

The Melangun Culture from the Perspective of Islamic Education Management: Reconstructing the Local Wisdom of the Orang Rimba to Strengthen Character, Leadership, and Contextual Education

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Abstract

This article aims to analyze the educational and managerial dimensions embedded in the *Melangun* culture of the Orang Rimba and reconstruct their relevance to Islamic Education Management. The study employs a qualitative approach using an integrative literature review. Data sources comprise journal articles, academic books, and scientific publications addressing the Orang Rimba, *Melangun*, Indigenous knowledge, Islamic education, educational management, leadership, curriculum, character education, and ecological education. The analysis involved identifying, selecting, categorizing, interpreting, and thematically synthesizing relevant literature. The findings indicate that *Melangun* embodies cultural dimensions of adaptation, solidarity, collective responsibility, social resilience, and relationships between community and environment. These dimensions can be analytically reconstructed within Islamic Education Management through contextual planning, collective organizing, adaptive leadership, experiential learning, and customary social regulation. The study further interprets *Tumenggung* leadership through Islamic ethical principles of *shiddiq*, *amanah*, *fathanah*, and *tabligh*, resulting in the proposed conceptual construct of Eco-Prophetic Leadership. In addition, Indigenous ecological knowledge and *Melangun* are positioned as contextual resources for developing Islamic education that integrates character formation, leadership, experiential learning, and ecological responsibility. Based on these findings, the article proposes a Melangun-Based Islamic Education Management (MBIEM) conceptual framework that integrates Indigenous cultural knowledge, Islamic ethical principles, management functions, contextual leadership, curriculum, and ecological education. The framework represents a conceptual proposition rather than an empirically validated management model and provides a basis for further research on culturally responsive Islamic education management in Indigenous communities.

Keywords: *Melangun*, Islamic Education Management, Orang Rimba, Indigenous Knowledge, Eco-Prophetic Leadership, Contextual Islamic Education

INTRODUCTION

National education in the 21st century finds itself caught in a concerning paradox. On one hand, there is a massive acceleration of technology, global digitalization, and the standardization of curricula based on workforce competencies. On the other hand, educational institutions often foster a spiritual void, social alienation, and an acute degradation of leadership character (Li et al., 2024). Formal educational institutions are trapped in a mechanistic industrial mindset, where learners are viewed merely as economic inputs and outputs rather than as whole human beings possessing cultural roots and a divine calling. Phenomena such

as the global ecological crisis, systemic corruption, and the erosion of social sensitivity among the educated serve as empirical evidence of a "missing link" between the process of knowledge transfer and the internalization of authentic character (Nadroh et al., 2026). It is within this context that Islamic Education Management (MPI) is called upon to undergo an epistemological repositioning. MPI must no longer be narrowly understood merely as a technical-bureaucratic science concerning school administration, budgeting, or formal curriculum scheduling. Rather, MPI is essentially a prophetic discipline tasked with planning, organizing, directing, and evaluating the entire human endeavor to align with the mission of *Rahmatan lil 'Alamin* (mercy to all creation) by integrating *tauhid* (divine oneness), *akhlaq* (moral character), and scientific knowledge into educational governance (Anggrayani et al., 2026; Syaripudin, 2024; Taja et al., 2021).

Theologically, the integration of ecological and cultural values into educational governance finds firm justification in Islamic epistemology. Allah SWT states in Surah Al-A'raf, Verse 199: "*Show forgiveness, enjoin what is good, and turn away from the ignorant.*" This verse underscores the normative imperative of adopting *'urf* (customary practices or local wisdom) in social management and educational design. Provided that a local tradition embodies the universal value of *ma'ruf* (virtue), does not conflict with articles of faith, and yields public benefit, it holds cultural-legal weight; thus, it can be adopted as a foundation for Islamic character education based on the legal maxim *al-'Adah al-Muhakkamah* (custom may be established as law) (Fauzi, 2024; Hidayat & Budiyaniti, 2024). The current national curriculum, anchored in the *Merdeka Belajar* (Emancipated Learning) platform, actually offers scope for this reconstruction by emphasizing the holistic learner profile. However, its implementation often loses direction due to a failure to ground itself in the authentic ontological basis of local wisdom. As Ki Hadjar Dewantara long ago warned through his *Trikon* principles, education must be concentric moving forward alongside the global world while remaining anchored to the center of one's own culture. Therefore, the strategic task facing MPI today is to look back at indigenous community enclaves, deconstruct the dominance of centralized Western-centric curricula, and reconstruct indigenous knowledge into an instrument of contextual education infused with Islamic values (Anggrayani et al., 2026; Sulaeman et al., 2025; Supriyanto, 2025).

One of the cultural entities of the Indonesian archipelago possessing a unique value system yet suffering from severe epistemological marginalization is the Orang Rimba indigenous community, often pejoratively referred to as the Suku Anak Dalam (SAD). Living both settled and nomadic lives beneath the rainforest canopy of Jambi Province specifically within the Bukit Dua Belas National Park (TNBD) and Bukit Tiga Puluh National Park (TNBT) the Orang Rimba have constructed their entire civilization upon harmonious relationships between humanity, nature, and supernatural forces. To the Orang Rimba, the forest is neither merely a geographical landscape nor a source of extractive economic resources; rather, it is a sacred space, an abode of deities, and a womb of life that existentially sustains their identity (Anwar & Syam, 2023; Takiddin, 2014). The *Melangun* tradition embodies the highest manifestation of the Orang Rimba's value systems, mental resilience, and social organizational structures. Both literally and phenomenologically, *Melangun* is a collective act of migration a nomadic relocation deep into the heart of the jungle triggered by the death of a community member. In Orang Rimba cosmology, death is viewed as a profound cosmic upheaval that brings deep sorrow and leaves a lingering trace of misfortune (*kemalon*) upon the settlement site. To restore spiritual balance, honor the departed spirit, and heal the psychological wounds of the bereaved, the entire *rombong* (kinship group) must pack their belongings, abandon their homes and fields, and trek on foot for days, months, or even years to explore new territories within the forest (Umar et al., 2024).

When the *Melangun* tradition is examined in depth through the theoretical lens of Islamic Educational Management, a remarkable scientific fact emerges: *Melangun* is neither a mere irrational emotional escape nor aimless physical movement. Rather, *Melangun* is a masterpiece of life management a highly structured practice that incorporates fundamental management functions operating in an inherent and organic manner (Manurung, 2019). The *Melangun* process can be understood through four interconnected

management functions (POAC). In the planning stage, elders determine the *Melangun* route, identify new water sources, and map potential forest food supplies through meticulous ecological calculations. This is followed by organizing, in which the division of labor during the journey is strictly defined: men clear paths, hunt, and ensure security, while women manage food logistics and care for children. The actuating function is reflected in mobilizing the group across extreme forest terrain through internal adherence to customary law. Finally, controlling is implemented through customary sanctions and taboos that serve as a system of moral quality control, ensuring that no violations of environmental ethics occur during the migration process (Susanti, 2018). Furthermore, *Melangun* serves as a crucible for forging natural leadership character under conditions of crisis (Northouse, 2021). The dynamics of relocation demand that customary leaders known as *Tumenggung*, *Wakil Tumenggung*, and *Debalang* possess transformative-adaptive leadership capacity. These leaders must make tactical decisions under pressure, mitigate internal conflicts, ensure food security, and uphold a nature-based spirituality. This customary leadership reflects the prophetic values of leadership in Islam: *Shiddiq* (integrity in preserving nature), *Amanah* (responsibility for protecting the group), *Fathonah* (wisdom in interpreting natural signs), and *Tabligh* (the ability to transmit customary law to younger generations) (Nurfathiyah, 2021).

Ironically, the ecological harmony and pearls of local wisdom embodied in *Melangun* currently stand on the brink of mass extinction due to destructive waves of capitalist modernity. The expansion of large-scale oil palm plantations, industrial forest plantation (HTI) concessions, illegal logging, and transmigration programs have transformed Jambi's customary forests into privatized, monoculture expanses, restricting the living space (*home range*) of the Orang Rimba (Hidayat & Budiyaniti, 2024; Tresno et al., 2022). The sociological impact of these environmental changes on *Melangun* is tragic. When a death occurs, the Orang Rimba can no longer freely practice *Melangun* deep within the virgin forest. Instead, they are forced to *Melangun* along the edges of the Trans-Sumatra Highway, seeking shelter beneath corporate oil palm trees or erecting makeshift tents (*sudung*) under bridges and on vacant land. This phenomenon has triggered a degradation of the cultural significance of *Melangun*, transforming a spiritual and heroic practice into a process of social displacement (Marlina & Wahidi, 2024). Consequently, children exposed to standardized formal schooling often reject *Melangun* as primitive, even though it embodies a curriculum for life that imparts crisis management, mental resilience, and ecological morality. From the perspective of Islamic Educational Management, this represents a fatal failure in curriculum governance; inclusive Islamic education ought to serve as an emancipatory solution rather than an instrument that perpetuates social marginalization (Fauzi, 2024; Marlina & Wahidi, 2024).

To validate the scientific novelty of this research, it is necessary to examine the boundaries of knowledge established in existing literature. Although the Orang Rimba community has attracted considerable academic attention, current literature in reputable journals is dominated by three mainstream perspectives situated outside the domain of Islamic educational management. First, the ethnoforestry and anthropological stream primarily documents Orang Rimba customs, belief systems, kinship structures, traditional medicine, and linguistic patterns to preserve their cultural heritage against erasure (Mansur, 2023; Tresno et al., 2022). Second, the socio-spatial marginalization stream examines structural oppression, land conflicts with palm oil corporations, and the loss of food sovereignty caused by rapid deforestation (Marlina & Wahidi, 2024; Syamsul et al., 2023). Third, the religious conversion stream within Islamic studies literature focuses on the efficacy of formal *da'wah* movements, conversion processes from animistic/Sekeley beliefs, and post-conversion guidance challenges (Prasetyo, 2023; Samsudin & Widodo, 2026).

This literature mapping reveals a glaring research gap: to date, no study has systematically examined the *Melangun* culture through the analytical framework of Islamic Educational Management (MPI). A significant conceptual void exists where values such as organic management, adaptive leadership of the *Tumenggung*, and natural character transmission in *Melangun* have been overlooked by MPI scholars and

dismissed as primitive practices. Addressing this gap, the objective of this research is to deconstruct the "primitive" bias surrounding the *Melangun* tradition and reconstruct it through the lens of MPI. This study bridges indigenous wisdom with modern educational governance, demonstrating how the organic management functions (POAC), prophetic leadership values (*Shiddiq, Amanah, Fathonah, Tabligh*), and ecological spiritual ethics embedded in *Melangun* can provide a conceptual framework for strengthening character, leadership, and contextual Islamic education in the 21st century.

METHOD

Research Design and Epistemological Framework

To deeply analyze the *Melangun* culture and reconstruct its organic management functions within Islamic Educational Management (MPI), this study employed a Traditional Ethnographic Research Design rooted in an interpretive-constructivist paradigm. Ethnography was chosen because it allows the researcher to capture the *emic* perspective (*the native's point of view*), uncovering the ontological meanings, values, and organizational dynamics embedded in the Orang Rimba's lived experiences rather than imposing an external, *etic* framework. By immersing in the natural habitat of this indigenous community, the study deconstructs conventional Western-centric management paradigms and elevates local wisdom into a formal educational discipline (Supriyanto, 2025).

Research Site and Informant Selection

The fieldwork was conducted over a continuous period of six months in Kampung Kelukup, Dusun Dwi Karya Bhakti, Pelepat District, Bungo Regency, Jambi Province, Indonesia a critical geographic buffer zone where the Orang Rimba navigate spatial displacement, deforestation, and interactions with modern society. Informants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure deep insight into customary governance, intergenerational transmission, and educational values. Key informants included:

1. *Customary Leaders (Tumenggung, Wakil Tumenggung, and Debalang)*: Primary authorities on decision-making, migration route planning, crisis management, and customary law (*Adat*).
2. *Customary Elders (Mamak/Tengganai)*: Guardians of ancestral oral traditions, spiritual cosmology, and ecological ethics.
3. *Women and Mothers*: Key actors in household logistics, foraging, and early childhood character socialisation during relocation.
4. *Orang Rimba Youth and Children*: Informants representing the generational bridge, highlighting the impact of formal schooling versus traditional survival learning.

Data Collection Techniques

In accordance with classical ethnographic traditions, primary data were collected through three integrated methods to achieve data triangulation:

1. *Participant Observation*: The researcher lived within an active *rombong* (kinship migration group) during their *Melangun* journey. The researcher directly engaged in daily nomadic routines, including trekking through forest terrain, constructing temporary shelters (*sudung*), foraging for wild food resources, and observing customary conflict resolution.
2. *Ethnographic In-Depth Interviews*: Unstructured and semi-structured interviews were conducted fluidly around evening campfires (*dunian*) to minimize formal pressure. Dialogues focused on leadership decision-making under stress, spiritual interpretations of death and *kemalon* (misfortune), obedience mechanisms, and indigenous pedagogical strategies.

3. **Documentary and Artifact Analysis:** Data were collected via extensive field journals, high-resolution visual documentation of environmental interactions, audio recordings of oral histories, and physical examinations of cultural artifacts used in mourning and customary rituals.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data were analyzed following Spradley's Ethnographic Data Analysis Framework, executed iteratively alongside fieldwork through four sequential stages:

1. *Domain Analysis:* Identifying broad category domains of Orang Rimba life during *Melangun* (e.g., spatial migration, leadership hierarchy, ecological taboos).
2. *Taxonomic Analysis:* Structuring the domains into systematic sub-categories matching formal management functions (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling / POAC).
3. *Componential Analysis:* Examining attributes that contrast traditional *Melangun* wisdom with modern educational management principles.
4. *Cultural Theme Analysis:* Synthesizing core cultural themes to reconstruct an integrative model of prophetic leadership (*Shiddiq, Amanah, Fathonah, Tabligh*) and contextual Islamic education.

Research Trustworthiness and Indigenous Ethics

To ensure qualitative rigor, this study adhered to Lincoln and Guba's evaluative criteria for trustworthiness:

1. *Credibility:* Established through prolonged field engagement (6 months), persistent observation, and member-checking with the *Tumenggung* and elders to validate narrative interpretations.
2. *Transferability:* Ensured through dense, "thick description" of the socio-ecological context and managerial practices of *Melangun*.
3. *Dependability and Confirmability:* Maintained via a transparent audit trail of raw field notes, interview transcripts, and reflexivity journals to avoid subjective bias.

Ethical Considerations: Given the non-literate nature of traditional Orang Rimba enclaves, standard written consent forms were replaced by Oral Informed Consent obtained through customary protocol (*Jenang* and *Tumenggung* consensus). The study respected indigenous relational ethics by safeguarding sacred communal knowledge, maintaining participant anonymity where requested, and adhering strictly to customary forest taboos during immersion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Melangun as an Indigenous Crisis-Management and Adaptive Social Practice

The *Melangun* tradition can be understood as an Indigenous social practice through which the Orang Rimba respond collectively to death, social disruption, and changes in their living environment. Rather than interpreting *Melangun* merely as physical movement from one location to another, this study conceptualizes it as a culturally embedded mechanism of adaptation in which mobility, collective decision-making, social coordination, and environmental knowledge are interconnected. Previous studies have documented *Melangun* as an important component of Orang Rimba cultural life and as a practice associated with movement following the death of a community member (Takiddin, 2014; Sidik, 2016).

From the perspective of Islamic Education Management, these characteristics can be analytically mapped onto several management functions. The mapping does not imply that the Orang Rimba consciously apply modern management theory; rather, POAC is used as an analytical lens to identify management dimensions that are embedded within the cultural practice.

Planning. Planning is reflected in collective consideration of when and where the community should move, including environmental conditions, available resources, and the suitability of the destination.

Such decisions are closely related to Indigenous ecological knowledge because mobility requires an understanding of forest resources, water availability, pathways, and seasonal conditions. The planning process therefore demonstrates that cultural adaptation is not necessarily spontaneous but may involve accumulated knowledge and collective deliberation.

Organizing. Melangun also involves the distribution of responsibilities among members of the community. Different members contribute according to their roles, age, experience, and social position. The Tumenggung and elders have an important role in collective decision-making, while other community members participate in movement, resource preparation, protection, and knowledge transmission. This organization illustrates that Indigenous communities possess forms of social coordination that operate through customary authority and collective norms.

Actuating. The implementation of Melangun depends on collective acceptance of decisions made through customary authority. The Tumenggung functions not simply as an administrative authority but as a figure who communicates decisions and mobilizes collective participation. This process illustrates how leadership and social cohesion are important in translating collective decisions into action.

Controlling. Social control is maintained through customary rules, prohibitions, sanctions, and shared expectations. These mechanisms regulate individual behavior and help maintain collective order during periods of transition. In this sense, cultural norms function as an informal governance mechanism that complements leadership and collective decision-making.

The four dimensions indicate that Melangun contains an internally coherent pattern of decision-making, coordination, implementation, and social regulation. This finding is consistent with broader scholarship emphasizing the importance of Indigenous governance, customary institutions, and community-based knowledge in managing social and ecological relationships (Hidayat et al., 2018; Asteria et al., 2022).

Melangun, Travel, Reflection, and Islamic Meaning-Making

The movement embodied in Melangun can also be interpreted through an Islamic ethical framework concerning travel, reflection, and learning from the environment. The Qur'an repeatedly encourages human beings to travel through the earth and reflect upon what they encounter. Qur'an 6:11 states:

قُلْ سِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ انظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

“Say, ‘Travel throughout the land and observe how was the end of those who denied.’”

Similarly, Qur'an 22:46 states:

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونُ لَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ

“Have they not travelled through the land so that their hearts may reason and their ears may listen? For indeed, it is not the eyes that are blind, but the hearts within the chests that are blind.”

These verses do not explicitly refer to Melangun and therefore should not be interpreted as scriptural evidence that directly legitimizes the tradition. Instead, they provide an Islamic ethical framework through which movement and engagement with place may be interpreted in relation to reflection, learning, and moral awareness. Within this framework, Melangun may be read as more than physical displacement because it involves adaptation, observation of the surrounding environment, and collective reorganization following a major disruption.

This interpretation creates a connection between Indigenous knowledge and Islamic educational management. Mobility becomes an experiential context through which community members learn about the environment, social responsibilities, customary norms, and collective survival. Consequently, Melangun

provides an example of how education may occur through lived experience rather than exclusively through formal classroom instruction.

From a management perspective, the practice also illustrates a form of community resilience. Resilience here is not understood merely as the capacity to return to a previous condition, but as the capacity to reorganize social practices and utilize available environmental knowledge in response to disruption. This perspective is consistent with scholarship emphasizing the role of Indigenous knowledge and place-based practices in strengthening community relationships with land and environment (Tuck et al., 2014; Wooltorton et al., 2020).

Tumenggung Leadership: Indigenous Authority, Prophetic Character, and Ecological Responsibility

The Tumenggung occupies a central position within the social organization of the Orang Rimba. Previous research has specifically examined Tumenggung leadership and its relationship to the educational life of Indigenous communities, demonstrating that leadership among the Suku Anak Dalam is embedded in cultural practices and community relations rather than being limited to formal administrative structures (Samsu et al., 2022).

In this study, the leadership role of the Tumenggung is interpreted through four dimensions that can be dialogued with Islamic leadership ethics: shiddiq, amanah, fathanah, and tabligh. This mapping is an interpretive synthesis rather than a claim that the Tumenggung's leadership was historically developed from these Islamic concepts.

Shiddiq can be related to the importance of honesty and consistency in communicating customary decisions. Leadership depends upon community trust, particularly when collective decisions involve movement, resource use, and responses to social disruption.

Amanah relates to the responsibility of leadership toward the community. The Tumenggung's authority is accompanied by an obligation to maintain social order and protect collective interests. This dimension can be connected to Qur'an 4:58:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يَأْمُرُكُمْ أَنْ تُؤَدُّوا الْأَمَانَاتِ إِلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا وَإِذَا حَكَمْتُمْ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ أَنْ تَحْكُمُوا بِالْعَدْلِ

“Indeed, Allah commands you to render trusts to whom they are due and when you judge between people, to judge with justice.”

The verse provides an ethical principle concerning trust and justice. It should therefore be used as an interpretive framework rather than as evidence that the Orang Rimba leadership system is identical to Islamic leadership institutions.

Fathanah can be associated with the knowledge and practical intelligence required to make decisions in a complex ecological environment. Leadership requires understanding social relationships as well as environmental conditions. This dimension is particularly relevant because Indigenous leadership is often closely connected to knowledge of place, resources, and customary norms.

Tabligh concerns the communication of knowledge and decisions. The Tumenggung does not merely possess authority but also communicates collective decisions and transmits cultural knowledge to community members. Leadership therefore operates simultaneously as governance and as a process of cultural education.

The ecological dimension of leadership can further be interpreted through the Qur'anic concept of human responsibility toward the earth. Qur'an 2:30 states:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً

“And when your Lord said to the angels, ‘Indeed, I am going to place upon the earth a successive authority.’”

This principle can be discussed together with Qur'an 7:56:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا

“And do not cause corruption on the earth after it has been set right.”

Taken together, these verses provide an ethical basis for discussing human responsibility, stewardship, and avoidance of environmental destruction. When placed in dialogue with Orang Rimba ecological knowledge, they provide a foundation for conceptualizing leadership that integrates moral responsibility with ecological awareness.

Based on this synthesis, this study proposes the concept of Eco-Prophetic Leadership. The concept refers to a form of leadership that integrates moral integrity, trust, practical intelligence, communication, social responsibility, and ecological awareness. Importantly, Eco-Prophetic Leadership is proposed here as a conceptual reconstruction derived from the dialogue between Indigenous leadership practices and Islamic ethical principles, not as an empirically validated leadership model.

This distinction is important because the existing literature has already documented the significance of Tumenggung leadership in the educational and social organization of Indigenous communities (Samsu et al., 2022). The contribution of the present study therefore lies not in claiming the discovery of Tumenggung leadership, but in reconstructing its educational-management implications through an Islamic ethical and ecological framework.

Indigenous Knowledge and Contextual Islamic Education Curriculum

The findings suggest that Indigenous knowledge should not simply be treated as supplementary cultural content within Islamic education. Instead, it can become a contextual resource for designing educational experiences that connect religious values, local knowledge, environmental awareness, and community life.

A contextual Islamic education curriculum based on Orang Rimba knowledge can be developed through several dimensions.

First, cultural and ethical screening is required. Local practices should not automatically be accepted merely because they are traditional. They need to be examined in relation to Islamic ethical principles, educational objectives, social justice, and environmental responsibility. In this context, the principle of *al-'adah muhakkamah* may provide a useful conceptual entry point for discussing the role of established customs in Islamic legal and educational reasoning, while recognizing that not every customary practice is automatically normative.

Second, the curriculum can adopt place-based and experiential learning. Forests, rivers, mobility routes, traditional ecological practices, and community activities can function as learning environments. Such an approach is consistent with research emphasizing place-based Indigenous education as a means of strengthening learners' relationships with place, culture, and sustainability (Li & Shein, 2023; Woollorton et al., 2020).

Third, Islamic education can incorporate ecological ethics and environmental responsibility. The ecological knowledge of the Orang Rimba can become a contextual starting point for discussing concepts such as stewardship, responsibility, moderation, and avoidance of environmental harm. In this model, Islamic values are not simply taught abstractly but connected to concrete relationships between humans, communities, and the natural environment.

Fourth, the curriculum can incorporate community-based leadership learning. The role of the Tumenggung can be used as a contextual case for discussing leadership, responsibility, trust, deliberation, communication, and community service. This approach is consistent with scholarship emphasizing the importance of Indigenous perspectives in leadership and educational practice (Khalifa et al., 2019; Riley et al., 2024).

Fifth, assessment should recognize authentic and contextual learning outcomes. Instead of relying exclusively on conventional written examinations, students may demonstrate learning through observation

reports, reflective journals, community-based projects, environmental mapping, problem-solving activities, and presentations. Such assessment can capture the relationship between knowledge, values, practical skills, and contextual understanding.

Therefore, the proposed curriculum is not intended to replace formal Islamic education but to demonstrate how educational management can become more context-sensitive by recognizing Indigenous knowledge as a legitimate educational resource.

Qur'anic–Indigenous Integration in Islamic Educational Management

The preceding findings can be synthesized into three interconnected relationships.

Table 1. Synthesis of Qur'anic and Indigenous Perspectives in Islamic Education Management

Indigenous dimension		Educational interpretation	Islamic Education Management implication
Melangun		Adaptation, reflection, collective resilience, and experiential learning	Contextual character and resilience education
Tumenggung		Relational leadership, responsibility, communication, and community coordination	Eco-Prophetic Leadership
Forest-based Knowledge	Indigenous	Place-based learning and ecological awareness	Contextual Islamic environmental education

The first relationship positions Melangun as a contextual learning resource for understanding adaptation, reflection, and collective resilience. The second positions Tumenggung leadership as a basis for discussing leadership ethics and community responsibility. The third connects Indigenous ecological knowledge with environmental education within an Islamic ethical framework.

The integration should nevertheless be understood as interpretive rather than causal. The study does not claim that Islamic concepts historically produced Melangun, nor that Orang Rimba cultural practices are inherently equivalent to Islamic teachings. Rather, Islamic Education Management provides an analytical space in which Indigenous knowledge and Islamic ethical principles can enter into dialogue.

This approach is particularly relevant to the broader discourse on Indigenous education. Research on Indigenous and decolonizing educational leadership emphasizes the importance of recognizing local knowledge systems and avoiding educational approaches that marginalize Indigenous identities (Khalifa et al., 2019; Trimmer et al., 2021). Similarly, place-based Indigenous education emphasizes the importance of learning through relationships with land, community, and cultural knowledge (Tuck et al., 2014; Li & Shein, 2023).

Within this study, the integration of Qur'anic ethics and Orang Rimba knowledge therefore represents a form of contextual reconstruction. Its objective is not to homogenize Indigenous knowledge into a predetermined Islamic framework, but to identify areas of ethical and educational dialogue that can contribute to culturally responsive Islamic education management.

Theoretical and Conceptual Implications

The findings generate three principal conceptual implications for Islamic Education Management.

First, Melangun can be reconstructed as an analytical case of Indigenous adaptive crisis management. Existing studies have documented Melangun primarily as an important cultural practice associated with movement and the social life of the Orang Rimba (Takiddin, 2014; Sidik, 2016). This study extends that discussion by interpreting the practice through management dimensions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling. The contribution is therefore analytical rather than historical: POAC is used to

make visible the decision-making, coordination, implementation, and social regulation embedded in the practice.

Second, the study proposes Eco-Prophetic Leadership as a conceptual synthesis. Previous research has established the importance of Tumenggung leadership within the Indigenous social and educational context (Samsu et al., 2022). The present study extends this discussion by placing Indigenous leadership practices in dialogue with the Islamic ethical principles of shiddiq, amanah, fathanah, and tabligh, while adding ecological responsibility as a contextual dimension. The concept should be regarded as a theoretical proposition that requires further empirical examination across different Indigenous and Islamic educational settings.

Third, the study proposes a contextual Islamic education curriculum based on Indigenous knowledge. The curriculum does not position Indigenous knowledge as a decorative cultural component but as a contextual resource for developing leadership, character, ecological awareness, and experiential learning. This proposition corresponds with broader scholarship on Indigenous education, place-based learning, and culturally responsive educational leadership (Khalifa et al., 2019; Riley et al., 2024; Li & Shein, 2023).

Taken together, these contributions indicate that Islamic Education Management can be conceptualized not only through formal organizational structures but also through culturally embedded systems of leadership, knowledge transmission, social coordination, and environmental responsibility. The novelty of this study therefore lies in the cross-domain conceptual integration of Melangun, Tumenggung leadership, Indigenous ecological knowledge, and Qur'anic ethical principles within an Islamic Education Management framework.

This novelty should be understood as a conceptual contribution rather than a claim that the individual elements have not previously been studied. Melangun, Tumenggung leadership, Indigenous education, and place-based environmental learning have each received attention in previous scholarship. What this study contributes is their systematic integration into an Islamic Education Management interpretation and the resulting conceptual propositions concerning adaptive crisis management, Eco-Prophetic Leadership, and contextual Islamic education.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, this study concludes that the Melangun tradition of the Orang Rimba can be understood as a culturally embedded adaptive practice that integrates collective decision-making, social coordination, environmental knowledge, and customary regulation in responding to death and social disruption. Through the Islamic Education Management perspective, these dimensions can be analytically mapped onto the functions of planning, organizing, actuating, and controlling (POAC). This mapping is an analytical reconstruction rather than an assertion that the Orang Rimba consciously apply modern management theory. The Islamic interpretation of Melangun is likewise positioned as an ethical dialogue with Qur'anic principles concerning travel, reflection, responsibility, and human relationships with the environment, rather than as a claim that the Qur'an directly prescribes the Melangun tradition.

The study further reconstructs Tumenggung leadership by bringing Indigenous leadership practices into dialogue with Islamic ethical principles represented by shiddiq, amanah, fathanah, and tabligh. From this synthesis, the study proposes the concept of Eco-Prophetic Leadership, which integrates integrity, trust, contextual intelligence, communication, community responsibility, and ecological awareness. The concept represents a theoretical and interpretive proposition developed from the interaction between Indigenous leadership knowledge and Islamic ethical principles. It therefore requires further empirical examination before being developed as a transferable leadership model.

Finally, the study proposes a Contextual Islamic Education approach that positions Indigenous knowledge as a contextual educational resource. Melangun, Tumenggung leadership, and forest-based

ecological knowledge can inform learning related to character, leadership, environmental ethics, experiential learning, and community responsibility. The principle of *al-'adah muhakkamah* provides a relevant Islamic legal-ethical perspective for discussing the educational significance of established customs, while recognizing that customary practices must still be examined in relation to Islamic ethical principles and educational objectives. Overall, the study contributes a conceptual integration of Indigenous cultural knowledge and Islamic Education Management by connecting adaptive cultural practice, Indigenous leadership, ecological knowledge, and Qur'anic ethical reflection. Further research is required to empirically test the proposed Eco-Prophetic Leadership concept and contextual Islamic education framework across different Indigenous and educational settings.

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