

# Implementing Sustainable Islamic Higher Education Campuses: A Practical Framework

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## Abstract

Most people know that our planet is in grave danger, but only a select few are doing something to stop the damage. Administrators at Islamic universities will find this article's framework for creating greener campuses useful. Institutional leaders must now take decisive action to rescue the planet by enacting environmentally friendly campus development programs or policies, directing environmental preservation, and building a clean, healthy, environmentally friendly, and sustainable campus. Several feasible frameworks are available for use in Islamic higher education institutions. The first step in environmental education management is the creation of an environmentally friendly curriculum, followed by the implementation of community-based education, the enhancement of the campus and surrounding environment, the implementation of an environmentally friendly support system, and finally the creation of environmental-based educational management.

## Abstrak

Walaupun sebagian besar manusia mengetahui dan menyadari bahwa bumi ini mengalami krisis yang parah, hanya sedikit dari mereka yang bertindak nyata ikut serta menyelamatkan bumi dari kerusakan. Artikel ini merupakan tawaran kerangka kerja praktis bagi para pengelola institusi pendidikan tinggi Islam dalam mengembangkan kampus yang ramah lingkungan. Para pemimpin institusi pendidikan sudah saatnya berindak nyata untuk menyelamatkan bumi dengan cara mengimplementasikan program atau kebijakan pengembangan kampus yang ramah lingkungan, berorientasi penyelamatan lingkungan, dan mewujudkan kampus yang bersih, sehat,

ramah lingkungan, dan berkelanjutan. Ada beberapa kerangka kerja praktis yang dapat diimplementasikan di institusi pendidikan tinggi Islam. Pertama-tama, kampus perlu mengembangkan kurikulum berwawasan lingkungan, lalu menciptakan pendidikan berbasis komunitas, kemudian meningkatkan kualitas kawasan kampus dan lingkungan sekitarnya, setelah itu mengembangkan sistem pendukung yang ramah lingkungan, dan terakhir mengembangkan manajemen pendidikan berwawasan lingkungan.

### **Keywords**

Sustainable campuse, Islamic education, Islamic higher education campuses

### **Introduction**

The planet has been in a serious crisis for a long time, and most people know this. There is mounting evidence that our planet is amid a serious environmental crisis. Due to rising populations and increased pressure to maximize the use of finite natural resources, environmental degradation is on the rise. At long last, irresponsible human actions have disrupted the natural order (Fu et al., 2020; Giampietro & Funtowicz, 2020). Experts say environmental and natural resource deterioration has reached an extremely worrying level (Chen et al., 2012; Napper & Thompson, 2019). Many events that have been witnessed so far—forest fires, gas explosions, garbage mountains, air pollution, wastes produced by factories, and many more—can cause damage to the environment and ecosystem we have longed for its sustainability. Still, with the passing of time and the ongoing development of the times, those hazards are growing more prevalent worldwide (Naidu et al., 2021; Xiang et al., 2022). Humans, on the other hand, can't survive without a healthy ecosystem. Therefore, any disruption to it would be catastrophic (Chenet et al., 2021). When the air quality is compromised, we can no longer rely on our surroundings to keep us alive. People will inevitably want to enhance their standard of living, but if they don't use their brains while doing so, the result will be less happiness.

Exploiting natural resources is necessary since people require them to survive (Mukherjee et al., 2021). Because of these shifts in society, there is a greater demand for a wider variety of scarce resources. At the same time, nature's carrying capacity will decrease due to over-exploitation (Vieira et al., 2022). In addition, trash is produced in the process of providing commodities for human needs, and this garbage burdens the environment, hastening its degradation (Karlsson & Edvardsson Björnberg, 2021; Yuan et al., 2022). More garbage that isn't broken down into smaller pieces means more pollution. There have been several environmental challenges and concerns raised in recent years (Al-Shetwi, 2022; Celermajer et al., 2021;

Selvaranjan et al., 2021). Growing global temperatures, growing levels of carbon dioxide, and declining forest cover all contribute to global environmental problems like climate change. One of the causes is the excessive use of natural resources due to a growing population. These problems eventually become catastrophic for the environment. Air pollution, litter, lack of clean water, deforestation, landslides, floods, and droughts are all issues that people must deal with regularly (Bhattarai & Conway, 2021; Sukumaran, 2022).

At the local level, the government and the community have tried out several strategies for dealing with environmental issues. But because of the minimal participation of the community in environmental education, these efforts have not shown actual outcomes. It is because there is a general lack of awareness, proficiency, and enthusiasm for addressing issues (Agarwal et al., 2020; Mfiri Andrea et al., 2022). Furthermore, educational actors' knowledge of environmental education is shallow, and the view that such instruction is unnecessary persists. Furthermore, environmental education materials and methods are insufficient and not applicable, students are taught more theory, and there is still a lack of tangible action, so students' understanding is insufficient (Aytun & Akin, 2022). Even though the government has increased its spending on environmental education in recent years, many schools still struggle with inadequate funding, leading to subpar environmental education programs. Environmental education programs are inconsistent, not synergistic, and overlap due to a lack of coordination between agencies and educational actors.

Islamic higher education plays a crucial function in environmental protection even though many initiatives for environmental upkeep have flaws. Multiple groups, such as educational advocacy organizations, have raised their voices to emphasize the significance of environmental education. The idea of an environment-based Islamic higher education, which prioritizes ecological sustainability, emerged later. The environment-based Islamic higher education refers to higher education that have made a concerted effort to integrate ecological principles into their pedagogy and curriculum. The campuses physical layout must reflect ecological principles to teach students and staff how to be responsible global citizens. Given the state of the world today, Islamic higher education plays a critical and timely role. There is a pressing need for Islamic universities to provide a more realistic and actionable framework for fostering environmental consciousness among their student body. To properly take sides with the environment, Islamic higher education institutions must establish environmentally sound teaching practices and an attitude of caring for the environment through learning and habituation. There is a need for Islamic

higher education to promote environmental consciousness by engaging students in meaningful, relevant, and accessible activities.

### **Environmental Education Concept**

According to the UNESCO convention in Tbilisi 1997, environmental education is a process that aims to create a global community that cares about the environment and the problems related to it and has the knowledge, motivation, commitment, and skills to work individually and collectively, to seek alternatives or provide solutions to existing environmental problems and to prevent the emergence of new environmental problems (Reid et al., 2021). The 1997 Tbilisi conference (Briceno & Pitt, 1988) identified three overarching goals for environmental education: (1) to aid in the explanation of the problem of concern and concern about the interrelationships between economic, social, political, and ecological in urban and rural areas; (2) to provide opportunities for everyone to develop the knowledge, values, attitudes, commitment, and abilities needed to protect and improve the environment; and (3) to create new patterns of behavior in individuals (Chernomorets et al., 2019). Among the goals to be attained are improvements in (1) information, (2) outlook, and (3) care. In its recommendations for the implementation of environmental education, that the learning process undertaken should be a process of reorganizing values and clarifying concepts to develop the skills and attitudes necessary to understand and appreciate the interrelationships among people, culture, and their physical environments. After learning about environmental challenges, students should practice making judgments and developing personal behavioral characteristics based on those lessons. Therefore, environmental education should aim to increase students' knowledge and influence their scientific worldviews, morals, and actions (Gilal et al., 2019; Jorgenson et al., 2019).

To encourage people to take an active role in conservation and safety efforts, many different groups and individuals in society engage in what is known as "Environmental Education," which aims to improve people's understanding of environmental values and problems. Preserve the planet's natural resources for the sake of future generations (Braun et al., 2018). The field of environmental education focuses on the study of environmental issues, including pollution, environmental harm, and the conservation of natural resources. A feature that jolts our minds is the increased rapidity with which environmental changes occur, and various tragedies follow one another. Realizing that deteriorating environmental quality is the root cause of some disasters prompts us to go backward and connect these calamities to the current teaching methods. Unfortunately, there are still many

deviations in behavior that can reduce environmental quality, which has resulted in many deaths due to the deforested forest disaster that caused erosion and landslides, which hit densely populated residential areas (Hursh et al., 2015).

Given these issues, we wonder if there is a crisis of public concern for the environment and if education that aims to raise public awareness is effective. It makes us wonder what steps should be taken to raise awareness and encourage more excellent environmental protection. Sumarwoto's (2004) assertion that development can and has hurt the environment, but national development is also needed to improve environmental quality, is still relevant today. Sustainable environmental conditions can perpetually ensure the well-being of human existence and other life forms. All management decisions should be made considering the environment's long-term viability. Management based on helpful information about the environment and the potential outcomes of human interference is essential. Humans' responsibility to ensure future generations' survival must also be taken into account while making management decisions. Education and other means of raising environmental consciousness are essential to improving environmental management.

After the summit in Tbilisi in 1977, the international community decided on five aims for environmental education. The following are the five goals proposed by Goralnik et al. (2012). (a) Domains of knowledge: providing people, organizations, and communities with the information and resources they need to develop and maintain environmentally sound practices. Environment and development-related concerns, questions, and challenges are addressed under (b) the Awareness domain, which aims to raise people's and communities' general understanding of these topics. (c) The study of human behavior: encouraging people at all levels of society to adopt a set of values, a sense of environmental responsibility, and the drive to work for the betterment and protection of their local environments. (d) Capacity building: educating and empowering people to recognize, avoid, and resolve environmental issues in their communities and networks. (e) Participation arena: encouraging and empowering individuals, communities, and organizations to work together for a more sustainable future (Kopnina, 2014).

To effectively manage our resources and instill a sense of responsibility for the interests of future generations, environmental education is essential; it necessitates acquiring information, values, and practices that ensure the long-term viability of these assets (Haigh, 2006). The overarching goal of environmental education is to: (1) have institutions dedicated to environmental education serve as a vehicle for bringing about ecologically cultured shifts in individual behavior. There have been various

challenges to bringing environmental education to the field. The lack of a perfect platform to promote the efficient implementation of environmental education in Indonesia is seen as a major barrier to environmental education. Human resources and environmental culture can benefit from high-quality environmental education. The amount and quality of environmental education actors and target groups are essential in determining the success or failure of environmental education's implementation in the field. It is hoped that a rise in both the caliber and some environmental education actors (e.g., teachers, instructors, facilitators) will lead to an increase in human resources that are well-informed, capable, sensitive, and committed to protecting the vital environmental services provided by their local ecosystems. (3) Infrastructure and environmental education facilities tailored to specific requirements. Facilities and infrastructure are essential to the success of the teaching and learning process in environmental education. The infrastructure and facilities in question include but are not limited to, classrooms, libraries, and laboratories. Furthermore, environmental education can use nature as a source of information. (4) environmental education funding is used as effectively and efficiently as possible. Adequate financing is required to support the implementation of environmental education. The dedication of environmental education actors at all levels, both central and regional, is crucial to allocating funding and budget for implementing environmental education. Proper implementation of environmental education necessitates that all relevant parties collaborate to allocate resources equitably and make the best possible use of available funds. (5) Comprehensive and relevant environmental education resources that provide a perspective on sustainable development. Materials for environmental education should be produced with the field's stated goals in mind, with consideration given to where it is in its evolution and what students most need to learn. Because of this, it's crucial that materials for environmental education are carefully crafted, covering all bases while remaining accessible to a wide range of audiences by combining environmental knowledge with a sustainable development perspective. (6) Effective communication relies on information, so make sure it's high-quality and straightforward to find. If we want everyone to have access to high-quality resources for environmental education, we need to keep improving and expanding them. Access to reliable data can help advance environmental education and improve communication between key stakeholders. (7) Community engagement and access to appropriate facilities for environmental education. Planning, executing, and assessing environmental education must include input from the community. As a result, those involved in environmental education should outline how members of the public might contribute. (8) Educating for environmental competence. There is a strong correlation between the effectiveness of an

environmental education program and the approach taken to deliver it. Improve the effectiveness of environmental education by developing techniques for implementing good environmental education (competency-based and adaptable).

The three fundamental environmental education pedagogical ideas that guide its implementation in schools are as follows: To begin, there is comprehensive environmental education. Meaningful interaction with one's surroundings requires attention to the sensory and cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor elements. The connections between concepts will become apparent with a well-rounded education. Second, context is taken into account when carrying out environmental education. The learning environment should be meaningful to the child. It's essential to recognize that kids have feelings just like adults and treat them with dignity to help them develop a love of learning and achievement. Second, kids need to be encouraged to learn from their immediate surroundings by being given the chance to solve problems and directly interact with their immediate environment (Briceno & Pitt, 1988). As a third point, teaching about the environment requires taking actual steps. Students should be made aware of environmental challenges and given opportunities to practice compiling constructive action to lessen the impact of these issues by providing services made possible through environmental education. In the event of a problem involving littering around campus, for instance, students can demonstrate their concern for the environment by cleaning up the litter and disposing of it in the appropriate bins or encouraging their peers to do the same.

Students need to be taught that their formative years as the nation's future leaders are crucial for environmental education to impact their lives. It is reasonable to assume that the provision of knowledge, comprehension, and the formation of conduct throughout childhood will provide a very substantial positive influence that will affect his life when he enters adolescence and maturity, provided that these are done correctly. As this environmental education topic demonstrates, it is crucial to instill a concern for the natural world in young people through structured and long-term exposure to environmental education.

Young people can receive environmental education in a classroom or more casually. Incorporating environmental education into the school curriculum and using the nature around them are two ways schools might provide formal environmental education. To present environmental education content, a teacher need not be an ecologist or scientist; instead, he need only be able to guide students in critically examining the world around him. The essence of environmental education can be delivered alongside other lessons on related topics or as a stand-alone unit. Its form can be packaged in an integrative manner in school subjects, keeping in mind that

environmental education is not a new subject, which are topics and materials unique to the area being taught about in terms of environmental education.

It is possible to implement environmental education in outdoor education by engaging students in extracurricular activities that bring them into closer contact with nature and by guiding the development of environmentally conscious attitudes and alterations to their behavior throughout the phases of environmental cognizance, environmental comprehension, environmental focus, environmental responsibility, and environmental positivity. Playing games, reading stories, participating in sports, conducting experiments, competing in events, learning about local environmental cases, collaborating to find solutions and positive actions, exploring the environment, and taking environmental action are all possible activities. Students will have a great time participating in these games, which are designed to make learning more engaging and effective. This way, students may use what they're learning about the environment rather than merely memorizing facts.

Schools and universities should take a holistic approach to environmental education, including all stakeholders in shaping students' values and passion for protecting the planet. The actual discussion of environmental issues and hands-on actions like planting trees for waste management can be incorporated into extracurricular activities as forms of environmental education. As a result, environmental education can be included in a wide range of school activities, leading to sustained environmental improvement and making the institution more ecologically responsible. Group work, laboratory practices, project work, social work, and other activities relevant to environmental preservation should be emphasized as a means of discussion. In addition, the government's environmental policies are referenced as part of the integrated approach to delivering environmental education in schools. Naturally, this calls for a reliable and consistent methodology and monitoring and assessment to gauge the initiative's efficacy.

Raising public awareness about the importance of protecting the environment is an effective strategy for changing human behavior at all levels of society. In this situation, it is crucial to spread knowledge about environmental morality. What is done is an attitude that encourages people to continue their resourceful ways and encourages them to spread this way of life to those around them. This strategy is chosen to ensure the long-term viability of our planet's natural resources and is tailored to the specific types of people who live on it. Suppose you're the type of person who throws away perfectly good resources without thinking twice about it. In that case, you need to learn to live frugally—not because you can't afford to, but because you know that everything consumerist pollutes the environment and that

nature can only take so much. There needs to be severe action in the shape of punishments following the damage that greedy human types have done to nature from the government or society to prevent similar actions from happening again.

### **Practical Framework**

In addition to presenting a green or leafy physical form of Islamic higher education, institutions with an environmental viewpoint present a form of Islamic higher education that includes educational programs and activities that lead to awareness and wisdom towards the environment. An Islamic Islamic higher education that takes an ecologically responsible stance is one that actively works to integrate ecological principles into its curricula. Islamic higher education has an ecological approach to its outward appearance, so it might serve as a tool for teaching all scholars to be intelligent and environmentally responsible. The educational program is presented in a highly interactive fashion, focusing on the collective, activating, and balancing of students' emotions, actions, and thoughts to help them appreciate the significance of their school. Understanding what matters, locating and appreciating what currently exists, discovering what should exist, arranging and caring for what does exist, and ensuring its continued existence are all ways the academic community is urged to work toward a common goal. When planning an Islamic higher education, it's important to keep the environment in mind by prioritizing creating a learning environment that is sympathetic to local values and wisdom, ecologically sound, and capable of supporting itself over the long term (Bennett & Satterfield, 2018).

An Islamic higher education that takes environmental issues seriously actively promotes the development of its faculty and student body's expertise in, and concern for, environmental protection. A good and ideal place to learn all knowledge and varied norms and ethics that can become the base of human beings towards the establishment of welfare and the ideals of sustainable development is an Islamic higher education institution with an environmental viewpoint. All faculty members are actively engaged in environmental education initiatives that promote a healthy environment and minimize harmful environmental impacts at Islamic higher education institutions. Efforts to protect the natural world and raise knowledge about environmental issues are integral to the overall plan for expanding Islamic universities that take an ecological approach to education. Development objects in creating a campus that is friendly to the environment include the institution's land, water resources, energy, and waste; the surrounding environment's community traditions, landscape conditions, and ecosystems; and the waste generated by the institution's operations.

Development of environmentally friendly curriculum, community-based education, improvement of the quality of areas surrounding Islamic higher education institutions, development of environmentally friendly support systems, and development of environmentally friendly management of Islamic higher education are the primary activities that contribute to creating environmentally friendly Islamic higher education campuses. Establishing environmentally focused Islamic universities is a priority as part of the larger educational reform initiative. As a result, the plan to create Islamic universities with an eye toward sustainability must be incorporated into the larger campus planning initiative. Both required and elective courses incorporate environmental awareness and community service learning. The physical environment/facility management plan incorporates both the expansion of Islamic higher education hubs and the creation of greener auxiliary infrastructure. Islamic higher education's managerial progress includes efforts to improve society and the workplace.

Academics are encouraged to carry out the teaching and learning process of environmental material and to engage in maintaining and protecting the environment around the campus as part of the development of environmentally friendly Islamic higher education. Campuses must create eight distinct programs: (1) Increasing infrastructure for environmental learning. (2) Enhancing human resource quality is priority number two. (3) building up existing infrastructure and establishments. (4) maximizing effectiveness while spending less money. (5) Creating eco-friendly materials. (6) enhanced interaction and data sharing. (7) Facilitating community members' roles in project planning and execution (Bennett & Satterfield, 2018). Create new strategies for teaching about environmental issues. These eight factors need refinement to serve as a powerful engine in pursuing a more sustainable campus.

Environmental education should be implemented on college campuses, which aims to alter how people behave and think about the world around them. Its goal is to raise people's understanding of environmental concerns and global environmental catastrophes by teaching them new skills and educating them on environmental values. For the sake of current and future generations, our ultimate objective is to promote environmental protection. At least four markers of program success exist for the growth of environmentally focused Islamic higher education: (1) Creating a curriculum that promotes empathy and ecological literacy. (2) Creating a course load based on the surrounding ecosystem. (3) Designing events where participants actively participate—building and maintaining infrastructure to facilitate Islamic higher education.

### (1) Educational Policy

Education following the fundamental principles of participative and sustainable campus environmental management aims to establish a caring and environmentally literate Islamic higher education policy. In the framework of developing a compassionate and eco-cultural curriculum, educational policy is crucial. It is envisaged that environmentally conscious and concerned educational policies can effectively accommodate all educational programs and activities about environmental issues. This policy can serve as a foundation for the administration of future environmental education initiatives. The educational policy created is grounded in environmental philosophy and fosters a climate of environmental consciousness among scholars. There are six facets of a campus that must be accounted for in educational policy. Let's talk about the values and goals of a cultured and concerned educational system. Second, institutional strategies for presenting environmental topics across the curriculum. Third, a plan to invest in people. Fourth, school rules that promote a safe and sanitary learning environment. Fifth, educational rules for distributing and utilizing funding for environmental action. Sixth, designing lessons with the natural world in mind.

### (2) Environment-Based Curriculum Development

Environmental information may be submitted to academics via an integrated or unified curriculum. To provide students with an understanding of the environment associated with routine environmental problems, materials, learning models, and various learning methods are developed. The environment is anticipated to serve as the primary guiding principle in developing and constructing an environment-based curriculum. Developing a curriculum based on the environment can be accomplished in the following ways: (1) Creating cross-disciplinary learning models. (2) Management and development of materials and environmental concerns in the neighborhood. (3) Creating learning methods based on the environment and culture. (4) Development of extracurricular activities to increase students' environmental knowledge and awareness.

The fact that students are burdened with un environmentally sustainable academic assignments is one of the problems plaguing Islamic higher education campuses. For instance, when students are about to graduate, they are tasked with creating a culminating project (thesis, dissertation) that has nothing to do with nature conservation. Almost all Indonesian postsecondary institutions require students to write their final assignments according to written norms and a non-ecological paper system. For instance, it is inefficient to stipulate the upper, lower, left, and right margin limits in writing. Then, the use of paper consisting of only one page (one page per sheet), the provision of double spacing, the use of new paper

each time students consult with instructors, and so on. It is time for campuses to eradicate policies requiring students to print their academic assignments to construct an environmentally conscious campus for higher education.

### (3) Creation of Group-Based Exercises

Academics' participation in various environmental activities is essential to developing a caring and environmentally conscious system of Islamic higher education. Involving the local population in campus activities that benefit the academic community, society, and the environment is also expected. To be considered "participatory," students or other groups must consent to be included in environmental initiatives. To inspire the academic community to consider, create, and take concrete steps toward resolving environmental issues, and to provide a venue for learning based on the surrounding environment. One thing professors may do to help foster participation is to organize interactive educational extracurriculars in the environmental field. Taking part in environmental action initiatives led by other parties is the second step. Third, establishing and launching collaborative initiatives for environmental improvement in Islamic universities.

### (4) Campus Facility and Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure that reflects environmental management programs must support efforts to establish Islamic higher education institutions emphasizing the environment. In addition to using the environment as a learning tool, academics are encouraged to enhance the management and quality of the living environment both on and off campus. No longer are learning activities limited to the extraction of knowledge; they also seek media coverage for efforts to preserve the environment. Therefore, educational infrastructure and carrying capacity must be environmentally friendly. The selection, planning, and maintenance of educational facilities must adhere to the tenets of sound environmental management. The campus environment must serve as a teaching instrument for academics and the surrounding community so that the latter can participate in designing, implementing, and evaluating environment-based activities. Development and management of educational facilities with an environmental focus include (1) developing a function to support educational facilities in their efforts to strengthen environmental education. (2) Enhancing the condition of the environment within and around the campus. (3) Conservation of natural resources (energy, water, and fuel). (4) Enhancing the quality of nutritious cuisine services. (5) Development of a system for refuse management.

As part of their duties and responsibilities to provide a campus environment that is safe, clean, healthy, conducive, and welcoming, leaders in higher education are required to create an eco-friendly campus environment. Density vegetation and plants can facilitate the seamless operation of learning activities and the creation of conducive classrooms. Plants and botanicals can provide oxygen, which promotes brain health and optimal function. The more oxygen you consume, the greater your brain's performance will improve. If cerebral performance improves, academic institutions will be able to maximize learning. Therefore, Islamic higher education needs to create an eco-friendly campus environment.

## Conclusion

Most people recognize that the planet has been in a very serious crisis for a long time. However, only a small percentage of individuals put their awareness into action. They don't merely warn about the perils of humanity's environmental dilemma. They also do not only emphasize the significance of environmental protection and management in a sustainable manner. What is more crucial is that they take genuine and practical steps to safeguard and save the environment. Those in charge of running educational institutions, particularly Islamic higher education, would do well to take note of this and put it into practice. It is time for Islamic educational administrators to do their part to save the planet by adopting environmentally friendly programs and policies for campus development and working towards a more sustainable, green, and healthy campus community.

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