

Reorienting the Tafsir Curriculum through Ma'na-cum-Maghza Hermeneutics: A Sustainability-Oriented Blueprint for Islamic Teacher Education

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Digital Pedagogy; Ethical Innovation; Hermeneutika Ma'na-cum-Maghza; SDGs; Teacher Development	Islamic teacher development institutions (LPTKs) face substantial challenges in preparing professional educators who are adaptive to global sustainability issues. Traditional Quranic exegesis (Tafsir) courses within the Tarbiyah curriculum frequently lean toward textually atomistic and past-oriented approaches, causing a pedagogical gap in addressing contemporary crises. This study aims to formulate a structural reorientation of the Tafsir curriculum for Islamic education teachers by deploying contemporary hermeneutical framework. This conceptual qualitative study utilizes the Ma'na-cum-Maghza (meaning and significance) hermeneutical approach to reconstruct cosmological and social verses of the Quran, aligned with Qualitative Content Analysis to re-engineer the curriculum structure. The study reveals that extracting the contemporary significance (maghza) of Quranic verses provides a robust epistemological foundation for global sustainability. This paper offers a transformative blueprint for the Tafsir curriculum driven by ethical innovation, digital pedagogy, and global justice. The shifting paradigm from past-meaning to future-significance ensures that prospective Islamic teachers possess high ecological and social literacy, crucial for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Target 4.7.
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INTRODUCTION

The global commitment toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has significantly transformed the orientation of educational institutions worldwide. Education is no longer perceived merely as a mechanism for knowledge transmission but also as a strategic instrument for cultivating ecological awareness, social responsibility, global citizenship, and ethical leadership. This commitment is explicitly articulated in SDG 4.7, which emphasizes the importance of integrating sustainable development, human rights, environmental responsibility, and global citizenship into educational systems.¹ Consequently, higher education institutions are increasingly required to prepare graduates capable of responding to contemporary global challenges through innovative, interdisciplinary, and transformative approaches.

Within the context of Islamic higher education, these global demands present both significant opportunities and continuing challenges. Islamic Teacher Education Institutions (Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan Islam—LPTKI) occupy a strategic position in preparing future educators who are expected to integrate Islamic values with contemporary societal needs. In recent years, numerous Islamic higher education institutions have undertaken curriculum reforms by incorporating outcome-based education, digital learning, interdisciplinary approaches, and sustainability-oriented educational perspectives into teacher education programs, reflecting broader efforts to align Islamic education with contemporary educational transformations while maintaining its religious foundations. Nevertheless, the implementation of these reforms remains uneven across institutions and disciplines. Within Tafsir education in particular, curriculum innovation has largely emphasized pedagogical improvement and instructional adaptation, whereas comparatively limited attention has been devoted to reconstructing the epistemological foundations through which Quranic interpretation can systematically generate sustainability-oriented teacher competencies.² This challenge becomes increasingly urgent amid the escalation of environmental crises, widening social inequalities, technological disruption, and cultural fragmentation that characterize the twenty-first century. Accordingly, recent scholarship argues that the long-term relevance of Islamic higher education depends not merely on curricular innovation but also on the ability of Islamic disciplines to reinterpret their

¹ UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives* (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2021), 18.

² Sahiron Syamsuddin, “Kontribusi Hermeneutika Ma’na-cum-Maghza dalam Penafsiran Al-Qur’an Kontemporer,” *Suhuf* 13, no. 2 (2020):93-106.

intellectual traditions in ways that respond constructively to contemporary global challenges while preserving their normative and scholarly integrity.³

Despite various curriculum reforms implemented in Islamic higher education, the integration of sustainability-oriented competencies within core Islamic disciplines remains relatively limited. One of the most notable examples can be observed in the teaching of Quranic exegesis (Tafsir), which continues to serve as a foundational subject within Tarbiyah faculties. In many cases, Tafsir courses remain predominantly oriented toward linguistic analysis, historical contexts of revelation, and the transmission of classical exegetical traditions.⁴ While these approaches are indispensable for preserving the authenticity of Islamic scholarship, they frequently position Quranic interpretation within a historical framework that is insufficiently connected to contemporary societal realities. Consequently, students often acquire substantial textual knowledge yet encounter difficulties when translating Quranic teachings into practical pedagogical responses to modern challenges.

Previous studies concerning the relationship between Islamic education and sustainable development have demonstrated the growing relevance of sustainability discourse within Muslim educational contexts. Research on the implementation of SDGs in Islamic educational institutions has highlighted various efforts to integrate sustainability values into institutional management, curriculum development, and character education programs.⁵ Likewise, studies on curriculum reform within Islamic higher education have underlined the necessity of preparing educators capable of addressing emerging global issues through interdisciplinary perspectives.⁶ Nevertheless, these studies primarily focus on practical implementation and institutional transformation. Relatively little attention has been devoted to reconstructing the epistemological foundations of core disciplinary subjects that shape the professional identity and competence of future teachers.

Another significant body of literature has focused on ecological, social, and ethical interpretations of the Quran. Inspired by the intellectual contributions of Fazlur Rahman and further developed by contemporary Muslim scholars, numerous studies have

³ M. Amin Abdullah, "Islamic Studies in Higher Education in Indonesia: Challenges and Impact on Contemporary Global Issues," *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 58, no. 2 (2020): 372; UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable ...*, 18.

⁴ Abdul Mustaqim, "Konstruksi Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer dan Relevansinya bagi Pembelajaran di Perguruan Tinggi." *Cendekia: Jurnal Kependidikan dan Kemasyarakatan* 17, no. 2 (2019): hal. 215.

⁵ N. Nahar et al., "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Islamic Higher Education Curriculum: A Systematic Review." *Edukasia: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 19, no. 1 (2024): hal. 80.

⁶ M. Raharjo, "Reorientasi Kurikulum Fakultas Tarbiyah Menghadapi Agenda Pembangunan Berkelanjutan 2030."

demonstrated that Quranic teachings provide substantial foundations for environmental stewardship, social justice, and sustainable development.⁷ Research conducted by Mujiyono Abdillah, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Mohammad Hashim Kamali, and other scholars has successfully established that Islamic teachings contain profound ecological and ethical principles relevant to contemporary sustainability concerns.⁸ Furthermore, recent developments in contextual Quranic interpretation, particularly through the Ma'na-cum-Maghza approach, have emphasized the importance of connecting historical meaning with contemporary significance in order to maintain the Quran's relevance across changing social realities.

Although these studies have made valuable contributions, a critical gap remains evident. Existing scholarship on Islamic education and SDGs generally concentrates on policy implementation and institutional practices, whereas studies on ecological and contextual Quranic interpretation are largely confined to the production of normative theological and ethical discourses. As a result, there remains limited scholarly attention devoted to transforming contemporary Quranic hermeneutics into a systematic pedagogical framework capable of reshaping the curriculum structure of Tafsir courses for prospective teachers. In other words, the connection between contemporary Quranic interpretation, sustainability-oriented education, and teacher professional formation remains insufficiently explored.

This article argues that the Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutical approach offers a promising framework for addressing this epistemological and pedagogical challenge. By emphasizing the dialectical relationship between historical meaning (ma'na) and contemporary significance (maghza), the approach enables Quranic texts to generate ethical guidance that remains relevant to present and future realities.⁹ Such a perspective is particularly important for teacher education because it encourages students not only to understand what Quranic texts meant in the past but also to explore what they signify for contemporary educational, ecological, social, and technological contexts.

Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its attempt to reconstruct the epistemological orientation of Tafsir instruction within Islamic teacher education programs

⁷ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), hal. 21

⁸ Mujiyono Abdillah, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, dan Mohammad Hashim Kamali. (Yogyakarta: Pemikiran Islam Press, 2018), hal. 45.

⁹ Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Kontribusi Hermeneutika Ma'na-cum-Maghza ...", 190.

through the integration of Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutics, sustainability ethics, digital pedagogy, and global justice perspectives. Unlike previous studies that primarily employed Ma'na-cum-Maghza as a hermeneutical framework for contextual Quranic interpretation, this study extends its application into the field of curriculum development within Islamic Teacher Education. Specifically, it connects four interrelated dimensions: Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutics as an epistemological foundation, Tafsir curriculum reconstruction as the educational domain, teacher competency development as the pedagogical objective, and Education for Sustainable Development (SDGs) as the contemporary orientation. The integration of these four dimensions constitutes the principal novelty of this study because it demonstrates that contemporary Quranic hermeneutics can function not merely as an interpretive method but also as a conceptual framework for designing sustainability-oriented Tafsir education..

Based on this background, the study aims to formulate a structural reorientation of the Tafsir curriculum within Islamic Teacher Education Institutions by employing the Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutical framework. Furthermore, it seeks to construct a conceptual model capable of fostering ecological literacy, social responsibility, ethical awareness, and digital competence among prospective Islamic teachers as essential capacities for supporting the realization of SDG 4.7 and broader sustainability agendas.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative conceptual research design aimed at reconstructing the epistemological orientation of Tafsir education within Islamic Teacher Education Institutions (Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan Islam/LPTKI) in response to contemporary sustainability challenges. Conceptual research is particularly appropriate for studies seeking to formulate theoretical frameworks, reconstruct existing paradigms, and generate new models of educational thought rather than merely describing empirical phenomena.¹⁰ In this context, the research was designed to formulate a transformative curriculum framework capable of integrating Quranic hermeneutics, sustainability ethics, and teacher professional development within a coherent pedagogical structure.

The study adopted the Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutical approach as its primary analytical framework. Developed by Sahiron Syamsuddin and further elaborated by

¹⁰ John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2018), 98.

contemporary Quranic scholars, this approach seeks to bridge the historical meaning (ma'na) of Quranic texts with their contemporary significance (maghza).¹¹ Unlike purely textual approaches that focus primarily on historical interpretation, Ma'na-cum-Maghza enables Quranic teachings to be dynamically contextualized within changing social realities while maintaining fidelity to the ethical spirit of revelation.¹² Such an approach is particularly relevant for educational studies because it allows Quranic values to be transformed into practical pedagogical principles capable of responding to contemporary challenges, including sustainability, social justice, and digital transformation.

The subject of this research consisted of selected Quranic verses addressing environmental stewardship, human responsibility as khalīfah, social justice, knowledge development, ethical conduct, and communal well-being. These themes were selected because they represent key ethical foundations frequently associated with contemporary sustainability discourse and the educational objectives of SDG 4.7.¹³ In addition, the study examined scholarly literature concerning contemporary Quranic hermeneutics, Islamic educational reform, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), curriculum innovation, teacher professionalism, and digital pedagogy. The combination of scriptural and academic sources was intended to facilitate a comprehensive reconstruction of Tafsir learning within teacher education programs.

Primary data were derived from the Quran and supported by classical and contemporary tafsir literature that discusses both the historical context and broader ethical implications of relevant verses. Secondary data consisted of scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, international policy documents, UNESCO educational frameworks, and recent studies concerning curriculum transformation in Islamic higher education.¹⁴ Particular attention was given to contemporary discussions on sustainability-oriented education, ecological ethics in Islam, and professional competency development among prospective teachers.¹⁵

Data collection was conducted through a systematic literature review and document

¹¹ Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Kontribusi Hermeneutika Ma'na-cum-Maghza...", 185–204.

¹² Ahmad Syakur and Sahiron Syamsuddin, "The Evolution of Contextual Exegesis in Indonesia: Analyzing the Ma'na-cum-Maghza Approach," *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Hadis* 22, no. 1 (2021): 45–68.

¹³ 14 UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable ...*, 18.

¹⁴ M. Amin Abdullah, *Islamic Studies in Higher Education in Indonesia ...*, 365–398.

¹⁵ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Environmental Care in Islam: Textual Foundations and Contemporary Applications," *Islam and Civilisational Renewal* 12, no. 1 (2021): 8–27; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* (Chicago: Kazi Publications, 2020), 53.

analysis. Relevant academic sources were identified, classified, and critically examined according to their contribution to three interconnected domains: contemporary Quranic interpretation, sustainability education, and teacher professional development.¹⁶ The literature review process enabled the researcher to map prevailing scholarly debates, identify conceptual gaps, and establish the theoretical foundation necessary for curriculum reconstruction. Simultaneously, document analysis was employed to examine educational frameworks, curriculum policies, and sustainability competencies promoted within global educational agendas, particularly those associated with the SDGs and Education for Sustainable Development.¹⁷

The analytical process combined Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) with the Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutical framework. Qualitative Content Analysis was selected because it facilitates the systematic identification, categorization, and interpretation of meanings embedded within textual data.¹⁸ The analysis was conducted through four stages. First, relevant Quranic verses were identified and examined to determine their historical meanings (ma'na) through engagement with classical and contemporary exegetical sources. Second, the contemporary significance (maghza) of these verses was extracted by relating their ethical messages to present-day sustainability challenges and educational needs. Third, the resulting thematic insights were categorized into competency domains associated with ecological literacy, social responsibility, ethical awareness, digital competence, and global citizenship. Finally, these domains were synthesized into a conceptual blueprint for the reorientation of the Tafsir curriculum within Islamic teacher education institutions.

To strengthen analytical validity, the study employed theoretical triangulation by comparing perspectives derived from Quranic hermeneutics, sustainability education theory, curriculum studies, and contemporary Islamic educational thought.¹⁹ This interdisciplinary strategy was intended to ensure that the proposed curriculum model was not only grounded in Quranic ethical principles but also aligned with current educational developments and global sustainability agendas. Through this methodological framework, the study seeks to generate a transformative curriculum blueprint that repositions Tafsir as a dynamic

¹⁶ Randolph H. Thrasher, "Systematic Literature Reviews and Conceptual Research in Educational Studies," *Educational Research Review* 15 (2021): 77–91.

¹⁷ UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals*, 18.

¹⁸ Philipp Mayring, *Qualitative Content Analysis: Theoretical Foundation, Basic Procedures and Software Solution* (Klagenfurt: SSOAR, 2014), 35.

¹⁹ Norman K. Denzin, *The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 67.

instrument for cultivating sustainability-oriented competencies among future Islamic educators.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Reinterpreting Sustainability Verses through the Ma'na-cum-Maghza Framework

The first finding of this study demonstrates that the Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutical approach provides a productive methodological framework for reinterpreting Quranic teachings in relation to contemporary sustainability challenges. Unlike conventional exegetical approaches that frequently emphasize the historical meaning of the text, Ma'na-cum-Maghza seeks to establish a dynamic relationship between the original context of revelation and its contemporary significance. Through this perspective, Quranic verses are not understood merely as historical guidance for seventh-century Arabian society but as ethical resources capable of addressing present and future human concerns.²⁰

The analysis of sustainability-related verses reveals several interconnected ethical foundations. The concept of human stewardship (*khilāfah*) articulated in Q.S. al-Baqarah [2]:30, for instance, historically refers to humanity's delegated responsibility before God. However, when interpreted through the Ma'na-cum-Maghza framework, the broader significance of this concept extends beyond theological representation toward ecological responsibility, environmental governance, and sustainable resource management. In contemporary contexts marked by climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation, the maghza of *khilāfah* points toward an ethical obligation to preserve ecological balance and promote intergenerational justice.²¹

Similarly, the Quranic principle of balance (*mīzān*) found in Q.S. al-Rahman [55]:7–9 acquires renewed significance when examined within contemporary sustainability discourse. Historically associated with divine order and cosmic harmony, the concept may be interpreted today as an ethical foundation for sustainable development that rejects exploitative economic practices and environmental destruction. This interpretation resonates strongly with modern sustainability theories emphasizing equilibrium between economic growth, social welfare, and ecological preservation.²²

²⁰ Sahiron Syamsuddin, “Kontribusi Hermeneutika Ma'na-cum-Maghza ...”, 185–204.

²¹ Ahmad Syakur and Sahiron Syamsuddin, “The Evolution of Contextual Exegesis in Indonesia, 45–68; Mohammad Hashim Kamali, “Environmental Care in Islam, 8–27.

²² Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* ..., 53; Mujiyono Abdillah, *Fiqh Lingkungan: Teologi Islam terhadap Krisis Ekologi Kontemporer* , 45.

The analysis further indicates that Quranic teachings concerning justice ('adl), collective welfare (maṣlaḥah), and social responsibility provide normative support for contemporary discussions regarding social sustainability. Verses promoting fairness, compassion, and protection of vulnerable communities reveal that sustainability within the Quranic worldview extends beyond environmental concerns and encompasses broader dimensions of social equity and human dignity.²³ Such findings support previous studies emphasizing the compatibility between Islamic ethics and sustainability principles while simultaneously extending them through a future-oriented hermeneutical framework.²⁴

From the perspective of Ma'na-cum-Maghza, therefore, sustainability is not merely an external agenda imported into Islamic education. Rather, it emerges as an inherent ethical consequence of Quranic teachings themselves. The significance of this finding lies in demonstrating that contemporary sustainability values can be derived from the internal epistemological resources of the Quran without compromising the integrity of Islamic scholarship. This reinterpretation establishes the foundational basis for transforming Quranic studies from a predominantly retrospective discipline into a future-oriented educational framework capable of addressing global challenges.

From Quranic Significance to Sustainability-Oriented Teacher Competencies

The second finding of this study indicates that the contemporary significance (maghza) derived from sustainability-related Quranic verses can be systematically transformed into a set of professional competencies required for future Islamic educators. This finding represents an important shift in the orientation of Tafsir education. Rather than treating Quranic interpretation solely as a body of religious knowledge, the Ma'na-cum-Maghza framework enables the extraction of educational competencies that are responsive to contemporary societal challenges. In this regard, the Quran functions not merely as an object of interpretation but also as a source of pedagogical transformation and professional formation.²⁵

The analysis reveals that the ethical principles embedded within Quranic teachings correspond closely with the competencies promoted by Education for Sustainable

²³ Tariq Ramadan, *Radical Reform: Islamic Ethics and Liberation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 144.

²⁴ Halstead, "An Islamic Concept of Education for Sustainable Development," *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity* 12, no. 3 (2022): 110–117.

²⁵ Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Kontribusi Hermeneutika Ma'na-cum-Maghza ..., 185–204.

Development (ESD) and SDG 4.7. UNESCO identifies critical thinking, systems thinking, anticipatory competence, collaborative problem-solving, ethical responsibility, and global citizenship as essential competencies for sustainability-oriented education.²⁶ Interestingly, these competencies resonate with numerous Quranic values that emerge through the Ma'na-cum-Maghza interpretive process. Consequently, the significance of Quranic teachings can be translated into educational outcomes that are both religiously grounded and globally relevant.

The first competency identified is ecological literacy. Through the reinterpretation of concepts such as *khilāfah* (stewardship), *mīzān* (balance), and *iṣlāḥ* (constructive improvement), the Quran promotes an ethical awareness concerning the interconnectedness of humans and nature. The contemporary significance of these concepts encourages future teachers to develop environmental consciousness and to cultivate similar awareness among their students. Ecological literacy therefore becomes not merely a scientific competency but also a moral and spiritual responsibility rooted in Quranic ethics.²⁷ This finding supports previous studies arguing that Islamic environmental ethics provide a strong foundation for sustainability education while extending the discussion toward teacher competency development.²⁸

The second competency emerging from the analysis is social responsibility and global citizenship. Quranic teachings concerning justice (*'adl*), compassion (*rahmah*), consultation (*shūrā*), and communal welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) reveal that sustainability cannot be separated from social equity and human dignity. Within contemporary educational contexts, these values encourage prospective teachers to foster inclusive learning environments, respect cultural diversity, and promote peaceful coexistence among different communities.²⁹ Such competencies align closely with SDG 4.7, which emphasizes global citizenship education as an integral component of sustainable development.³⁰

The third competency relates to ethical reasoning and transformative leadership. The Ma'na-cum-Maghza analysis demonstrates that many Quranic narratives emphasize accountability, moral responsibility, and future-oriented decision-making. These values are particularly relevant in an era characterized by technological disruption, misinformation, and

²⁶ UNESCO, Education for Sustainable Development Goals, 10–22.

²⁷ Mujiyono Abdillah, *Fiqh Lingkungan: Teologi Islam terhadap Krisis Ekologi Kontemporer*, 45.

²⁸ Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Environmental Care in Islam ...", 8–27; Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man*, 14.

²⁹ Tariq Ramadan, *Radical Reform*, 144.

³⁰ UNESCO, Education for Sustainable Development Goals, 25–34.

ethical uncertainty. Consequently, future Islamic educators are required not only to transmit religious knowledge but also to guide learners in addressing complex ethical dilemmas through critical reflection and value-based judgment.³¹ In this context, Quranic interpretation becomes a means of cultivating ethical leadership rather than merely preserving doctrinal knowledge.

A fourth competency identified through the analysis is digital and adaptive pedagogical competence. Although digital technology is not explicitly addressed in classical exegetical discourse, the contemporary significance of Quranic teachings concerning knowledge acquisition, reflection (tafakkur), and continuous learning provides an ethical foundation for engaging with technological innovation.³² Recent studies on Islamic education have demonstrated that future teachers must be capable of integrating digital technologies into learning processes while simultaneously maintaining ethical and humanistic values.³³ Through the Ma'na-cum-Maghza framework, technological adaptation is therefore understood not as a departure from Islamic educational principles but as a contemporary manifestation of the Quranic imperative to seek knowledge and contribute positively to society.

The findings further suggest that these competencies should not be viewed as separate educational objectives. Instead, they constitute an integrated framework of sustainability-oriented teacher professionalism. Ecological literacy without social responsibility may result in technocratic environmentalism, while digital competence without ethical awareness may encourage the uncritical use of technology. Likewise, social responsibility without transformative leadership may fail to generate meaningful educational change. Therefore, the integration of ecological, social, ethical, and digital competencies represents a holistic model of teacher development consistent with both Quranic values and contemporary sustainability frameworks.³⁴

From a theoretical perspective, this finding extends previous studies on contextual Quranic interpretation by demonstrating that the significance (maghza) of Quranic teachings can be operationalized into measurable domains of teacher competence. While earlier

³¹ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity*, 21.

³² Abdullah Saeed, *Reading the Qur'an in the Twenty-First Century*, 89.

³³ Yusron Hanafi et al., "Transforming Quranic Learning through Mobile Applications: Prospective Teachers' Perspectives," *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning* 18, no. 4 (2023): 54–71; Hasan and Anwar, "Digital Pedagogy in Islamic Education: Balancing Technological Innovation and Ethical Values," *Journal of Islamic Education Review* 14, no. 1 (2025): 88–105.

³⁴ M. Amin Abdullah, *Islamic Studies in Higher Education in Indonesia ...*, 365–398.

research largely focused on producing contextual interpretations of specific verses, this study advances the discussion by establishing a direct connection between Quranic hermeneutics and professional competency formation. The transformation from textual significance to pedagogical competence thus constitutes an important epistemological bridge between Quranic studies and educational practice.



Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for Developing Sustainability-Oriented Tafsir Teacher Competencies through the Ma'na-cum-Maghza Approach

Accordingly, this study argues that the future of Tafsir education within Islamic Teacher Education Institutions should no longer be limited to the transmission of exegetical knowledge. Rather, Tafsir should function as a strategic instrument for cultivating sustainability-oriented competencies capable of preparing future educators to address environmental, social, technological, and ethical challenges. This transformation represents a crucial step toward realizing the educational aspirations embedded within SDG 4.7 while simultaneously preserving the normative foundations of Islamic scholarship

Reconstructing the Epistemological Orientation of Tafsir Curriculum

The third finding of this study demonstrates that the integration of sustainability-oriented teacher competencies into Tafsir education requires a fundamental reconstruction of the epistemological orientation underlying the curriculum itself. The challenge identified in previous sections is not merely the absence of sustainability-related content within Tafsir courses but rather the persistence of an epistemological paradigm that primarily views Quranic interpretation as the transmission of established meanings derived from historical authorities. While such an orientation has contributed significantly to preserving the continuity of Islamic intellectual traditions, it often limits the transformative potential of

Quranic studies in responding to emerging educational and societal challenges.³⁵

The analysis reveals that conventional Tafsir instruction within many Islamic Teacher Education Institutions remains largely organized around the mastery of textual knowledge, exegetical methodologies, linguistic analysis, and historical contexts of revelation. Students are generally trained to understand what Quranic verses meant within their original contexts and how classical scholars interpreted them across different historical periods.³⁶ Although these competencies remain indispensable for maintaining academic rigor, they frequently position learners as recipients of established interpretations rather than active interpreters capable of engaging contemporary realities. Consequently, the curriculum tends to prioritize the reproduction of knowledge over the production of contextual understanding and transformative educational practice.

From the perspective of Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutics, such a curriculum orientation represents only one dimension of Quranic learning. Contemporary Quranic interpretation requires a complementary emphasis on the extraction of ethical significance (maghza) capable of addressing present and future realities.³⁷ This shift does not imply abandoning classical exegetical traditions or historical scholarship. Rather, it involves extending the interpretive process beyond historical reconstruction toward the identification of normative principles and educational values relevant to contemporary contexts. In this regard, the objective of Tafsir education expands from understanding the Quran as a historical text to engaging it as a dynamic source of ethical and pedagogical guidance.

The findings suggest that this epistemological reconstruction requires a transition from a content-centered curriculum toward a competency-oriented curriculum. In conventional approaches, educational success is frequently measured through students' ability to recall exegetical opinions, explain linguistic structures, or identify historical circumstances of revelation. By contrast, a sustainability-oriented Tafsir curriculum evaluates the extent to which students are capable of translating Quranic ethical principles into practical responses to contemporary challenges.³⁸ Such a transformation aligns with broader developments in higher education, where learning outcomes increasingly emphasize critical thinking, problem-solving, ethical reasoning, and social engagement rather than mere content

³⁵ Abdul Mustaqim, "Konstruksi Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer", 211–230.

³⁶ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity*, 21.

³⁷ Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Kontribusi Hermeneutika Ma'na-cum-Maghza", 185–204; Ahmad Syakur and Sahiron Syamsuddin, "The Evolution of Contextual Exegesis in Indonesia", 45–68.

³⁸ UNESCO, Education for Sustainable Development Goals, 18.

acquisition.³⁹

A significant implication of this reconstruction concerns the relationship between revelation and contemporary knowledge. Traditional curriculum models often position religious sciences and contemporary disciplines as separate domains of inquiry. However, the Ma'na-cum-Maghza framework encourages a dialogical relationship between Quranic teachings and modern scientific, social, environmental, and technological knowledge.⁴⁰ Through this perspective, sustainability issues such as climate change, ecological degradation, social inequality, and digital transformation are not viewed as external concerns unrelated to Quranic studies. Instead, they become interpretive contexts through which the ethical significance of the Quran may be explored and actualized.

The analysis further reveals the necessity of shifting the educational focus from retrospective learning toward prospective learning. Conventional Tafsir instruction often emphasizes the question of what the Quran meant in the past, whereas sustainability-oriented education requires students to consider what the Quran signifies for the future. This future-oriented perspective resonates strongly with contemporary educational theories emphasizing anticipatory competence, systems thinking, and transformative learning as essential capacities for addressing complex global challenges.⁴¹ Consequently, Quranic interpretation becomes a means of preparing future educators not only to understand inherited knowledge but also to anticipate and respond to emerging realities.

Another important dimension of this epistemological reconstruction involves the repositioning of the learner. Within traditional content-transmission models, students frequently occupy a relatively passive role as recipients of authoritative knowledge. In contrast, a Ma'na-cum-Maghza-oriented curriculum encourages learners to become active participants in the interpretive process. Students are invited to critically engage Quranic texts, examine contemporary societal issues, and formulate educational responses grounded in Islamic ethical principles.⁴² Such an approach promotes reflective thinking, intellectual creativity, and contextual problem-solving, all of which are increasingly recognized as essential competencies for professional educators in the twenty-first century.

³⁹ John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 98.

⁴⁰ M. Amin Abdullah, "Islamic Studies in Higher Education in Indonesia, 365–398.

⁴¹ UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives*, 28–37.

⁴² Abdullah Saeed, *Reading the Qur'an in the Twenty-First Century: A Contextualist Approach* (London: Routledge, 2014), 89.

Theoretically, this finding extends previous scholarship on contextual Quranic interpretation by demonstrating that hermeneutical innovation has direct implications for curriculum theory and teacher education. While earlier studies primarily focused on methodological debates concerning Quranic interpretation, the present study argues that interpretive paradigms inevitably shape educational objectives, learning outcomes, instructional strategies, and assessment models.⁴³ Consequently, the reconstruction of Tafsir curriculum cannot be achieved solely through the addition of new topics or sustainability-related materials. Instead, it requires a more fundamental transformation of the epistemological assumptions governing the teaching and learning of Quranic studies.

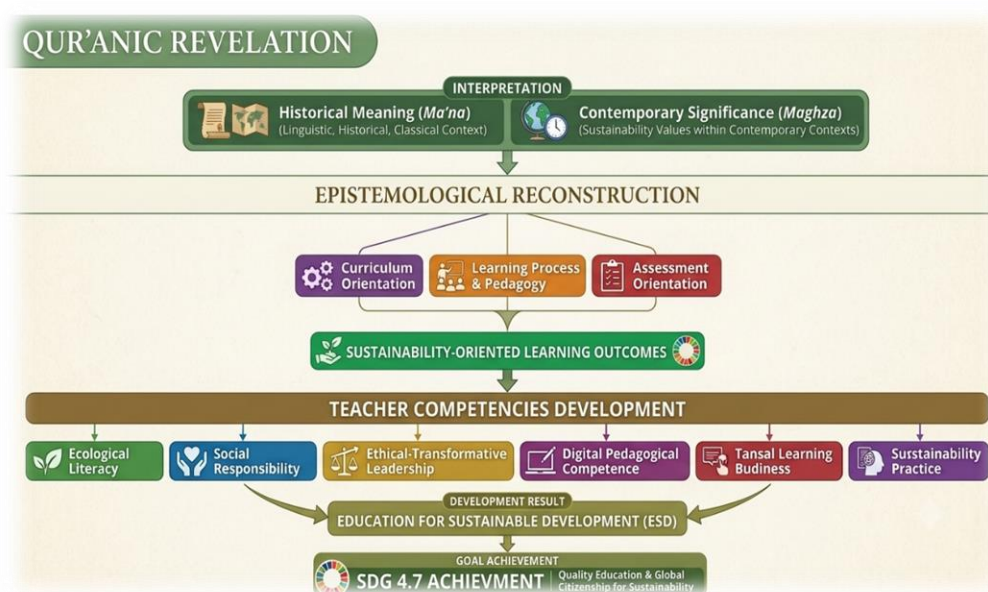


Figure 2. Epistemological Orientation of the Tafsir Curriculum Based on the Ma'na-cum-Maghza Perspective. *Developed by the authors based on the findings of this study.*

Accordingly, this study proposes a paradigm shift from what may be termed a “text-centered epistemology” toward a “significance-centered epistemology.” In the former model, the curriculum prioritizes the preservation and transmission of textual meanings. In the latter, historical meanings remain important but serve as a foundation for generating ethical significance relevant to contemporary educational realities. Through this reconstruction, Tafsir education is repositioned as a transformative discipline capable of cultivating sustainability-oriented competencies while preserving the scholarly integrity of the Islamic intellectual tradition. This epistemological shift ultimately provides the conceptual foundation for the curriculum blueprint proposed in the following section.

⁴³ Mohamad Nor Ichwan, “Towards a Purposive Interpretation of the Qur'an: Contextual Approaches and Contemporary Challenges,” dalam kajian tafsir kontemporer dan hermeneutika Al-Qur'an.

A Transformative Blueprint for SDGs-Based Tafsir Curriculum in Islamic Teacher Education

The final and most significant finding of this study is the formulation of a transformative blueprint for a sustainability-oriented Tafsir curriculum within Islamic Teacher Education Institutions (LPTKI). Building upon the previous findings, this blueprint emerges from a sequential process that begins with the reinterpretation of Quranic verses through the Ma'na-cum-Maghza framework, continues through the identification of sustainability-oriented teacher competencies, and culminates in the reconstruction of the epistemological foundations of Tafsir education. Consequently, the proposed curriculum model represents not merely a revision of course content but a comprehensive reorientation of educational objectives, learning outcomes, pedagogical strategies, and assessment frameworks.⁴⁴

The proposed blueprint is founded upon the assumption that the primary objective of Tafsir education in teacher preparation programs should extend beyond the mastery of exegetical knowledge. While knowledge of classical and contemporary interpretations remains essential, future Islamic educators must also be equipped with the capacity to translate Quranic ethical values into practical responses to contemporary global challenges. Therefore, the curriculum is organized around four interconnected domains of professional competence: ecological literacy, social responsibility, ethical-transformative leadership, and digital pedagogical competence. These domains collectively represent the educational manifestation of the contemporary significance (maghza) derived from sustainability-related Quranic teachings.⁴⁵

The first domain, ecological literacy, is derived from Quranic concepts such as *khilāfah*, *mīzān*, and *iṣlāḥ*. Within the curriculum structure, these concepts are transformed into learning outcomes that enable students to understand environmental sustainability not merely as a scientific concern but as a moral and spiritual obligation. Learning activities may include thematic interpretation of ecological verses, interdisciplinary dialogue with environmental sciences, case-based discussions on climate change, and project-based initiatives addressing local environmental issues. Through such approaches, prospective teachers are expected to develop both ecological awareness and pedagogical competence in

⁴⁴ M. Amin Abdullah, "Islamic Studies in Higher Education in Indonesia, 365–398.

⁴⁵ UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals*, 18.

sustainability education.⁴⁶

The second domain, social responsibility and global citizenship, originates from Quranic principles of justice ('adl), compassion (rahmah), consultation (shūrā), and collective welfare (maṣlaḥah). These values are translated into curriculum components that encourage prospective teachers to engage with issues of social inclusion, intercultural dialogue, peacebuilding, gender equity, and community empowerment. Rather than approaching such issues as external social agendas, the curriculum frames them as contemporary manifestations of Quranic ethical commitments. This integration reflects UNESCO's emphasis on global citizenship education while maintaining strong grounding within Islamic intellectual traditions.⁴⁷

The third domain concerns ethical-transformative leadership. The analysis conducted in this study demonstrates that sustainability challenges are fundamentally ethical in nature, requiring educators capable of guiding learners through complex moral and social dilemmas. Accordingly, the curriculum emphasizes reflective interpretation, ethical reasoning, critical inquiry, and value-based decision-making. Quranic narratives concerning prophetic leadership, accountability, trustworthiness (amānah), and social reform become important resources for cultivating transformative educational leadership. In this framework, future teachers are positioned not merely as transmitters of religious knowledge but as agents of positive social transformation.⁴⁸

The fourth domain focuses on digital pedagogical competence. The rapid expansion of digital technology has fundamentally altered the educational landscape, creating both opportunities and challenges for Islamic education. Consequently, sustainability-oriented Tafsir education must prepare prospective teachers to utilize digital technologies responsibly, critically, and ethically. Through the Ma'na-cum-Maghza framework, Quranic teachings concerning knowledge acquisition, reflection, communication, and wisdom are reinterpreted as ethical foundations for digital engagement. Learning activities may therefore include digital Tafsir projects, collaborative online learning, multimedia interpretation exercises, and

⁴⁶ Mujiyono Abdillah, *Fiqh Lingkungan: Teologi Islam terhadap Krisis Ekologi Kontemporer* (Yogyakarta: Pemikiran Islam Press, 2018); Mohammad Hashim Kamali, "Environmental Care in Islam: Textual Foundations and Contemporary Applications," *Islam and Civilisational Renewal* 12, no. 1 (2021): 8–27.

⁴⁷ Tariq Ramadan, *Radical Reform: Islamic Ethics and Liberation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 144; UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals*, 18.

⁴⁸ Fazlur Rahman, *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 21.

technology-assisted community engagement initiatives.⁴⁹

These four competency domains are integrated through a curriculum architecture that places Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutics at its epistemological center. Rather than functioning as a supplementary interpretive method, the hermeneutical framework becomes the principal mechanism through which historical meanings are transformed into contemporary educational significance. As a result, students are encouraged to move continuously between textual understanding, contextual analysis, ethical reflection, and pedagogical application. This process enables Tafsir learning to remain faithful to its scholarly traditions while simultaneously responding to emerging societal needs.⁵⁰

The findings further indicate that the proposed curriculum aligns closely with the transformative vision of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), particularly the competencies promoted within SDG 4.7. Systems thinking, anticipatory competence, normative competence, collaborative problem-solving, and strategic action are embedded throughout the curriculum structure and linked directly to Quranic ethical principles.⁵¹ Consequently, sustainability is not introduced as an external framework imposed upon Islamic education but emerges organically from the interpretive engagement between revelation and contemporary reality.

Theoretically, this blueprint contributes to both Quranic studies and Islamic educational scholarship. Within the field of Quranic studies, it demonstrates that contemporary hermeneutical approaches possess implications extending beyond textual interpretation toward curriculum design and educational transformation. Within the field of Islamic education, it provides a new model for integrating sustainability competencies into core disciplinary subjects without sacrificing religious authenticity. This contribution addresses a significant gap in existing scholarship, which has largely treated sustainability education and Quranic interpretation as separate domains of inquiry.⁵²

Accordingly, the transformative blueprint proposed in this study represents a new paradigm for Tafsir education in Islamic Teacher Education Institutions. The model repositions Tafsir from a predominantly retrospective discipline concerned with

⁴⁹ Yusron Hanafi et al., "Transforming Quranic Learning through Mobile Applications: Prospective Teachers' Perspectives," *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning* 18, no. 4 (2023): 54–71; Hasan and Anwar, "Digital Pedagogy in Islamic Education: Balancing Technological Innovation and Ethical Values," *Journal of Islamic Education Review* 14, no. 1 (2025): 88–105.

⁵⁰ Sahiron Syamsuddin, "Kontribusi Hermeneutika Ma'na-cum-Maghza ,185–204.

⁵¹ UNESCO, *Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives*, 24–39.

⁵² Abdul Mustaqim, "Konstruksi Epistemologi Tafsir Kontemporer , 211–230.

understanding the past into a future-oriented educational framework dedicated to shaping socially responsible, ecologically conscious, ethically grounded, and digitally competent educators. Through this paradigm shift, Tafsir education becomes an active contributor to the realization of Sustainable Development Goals while preserving its foundational commitment to the ethical vision of the Quran.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the reconstruction of the Tafsir curriculum through the Ma'na-cum-Maghza perspective offers an epistemological foundation for strengthening the relevance of Quranic studies within Islamic Teacher Education Institutions (LPTKI). Four principal findings emerge from this research. First, the Ma'na-cum-Maghza approach enables the reinterpretation of sustainability-related Quranic verses by connecting their historical meanings (ma'na) with their contemporary ethical significance (maghza). Second, this interpretive process provides a framework for formulating four core competencies required of prospective Tafsir teachers, namely ecological literacy, social responsibility, ethical-transformative leadership, and digital pedagogical competence. Third, these competencies necessitate a shift from a text-centered to a significance-centered epistemological orientation of the Tafsir curriculum, allowing Quranic interpretation to function as a transformative educational process rather than merely the transmission of classical exegetical knowledge. Fourth, the study proposes a sustainability-oriented curriculum blueprint that integrates Ma'na-cum-Maghza hermeneutics, teacher competency development, and the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into a coherent conceptual framework for Tafsir education.

The proposed epistemological orientation contributes a future direction for the development of Tafsir curricula by repositioning Quranic interpretation as a dynamic, contextual, and transformative discipline capable of responding to contemporary educational and societal challenges. Rather than limiting Tafsir learning to the preservation of textual meanings, the proposed framework encourages future educators to translate Quranic values into ethical, pedagogical, and socially responsive educational practices. Consequently, this study offers a conceptual foundation for developing adaptive Tafsir curricula that strengthen the role of teachers as reflective interpreters, transformative educators, and agents of sustainable development while preserving the normative and intellectual integrity of the Quran. Through this orientation, Tafsir education is expected to remain relevant to the

evolving needs of society and to contribute meaningfully to the preparation of globally competent and ethically responsible Muslim educators.

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