



## Green School Policy as an Effort to Strengthen Sustainable Education in the Era of Globalization

Suhaeri <sup>\*1</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya  
e-mail: [herypoenk1@gmail.com](mailto:herypoenk1@gmail.com)


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**ABSTRACT.** Environmental degradation and the challenges of globalization require the education sector to play an active role in promoting sustainability values from an early stage. Schools, as strategic educational institutions, have a crucial role in fostering students' ecological awareness through policies oriented toward sustainable development. This article aims to analyze the concept and implementation of green school policies as an effort to strengthen sustainable education in the era of globalization. This study employs a library research method by reviewing relevant literature, including books, national and international journal articles, policy reports, and official documents related to green schools, sustainable education, and environmental education. The findings indicate that green school policies are not limited to improving the physical environment of schools but also involve integrating sustainability values into the curriculum, school culture, and the active participation of all school stakeholders. These policies contribute to the development of environmentally responsible, socially aware, and globally adaptive learners. Therefore, green school policies can be understood as a relevant and contextual educational strategy for strengthening sustainable education in the increasingly complex era of globalization.

**Keywords:** green school policy, sustainable education, globalization

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### INTRODUCTION

Global environmental challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion have become pressing issues in the era of globalization, directly affecting social, economic, and educational systems worldwide (UNESCO, 2017). Globalization accelerates industrialization, urbanization, and consumption patterns, which often lead to environmental degradation if not accompanied by sustainable practices (Tilbury, 2011). In this context, education is increasingly recognized as a key instrument for fostering environmental awareness and promoting sustainable development. Schools are not merely spaces for knowledge transmission but also arenas for shaping values, attitudes, and behaviors that support sustainability principles, making them strategic agents in addressing global environmental challenges (Sterling, 2010).

The concept of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) emphasizes the integration of environmental, social, and economic dimensions into educational practices to prepare learners to respond critically and responsibly to global issues (UNESCO, 2017). However, the implementation of ESD often faces practical challenges at the institutional level, particularly in translating abstract sustainability concepts into concrete school policies and daily practices (Tilbury & Wortman, 2004). As a response, the idea of green school policies has emerged as a holistic approach that links

environmental education with school governance, curriculum development, and school culture. These policies aim to institutionalize sustainability values within the school system rather than treating them as supplementary or extracurricular activities (Gough, 2016).

Green school policies generally encompass environmentally friendly infrastructure, sustainable resource management, curriculum integration, and participatory school culture involving teachers, students, and the wider community (Henderson & Tilbury, 2004). Through such policies, schools are encouraged to become living laboratories where sustainability principles are practiced and experienced directly by learners. Research suggests that students who are educated in environmentally oriented school settings tend to develop stronger ecological awareness, pro-environmental attitudes, and responsible behaviors compared to those in conventional school environments (Stevenson et al., 2013). This indicates that green school policies have the potential to function not only as administrative frameworks but also as transformative educational strategies.

In the era of globalization, the relevance of green school policies becomes increasingly significant due to the interconnected nature of environmental problems and global educational agendas (Sterling, 2010). Global frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) place education at the center of sustainability efforts, urging educational institutions to align their policies with global sustainability commitments (United Nations, 2015). Nevertheless, there remains a gap in theoretical and conceptual discussions regarding how green school policies systematically contribute to strengthening sustainable education, particularly from a policy and governance perspective rather than solely from pedagogical or practical viewpoints (Gough, 2016). This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive literature-based analysis that synthesizes existing studies and policy documents to clarify the role of green school policies within sustainable education discourse.

Based on these considerations, this article seeks to explore and analyze green school policies as a strategic effort to strengthen sustainable education in the era of globalization through a library research approach. By critically reviewing relevant literature, this study aims to provide a conceptual understanding of green school policies and their contribution to embedding sustainability values within educational institutions. The findings are expected to offer theoretical insights for scholars and practical references for policymakers and educators in developing environmentally oriented school policies that are responsive to global sustainability challenges (Tilbury, 2011; UNESCO, 2017).

## **METHOD**

This study employs a library research method to examine green school policies as an effort to strengthen sustainable education in the era of globalization. Library research is appropriate for this study because it allows for an in-depth exploration of concepts, theories, and policy frameworks related to sustainability and education through systematic analysis of existing literature (Zed, 2008; Creswell, 2014). Rather than collecting empirical field data, this method focuses on synthesizing knowledge from authoritative sources to construct a comprehensive conceptual understanding of green school policies and their educational implications.

The data sources in this study consist of secondary data obtained from various academic and institutional publications, including scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, international policy documents, and reports published by global organizations concerned with education and sustainability. Key sources include literature on green schools, education for sustainable development (ESD), environmental education, and globalization in education (UNESCO, 2017; Sterling, 2010). These sources were selected based on their relevance, credibility, and contribution to the discussion of sustainable education and school-level policy development.

Data collection was conducted through a systematic literature search using academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus-indexed journals, and reputable publisher platforms. Keywords such as *green school policy*, *sustainable education*, *education for sustainable development*, and *globalization in education* were used to identify relevant literature. The selected materials were then screened to ensure conceptual alignment with the research focus and to avoid redundancy, allowing the study to concentrate on the most significant and influential works in the field (Creswell, 2014).

The data analysis technique applied in this study is descriptive-analytical analysis, in which the collected literature was carefully read, categorized, and interpreted to identify recurring themes, conceptual patterns, and policy implications related to green school implementation. This process involved comparing different scholarly perspectives, identifying convergences and divergences among authors, and synthesizing theoretical insights into a coherent analytical framework (Zed, 2008). Through this approach, the study aims to provide a structured understanding of how green school policies contribute to strengthening sustainable education at the institutional level.

To ensure the validity and rigor of the analysis, this study emphasizes the use of up-to-date and peer-reviewed sources, as well as internationally recognized policy documents. Triangulation of concepts from multiple authors and institutions was also applied to reduce interpretative bias and enhance the credibility of the findings (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). By adopting this methodological approach, the study seeks to offer reliable theoretical insights that can serve as a foundation for further empirical research and policy development in the field of sustainable education.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

#### **1. Conceptual Foundation of Green School Policy**

The literature review indicates that green school policy is conceptually grounded in the principles of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which emphasizes the integration of environmental, social, and economic sustainability within educational institutions (UNESCO, 2017). Scholars consistently describe green school policies as institutional frameworks that guide schools in embedding sustainability values into governance, curriculum design, and daily operational practices rather than treating environmental education as an isolated subject (Sterling, 2010). This conceptual foundation positions schools as transformative agents capable of shaping learners' ecological awareness and global responsibility, particularly in responding to sustainability challenges intensified by globalization (Tilbury, 2011).

#### **2. Integration of Sustainability Values into School Curriculum**

Another key result emerging from the literature is the emphasis on curriculum integration as a central component of green school policy. Studies reveal that effective green school initiatives incorporate sustainability themes across subjects through interdisciplinary learning approaches, project-based learning, and contextualized environmental issues relevant to students' daily lives (Stevenson et al., 2013). Rather than adding new subjects, sustainability values are infused into existing curricula, enabling students to develop critical thinking, ethical awareness, and problem-solving skills related to environmental challenges (Gough, 2016). This curricular integration strengthens the relevance of education in preparing learners to navigate complex global issues linked to environmental sustainability (Sterling, 2010).

#### **3. Development of Sustainable School Culture and Participation**

The findings also highlight that green school policies significantly influence the formation of a sustainable school culture, characterized by shared values, collective responsibility, and active participation of all school stakeholders. Literature suggests that sustainability-oriented school

policies encourage participatory practices involving teachers, students, school leaders, and the surrounding community in environmental programs and decision-making processes (Henderson & Tilbury, 2004). Such participatory culture not only enhances students' environmental attitudes but also fosters social responsibility and collaborative skills essential in the era of globalization, where collective action is crucial to addressing global environmental problems (Tilbury & Wortman, 2004).

#### 4. Contribution of Green School Policy to Learners' Global Competence

The review further reveals that green school policies contribute to strengthening learners' global competence, particularly in terms of environmental awareness, ethical responsibility, and adaptability to global challenges. Students educated within sustainability-oriented school environments tend to demonstrate higher levels of ecological literacy and pro-environmental behavior, which are critical competencies in a globalized world (Stevenson et al., 2013). These competencies align with international educational agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals, reinforcing the role of green school policies as strategic instruments for aligning school practices with global sustainability commitments (United Nations, 2015; UNESCO, 2017).

### **Discussion**

to strengthening sustainable education by institutionalizing sustainability values within the school system. In the context of globalization, where environmental issues transcend national boundaries, education is expected to prepare learners not only with academic knowledge but also with ecological awareness and global responsibility (UNESCO, 2017). Green school policies respond to this expectation by positioning schools as learning ecosystems that integrate sustainability into governance, curriculum, and daily practices, rather than treating environmental education as an isolated instructional component (Sterling, 2010).

The literature further suggests that the effectiveness of green school policies lies in their holistic nature, particularly in integrating sustainability values across the curriculum. This integration enables learners to engage with environmental issues through interdisciplinary perspectives, fostering critical thinking and ethical reflection on real-world problems (Stevenson et al., 2013). In the era of globalization, such curricular approaches are essential because students are increasingly exposed to global environmental discourses that require contextual understanding and responsible decision-making. By embedding sustainability themes within existing subjects, green school policies enhance the relevance of education and support the development of competencies aligned with global sustainability agendas (Gough, 2016).

Moreover, green school policies contribute significantly to the formation of a sustainable school culture characterized by participation, collaboration, and shared responsibility. The literature emphasizes that sustainability-oriented policies encourage active involvement of teachers, students, school leaders, and communities in environmental initiatives, transforming schools into spaces of collective learning and action (Henderson & Tilbury, 2004). This participatory culture not only strengthens environmental awareness but also nurtures social competencies such as cooperation and civic engagement, which are increasingly vital in a globalized society facing complex environmental challenges (Tilbury & Wortman, 2004).

From a broader perspective, green school policies also play a crucial role in developing learners' global competence. Exposure to sustainability practices within the school environment enables students to internalize ecological values and adopt pro-environmental behaviors that extend beyond the school context (Stevenson et al., 2013). These competencies resonate with international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals, which emphasize education as a key driver of sustainable development worldwide (United Nations, 2015). Therefore, green school

policies function not only as institutional guidelines but also as transformative educational strategies that align local school practices with global sustainability commitments (UNESCO, 2017).

Overall, the discussion highlights that green school policies offer a conceptual and practical framework for strengthening sustainable education in the era of globalization. By integrating sustainability into curriculum, culture, and governance, schools are better positioned to respond to global environmental challenges and to prepare learners as environmentally responsible global citizens. However, the literature also implies the need for continuous policy evaluation and contextual adaptation to ensure that green school initiatives remain relevant and effective within diverse educational settings (Sterling, 2010; Tilbury, 2011).

## **CONCLUSION**

This study concludes that innovative school principals' leadership plays a crucial and strategic role in building a sustainable digital literacy culture in schools. In the context of ongoing digital transformation, principals are required to move beyond traditional managerial roles and adopt visionary, adaptive, and innovation-oriented leadership approaches. Through a clear digital vision, principals are able to align school policies, programs, and practices with the demands of the digital era, ensuring that digital literacy becomes an integral component of school development.

Furthermore, the findings indicate that innovative leadership contributes significantly to the institutionalization of digital literacy through strategic policy support and teacher empowerment. Principals who actively facilitate professional development, encourage collaborative learning, and provide pedagogical support enable teachers to integrate digital tools effectively into classroom practices. This leadership approach not only enhances teachers' digital competencies but also strengthens their readiness to implement meaningful and ethical digital learning.

The study also highlights that the availability of digital infrastructure must be accompanied by strong leadership to ensure its optimal and pedagogically relevant use. Innovative principals foster a supportive digital school culture characterized by openness to change, critical thinking, collaboration, and responsible digital behavior. By acting as agents of change, principals are able to manage resistance, motivate school stakeholders, and sustain digital literacy initiatives over time.

Overall, this literature review demonstrates that innovative school principals' leadership is a key determinant in the success of building a digital literacy culture in schools. These findings offer important theoretical contributions to the field of educational leadership and provide practical insights for school leaders seeking to navigate the challenges of digital transformation in education. Future studies are encouraged to further explore this topic through empirical research to validate and expand upon the conceptual findings presented in this study.

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