages. Initial codes were developed from the content of the primary sources and subsequently organized into broader thematic categories. The coding process followed the qualitative coding principles described by Saldaña (2021), in which textual information is organized into meaningful codes and categories to support interpretation. The main analytical categories included theological foundations, human responsibility toward nature, ecological ethics, social justice, and educational implications.

Third, intra-traditional comparison was conducted within the respective religious traditions. Nasr's spiritual and metaphysical perspective was compared with al-Qaradawi's ethical and juridical approach to Islamic environmental responsibility. Similarly, Boff's emphasis on ecological liberation and social justice was examined in relation to Pope Francis's concept of integral ecology and the interconnectedness of environmental and social crises. This stage identified similarities and differences without assuming that the thinkers shared identical theological premises.

Fourth, interreligious comparison was conducted across the four thinkers. The comparison focused on their theological foundations, understandings of human responsibility toward nature, ecological ethics, responses to environmental degradation, and views concerning social responsibility. The findings were classified into convergence, partial convergence, and divergence. Convergence referred to comparable ecological or ethical concerns supported by the relevant primary texts. Partial convergence referred to similar concerns accompanied by differences in theological foundations, conceptual emphasis, or normative orientation. Divergence referred to substantial differences in arguments, theological premises, or ethical implications.

Fifth, educational synthesis was developed by interpreting the comparative findings in relation to Islamic Religious Education. This stage identified four conceptual orientations: theological grounding, ecological morality, contextual pedagogy, and interreligious praxis. The four orientations were formulated as an interpretive synthesis of the comparative findings. They were not treated as educational recommendations explicitly proposed in identical terms by all four thinkers, but as conceptual implications that could enrich the theological and ethical foundations of PAI. The relationship between the primary textual ideas, initial codes, thematic categories, and educational interpretations is illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Thematic Coding Matrix of the Four Thinkers

Thinker	Textual Proposition / Paraphrased Evidence	Initial Code	Thematic Category	Interpretive Meaning for PAI
Nasr	Modern environmental problems are associated with the spiritual crisis of humanity and the loss of awareness of the sacred character of nature.	Spiritual crisis; sacred nature; desacralization	Sacred cosmos and ecological responsibility	Environmental awareness should be grounded in the theological understanding that nature is part of a meaningful and sacred order of creation.
Al-Qaradawi	Environmental preservation is connected to Islamic legal and ethical responsibilities, including human stewardship, prevention of environmental damage, and protection of public welfare.	Khalifah; amanah; maslahah; prevention of fasad	Religious and moral responsibility	Environmental protection can be understood as a religious and moral responsibility arising from faith and accountability.
Boff	Ecological destruction is inseparable from social suffering because environmental degradation also affects vulnerable communities and the conditions of life.	Ecological justice; poverty; care; liberation	Socio-ecological justice	PAI can integrate environmental responsibility with social empathy, justice, solidarity, and concern for vulnerable communities.
Pope Francis	Environmental and social crises are interconnected and require an integrated understanding of ecological, social, economic, and human relationships.	Integral ecology; interdependence; common home	Ecological interdependence	PAI can encourage students to understand environmental problems holistically and develop responsible attitudes toward the shared environment.

Source: The researcher's thematic interpretation of Nasr (1968, 1989, 1996), al-Qaradawi (2001, 2022), Boff (1995, 1997), and Francis (2015, 2023). The propositions are paraphrases rather than direct quotations.

Research Credibility

The credibility of the analysis was maintained by prioritizing the original works of the four thinkers and using relevant secondary literature to contextualize their arguments. The interpretation considered the theological and intellectual backgrounds of each author to avoid reducing different religious positions to identical ecological claims. The analysis also distinguished between the original propositions of the thinkers and the educational implications formulated by the researcher.

The comparative interpretation followed explicit criteria for identifying convergence, partial convergence, and divergence. A shared concern for environmental protection was not automatically interpreted as evidence of doctrinal equivalence. Instead, convergence was identified when comparable ecological or ethical propositions were supported by the relevant primary texts. Partial convergence was applied when the thinkers addressed similar environmental concerns but emphasized different theological foundations or conceptual approaches. Divergence was identified when substantial differences appeared in their arguments, theological premises, or normative implications.

The analytical process was guided by the relationship between textual evidence, thematic codes, interpretive categories, comparative findings, and educational synthesis. This approach was intended to maintain consistency between the primary sources and the conclusions drawn from them. The educational orientations proposed in the study were therefore presented as conceptual interpretations of the comparative findings rather than as direct empirical findings or an already validated PAI curriculum.

RESULTS

The analysis identified two main levels of findings: the distinctive ecological perspectives of Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, Leonardo Boff, and Pope Francis, and the theological-ethical principles that converge across their respective Islamic and Christian traditions. The findings were developed through individual textual interpretation, thematic coding, and comparative analysis of the primary works. The analysis demonstrates that the four thinkers do not formulate a single unified ecological doctrine. Rather, they provide distinct theological and ethical approaches that share several concerns regarding the relationship between human beings, nature, and moral responsibility.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr: The Sacred Cosmos and the Spiritual Roots of Ecological Crisis

Nasr's ecological thought is grounded in a metaphysical understanding of nature as an ordered reality whose meaning cannot be reduced to material or economic usefulness. In *Religion and the Order of Nature*, he examines the religious understanding of the cosmos as an order imbued with spiritual significance, contrasting this perspective with modern interpretations that treat nature primarily as an autonomous physical mechanism (Nasr, 1996, Chapter 2). His discussion of modern science further addresses the separation of knowledge about nature from its traditional religious and philosophical foundations (Nasr, 1996, Chapter 4). Within this perspective, nature possesses significance through its relationship to the divine order rather than merely through its usefulness for human purposes.

Nasr consequently interprets ecological degradation as a manifestation of a deeper spiritual and intellectual crisis, rather than simply a failure of technology or environmental regulation (Nasr, 1996, Chapter 6). His proposal for the resacralization of nature does not imply that human beings confer sacredness upon the natural world. Instead, it requires a transformation in human perception through which the sacred significance already inherent in nature can be rediscovered (Nasr, 1996, Chapter 8). Ecological responsibility therefore depends not only on changes in human behavior but also on recovering a worldview that recognizes the relationship between nature, spiritual knowledge, and divine order.

This perspective establishes the metaphysical foundation of Nasr's ecological contribution. His central concern is the loss of a sacred understanding of nature, which has allowed the natural world to be approached primarily as an object of exploitation. In relation to the other thinkers examined in this study, Nasr provides the most explicitly metaphysical explanation of the ecological crisis, emphasizing the transformation of human consciousness as a prerequisite for restoring harmony between humanity and nature.

Yusuf al-Qaradawi: Khalifah, Amanah, and Normative Ecological Responsibility

Al-Qaradawi approaches ecological responsibility through Islamic ethics and jurisprudence, emphasizing *riʿāyat al-bīʾah* (active care for the environment) rather than protection alone. In the introduction to *Riʿāyat al-bīʾah fī Sharīʿat al-Islām*, he presents environmental care as a responsibility that extends beyond preventing damage to include maintaining and improving the conditions that sustain life (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, Introduction). This perspective connects environmental responsibility with the objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*), particularly the preservation of life, public welfare, and the conditions necessary for human existence (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, discussion of uṣūl al-fiqh and environmental care).

This ethical-juridical perspective becomes more concrete in al-Qaradawi's discussion of resource depletion, *isrāf* (wasteful excess), and *fasād* (corruption or destruction on earth). These concepts connect environmental degradation with violations of religious and moral responsibility (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, discussions of resource depletion and environmental corruption). Human use of natural resources is therefore legitimate but remains subject to ethical limits, moderation, and accountability before God.

Al-Qaradawi also emphasizes the importance of educating younger generations and developing public awareness as means of strengthening environmental responsibility (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, discussion of contemporary Islamic measures for environmental care). Whereas Nasr emphasizes the spiritual and intellectual roots of ecological degradation, al-Qaradawi develops normative principles that can guide individual conduct, collective practices, and educational priorities. His approach thus provides Islamic Religious Education with a foundation for integrating ecological responsibility into moral formation and everyday religious practice.

Leonardo Boff: The Community of Life, Care, and Socio-Ecological Justice

Boff approaches the ecological crisis through the perspective of liberation theology, emphasizing that environmental destruction and social injustice are interconnected rather than independent problems. In *Ecology & Liberation*, he relates ecological reflection to questions of social justice and places the condition of impoverished communities within his critique of dominant models of development (Boff, 1995, sec. "The Religious Factor and Social Justice" and "Center of Gravity: The Poor Two-thirds"). In *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*, he further develops this relationship by connecting ecosystem degradation with the suffering of poor and Indigenous communities affected by exploitative economic practices (Boff, 1995, Chapters 3 and 5).

Boff's perspective therefore challenges approaches that reduce ecological responsibility to individual conservation practices while overlooking the social and economic structures that contribute to environmental destruction. His ecological vision also understands the Earth as an interconnected community of life in which human beings participate rather than exercise unlimited domination. This relational understanding is developed through his discussion of ecology as interaction and its theological implications in Christian thought (Boff, 1995, sec. "Ecology: The Science and Art of Interaction" and "Ecology and Theology: Christian Panentheism").

Within this framework, care and solidarity extend beyond interpersonal relationships to encompass the wider community of life. Boff's distinctive contribution lies in his insistence that ecological responsibility must include both the protection of nature and attention to structural injustice. For Islamic Religious Education, this perspective provides a comparative framework for examining not only moral duties toward creation but also the social consequences of ecological degradation, particularly for vulnerable communities.

Pope Francis: Integral Ecology and Responsibility for the Common Home

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis develops an integral ecological perspective in which environmental and social problems are understood as interconnected rather than independent crises (Francis, 2015, para. 139). He also identifies the technocratic paradigm as a central factor in ecological degradation, criticizing the tendency to treat nature as an object of technological control and unlimited exploitation (Francis, 2015, paras. 106–111). This critique is further developed in *Laudate Deum*, where he questions the assumption that technological and economic power necessarily constitutes genuine progress (Francis, 2023, para. 20).

Within this vision of the common home, ecological responsibility also becomes an educational concern. Francis argues that environmental education should move beyond the transmission of information toward the formation of responsible habits, solidarity, and care for creation (Francis, 2015, paras. 209–211). His approach therefore connects ecological reflection with moral formation and social responsibility, providing an integral and educational dimension to the comparative analysis.

Boff and Francis both connect ecological degradation with social suffering, but their emphases are not identical. Boff foregrounds structural injustice, poverty, and the interdependence of the community of life, whereas Francis articulates integral ecology through the interconnected environmental, social, economic, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of human existence. Their perspectives therefore demonstrate a meaningful convergence in recognizing the social consequences of ecological degradation, while retaining distinctive theological and conceptual orientations.

Comparative Structure of the Four Ecological Approaches

The comparison reveals four distinct theological and ethical approaches to the ecological crisis rather than a unified ecological doctrine. Nasr situates the problem primarily within the desacralization of nature and emphasizes the recovery of a sacred understanding of the cosmos. Al-Qaradawi approaches ecological responsibility through Islamic ethical and juridical principles that regulate human conduct and the use of natural resources. Boff expands the analysis by connecting environmental degradation with structural injustice and the suffering of vulnerable communities, while Pope Francis articulates an integral ecological perspective that relates environmental, social, economic, and cultural dimensions.

These approaches share a critical position toward unrestricted human domination over nature, although they differ in their theological foundations, explanations of ecological destruction, and proposed responses. Their comparative characteristics are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparative Structure of the Ecological Thought of the Four Thinkers

Dimension	Seyyed Hossein Nasr	Yusuf al-Qaradawi	Leonardo Boff	Pope Francis
Understanding of nature	Sacred cosmos and manifestation of divine order	God's creation and a trust requiring care	Interconnected community of life	Common home and interconnected creation
Human position	Human beings as participants in a sacred cosmic order	Khalifah and bearer of amanah	Member of the Earth community	Responsible steward within an integral ecology
Root of ecological crisis	Desacralization and the spiritual crisis of modernity	Fasad, israf, and moral irresponsibility	Structural injustice and exploitative development	Technocratic paradigm and culture of waste
Central ethical orientation	Resacralization of nature, sacred knowledge, and harmony	Accountability, moderation, and maslahah	Care, solidarity, and socio-ecological justice	Ecological conversion and integral responsibility
Distinctive contribution	Metaphysical and spiritual foundation	Normative and juridical foundation	Socio-ecological and relational foundation	Integral, pastoral, and global articulation
Educational relevance	Developing spiritual awareness of creation	Forming religious and moral responsibility	Integrating environmental care with social justice	Promoting holistic ecological awareness and responsible habits

Source: Author's synthesis based on Nasr (1968, 1989, 1996), al-Qaradawi (2001, 2022), Boff (1995, 1997), and Francis (2015, 2023).

Thematic Evidence and Comparative Convergence

To establish the relationship between the primary texts and the comparative findings, the analysis identified the textual propositions, their corresponding thematic categories, and the rationale for determining convergence. The evidence presented in Table 4 consists of paraphrased arguments rather than direct quotations. The chapter, section, and paragraph references indicate the locations of the arguments in the primary sources.

Table 4. Thematic Evidence Matrix of Comparative Ecological Thought

Comparative Theme	Nasr	Al-Qaradawi	Boff	Pope Francis	Comparative Interpretation and Convergence
Nature beyond instrumental value	Nature is understood within a sacred cosmic order whose meaning transcends material usefulness *Religion and the Order of Nature* (Nasr, 1996, Chapter 2).	Environmental care is connected to the preservation of creation and the objectives of Islamic law *Riʿāyat al-bīʾah (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, sec. Introduction and discussion of maqāṣid al-sharīʿah).*	Nature is understood through the relational interaction of life and the interconnectedness of ecological existence *Ecology & Liberation (Boff, 1995, sec. "Ecology: The Science and Art of Interaction").*	Creation is understood as a common home requiring care and responsible relationships *Laudato si'* (Francis, 2015, para. 139).	All four challenge the reduction of nature to an object of unrestricted exploitation. Their grounds differ: metaphysical, juridical, relational, and integral.
Human responsibility toward nature	Human beings should recover awareness of their place within the sacred cosmic order (Nasr, 1996, Chapters 2 and 8).	Human responsibility is expressed through environmental care, stewardship, and accountability (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, Introduction and discussion of environmental care).	Human beings are part of the Earth community and are called to care for the wider community of life (Boff, 1995, sec. "Ecology: The Science and Art of Interaction").	Human beings are responsible for caring for the common home and responding to ecological problems (Francis, 2015, para. 139).	The four perspectives reject absolute human ownership and support responsibility, although they conceptualize the human position differently.
Roots of ecological degradation	Ecological degradation is associated with the spiritual and intellectual crisis of	Environmental destruction is associated with *fasād*, *isrāf*, and violations of moral	Environmental destruction is linked to exploitative development and structural injustice	The technocratic paradigm and excessive confidence in technological and	Ecological degradation is not treated as a merely technical problem. The thinkers identify

Comparative Theme	Nasr	Al-Qaradawi	Boff	Pope Francis	Comparative Interpretation and Convergence
	modernity (Nasr, 1996, Chapters 4 and 6).	and religious responsibilities (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, discussions of resource depletion and environmental corruption).	(Boff, 1995, sec. sections on social justice and poverty; Boff & Berryman, 1997, Chapters 3 and 5)	economic power contribute to ecological degradation (Francis, 2015, paras. 106–111, Francis 2023, para. 20).	complementary spiritual, moral, structural, and technological dimensions.
Limits on exploitation and consumption	Resacralization challenges the reduction of nature to material usefulness (Nasr, 1996, Chapters 6 and 8).	*Isrāf* and environmental corruption are rejected through moderation and moral accountability (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, discussions of resource depletion and environmental corruption).	Exploitative development is criticized because it damages ecosystems and marginalizes vulnerable communities (Boff & Berryman, 1997, Chapters 3 and 5).	The technocratic paradigm and culture of waste are criticized, while ecological conversion is encouraged (Francis, 2015, paras. 106–111 and 209–211).	All four challenge unrestricted exploitation, although the specific ethical and theological grounds for restraint are different.
Socio-ecological justice	Nasr provides a metaphysical critique of the worldview that permits the instrumentalization of nature (Nasr, 1996, Chapters 4 and 6).	Environmental responsibility is related to the preservation of life and public welfare through Islamic legal objectives (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, discussion of maqāṣid al-sharī ̔ah).	Ecological destruction is explicitly connected to poverty, social injustice, and the suffering of vulnerable communities (Boff, 1995, Boff, 1997, chapters 3 and 6).	Integral ecology connects environmental degradation with social, economic, and human concerns (Francis, 2015, para. 139).	The convergence is partial. Boff and Francis explicitly emphasize social-ecological justice, while Nasr and al-Qaradawi contribute through metaphysical and public-welfare perspectives that do not necessarily formulate the same framework of structural justice.
Education and ecological formation	Recovering sacred knowledge can transform human perception of nature (Nasr, 1989, 1996).	Environmental care can be strengthened through education and public awareness (Al-Qaradawi, 2001, discussion of contemporary Islamic measures for environmental care).	Ecological awareness is connected to care, solidarity, and concern for the community of life (Boff, 1995; Boff & Berryman, 1997).	Environmental education should form responsible habits, solidarity, and care for creation (Francis, 2015, paras. 209–211).	The perspectives provide complementary foundations for ecological formation, although their educational approaches are not identical or equally explicit.

Source: Author's thematic analysis of the primary works. All textual propositions are paraphrased; references identify the relevant chapters, sections, or paragraphs.

The matrix demonstrates that the comparative categories were not derived solely from general similarities among the four thinkers. Each category was established by identifying relevant arguments in their primary texts and examining the conceptual relationship between those arguments. The comparison consequently distinguishes between strong convergence, partial convergence, and constructive implications. Strong convergence refers to comparable ethical or ecological concerns that receive clear support in the relevant primary sources. Partial convergence refers to similar concerns that are developed through different theological foundations or conceptual emphases. Constructive implications refer to possibilities developed by the researcher through comparative interpretation rather than propositions explicitly formulated by all four thinkers. Based on this analysis, five theological-ethical principles of convergence were identified, followed by a sixth constructive implication concerning interreligious ecological cooperation.

Five Convergent Theological-Ethical Principles

First, nature should not be understood merely as an instrument for human use. All four approaches challenge the reduction of nature to an object of unrestricted exploitation, although they ground its value in different theological and ethical frameworks. For Nasr, nature belongs to a sacred cosmic order whose meaning transcends material usefulness. Al-Qaradawi understands the natural world as God's creation and a trust that entails moral and juridical responsibilities. Boff emphasizes the relational value of the community of life, while Pope Francis recognizes creation within an integral ecological vision. The convergence therefore lies in rejecting a purely instrumental

understanding of nature, not in assuming that all four thinkers formulate an identical doctrine of its intrinsic or theological value.

Second, human distinction implies responsibility rather than unrestricted ownership. Human beings are understood as participants in a sacred cosmic order, bearers of *khalifah* and *amanah*, members of the Earth community, or responsible inhabitants of the common home. Despite their different conceptual frameworks, these perspectives challenge the idea that human power over nature provides unlimited permission to exploit it. Their convergence lies in understanding human existence in relation to responsibility and accountability.

Third, ecological degradation cannot be reduced to a technical problem. The four thinkers identify different underlying causes of environmental destruction. Nasr emphasizes the desacralization of nature and the spiritual crisis of modernity. Al-Qaradawi identifies violations of moral and juridical responsibilities, including *fasad* and *israf*. Boff highlights exploitative social structures and the marginalization of vulnerable communities. Pope Francis criticizes the technocratic paradigm and the culture of waste. These diagnoses demonstrate that ecological problems require attention to spiritual, moral, structural, and technological dimensions rather than technical solutions alone.

Fourth, human exploitation of nature requires ethical limits. Nasr challenges the reduction of nature to material usefulness, al-Qaradawi emphasizes moderation and the prohibition of waste, Boff questions economic practices that undermine the community of life, and Pope Francis advocates ecological conversion and responsible patterns of consumption. Their convergence consists primarily in rejecting unrestricted exploitation. Nevertheless, the theological reasoning and specific ethical prescriptions differ across their respective traditions.

Fifth, ecological responsibility has implications for human well-being and socio-ecological justice. This convergence requires a more differentiated interpretation because the four thinkers do not give the same degree of attention to social justice. Boff explicitly connects environmental degradation with poverty, structural injustice, and the suffering of vulnerable communities. Pope Francis similarly relates ecological problems to social and economic inequalities through integral ecology. Al-Qaradawi approaches human well-being through the objectives of Islamic law and the prevention of harm, while Nasr contributes a metaphysical critique of the worldview that permits the instrumentalization of nature. Consequently, the comparative finding is not that all four thinkers advance an identical theory of socio-ecological justice. Rather, their distinct perspectives provide complementary grounds for considering environmental responsibility in relation to human well-being, vulnerable communities, and future generations.

Interreligious Ecological Cooperation as a Constructive Implication

The five principles above provide a basis for proposing shared ecological responsibility across religious boundaries. However, this sixth finding is a constructive implication of the comparative analysis rather than a proposition explicitly advanced in the same form by all four thinkers. Their convergent ethical concerns can support coordinated action toward environmental protection while preserving distinctive theological commitments. Interreligious cooperation is therefore proposed as a possible practical expression of the comparative findings, not as evidence that Islamic and Christian ecological theologies are doctrinally identical.

This implication is consistent with research documenting similarities and differences among religious communities in their responses to climate change. Albareda-Tiana et al. (2024) , for example, examine how religious communities in Catalonia address climate change and demonstrate the relevance of examining both shared environmental concerns and differences between religious perspectives. Although their study is situated in a different sociocultural context, it provides a contemporary reference for understanding the possibility of ecological engagement across religious boundaries.

Taken together, the results demonstrate that the ecological thought of Nasr, al-Qaradawi, Boff, and Pope Francis offers distinct but potentially complementary perspectives. Their contributions connect theological understandings of nature with human responsibility, ethical restraint, and concern for ecological and social well-being. These findings provide the conceptual basis for examining how comparative ecotheology can inform the theological, ethical, pedagogical, and interreligious orientations of Islamic Religious Education.

DISCUSSION

From Comparative Findings to Interreligious Ecotheology

The comparison reveals a tension concerning what must change for ecological responsibility to become effective. Nasr gives explanatory priority to the recovery of a sacred understanding of nature, whereas al-Qaradawi emphasizes the ethical and juridical norms governing human conduct. These emphases raise an important question: how can a sacred worldview guide concrete decision, and how can ecological norms remain connected to their theological meaning? Boff's focus on structural injustice and Francis's critique of the technocratic paradigm introduce a further question concerning the relationship between personal responsibility and collective conditions. Ecological formation must therefore address how individuals understand and treat nature, as well as how

institutions and social practices enable or constrain responsible action. These differences are differences of emphasis rather than mutually exclusive positions. Their educational significance lies in connecting theological understanding, moral judgment, and critical reflection on social conditions without treating any one approach as a substitute for the others.

Interreligious ecotheology must consequently be distinguished from doctrinal synthesis. Comparative engagement can deepen understanding while preserving the normative identity of each religious tradition (Clooney, 2010; Panikkar, 1999). Islamic concepts such as *khalifah*, *amanah*, *maslahah*, *mizan*, *fasad*, and *israf* are not direct equivalents of Christian stewardship, the common home, ecological conversion, or integral ecology. They emerge from different theological and interpretive frameworks, although they can generate comparable orientations toward responsibility, restraint, justice, and care. The purpose of comparison is not to make these concepts interchangeable, but to identify meaningful points of ethical engagement while acknowledging their theological differences. Recent scholarship similarly indicates that ecological dialogue can generate new perspectives through interreligious and hermeneutical engagement without eliminating the particularity of each tradition (Kiem, 2024).

This study extends research that has often examined Islamic and Catholic environmental thought separately. Nasr's critique remains relevant to Indonesian ecological reflection (Wasil & Muizudin, 2023), while studies of Catholic environmental attitudes and higher education have demonstrated the relevance of integral ecology and *Laudato Si'* in educational contexts (Daw et al., 2023; Palos Rey & Diez Bosch, 2024; Sánchez-Camacho & Villegas Moreno, 2024). Research on Islamic environmental education has also explored Qur'anic learning, environmental character formation, and curriculum integration (Karman et al., 2023; Lutfauziah et al., 2023; Rohman et al., 2024). The present study advances this literature by placing selected Islamic and Catholic perspectives in a structured comparative-hermeneutical dialogue and identifying how their points of convergence can inform a conceptual orientation for Islamic Religious Education (PAI). Its contribution is therefore not the formulation of a new religious doctrine or a validated curriculum, but an analytical framework connecting comparative ecotheological principles with educational purposes and possible learning practices.

Human Beings as Moral Subjects, Not Absolute Owners

The central anthropological interpretation is that human beings are moral subjects responsible for nature rather than its absolute owners. Their reason, freedom, moral judgment, and transformative ability establish accountability, not unlimited authorization for domination. In Nasr, the human relationship with nature must be understood within the divine order; in al-Qaradawi, human responsibility is constrained by *amanah*, *maslahah*, and the prevention of harm; in Boff, humanity belongs to the wider community of life; and in Francis, human power must be subordinated to responsibility for the common home (Al-Qaradawi & Research Managment Centre, 2022; Boff & Berryman, 1997; Francis, 2015; Nasr, 1996).

This interpretation avoids two opposing extremes. The first is exploitative anthropocentrism, in which nature is valued only according to its usefulness to human beings. The second is an ecological position that overlooks human moral agency and responsibility. The concept of the moral subject offers a relational alternative. This understanding resonates with recent Islamic ecotheological efforts to move beyond narrow anthropocentrism through a holistic vision of creation grounded in divine unity (Lohlker, 2024). Human responsibility consequently extends toward God, other people, nonhuman creation, and future generations.

The ecological crisis can therefore be interpreted as a crisis of moral subjectivity. Environmental destruction occurs when freedom is separated from responsibility, knowledge from wisdom, consumption from limitation, and human development from justice. Nasr describes this fragmentation through the desacralization of nature; al-Qaradawi identifies related problems through the concepts of *fasad* and *israf*; Boff connects ecological destruction with the loss of care and structural exploitation; and Francis associates it with the technocratic paradigm and the culture of waste. These diagnoses are not conceptually identical. Nevertheless, they indicate that ecological repair requires transformation in human understanding and conduct, alongside changes in the social and institutional conditions that shape environmental behavior. For PAI, this interpretation means that environmental responsibility should not be taught merely as a set of rules. It should also be developed as a reasoned moral commitment grounded in religious understanding.

The Five Convergent Principles and Four Educational Orientations

The five principles identified in the comparative analysis provide the ethical and theological foundation for the proposed educational framework: (1) nature has value beyond its instrumental use; (2) human distinction entails responsibility rather than absolute ownership; (3) ecological degradation has moral, spiritual, and social dimensions, not merely technical causes; (4) exploitation and consumption require ethical limits; and (5) ecological responsibility is connected with social justice. These principles do not have identical meanings or levels of emphasis in all four thinkers. In particular, the relationship between ecological destruction and poverty is more explicit in Boff and Francis, while it is approached through different theological and ethical foundations in Nasr

and al-Qaradawi. The principles should therefore be understood as points of qualified convergence rather than evidence of a unified doctrine. The proposed four educational orientations translate these comparative findings into a possible framework for PAI. The relationship between the five principles, the constructive possibility of interreligious cooperation, and the four orientations is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Analytical Mapping of Comparative Principles into PAI Educational Orientations

Comparative principles and constructive implication	Theological grounding	Ecological morality	Contextual pedagogy	Interreligious praxis
Nature has value beyond instrumental use	Understand nature as creation and a sign of divine power (*ayat kauniyah*)	Develop respect for living beings and avoid treating nature merely as a commodity	Interpret local environmental cases through religious and ethical perspectives	Recognize shared concerns for the protection of the environment while respecting doctrinal differences
Human responsibility rather than absolute ownership	Interpret *khalifah* and *amanah* as foundations of accountability	Practice responsibility in the use of water, energy, food, and other resources	Examine the relationship between human decisions and ecological consequences	Cooperate in activities that express responsibility for shared environmental spaces
Ecological degradation has moral, spiritual, and social dimensions	Connect faith and religious knowledge with environmental responsibility	Reflect on the moral consequences of negligence, waste, and environmental harm	Analyze local environmental problems and their social causes	Discuss environmental concerns through respectful interreligious engagement
Exploitation and consumption require ethical limits	Interpret *mizan*, *israf*, and *fasad* as concepts for balance, excess, and destruction	Develop moderation and responsible consumption habits	Conduct waste audits and evaluate consumption practices in school or the community	Organize voluntary activities to reduce waste and conserve resources
Ecological responsibility is connected with social justice	Relate religious responsibility to the protection of life and public welfare (*maslahah*)	Develop empathy toward communities affected by environmental damage	Investigate who experiences environmental harm and why	Participate in inclusive community activities that address shared environmental concerns
Constructive implication: interreligious ecological cooperation	Maintain Islamic theological foundations while understanding other religious perspectives	Practice respect, cooperation, and care for the common good	Use collaborative projects and reflective dialogue appropriate to the learning context	Conduct joint environmental activities without requiring theological agreement

Source: Researcher's comparative synthesis based on Nasr (1968, 1989, 1996), Al-Qaradawi (2001,2022), Boff (1995,1997), and Francis (2015, 2023).

The mapping shows that the four orientations are interconnected rather than separate instructional domains. Theological grounding provides the religious rationale for ecological responsibility; ecological morality translates that rationale into personal and collective conduct; contextual pedagogy connects religious concepts with actual environmental problems; and interreligious praxis offers a possible form of cooperation in addressing shared concerns. The fifth principle, concerning socio-ecological justice, is particularly important because it prevents ecological education from being reduced to individual habits such as disposing of waste or saving electricity. It also encourages learners to consider unequal exposure to environmental harm and the responsibilities of institutions and communities. Meanwhile, interreligious cooperation is treated as a constructive educational implication of the comparative analysis, not as a proposition explicitly formulated in the same way by all four thinkers.

Implications for the Development of Islamic Religious Education

The educational contribution of this comparison lies in bringing distinct theological perspectives into dialogue as a basis for reflection on PAI. Nasr's understanding of the sacred cosmos and al-Qaradawi's ethical and juridical approach provide Islamic foundations for ecological responsibility. In comparative engagement with these foundations, Boff's emphasis on the relationship between environmental degradation, poverty, and structural injustice highlights the social consequences of ecological harm, while Francis's integral ecology connects individual conduct with broader institutional, economic, and cultural conditions. Their relevance for PAI does not lie in introducing ecological values absent from Islamic thought or replacing its normative foundations. Rather, these perspectives provide comparative resources for deepening reflection on socio-ecological justice, ecological interdependence, and the educational possibilities of interreligious dialogue.

For PAI, ecology should not be treated as an isolated topic but as an integrated dimension of *akidah*, worship, morality, Qur'anic interpretation, Islamic jurisprudence, and character formation. The first orientation, theological grounding, presents nature as creation, divine trust, and *ayat kauniyah*. Concepts such as *khalifah* and *amanah* can be used to explain accountability, while *mizan*, *fasad*, and *israf* provide categories for discussing balance, destruction, waste, and excess. A corresponding learning indicator could be that students are able to explain the relationship between selected Islamic concepts and human responsibility for environmental protection. Learning activities may include guided interpretation of relevant Qur'anic passages, comparison of interpretations, and written reflection on the meaning of human responsibility toward creation. Assessment can focus on the accuracy of students' explanations and their ability to connect religious concepts with environmental issues.

The second orientation, ecological morality, extends *akhlak* through moderation, responsibility, care, justice, discipline, and respect for life in everyday decisions concerning consumption, waste, water, energy, food, and shared spaces. Its learning indicators may include students' ability to identify environmentally responsible and irresponsible behaviors, explain the moral consequences of waste and excessive consumption, and demonstrate responsible practices in their immediate environment. Learning activities can involve maintaining a classroom cleanliness routine, reducing single-use materials, monitoring water and electricity use, and reflecting on personal consumption habits. Assessment may combine reflective journals, observation of participation, and project-based rubrics that evaluate responsibility, consistency, and cooperation. Ecospiritual reflection can support the connection between religious meaning and environmental practice (Bock, 2024), while teacher example, school culture, and practical programs can reinforce environmental care (Dwi Ratnasari et al., 2025; Prajoko & Humaedah, 2024) .

The third orientation, contextual pedagogy, connects Qur'anic and theological concepts with ecological problems experienced by students and their communities. It encourages learners to examine how environmental harm affects vulnerable groups and how individual habits interact with school practices and wider social conditions. Possible learning indicators include students' ability to identify a local environmental problem, explain its possible causes and consequences, recognize groups affected by it, and propose an action grounded in ethical and religious considerations. Learning activities may include observing local ecosystems, analyzing cases of waste accumulation or water pollution, conducting a simple school waste audit, discussing the relationship between consumption and environmental damage, and proposing feasible conservation projects. Assessment can be conducted through case-analysis tasks, group presentations, project reports, and rubrics that evaluate problem identification, use of relevant religious concepts, reasoning, and proposed solutions. Research in pesantren has shown that Qur'anic learning and Islamic values can contribute to environmental transformation when connected with concrete conservation practices (Karman et al., 2023). Curriculum research has also demonstrated the possibility of organizing environmental education through learning outcomes, teaching materials, problem-based activities, and practical evaluation (Lutfauziah et al., 2023).

The fourth orientation, interreligious praxis, offers opportunities to translate ecological responsibility into collaborative learning and community action. Its learning indicators may include students' ability to identify shared environmental concerns, demonstrate respectful communication when encountering different religious perspectives, and participate responsibly in inclusive environmental activities. Appropriate activities may involve studying examples of environmental care from different religious traditions, discussing similarities and differences without judging the truth claims of other religions, and participating in voluntary activities such as tree planting, river cleaning, waste management, public education, or disaster response. Assessment should focus on respectful communication, cooperation, participation, and reflection on the common good rather than on students' acceptance of another religion's theological teachings. This distinction is important because interreligious learning in PAI should cultivate mutual understanding without requiring students to compromise their own religious commitments.

The operational examples above are intended as possible indicators and learning activities, not as a prescribed syllabus or validated assessment instrument. Their implementation should be adjusted to the applicable curriculum, learning objectives, institutional context, and developmental characteristics of students. At the primary education level, for example, ecological learning can emphasize concrete experiences, simple habits, stories, observation,

and guided reflection. At the junior and senior secondary levels, students can be introduced to more systematic analysis of environmental causes, social consequences, consumption patterns, and relevant religious concepts. At the university level, learning may involve comparative textual analysis, ethical argumentation, policy discussion, and community-based projects. In *madrasah* and *pesantren*, these activities may also be connected with institutional routines, religious practices, and the management of the school environment. Such differentiation is necessary because the capacity for abstract theological comparison, independent inquiry, and critical discussion develops differently across educational levels.

Doctrinal and Pedagogical Challenges in Interreligious Integration

Although comparative ecotheology offers educational opportunities, the incorporation of Catholic theological perspectives into PAI requires careful boundaries. The first challenge is doctrinal asymmetry. Concepts such as *khalifah*, *amanah*, and *maslahah* arise from Islamic theological and legal traditions, whereas integral ecology, the common home, and ecological conversion are articulated within Catholic theological and ecclesial contexts. Treating these concepts as equivalent would obscure their different sources, meanings, and normative authorities. For this reason, Catholic perspectives should function as comparative materials that broaden students' understanding of how different traditions respond to ecological problems, not as substitutes for Qur'anic foundations, Islamic jurisprudence, or the theological authority of PAI.

The second challenge concerns the purpose and scope of interreligious dialogue. In religious education, comparative learning should not be confused with theological syncretism, relativism, or the expectation that students adopt beliefs outside their own tradition. The purpose is to understand similarities and differences, recognize the ethical significance of shared concerns, and develop respectful engagement. Teachers therefore need to distinguish between explaining another tradition accurately and asking students to affirm its theological claims. This distinction is especially important when discussing doctrines of creation, the relationship between God and nature, human responsibility, and religious authority. The teacher's role is to facilitate academically responsible comparison while maintaining the Islamic orientation of PAI.

The third challenge is pedagogical readiness. Interreligious discussion requires teachers to have adequate knowledge of the traditions being compared, the ability to select reliable sources, and the skill to manage sensitive questions without stereotyping or oversimplifying religious positions. Limited teacher preparation, insufficient learning resources, differences in local religious composition, and the possibility of misunderstanding may restrict implementation. Therefore, interreligious praxis should be contextual and voluntary where it involves activities with communities outside the school. It should also be adapted to institutional policies and local circumstances. Where direct interreligious collaboration is not feasible or appropriate, students can still examine comparative texts, study examples of environmental cooperation, or conduct school-based ecological projects that do not require participation in interfaith activities.

A further challenge is the risk of reducing ecological education to visible activities without sufficient conceptual understanding. Tree planting, cleaning campaigns, and waste-management projects can become ceremonial activities if learners are not encouraged to understand the religious, ethical, and social reasons behind them. Conversely, theological discussions may remain abstract if they are not connected with daily conduct and actual environmental problems. The four orientations are intended to address this gap by connecting religious understanding, moral formation, contextual analysis, and practical action. This integration also responds to the curricular challenge identified by Rohman et al. (2024), who found that environmental themes in Islamic Religious and Character Education require more systematic cognitive integration alongside affective formation. The present framework therefore emphasizes the connection between knowledge, attitudes, reasoning, and practice rather than treating environmental awareness as an exclusively affective outcome.

Conceptual Contribution, Limitations, and Future Research

The conceptual framework proposed here offers an orientation for reviewing and potentially developing existing PAI curricula. It identifies four interconnected dimensions (theological grounding, ecological morality, contextual pedagogy, and interreligious praxis) that may inform the evaluation of educational objectives, teaching materials, learning activities, and assessment strategies. The framework also clarifies the relationship between the five comparative principles and the proposed educational orientations. Its principal contribution is to connect comparative ecotheological interpretation with possible educational indicators and instructional practices while maintaining the distinction between Islamic normative foundations and Catholic comparative perspectives.

Nevertheless, the proposed framework remains a theoretical contribution derived from library-based research. The learning indicators and activities presented in this discussion are illustrative operational possibilities, not empirically validated learning outcomes. The study has not tested the framework in classrooms, evaluated its acceptability among PAI teachers, or measured its effects on students' ecological knowledge, attitudes, behavior, or interreligious understanding. It also does not establish that all schools, *madrasah*, universities, and *pesantren* have the same institutional capacity or social conditions for implementing interreligious ecological activities.

Future research should therefore examine the framework through curriculum analysis, expert assessment, teacher interviews, and classroom-based studies. Subsequent work may develop teaching modules, curriculum indicators, lesson plans, project guidelines, and assessment instruments based on the four orientations. Empirical studies should also consider differences in educational levels, student characteristics, school contexts, and local religious conditions. Particular attention should be given to how teachers maintain Islamic doctrinal foundations while facilitating accurate and respectful comparative learning. Such research is necessary to determine whether the proposed interreligious ecotheological framework can move from conceptual synthesis to contextually appropriate and educationally effective practice.

CONCLUSION

This study contributes a comparative-hermeneutical framework for understanding how Islamic and Catholic ecological thought can inform Islamic Religious Education (PAI) without dissolving their distinct theological foundations. Its principal theoretical contribution lies in connecting five areas of qualified ecological convergence (respect for nature beyond instrumental use, human responsibility, recognition of the moral and social dimensions of ecological degradation, ethical limits on exploitation, and socio-ecological justice) with four educational orientations: theological grounding, ecological morality, contextual pedagogy, and interreligious praxis. This synthesis extends existing approaches to Islamic environmental education by providing a comparative conceptual structure that links theological reasoning, ethical formation, critical engagement with environmental problems, and the possibility of interreligious cooperation.

For PAI scholarship, the framework offers a conceptual reference for examining educational objectives, learning materials, pedagogical approaches, and environmental learning indicators within Islamic normative foundations. Catholic ecological perspectives function as comparative resources for developing critical understanding and respectful engagement, rather than as replacements for Islamic theological and juridical principles. The framework therefore contributes to the conceptual discussion of how ecological responsibility and interreligious understanding may be addressed together in Islamic religious education. However, its applicability cannot be generalized across different educational institutions and social contexts without further examination. As a library-based and interpretive study, it does not demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed orientations or establish their suitability for every educational level.

Future research should prioritize expert validation involving specialists in Islamic Religious Education, environmental education, and ecotheology to assess the conceptual coherence and contextual appropriateness of the framework. Subsequent studies may translate the four orientations into specific learning indicators, teaching materials, instructional activities, and assessment instruments. Feasibility studies in selected schools, *madrasah*, universities, and *pesantren* should then examine teacher readiness, institutional conditions, student characteristics, and the appropriateness of comparative interreligious learning. Classroom-based research may subsequently evaluate changes in students' ecological knowledge, moral reasoning, environmental attitudes, and responsible practices. These stages are necessary to establish the framework's pedagogical feasibility and educational effects; such outcomes remain questions for future empirical investigation rather than findings demonstrated by the present study.

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The author was responsible for conceptualizing the research, collecting and reviewing relevant literature, conducting the comparative-hermeneutical analysis, interpreting the findings, and writing and revising the manuscript. The author also reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

AI DISCLOSURE STATEMENT
The authors declare that this research was prepared, researched, written, and edited without the aid of artificial intelligence (AI) techniques.

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