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ECOTHEOLOGY ORIENTED ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE MANAGEMENT IN MODERN PESANTREN IN EAST KALIMANTAN

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Abstract

This study examines how an ecotheology-oriented organizational culture is formed and developed in two modern Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in East Kalimantan, namely Trubus Iman in Paser and Al Azhar in Balikpapan. Using a qualitative multisite case study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 16 informants (eight per site, comprising leaders, teachers, and student organization officers), observation, and documentation, and were analyzed with the Miles interactive model supported by source and technique triangulation. Culture formation was read through Robbins' organizational culture framework, while culture development was read through Kotter's eight-stage change model. The findings show that ecotheological values, namely khalifah, amanah, mizan, and the prohibition of fasad, become shared meanings through the founders' vision, the exemplary conduct (uswah) of the kiai and teachers, and layered socialization of new students. These values are then developed through planning, organizing, implementation, and educational control that move students from knowledge to understanding, practice, habituation, awareness, and character. Two institutionalization patterns emerged: explicit-institutional at Trubus Iman and implicit-integrative at Al Azhar. Documentation of short-term wins is the weakest stage, and cultural embedding runs simultaneously rather than at the end of the change process. The study concludes that ecotheology endures as organizational culture when theological meaning is sustained by managerial mechanisms.

Keywords Ecotheology; Modern Pesantren; Organizational Change; Organizational Culture.

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INTRODUCTION

The ecological crisis has become a multidimensional problem felt directly by communities worldwide, ranging from rising global temperatures, melting polar ice, and sea-level rise to the growing frequency of hydrometeorological disasters such as floods, droughts, and forest fires (Pakaya et al., 2024). This crisis reflects a pattern of human–nature relations that tends to be exploitative and unsustainable (Suhaeb et al., 2025). Consequently, technical and regulatory approaches alone are not sufficient; a change in worldview grounded in ethical, moral, and spiritual values is required.

In Indonesia, ecological pressure is evident in deforestation, forest and land fires, and flash floods. In late 2025, floods in Sumatra were reported to have claimed more than 1,140 lives and displaced around 399,000 residents (Ilham, 2025). East Kalimantan is no less vulnerable. The expansion of coal mining, the conversion of forests into industrial and plantation areas, and large-scale infrastructure development place heavy pressure on local ecosystems. Deforestation and forest degradation in the province have been documented in scientific studies (Awaluddin et al., 2025), and JATAM Kaltim has warned of a rising risk of ecological disasters if a development pattern that relies on the exploitation of natural resources is not changed (Fortinusa, 2025).

In this situation, educational institutions are regarded as strategic actors in building ecological awareness. However, environmental education is still often technocratic and stops at mastering ecological concepts, waste management, or conservation (Salsabela et al., 2025), even though environmental knowledge does not always translate into behavioral change unless it is accompanied by the internalization of values (Suhaeb et al., 2025). A spiritual and theological dimension is therefore needed, namely ecotheology, a perspective that places concern for the environment as an integral part of faith and emphasizes harmony among humans, nature, and God (Mali, 2025). In the Islamic tradition, this idea rests on the concepts of *khalifah*, *amanah*, *mīzān*, and the prohibition of *fasād*, and religious education fundamentally regulates the relationship of humans with God, with one another, and with the universe (Abd.Rahman, 2025).

Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) occupy a distinctive position in this role. Modern pesantren combine the pesantren system with formal education so that graduates are spiritually strong and skilled in facing change (Neliwati, 2023), and round-the-clock residential life makes them an intensive space for habituating values. The Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs has also promoted the Eco-Pesantren and ecotheology programs in response to environmental issues

(Asmar, 2025). In institutional terms, values that are shared and repeatedly transmitted are what constitute organizational culture (Robbins & Judge, 2019). The question, then, is how ecotheological values are managed so that they become pesantren organizational culture rather than remaining an environmental program.

Previous studies have captured several sides of this problem. Eco-pesantren studies highlight ecotheology-based environmental management in pesantren in Lombok (Akrom et al., 2026), eco-pesantren programs that shape Islamic character and environmental awareness (Al Makrufah & Abror, 2026), the role of student religiosity in environmental awareness (Khoirurrijala et al., 2026), and a faith-based sustainability education model that integrates Islamic environmental ethics with institutional practices (Widodo, 2026). Menurut Muhyidin examined students' ecoliteracy in green pesantren (Muhyidin, 2025), while Abd. Rahman and Mafaza discussed environmental education and ecotheology in Islamic education at the conceptual level (Abd.Rahman, 2025) (Mafaza et al., 2025). Meanwhile, studies of organizational culture and pesantren modernization focus on the performance of Islamic educational institutions (Dewi et al., 2025) and curriculum transformation (Sari et al., 2025) without examining the ecological dimension. To the authors' knowledge, few empirical studies have read how an ecotheology-oriented pesantren organizational culture is formed and developed through the lens of organizational culture theory and change management, especially in East Kalimantan, which faces real ecological pressure.

Preliminary research at Pondok Pesantren Modern Trubus Iman Paser, which is also known for its productive waqf management (Ramadhan & Miftahul Huda, 2020), and Pondok Pesantren Modern Al Azhar Balikpapan showed that both institutions already carry out environmentally friendly practices, such as greening, waste management, and basic education on caring for nature. According to the initial findings, however, these practices were not yet fully integrated into their vision, mission, policies, and curricula. This article aims (1) to describe the formation of an ecotheology-oriented organizational culture in modern pesantren using the perspective of (Robbins & Judge, 2019), and (2) to analyze its development using Kotter's eight-stage model of change. Theoretically, this article enriches Islamic education management studies by positioning ecotheology as a value framework within organizational culture. Practically, it offers a reference for pesantren managers and policymakers in designing institutional strategies that internalize ecological values (Mujahidin et al., 2025).

METHOD

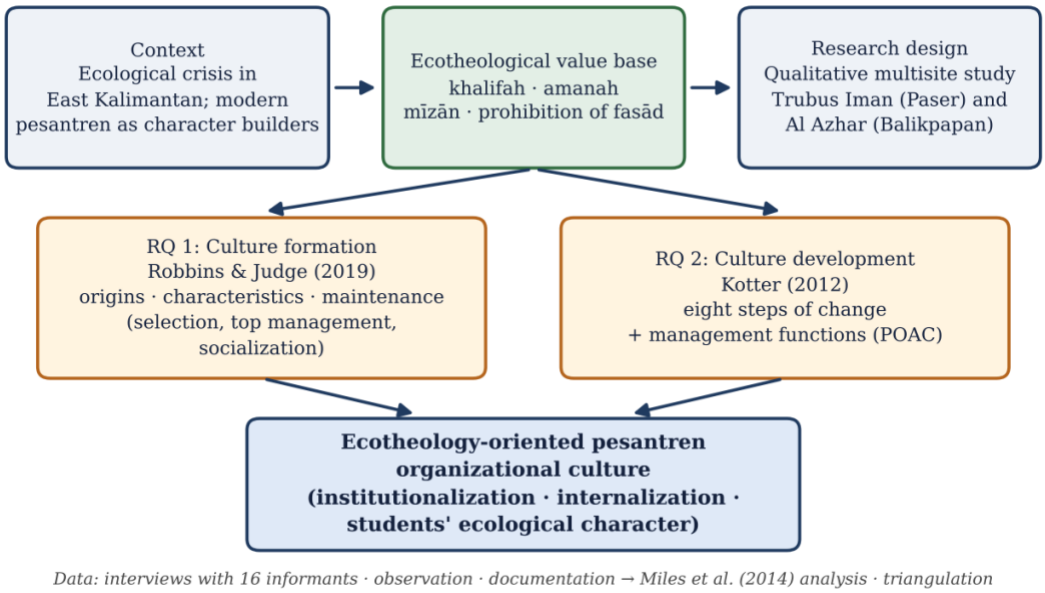
This study used an interpretive qualitative approach with a multisite case study design. The approach was chosen because the research focuses on meanings, values, and practices that unfold in a natural setting and cannot be sharply separated from their institutional context; the researcher acted as the key instrument (Creswell, 2015). Two sites were selected to allow cross-site comparison: Pondok Pesantren Modern Trubus Iman in Paser Regency (Site I) and Pondok Pesantren Modern Al Azhar Tritip in Balikpapan City (Site II). Both are located in different administrative areas of East Kalimantan, combine religious education with character building, and position environmental concern as part of Islamic teaching.

Primary data were obtained through in-depth semi-structured interviews with 16 informants, eight at each site, representing three layers of cultural actors. The first layer comprised founders, caretakers, or leaders as the source of values and policy makers. The second comprised teachers (*ustaz*) and madrasah heads as mentors and role models. The third comprised student officers of the student organization as technical implementers and recipients of guidance. The interview guide was organized into six clusters: the history and philosophy of organizational culture, planning, organizing, implementation of ecological culture, control and evaluation, and the concept of ecotheology and its transformation from theology to practice. The interviews were complemented by non-participant observation and documentation, including institutional profiles, vision and mission statements, strategic plans, and activity photographs. Preliminary research was carried out in December 2025 and the main interviews in 2026.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles Huberman, which comprises data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing, conducted before, during, and after fieldwork (Huberman & Miles, 2002). Transcripts were grouped according to the interview-guide clusters, mapped onto the two research questions, and then analyzed within each site and across sites. Data trustworthiness was pursued through source triangulation (leaders, teachers, and students) and technique triangulation (interviews, observation, and documentation). Culture formation was read using the framework of Robbins and Judge, the origins of culture, the characteristics of culture, the maintenance of culture through selection, top management actions, and socialization, and the ways culture is learned (Robbins & Judge, 2019). Culture development was read using Kotter's eight steps of leading change, positioned as an analytical analogy because the framework was originally designed for transformation in business organizations (Mujahidin et al., 2025). The research

framework is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research Framework



Source: Authors' construction

Two data limitations should be noted. First, information on productive ecological activities at Site II still partly rests on informants' perceptions and requires confirmation through observation and documentation. Second, the selection of students and teachers as a culture-maintenance mechanism was not explicitly explored at either site. Both are treated as data limits, not as evidence that such practices do not exist.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The findings are presented according to the two research questions, namely the formation and the development of an ecotheology-oriented organizational culture, preceded by a brief description of the two sites. Informant quotations are presented anonymously by role.

Description of the Two Sites

Pondok Pesantren Trubus Iman developed from 2010–2011 out of a social and educational institution oriented toward strengthening the values of the Qur'an, hadith, and moral character, with levels ranging from MTs and MA to the *muadalah* education unit (interview with Trubus Iman leader, 2026). Its vision, "to become an Islamic educational institution that produces a generation that thinks modernly and has Qur'anic character," is carried out in a 24-hour pesantren system. Its ecological orientation is articulated explicitly through the motto *Green, Clean, and Healthy*, which

goes hand in hand with the development of productive waqf (Ramadhan & Miftahul Huda, 2020), agribusiness, and a producer cooperative.

Pondok Pesantren Modern Al Azhar Tritip oversees a junior and a senior high school and combines the national curriculum with a distinctive pesantren curriculum that refers to TMI Al-Amien Prenduan and KMI Gontor, based on character building. The pesantren has neither a specific ecotheology document nor a separate ecological slogan. Environmental values are embedded in cleanliness regulations, discipline, student guidance, and pesantren programs (interview with Al Azhar caretaker, 2026).

Formation of Ecotheology-Oriented Organizational Culture

Trubus Iman's leader named six basic values meant to function as a unit: sincerity, trust (*amanah*) and responsibility, discipline and exemplary conduct, togetherness and mutual cooperation, self-reliance, and care for nature as part of faith. Al Azhar's caretaker emphasized faith, morals, sincerity, discipline, trust, responsibility, self-reliance, togetherness, and care, to which a teacher added honesty and environmental concern specifically. At both sites, the environment is not positioned as an add-on program. Trubus Iman's leader stated, "Ecotheology is not enough to be taught in religious study sessions or delivered through sermons; it must become an organizational culture that lives in the daily life of the pesantren."

The theological foundations are identical. Nature is seen as a trust from God and a sign of His greatness, so pesantren education builds not only the relationship with God (*hablum minallah*) and with fellow humans (*hablum minannas*) but also a responsible relationship with nature (*hablum minal 'alam*). The scriptural references include QS. Al-Baqarah: 30, QS. Al-A'raf: 56, QS. Ar-Rum: 41, QS. Al-A'raf: 31 (particularly at Al Azhar), and hadith on cleanliness. The translation of these theological concepts into behavior is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Ecotheological Concepts and Their Translation into Behavior at Both Pesantren

No	Concept	Pesantren understanding	Behavioral manifestation
1	Khalifah	Humans are responsible for prospering and safeguarding the earth, not damaging or over-exploiting it.	Caring for the environment, keeping things clean, tending plants, not damaging facilities.
2	Amanah	Nature, water, plants, and facilities are God's trust that must be kept and accounted for.	Using water, energy, and facilities responsibly; managing waste.
3	Mīzān	Balance; using nature must not harm balance and sustainability.	Saving water and energy, avoiding waste (QS. Al-A'raf: 31).
4	Fasād	Pollution, wastefulness, and destruction contradict the function of stewardship (QS. Ar-Rum: 41).	Not littering; not damaging plants and facilities.

5	Ṭahārah	Purification is part of faith, extended to cleanliness of the self and the environment.	Duty rosters, communal work, cleaning rooms, the mosque, classrooms, yards, and drains.

Source: Interviews with Trubus Iman and Al Azhar leaders/caretakers, processed by the authors (2026)

Exemplary conduct (*uswah*) is placed as the most effective channel for instilling ecological values. Trubus Iman's leader stated, "We try to ensure that what is conveyed to students is also done by their educators, because pesantren culture is more easily passed on through example than through advice alone." Students at both sites confirmed that teachers and caretakers do not merely give orders but are also seen keeping things clean, maintaining facilities, and reprimanding when the environment is not clean.

The transmission of culture to new students takes place through orientation, regulations, duty rosters, and imitation of senior students. Trubus Iman summarized it as orientation, guidance, exemplary conduct, direct involvement, and habituation, while Al Azhar's caretaker described four stages: *instruction*, *imitation*, *habituation*, and *participation*. Reminders also flow in both directions because students remind one another. A Trubus Iman student described a shift in perspective, from seeing cleanliness as someone else's task to seeing it as a personal responsibility and part of a Muslim's character. A comparison of the formation aspects at the two sites is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Cross-Site Comparison: Formation of Ecotheological Organizational Culture

No	Aspect	Trubus Iman Paser	Al Azhar Tritip Balikpapan
1	Historical roots	Developed from 2010–2011 out of a social and educational institution; founded on the founders' awareness.	Grew along with the educational process; not one person's idea but a shared agreement.
2	Core values	Six values: sincerity, trust, discipline and exemplary conduct, togetherness, self-reliance, care for nature.	Nine values: faith, morals, sincerity, discipline, trust, responsibility, self-reliance, togetherness, care.
3	Ecological articulation	Explicit through the motto *Green, Clean, and Healthy* and an agribusiness orientation.	Implicit; embedded in character education, cleanliness, and discipline without a specific label.
4	Formulation and documents	Vision, environmentally friendly policies, environment-based learning, business units.	Regulations, task allocation, pesantren programs; no specific ecotheology document.
5	Role of the kiai	Source of values and role model; sets direction and policy.	Source of values and role model; the caretaker's attention is passed on by teachers and officers.
6	Transmission to new students	Orientation, guidance, exemplary conduct, direct involvement, habituation.	*Instruction*, *imitation*, *habituation*, *participation*; senior students as examples.

Source: Processed by the authors from interview data at both sites (2026)

Development of Ecotheology-Oriented Organizational Culture

In the planning function, both pesantren derive values from the educational vision and translate them into regulations, programs, and daily habits. Priority issues are determined by real needs and their impact on students' health, discipline, and education. The discussion is not held in a dedicated meeting but is included in the pesantren's planning and evaluation meetings. Al Azhar's caretaker added that the target of planning is not only a clean, healthy, and orderly physical condition but also a change in student behavior.

In the organizing function, there is no stand-alone ecology unit. Responsibility is attached to the existing management structure with clearly divided roles: the caretaker sets direction, teachers integrate values into learning and guidance, student officers arrange schedules and check implementation, and students act as the main implementers. At Trubus Iman, after the dawn prayer there are groups that clean the mosque, clean the yard and drains, sort waste, and tend the garden, while at Al Azhar the environmental function is placed within the cleanliness, health, or facilities section.

In the implementation function, values are applied through habituation: disposing of waste properly, duty rosters, communal work, tending plants, and saving water and electricity, which are linked to the prohibition of excess. Each activity is tied to the value behind it, for example cleanliness with purity and morals, and caring for nature with the human role as *khalifah*. Teachers integrate environmental themes mainly in moral education, jurisprudence, Qur'an, and hadith lessons, not as a separate subject. Trubus Iman adds greening and agribusiness as spaces for ecological education, while at Al Azhar productive activities are described as something that can be developed and still require field confirmation.

In the control and evaluation function, monitoring is carried out through direct supervision, officers' reports, and evaluation meetings. Success indicators include a clean and orderly environment, regular duty rosters, well-kept plants, and, most importantly, awareness of caring for the environment without being told. Rewards take the form of appreciation and trust, while sanctions are educational: asking for the cause, reprimanding, guiding, and then assigning a substitute task. When a program does not run, the pesantren traces the cause to task allocation, facilities, supervision, or student awareness and then improves the system. A comparison of management functions at the two sites is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. Cross-Site Comparison: Development of Ecotheological Organizational Culture

No	Function	Trubus Iman Paser	Al Azhar Tritip Balikpapan
1	Planning	Values translated into vision, rules, programs; participatory; priorities by urgency; discussed in planning and evaluation meetings.	Starts from the vision and students' needs; periodic agenda; target of a clean, healthy, orderly environment and behavioral change.
2	Organizing	Responsibility attached to the management structure; post-dawn group duty rosters; involves facilities managers and business units.	Environmental function in the cleanliness, health, or facilities section; groups by area of responsibility.
3	Implementation	Daily habituation (waste, cleanliness, water and energy, plants) plus greening and agribusiness.	The same daily habituation; productive activities still require field confirmation.
4	Control and evaluation	Direct supervision, officers' reports, evaluation meetings; appreciation and educational sanctions.	Mentors and officers, reports, evaluation against targets; appreciation and graduated sanctions.
5	Value transformation	Knowing → understanding → becoming accustomed → aware → culture.	Knowledge → understanding → practice → habituation → awareness → character.
6	Main challenges	Consistency, differences in character, facilities, busy routine.	Consistency, differences in character and prior habits, facilities, student turnover.

Source: Processed by the authors from interview data at both sites (2026)

Both pesantren describe the transformation of theological values into behavior as a gradual path. Trubus Iman calls it knowing, understanding, becoming accustomed, becoming aware, and then becoming culture, while Al Azhar calls it knowledge, understanding, practice, habituation, awareness, and character. Al Azhar's caretaker framed the core of ecological culture as follows: "The core of the pesantren's ecological culture is not merely 'students must be clean' but how students understand that safeguarding God's creation is part of their religious responsibility." Both leaders acknowledged a gap between values and practice and respond to it with habituation, supervision, exemplary conduct, and guidance. Supporting factors include leaders' commitment, teachers' example, clear regulations, and student involvement, while inhibiting factors are differences in students' character and prior habits, consistency of implementation, limited facilities, and a busy routine. Students reported that these habits carry over to their homes and communities, and Al Azhar's caretaker judged the success of culture by whether students continue the habits without supervision.

Cross-Site Patterns

The cross-site analysis shows six shared patterns: ecological values are sourced from theology; ecology is integrated into character education; the kiai is the source of values and the role

model; existing structures are used instead of creating new ones; control is educational; and transformation proceeds gradually toward character. The largest difference lies in the degree of explicitness and institutionalization, not in the substance of the values. Trubus Iman displays explicit-institutional ecotheology, in which ecological values are given an identity, a motto, and an institutional vehicle linked to business units. Al Azhar displays implicit-integrative ecotheology, in which ecological values are absorbed into norms of cleanliness, discipline, and moral guidance without a separate identity. The difference in the depth of evidence on productive activities should be read as a data limit, not as a conclusion that the practice does not exist.

Discussion

Robbins and Judge view organizational culture as a system of shared meaning held by members that distinguishes the organization from others. The data show that the shared meaning in both pesantren centers on the idea that caring for nature is part of faith and morals (Robbins & Judge, 2019). This meaning is what distinguishes pesantren culture from institutions that regard cleanliness merely as a rule. Ecotheology thus functions as the source of meaning, while cleanliness, discipline, and resource saving become its behavioral expressions.

The source of culture, according to the same framework, lies in the founders' vision, which is then projected onto members. This is consistent with the data: the orientation toward the Qur'an, morals, and self-reliance at Trubus Iman stems from the founders' awareness, and at Al Azhar the caretaker as founder is the source of values and direction. Notably, Al Azhar's caretaker said the culture is not one person's idea but has grown into a shared agreement. In the framework of Robbins and Judge, this marks a shift from a founder-carried culture to a commonly owned meaning, which is a feature of a strong culture. The view of Schein and Schein, that leaders embed and transmit culture through what they pay attention to, measure, and model is also visible in the kiai's position as both the source of values and the living proof of those values through *uswah* (Schein & Schein, 2017).

Culture maintenance rests on selection, top management actions, and socialization. On selection, the data do not reveal criteria for selecting students and teachers in relation to ecological values, so this remains a space for further research (Rohmah, 2024). Top management actions are clearly visible: the kiai sets direction, gives examples, reprimands deviations, supervises, and evaluates. Socialization is the richest data and can be mapped onto the three socialization stages (Robbins & Judge, 2019). At the prearrival stage, students bring different habits and levels of

awareness from their families, which both caretakers acknowledged as a source of differences in character. At the encounter stage, students meet regulations, duty rosters, and guidance, producing a gap between old habits and pesantren norms. At the metamorphosis stage, habituation and exemplary conduct turn compliance into awareness, as shown in the shift in the Trubus Iman student's view of cleanliness.

The ways culture is learned can likewise be found in all four of its channels. Stories appear in the narratives of the pesantren's founding and growth; rituals appear in the post-dawn duty rosters, communal work, and mutual cooperation; material symbols appear in a clean and green environment and the motto *Green, Clean, and Healthy*; and language appears in the use of the terms *khalifah*, *amanah*, *mīzān*, and *fasād* as a shared vocabulary for naming ecological behavior. This adds to previous studies. Muhyidin and Khoirurrijala highlight students' ecoliteracy and religiosity (Muhyidin, 2025) (Khoirurrijala et al., 2026), while Abd. Rahman emphasizes pedagogical aspects (Abd.Rahman, 2025). The present study shows that at the institutional level such awareness is sustained through repeated systems of meaning, role models, rituals, and language, in line with eco-pesantren models that link Islamic environmental ethics with institutional practices (Widodo, 2026), and with ecotheology-based environmental management in pesantren (Akrom et al., 2026). The findings also provide empirical data for the normative foundation of ecotheology that affirmed conceptually (Mafaza et al., 2025).

Kotter formulated eight steps of leading change, from creating a sense of urgency to anchoring new approaches in the culture (Kotter, 2016). The mapping of the data onto this framework is presented in Table 4. The mapping is interpretive because Kotter's framework is read as an analytical analogy for a directed change process in pesantren.

Table 4. Mapping of Ecotheological Culture Development onto Kotter's Eight Steps

No	Kotter's step	Evidence at both sites	Assessment
1	Sense of urgency	Theological basis (QS. Ar-Rum: 41); environmental problems seen as issues of education and morals.	Fairly strong; theological-pedagogical, not crisis-driven.
2	Guiding coalition	Caretaker, leaders, teachers, and officers; planning involves several parties.	Strong; formed structurally.
3	Vision and strategy	Ecological vision derived from the educational vision; strategy through motto, habituation, rules, and guidance.	Strong.
4	Communicating the vision	Religious study, advice, learning, orientation of new students, and exemplary conduct.	Strong; exemplary conduct as the main channel.

5	Empowering broad action	Students as main actors; clear roles and functions; facility constraints remain.	Strong, with structural obstacles.
6	Short-term wins	Appreciation and praise for disciplined groups; a cleaner, more orderly environment.	Moderate; no systematic documentation of achievements.
7	Consolidation	Routine evaluation yields improvements to scheduling, task allocation, and supervision.	Strong.
8	Anchoring in culture	Transmission from new students onward; habits carried home and into the community; behavior without supervision.	Strong; runs from the start, not only at the end.

Source: Authors' assessment based on interview data and Kotter's framework; interpretive

In the early steps (urgency, coalition, and vision), urgency does not arise from an external crisis but from the theological conviction that humans are responsible for corruption on earth, with QS. Ar-Rum: 41 serving as the binding verse at both sites. The guiding coalition forms structurally through the hierarchy of kiai, leaders, teachers, and student officers. The ecological vision is not formulated separately but derived from the educational vision, namely "thinking modernly and having Qur'anic character" at Trubus Iman and character education at Al Azhar. This strategy makes the vision easy to accept because it does not feel foreign to pesantren members.

In the communication and empowerment steps, exemplary conduct is the strongest communication channel, and students are placed as main actors rather than objects of policy (Nurhayati et al., 2025). Empowerment is not yet fully free of obstacles because limited facilities and a busy routine are still mentioned at both sites. The short-term wins step is the weakest point. Appreciation and naming disciplined groups as examples do exist, but the data show no systematic recording of early achievements, such as a before-and-after comparison of environmental conditions for a given program. This finding opens an opportunity for managerial strengthening by documenting and celebrating small achievements to sustain momentum (Shukla & Arora, 2023).

Consolidation is seen in an evaluation cycle that does not stop at assessment but produces improvements to scheduling, task allocation, supervision, and renewed explanation of values. At the eighth step, Kotter places anchoring in the culture at the end of the process, whereas the pesantren data show a different pattern. Anchoring is pursued from the moment students enter, through orientation, regulations, and habituation, while the other steps run concurrently (Kotter, 2016). Cultural development in pesantren is therefore iterative and simultaneous rather than linear, which is reasonable for a residential institution where culture is learned through communal life around the clock. The success indicators are also consistent with Kotter's ideas, namely students who

care for the environment without being told and who carry the habits home and into the community.

Integration of management and ecotheology

The data show that management elements do not merely accompany ecotheological values but serve as the mechanism that makes those values endure. Trubus Iman's leader stated that rules without supervision usually do not last, and Al Azhar's caretaker pointed to the continuity of planning, organizing, implementation, supervision, and evaluation as a cycle that gives culture a mechanism of reproduction. Without that mechanism, theological values remain mere teachings; conversely, without theological values, cleaning activities become a technical routine. Ecotheology provides meaning, and management provides durability. This integration is summarized as a theological-managerial transformation model in Table 5.

Table 5. Theological-Managerial Transformation Model of Pesantren Ecological Culture

No	Stage	Supporting Managerial Mechanism	Main Actors	Management Function
1	Knowledge	Religious study, Qur'an and hadith learning, orientation of new students.	Caretaker, teachers	Planning
2	Understanding	Advice after worship; linking theological values to concrete activities.	Teachers	Planning, implementation
3	Practice	Duty rosters, communal work, plant care, group allocation.	Students, officers	Organizing, implementation
4	Habituation	Daily repetition, schedules, checks, exemplary conduct of teachers and seniors.	Officers, teachers, seniors	Implementation, supervision
5	Awareness	Educational reprimands, mutual reminders, appreciation, evaluation, renewed explanation of values.	Officers, teachers, fellow students	Control, evaluation
6	Character	Behavior without being told or supervised; carried home and into the community.	Students	Outcome of the management cycle

Source: Authors' construction based on data from both sites (2026)

The model in Table 5 shows that each stage of the transformation is supported by a specific managerial mechanism. Without that support, the early stages stop at knowledge. The two institutionalization patterns found also carry managerial consequences. The explicit-institutional pattern strengthens identity and productive ecological activities, while the implicit-integrative pattern strengthens integration with character education but is harder to recognize and evaluate because it has no dedicated document or indicator. This conjecture needs to be tested further through observation and document review.

These findings have theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the source of culture in pesantren is not only the founders' vision but also a transcendental source in the form of

revealed values adopted as shared meaning, and socialization takes place mainly through exemplary conduct and imitation in residential life. In Kotter's framework, urgency can be theological-pedagogical and anchoring in culture can run concurrently with other steps (Kotter, 2016). Practically, there are three opportunities for strengthening: documenting short-term achievements, formulating measurable indicators of ecological behavior, especially for the implicit pattern, and considering the inclusion of ecological values in student selection and the guidance of new teachers. The study has limitations. The data come mainly from interviews, and informants' answers that take the form of normative formulations may reflect ideal conditions, so the assessment of Kotter's steps and Robbins's characteristics is the researchers' interpretation. The two sites studied are also not meant to represent all modern pesantren in East Kalimantan.

CONCLUSION

Overall, this study shows that ecotheology functions as the value base, organizational culture as the social mechanism that internalizes those values, and change management as the mechanism that develops and institutionalizes them. Management of an ecotheology-oriented pesantren culture is therefore not merely management of an environmental program but the stewardship of values, people, systems, behavior, and organizational change so that concern for the environment becomes part of Islamic devotion and pesantren identity.

The findings are contextual to the two pesantren studied. Further research is advised to broaden the sites and strengthen triangulation through long-term observation and document review, to explore the role of student and teacher selection in maintaining ecological culture, and to test quantitatively the propositions on exemplary conduct, educational control, and institutionalization patterns. For pesantren managers, documenting early achievements and formulating indicators of ecological behavior can serve as practical next steps.

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