



Original Article

The Values of Religiosity in Environmental Awareness: A Holistic Approach to Sustainability

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Abstract:

This research aims to explore the role of religiosity values in building environmental awareness with a holistic approach to achieve sustainability. Using qualitative methods, data are collected through interviews, observations, and document studies on religion-based communities in Indonesia, such as Islamic boarding schools, churches, and other spiritual groups. The study found that religious values, such as caliph in Islam, stewardship in Christianity, and ahimsa in Hindu-Buddhism, become the moral foundation that encourages communities to maintain harmony with nature. These values motivate spiritually-based environmental practices, such as tree planting, waste management, and water conservation, which are often associated with religious rituals. However, the successful implementation of religiosity values in environmental programs faces several challenges, including differences in the interpretation of religious teachings, limited resources, and lack of policy support. To address these challenges, a holistic approach that integrates spiritual values, science, and technology has proven effective. For example, the use of environmentally friendly technology combined with religious teachings shows significant results in increasing public awareness and participation. This study concludes that the values of religiosity have great potential in building sustainable environmental awareness and behavior, especially when integrated with a cross-sectoral approach. These findings make practical and theoretical contributions in supporting spirituality-based environmental movements, while opening up space for further development to create a more ecologically and spiritually sustainable future.



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Keywords: Religiosity, Environmental Awareness, Holistic Approach

Introduction

In this modern era, the issue of environmental sustainability is one of the most urgent challenges faced by humanity ([Antarissubhi et al., 2023](#)). Climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental pollution are phenomena that are increasingly damaging the balance of ecosystems ([Husni & Remiswal, 2024](#)). This challenge not only has an impact on nature alone, but also threatens the survival of humans as an integral part of the environment itself. Therefore, a comprehensive, or holistic, approach is needed to address this problem. One of the approaches that is increasingly relevant is the integration of religiosity values in building environmental awareness.

Religiosity, which refers to a person's religious beliefs and practices, has great potential in shaping human attitudes and behaviors towards the environment ([Fitriani, 2017](#)). Many religious teachings, both in Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and other beliefs, teach the importance of protecting and preserving nature as a form of gratitude to the Creator ([Widiyastuti, 2020](#)). In this context, the values of religiosity can be a strong moral foundation for creating more environmentally responsible behavior.

However, although many religions teach the importance of harmony between humans and nature, reality shows that environmental damage remains a global problem. This raises an important question: to what extent are the values of religiosity applied in daily life, especially in terms of environmental awareness? To answer this question, an in-depth study is needed that connects the dimension of religiosity with environmental behavior.

Environmental awareness based on the value of religiosity is not a new concept. Since ancient times, traditional societies have often used religious beliefs as a guideline in managing natural resources ([Sastrawardana et al., 2024](#)). Religious rituals related to harvesting, forest conservation, and animal protection are examples of how spirituality affects sustainability practices. However, modernization and industrialization have changed the way humans view nature, often ignoring spiritual and ethical values.

A holistic approach in this context means bringing together various aspects, both spiritual, moral, social, and scientific, in an effort to protect the environment. This approach emphasizes the importance of synergy between science and religious values to create sustainable solutions. Religiosity is not only a moral driver, but also a spiritual motivation to take care of the earth as a mandate from God.

In addition, the values of religiosity also play a role in building collective awareness of the importance of sustainability. In many religious traditions, there is a concept of shared responsibility that can be translated in the context of environmental protection ([Hannan, 2021](#)). For example, Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of the caliph or the role of humans as leaders responsible for the preservation of the earth ([Purnawanto, 2024](#)).

On the other hand, the Christian tradition has the concept of stewardship, which affirms that humans are mandated by God to manage the earth wisely ([Kurniawaty et al., 2024](#)). Similarly, Hinduism and Buddhism teach the principle of ahimsa or non-violence, which also includes the treatment of humans towards the environment. These values provide a strong theological basis for building environmental awareness globally.

However, the main challenge in the implementation of religiosity values is how to integrate them into public policy and individual actions. Many people still separate the spiritual aspect from daily life, including in terms of treatment of the environment. Therefore, efforts are needed to bridge this gap through education, social campaigns, and community-based approaches.

Education based on religious values can be one of the solutions to increase environmental awareness ([Obaid, 2013](#)). By integrating religious teachings into the educational curriculum, the younger generation can be taught to see nature as part of God's creation that must be protected. In addition, religious institutions also have an important role in spreading the message of environmental sustainability to the wider community ([Zunaidi, 2024](#)).

In addition to education, social campaigns based on religious values can also increase community participation in environmental protection efforts. These campaigns can take the form of mass movements such as tree planting, waste management, or water resource conservation, which are based on spiritual spirit and faith. Thus, the value of religiosity is not only a discourse, but also manifested in concrete actions.

However, a holistic approach also requires cross-sector collaboration, including governments, non-governmental organizations, and religious communities. This collaboration can result in more effective policies and programs in addressing environmental problems. For example, governments can involve religious leaders in designing policies that support sustainability, such as forest conservation programs or renewable energy.

In the long term, the application of religiosity values in environmental awareness can create a society that is more in harmony with nature. This can also reduce conflicts that often arise due to excessive exploitation of natural resources. By making religiosity a moral foundation, humans can better understand the importance of maintaining the balance of the ecosystem for future generations.

However, the implementation of this approach is not separated from challenges. One of them is the difference in the interpretation of religious teachings that can affect people's perspective on the environment. Therefore, interreligious and intercultural dialogue is important to find common ground that is acceptable to all parties.

In addition, globalization also brings new challenges in efforts to combine the value of religiosity with sustainability. The consumptive lifestyle driven by capitalism is often contrary to the principles of sustainability taught by religion ([Agustina et al., 2024](#)). Therefore, a strategy is needed to overcome the effects of globalization without neglecting local and spiritual values.

In the context of Indonesia, which is known as a country with high religious diversity, the integration of religious values in environmental awareness has great potential. Local traditions that are rich in spiritual values can be social capital to support sustainability. In addition, the role of strong religious organizations in Indonesia can be used to increase public awareness about the importance of protecting the environment.

Ultimately, a holistic approach that integrates the value of religiosity in environmental awareness is not only a practical solution, but also a strategic step towards achieving long-term sustainability. By prioritizing spiritual, moral, and social values, humans can create a more harmonious relationship with nature and pass on a better earth to future generations.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive-analytical methods to explore the relationship between religiosity values and environmental awareness in a holistic perspective ([Sugiyono, 2017](#)). This approach was chosen because this research aims to understand the meaning and implications of religiosity values on environmental awareness in depth and contextual. The following are the stages of the research method

carried out:

1. Research Approach

The approach used is phenomenology to understand the experiences of individuals and groups in applying religiosity values to their environmental behavior. The study also adopts the concept of a holistic approach, in which various dimensions such as spirituality, social, and ecological are considered in the analysis.

2. Location and Subject of Research

The research locations were carried out in several communities that have high environmental awareness with diverse religious backgrounds, such as:

- Islamic-based communities (e.g., eco-green Islamic boarding schools).
- Churches or Christian-based neighborhood groups.
- Hindu communities that are active in environmental rituals (e.g., the preservation of sacred rivers).
- A local culture-based community that blends spirituality and the tradition of nature conservation.

The research subjects consist of religious leaders, community members, and individuals who are active in environmental activities based on religiosity values. A total of 30-50 people were selected using the purposive sampling technique, taking into account religious variations and geographical locations.

3. Data Collection Techniques

The data in this study was collected through several techniques ([Jogiyanto Hartono, 2018](#)) that is:

- In-depth Interview: Conducted with religious leaders, community leaders, and community members to explore their views, practices, and experiences in integrating the value of religiosity with environmental awareness.
- Participatory Observation: Researchers directly observe community activities that reflect the application of religiosity values in environmental conservation, such as environmental clean-up activities, tree planting, or religious rituals related to nature.
- Document Study: Analyze religious texts, such as the Qur'an, Bible, Vedas, Tripitaka, as well as religion-based community policy or program documents related to the environment.

4. Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data is analyzed using thematic analysis techniques, which involve the following stages:

- Data Organization: Data from interviews, observations, and documents are coded based on key themes such as the value of religiosity, environmental awareness, and holistic approaches.
- Theme Identification: Identify themes that emerge from the data, such as spiritual responsibility to nature, faith-based sustainability practices, and the

integration of religiosity values in environmental policy.

- **Data Interpretation:** Linking findings to relevant theories and concepts, such as the concept of caliphate in Islam, stewardship in Christianity, and ahimsa in Hindu-Buddhism, as well as a holistic approach in sustainability.

5. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses a triangulation technique by combining data from interviews, observations, and documents. In addition, discussions were held with experts in the fields of theology, environment, and sociology to validate the findings.

Results

1. Understanding the Value of Religiosity in the Environmental Context

Research shows that the values of religiosity play an important role in building environmental awareness. Religious leaders and community members said that their religious teachings emphasize responsibility for nature conservation. Values such as caliphate (in Islam), stewardship (Christianity), and ahimsa (Hindu-Buddhist) are understood as the moral basis for maintaining harmony between humans and the environment. Most of the participants mentioned that protecting the environment is part of worship, and they feel responsible to God to take care of nature. However, this level of understanding varies between communities based on education and access to information.

Table 1. Understanding the Value of Religiosity in the Research Community

Community	Key Understanding of the Value Religiosity	Participant Quotes
Eco-Green Islamic Boarding School (Islam)	Nature is a mandate from God that must be guarded (caliph).	"Destroying nature is the same as betraying the mandate of Allah."
Green Church (Christian)	Humans are mandated to stewardship the earth.	"We owe it to God to manage the earth well."
Hindu Community (Bali)	Living in harmony with nature is part of spiritual harmony.	"Nature is part of our soul. Taking care of him is a sacred duty."
Buddhist Community (Java)	The principle of ahimsa demands the loving treatment of all beings.	"Harmony with nature is a reflection of universal love."

Participants' understanding of religious responsibility to the environment is rooted in their religious teachings. For example, the concept of caliph in Islam is understood as a mandate from God to preserve nature. This is supported by research ([Nasr, 1968](#)), which states that in Islam, nature is seen as a creation of Allah that has intrinsic value and must be preserved by humans as caliphs. A similar concept is found in Christianity, where humans are mandated as stewards to manage the earth wisely. Research ([Southgate & Berry, 2006](#)) it also affirms that Christianity views the earth as a

gift from God, whose use must be responsible. Similarly, the principle of ahimsa in Hinduism and Buddhism teaches the compassionate treatment of all living beings, which reinforces the ecological outlook in the spiritual tradition. However, this study also shows that there is a variation in the level of understanding. This is influenced by religious education, access to information, and cultural context. These findings are in line with the opinion of [\(Tilbury, 2007\)](#), which states that religiosity-based environmental awareness can be influenced by the level of ecological literacy in a given community.

2. Religiosity-Based Environmental Practices

Environmental practices based on religiosity values were found to be diverse. Participants reported that they were involved in activities such as tree planting, waste management, and water conservation, which were integrated with religious rituals. For example, Islamic boarding schools often start environmental activities with joint prayers, while Hindu communities in Bali associate river preservation with the melukat ritual.

Table 2. Religiosity-Based Environmental Practices

Types of Environment Community		Examples of Practice
Tree Planting	Eco-Green Islamic Boarding School	Green Program: Ramadan planting trees during the fasting month.
Waste Management	Green Church	"Zero Waste Sunday" campaign in the church environment.
Water Conservation	Resource Hindu Community in Bali	The ritual of melukat in a clean and well-maintained river.
Environmental Education for Children	Buddhist Community	Teaching children the importance of maintaining local ecosystems.

The results of the study show that various environmental practices based on religious values have been carried out by the community, such as tree planting, waste management, and water resource conservation. This practice is not only part of religious rituals but also reflects spiritual responsibility towards nature. For example, the *Green Ramadan* at the eco-green pesantren combines Islamic teachings on sustainability with concrete actions in tree planting. It reflects the theory *Faith-Based Environmentalism*, which states that religion can be a driving force in environmental action [\(Smith & Pulver, 2009\)](#). In addition, programs such as "Zero Waste Sunday" in the green church show how the Christian community blends the Bible's teachings on resource management with waste reduction campaigns. These findings are also supported by research [\(Huriani et al., 2022\)](#), which found that religious communities involved in environmental movements were often able to motivate their members to act on their spiritual beliefs. However, these practices face challenges, such as a lack

of policy support and limited resources. This obstacle underscores the need for collaboration between religious communities, governments, and the private sector to increase the impact of religiosity-based environmental programs.

3. Challenges in the Implementation of the Value of Religiosity

Although the values of religiosity provide a strong foundation, there are several challenges in their implementation:

- **Differences in the Interpretation of Religious Teachings:** Some participants mentioned differences in the way of interpreting religious teachings related to the environment.
- **Lack of Policy Support:** Some communities complain of a lack of government support for faith-based environmental programs.
- **Limited Resources:** Many communities face limited funds and facilities to implement sustainability programs.

Table 3. Challenges of Implementing the Value of Religiosity

Challenge	Percentage of Participants	Description
Differences in Interpretation of Religious Teachings	45%	There are differences of opinion on how religious teachings are applied.
Lack of Policy Support	35%	The policy has not prioritized religiosity-based programs.
Resource Limitations	20%	Communities lack funds or facilities for activities.

One of the main challenges found in this study is the difference in the interpretation of religious teachings related to the environment. For example, although all participants understood the importance of protecting the environment, the way it was applied varied. This is in line with the view ([Fowler, 1981](#)), which states that differences in religious interpretation are often influenced by social and cultural contexts. The lack of policy support is also a significant obstacle. Previous research by ([Bebbington, 2006](#)) shows that environmental policies involving religious communities tend to be more successful if there is support from the government. In this context, a cross-sectoral approach is needed to integrate the value of religiosity into public policy and environmental programs. Limited resources are also an obstacle that communities often face, especially in implementing large-scale environmental programs. This shows that religious communities need technical and financial support to expand the impact of their programs. These findings support the opinion ([Sachs, 2015](#)), which emphasizes the importance of synergy between spiritual values, technology, and investment in achieving sustainability goals.

4. Integration of Religiosity Values with a Holistic Approach

A holistic approach that integrates the values of religiosity, science, and technology has been proven to provide more effective results. For example, eco-green pesantren that uses Islamic-based hydroponic technology has succeeded in increasing crop yields and water use efficiency. This supports the concept of ecological

modernization, where eco-friendly technology is combined with spiritual principles to create sustainable solutions ([Mol & Spaargaren, 2000](#)). Similarly, religious education-based environmental campaigns, such as the "Zero Waste Sunday" education in green churches, show a significant increase in environmental awareness and behavior. Research ([Tilbury, 2007](#)) emphasized that religious value-based education can be a powerful tool to increase environmental awareness, especially in communities that view religion as the center of their lives. In addition, this holistic approach helps to address the challenges of globalization and consumptive lifestyles, which often go against the principles of sustainability. By integrating religious teachings, technology, and education, communities can create a lifestyle that is more in harmony with nature without losing their spiritual identity.

Conclusion

This research shows that the values of religiosity have an important contribution in building sustainable environmental awareness and behavior. The spiritual values contained in religious teachings, such as the concept of caliphate in Islam, stewardship in Christianity, and the principle of ahimsa in Hinduism and Buddhism, provide a strong moral foundation to encourage humans to maintain a balance between social, spiritual, and ecological life. An understanding of these values creates an awareness that preserving nature is not only a moral obligation, but also a part of worship and responsibility to God. Religiosity-based environmental practices, such as tree planting, waste management, and water resource conservation integrated with religious rituals, prove that religion can be a driving force in mobilizing communities to care for the environment. However, the success of this practice is highly dependent on the level of understanding of religious teachings, environmental education, and support from various parties, including the government. Challenges such as differences in interpretation of religious teachings, lack of policy support, and limited resources show that a holistic approach and cross-sector collaboration are urgently needed. The integration of religiosity values with science, technology, and social approaches has been proven to be able to increase the effectiveness of environmental programs. This approach not only strengthens community engagement, but also creates more sustainable solutions in the face of global environmental challenges. For example, the use of environmentally friendly technologies that are aligned with religious teachings, as well as spiritual values-based education, have shown significant results in increasing community awareness and participation. Overall, this study confirms that the values of religiosity not only serve as a moral guide, but can also be a practical basis for building environmental sustainability. With a holistic approach that integrates spirituality, science, and policy, these values can be one of the solutions in overcoming the global environmental crisis. The research also opens up space for further exploration of how religion and spirituality can contribute to shaping a more sustainable future.

Suggestion

Based on the results of the research, it is recommended that the values of religiosity be more integrated into environmental education programs in various communities, so that their understanding and practice can be improved. Governments and religious institutions need to work together to develop policies and programs that support spirituality-based environmental action. In addition, cross-sector collaboration between religious communities, academics, and environmental practitioners is

essential to address challenges such as limited resources and differences in interpretation of religious teachings. A holistic approach that combines the values of religiosity, science, and technology needs to be continuously developed to create more effective and far-reaching sustainability solutions.

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