

The Implementation of *LAUDATO SI* as the Embodiment of Integral Ecology in Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University

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ABSTRACT

The wrong paradigm towards self and others leads humans to individual pride and collective egoism. Technocratic and mechanical views can obscure human dignity, because humans are considered as objects and usability values only. Anthropocentric, mechanistic and technocratic paradigms make individuals alienated from others, both with each other, as well as with other creatures and entities. This research aims to explore the Encyclical *Laudato Si* and its implementation in Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University (UAJY). As a university, UAJY plays an important role in creating a catholic education that respects human dignity, the value of interconnectedness and builds an integral ecology. The results of the research are expected to be more effective in realising the encyclic in Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University. This research uses a qualitative method, and the approach used was a mixture of library research and field research. The material object of the research is policy, while the formal object is moral philosophy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Laudato Si (Praise be to You) (abbreviated as LS) is an encyclical letter lissued by Pope Francis in St Peter's Basilica, Vatican City, on 24 May 2015. The encyclical, which consists of six chapters, emerged as a form of the Church's concern about the various problems of ecological degradation (pollution, damage and destruction of ecosystems and natural resources) that occur both at the national and global levels. Such degradation not only destroys the integrity of creation, but also threatens all elements of life on earth which is 'our common home.'

Inspired by the ecological spirituality of St Francis of Assisi (patron of ecology), Pope Francis expressed his concern and offered the idea of integral ecology in the encyclical LS (Pope Francis, 2018:82-94).

The Church's serious concern and attention is not only narrated in the LS. Long before the LS, there have been approximately 103 (one hundred and three) documents (consisting of encyclicals, pastoral letters and Papal messages) that voice environmental interests. Some of them are *Octogesima Adveniens* 21 (Pope Paul VI), *Redemptor Hominis* 15 (Pope John Paul II), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* 34 (Pope John Paul II), *Centesimus*

Annus 37 (Pope John Paul II), Compendium of the Social Teaching of the Church 451-487, Caritas in veritate 48-52 (Pope Benedict XVI) etc (Bernadeta Harini (ed), 2015). Based on these documents, it can be said that the Church has an 'ecological' vocation and mission to save all forms of life on earth. Now in LS, this vocation appears very clear and crystallised in the spirit of the Church and is addressed to all people of good will.

Laudato Si does not mean that the problem of ecological degradation has been solved. Environmental problems still continue to occur, for example the problem of garbage, waste (solid, liquid and gas waste), water, air (Kompas 11 August 2023), climate change, global warming, depletion of natural resources, etc. (Emil Salim, 2010). LS in itself is only a moral and spiritual appeal or a kind of 'environmental ethics' with a biblical foundation (Scripture). It is not yet at the level of action or real implementation. In other words, it is only in the 'eco-theology' facet of Laudato Si and not yet a reality.

In LS (see Chapter II on 'The Gospel of Creation'), the ethical and spiritual appeal is clear when the words of Pope John Paul II are quoted, 'the responsibility of Christians towards nature is an expression or ecological commitment that arises from the conviction of faith.' (Pope Francis, 2015:40). Similarly, in Chapter IV (on general welfare and intergenerational justice) and more explicitly in Chapter V on dialogue as an ideal hope. It could be argued that these are only at the ideal or rational disposition stage. Therefore, a research is needed on the implementation of LS to realise integral ecology, especially at Atma Yogyakarta Jaya University as a Catholic university that has declared itself as "Laudato Si University" which has the responsibility to maintain integral ecology.

Research Problem

The researcher views that caring for the environment is the duty of all humanity in accordance with the call of Pope Francis in the encyclical LS. The role of Higher Education in the context of implementing LS academically is a necessity. LS is not only a principle and norm at the cognitive level, but a demand for

action that must be implemented in real life. Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University has declared itself as Laudato Si University, so it must live out the LS encyclical as a guideline for the integral ecology in reality. The problem of the research is how the policy of the university to implement the concept of integral ecology and what are real actions to implement the concept of integral ecology at Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University?

2. METHODS

This study aims to explore the understanding and implementation of Laudato Si as an embodiment of integral ecology at Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University (UAJY). The research employs a qualitative approach, combining library research and field research to gain a deep understanding of the perception and application of Laudato Si principles within the campus environment. The material object of this research is campus policy related to integral ecology, while the formal object is moral philosophy, which emphasizes environmental ethics and spiritual responsibility toward Earth as our shared home.

Data were collected through a questionnaire survey filled out by 102 students from six different faculties, as well as interviews with faculty members and members of the Laudato Si team at UAJY. The survey results were analyzed descriptively to evaluate students' understanding of Laudato Si, while the interviews were processed using a thematic approach to identify key themes related to campus policies and practices for integrating Laudato Si. Through source triangulation and expert validation, this study provides an overview of the effectiveness of UAJY's policies in applying Laudato Si principles of integral ecology, as well as the challenges faced in fostering holistic environmental awareness among the academic community.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Understanding and Implementation of LS among UAJY Students

The research was conducted on 102 (one hundred and two) students as respondents from 6 (six) faculties, namely Faculty of Law, Faculty of Business and Economics, Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Technobiology and Faculty of Industrial Technology. The selection of faculties was done *purposively*. Similarly, students were selected as respondents by *purposive sampling* from these faculties from the courses of Religious education, Pancasila education.

From the available data, 67.6% of respondents stated that they knew about the Encyclical LS from several subjects delivered by lecturers. Thus, the delivery of information about LS in lectures is something that needs to be done, so that all students understand the encyclic. Then 83, 4% stated that they were quite familiar with the encyclic. Their understanding of LS is that it is a new call from Pope Francis addressed to 'everyone living on this planet' to conduct an inclusive dialogue on how we shape the future of our planet. Actions that they understand include recycling waste, loving and protecting the environment and caring for the preservation of the earth's ecosystem.

In relation to that understanding, respondents were also quite familiar with the concept of *integral ecology*. 71.6% respondents stated that they understood integral ecology. This is quite encouraging, although 28.4% were less or did not understand the integral ecology. Related to the understanding of integral ecology, 52.9% of respondents stated that the important point in LS to realise integral ecology is to protect the environment, while 40.2% stated that self-awareness and

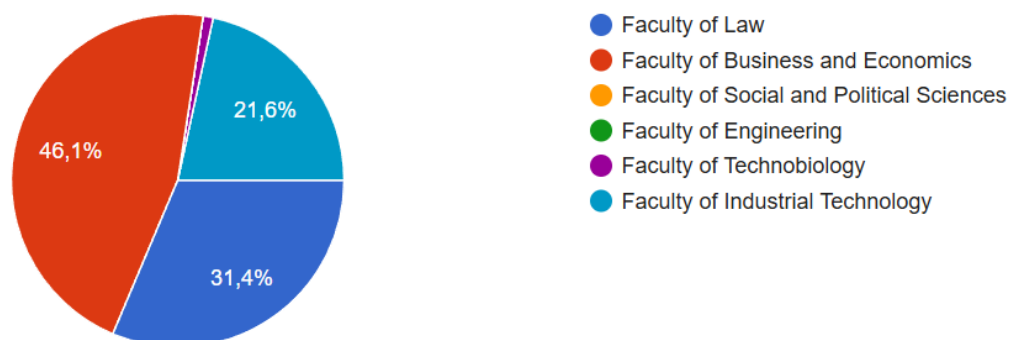
lifestyle changes needs to be done. What is meant is awareness of the importance of the environment and lifestyle changes that respect the integrity of the environment.

Interestingly, 98% of the respondents were of the opinion that UAJY has understood and implemented the Encyclical *Laudato Si*. This is interesting, because it is the students as respondents who think so. This means that students have observed the implementation of LS by UAJY. The application and implementation of LS in question is that which is done in a real and technical way in life on campus. This is supported by the opinion of 94% of respondents regarding the application of integral ecology principles, namely that integral ecology principles are quite effectively implemented in UAJY.

In this regard 98% of respondents also agreed that UAJY 'has' implemented *Laudato Si* academically. In light of the data available on this point, it can be argued that perhaps respondents have misunderstood what constitutes 'academic'. This is because the respondents mixed the academic with the non-academic. The use of tumblers, saving water and electricity, reducing plastic waste, reforestation etc. are not academic, but technical and practical.

Academic implementation includes incorporating LS into study programmes and curricula. For this, 98% of respondents considered the academic effectiveness of *Laudato Si* to be realised in several courses at UAJY, such as Pancasila, Environmental Law, Entrepreneurship, Basic Humanities, Civic Education, PDK, Introductory Business, Introductory Management etc.

The results of research as follows:



Total respondents: 102 students, with questions and answers in details:

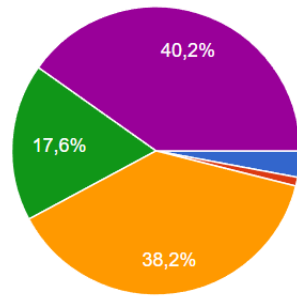
- 1) How **often** do respondents **read the Encyclical** Laudato Si? Sometimes: 43.1% of respondents, Rarely and very rarely: 39.2% of respondents, Frequent and very frequent: 17.7% of respondents.
- 2) How well do respondents **understand the content of the Encyclical** Laudato Si? Fairly well understood: 51% of respondents, Understand: 25.5% of respondents, Less understand: 14.7% of respondents, Understand very well: 6.9% of respondents, Do not understand: 2% of respondents. **Result:** *Fairly understood and above 83.4% of respondents.*
- 3) Some responses **that respondents knew about the Encyclical** Laudato Si: Recycling rubbish, Love the Environment, Safeguarding the environment, An encyclical that focuses on inviting humans to care and act in preserving the earth, Broadly speaking, Laudato Si invites and reminds humans to care for the environment. Laudato Si is a statement about environmental damage due to environmental destruction, Everything in the universe is interconnected, and human actions can have a significant impact on the environment. We must live in a sustainable way that meets the needs of the present without jeopardising future generations. The environmental crisis impacts the poor and marginalised the most. We must work for environmental and social justice. We all have a responsibility to care for our common home. We must act now to protect the planet, Pope Francis' new appeal to "everyone living on the planet" for inclusive dialogue on how we shape the future of our planet, Laudato Si, which means 'Blessed are You' in Central Italian, is the second encyclical from Pope Francis. Published on 24 May 2015, it focuses on environmental issues and climate change, What I know is that it is a new call from Pope Francis addressed to 'everyone who lives on this planet' to have an inclusive dialogue on how we shape the future of our planet, Laudato si was first introduced by Pope Francis, to protect the environment due to climate change.
- 4) How do **respondents understand the concept of integral ecology** in the Encyclical Laudato Si? Fairly well understood: 46.1% of respondents, Understand: 18.6% of respondents, Understand very well: 6.9% of respondents, Less understand: 24.5% of respondents, Do not understand: 3.9% of respondents. **Result:** *71.6% of the respondents had a fair understanding to a very good understanding, and 71.6% of the respondents had a poor understanding and no understanding.*
- 5) How did **respondents obtain information** about the **Encyclical** Laudato Si? Lecture/lecturer: 67.6% of respondents, Seminar/workshop : 11.8% of respondents, Books/articles: 10.8% of respondents, Social media: 5.9% of respondents **Result:** *Respondents have only obtained information on the Laudato Si encyclical since college, 67.6% of respondents.*
- 6) According to the respondents, what are the **most important points of the Encyclical** Laudato Si for **realising integral ecology**? Protection of the environment: 52.9% of respondents, Self-awareness and lifestyle change: 40.2% of respondents, Others: 6.9% of respondents
- 7) According to respondents, to **what extent does Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University understand and apply the contents of the Encyclical** Laudato Si? Good: 50% of respondents, Very good : 34.3% of respondents, Good enough: 13.7% of respondents, Less: 1% of respondents, Very less: 1% of respondents. **Result:** *98% of respondents agreed that UAJY has understood and implemented the contents of the Encyclical within the range of fairly good to very good.*
- 8) How many **policies has Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University implemented to implement the Encyclical** Laudato Si **academically**? Many: 45.1% of respondents, Very much: 29.4% of respondents, Quite/moderate: 23.5% of

- respondents, Less: 2% of respondents, None: 0 respondents. **Result:** 98% of respondents agreed that UAJY has applied and implemented the contents of the Encyclical academically in the range of quite a lot to very much.
- 9) What are some examples of **policies for implementing the Encyclical Laudato Si academically** at Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University? Use of tumblr, Lights in the toilet use motion sensors to save electricity, Refill drinking water, Reducing plastic waste, Curriculum Integration: Courses related to the environment and sustainability have been incorporated into the curriculum of various study programmes, There is research and community service carried out by several organisations, such as cleaning beaches or helping friends who are in a less conducive environment, Increased recycling because in the past we participated in seminars to recycle waste that was used, No more printing krs or ktm, Assignments are already using soft copies, In religion class, laudato si is one of the topics of discussion, Waste bins that have segregation (special bins for plastic, special bins for paper, etc.), Extracurricular activities that are ecologically-economically based such as agribusiness, Greening the environment, Inviting students to participate in plant maintenance activities in the Seturan campus garden, Organising community service activities and programmes that focus on the environment, such as tree planting programmes.
- 10) **How effective do** respondents rate university **policies in implementing the concept of integral ecology?** Effective: 41.2% of respondents, Quite effective: 29.4% of respondents, Very effective: 28.4% of respondents, Less: 1% of respondents, Very less: 0% of respondents. **Result:** 98% of respondents rated the university's policy in implementing the concept of integral ecology as moderately effective to very effective.
- 11) What are the **courses that discuss Laudato Si?** Religious Education, Pancasila, Environmental Law, Entrepreneurship, Basic Humanities, Citizenship Education, PDK. Introductory Business, Introductory Management. **Result:** *Religious Education, Pancasila, and Environmental Law were most mentioned by respondents.*
- 12) According to respondents, what are some **concrete actions that Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University can take to realise integral ecology?** 69.6% of respondents answered increasing the use of environmentally friendly products (such as tumblers), 18.8% of respondents answered increasing awareness and education about integral ecology, 8.8% of respondents answered reducing waste
- 13) Some examples of concrete actions that Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University has taken to realise integral ecology: Safeguarding the environment, Use of tumblers, Building knowledge-based ecological awareness, Implementing several trash bins with organic, inorganic, and paper writing. In addition, it plays a role in energy consumption by using energy-efficient equipment, Community service programme, With mutual respect for each other, National seminar.
- 14) Which policy do respondents think has the most positive impact on the integral ecology on campus? Waste management: 50% of respondents, Greening programme: 30.4% of respondents, Ecology-based curriculum: 12.7% of respondents, Use of renewable energy: 5.9% of respondents.
- 15) Is the respondent involved in activities or programmes that support the concept of integral ecology at the university? Yes: 53.9% of respondents, No: 46.1% of respondents.
- 16) How often does the respondent participate in the activity or programme? Every week: 14.7% of respondents, Every month: 4.9% of respondents, Every semester: 28.4% of respondents, Once a

year: 14.7% of respondents, Never: 37.3% of respondents.

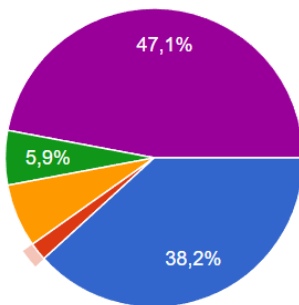
- 17) How much impact did the activity or programme have on respondents' ecological awareness? None: 5.9% of respondents, Small : 7.8% of respondents,

- 18) How do respondents understand the relationship between humans and nature in the context of integral ecology?



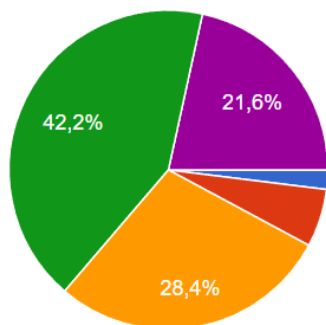
- Humans and nature are two things that separate and independent.
- Man is the ruler of nature and have the right to exploit it.
- Humans and nature are interrelated and interdependent.
- Nature is a resource that must be preserved for the benefit of humans.
- Humans have a moral responsibility to care for and protect nature

- 19) According to respondents, what are the main challenges in realising integral ecology?



- Lack of awareness and education about integral ecology.
- Social and economic injustice.
- Consumerism and culture materialism.
- Environmental damage caused by human activity.
- All the answers above.

- 20) How do respondents rate the role of Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University in promoting integral ecology?



- UAJY has no role in promote integral ecology.
- UAJY has a small role in promote integral ecology.
- UAJY has a considerable role in promote integral ecology.
- UAJY has a big role in promote integral ecology.
- UAJY has a very big role to play in promoting integral ecology

- 21) According to respondents, how effective is the implementation of Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University's policy in realising integral ecology? Effective: 51% of respondents, Quite effective: 23.5% of respondents, Very large: 22.5% of respondents, Less effective: 2% of respondents, Very ineffective: 1% of

respondents. **Result:** 97% of respondents felt that the implementation of Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University's policy in realising integral ecology was moderately effective to very effective.

- 22) How much are respondents willing to engage in concrete actions to realise integral ecology at Atma Jaya Yogyakarta

University? Willing: 39.2% of respondents, Very willing: 33.3% of respondents, Undecided: 24.5% of respondents, Less willing: 2.9% of respondents, Very ineffective: 1% of respondents. **Result:** 72.5% of respondents are willing to be involved in concrete actions to realise integral ecology at Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University.

3.2 Understanding and Implementation of LS at University level

UAJY is determined to implement the Encyclical LS in real terms starting in 2022. This is indicated by the formation of the *Laudato Si Team* by UAJY Rector Yoyong Arfiadi. The team consists of 4 (four) lecturers related to the implementation of the encyclical. Based on the Letter of Assignment Number: 412/In/R dated 1 August 2022, the 4 (four) lecturers assigned are Ign. Pramana Yuda (Coordinator), P. Kianto Atmodjo (member), Surya Adi Pramana (member) and Rm. Yohanes Riyanto, Pr (member).

According to the Letter of Task, the Team was given time to carry out its duties for one year (from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2023). The Task Letter was then renewed during the leadership of UAJY Rector, G. Sri Nurhartanto, with Task Letter Number: 839/In/ST/VIII/R dated 1 August 2023. This assignment letter is slightly different from the previous assignment letter. There are additions, namely the person in charge Samiaji Sarosa (Warek II) and additional 3 (three) members (Roberto R. Sitepu, Ni Made Candra Partarini and Rebekka Rismayanti).

The tasks of the new team are the same as the tasks of the team in the previous assignment letter. The *Laudato Si* team is tasked with: preparing the concept of *Laudato Si* implementation at UAJY; preparing the University's plan to become a *Laudato Si* University; campaigning for *Laudato Si* activities at UAJY; and establishing cooperation with related parties to support the implementation of *Laudato Si*.

According to Ign. Pramana Yuda (as coordinator), the team has reported its activities (only 1 (one) year and proposed that a Special Unit for the implementation of

Laudato Si be formed, but until now it has not been formed. The team was inspired by the Vatican's model of implementing *Laudato Si*, which is for 7 (seven years). The team has focused on 3 (three) programmes to implement the encyclical, namely electrical energy conservation, water (rainwater harvesting) and waste management (Ign.Pramana Yuda, interview on 26 August 2024).

Related to electrical energy, the team has conveyed to Vice Rector II about the cooperation with external parties, namely NGOs with funding from the European Union for the installation of electrical panels to meet electricity needs at UAJY, but the cooperation plan was cancelled, because the requirements for electricity utilisation at UAJY were below standard. So it is proposed that UAJY itself budget the installation of *sollar sell*. Then related to rainwater utilisation, a team has been formed to design rainwater utilisation at UAJY starting from FTB. Rainwater utilisation aims to reduce the burden of groundwater utilisation (Ign Pramana Yuda, interview 26 August 2024). Similarly, rainwater is not wasted or useless.

The next programme is waste management. Regarding waste management, activities have been designed through identification and other planning to reduce waste (waste from UAJY). This was also mentioned by Mr. G. Sri Nurhartanto regarding the need for sorting organic and non-organic waste, especially in the UAJY campus environment as an example of the implementation of *Laudato Si* (G. Sri Nur Hartanto, interview on 26 August 2024).

Waste reduction has begun at UAJY, for example in various activities (meetings, discussions, etc.), the use of plastic packaging is avoided (although there is no written regulation about it). Meanwhile, the use of the 3 R's method (*reduce, recycle, and reuse*) will also be promoted at UAJY. The waste and paper shredding system will also be reinstated at UAJY in addition to the planned waste bank in cooperation with cooperatives at UAJY. (Ign Pramana Yuda, interview 26 August 2024).

Related to integral ecology, Mr Ign. Pramana Yuda argued that the purpose of integral ecology is to overcome the problem of environmental burden, and one of the concrete forms for that is handling the waste problem. Then what is meant by *integration* is related to 'ecological conversion', namely the manifestation of our faith through good deeds for the environment. Similarly, integral ecology is also related to the reflection of faith and deeds and last but not least, the attention to the poor as mandated by *Laudato Si* (Ign Pramana Yuda, interview 26 August 2024).

At UAJY this should be evident in university policies that involve all parties and the important thing is that the implementation must be clear. Similarly, when LS is to be realised in the curriculum at UAJY, it should be agreed upon by all parties concerned, but it is necessary to identify the various subjects related to the issue of LS. According to Mr Pramada Yuda, almost all courses in the curriculum of each faculty are related to LS, so there is actually no problem, if LS is included or integrated into the curriculum, without having to have a special course, namely *Laudato Si*. (G.Sri Nurhartanto, interview 26 August 2024). It's just that this needs to be discussed with all Vice Dean I in UAJY. (Ign Pramana Yuda, interview 26 August 2024).

According to Ign. Pramana Yuda, what is important in the implementation of LS is the consistency of attitude. This is important but it is one of the obstacles in the implementation of the encyclical at UAJY. So -according to Ign. Pramana Yuda- a written policy is needed about it. One of the concrete steps taken in this regard is that the RPU or University Strategic Plan Team has incorporated the encyclical into the University Strategic Plan (Ign Pramana Yuda, interview 26 August 2024). The Renstra of study

programmes (S1, S2 and even S3) within UAJY must then adjust to the University Renstra. This is encouraging news as well as the hope that the Encyclical *Laudato Si* will be implemented at UAJY systematically and methodically, but what is also very important is that its implementation must then be consistently realised (Ign Pramana Yuda, interview 26 August 2024). Thus the ideal or idea that UAJY is a '*Laudato Si University*' is truly real or realised in life at UAJY.

4. Conclusion

Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University has a good understanding of the Encyclical LS, especially the principle of integral ecology. This is demonstrated, among others, by UAJY's aspiration to become a '*Laudato Si University*.' In addition, UAJY's understanding of LS and integral ecology is also shown by the policy plans that will continue to be implemented at UAJY.

The policy of implementing the encyclical academically at Atma Jaya Yogyakarta University is only at the planning stage. In other words, academic policies that are officially set to incorporate LS into study programmes or curricula are not yet clearly visible. Nevertheless, the results of research on students show that the real practice of incorporating LS ideas into certain courses has been carried out.

Concrete actions to implement the concept of integral ecology at Atama Jaya Yogyakarta University consist of the implementation of the Letter of Task by the *Laudato Si* Team formed by the Rector and several activities that have been carried out such as waste reduction or handling, saving electricity and water, utilising rainwater, greening etc.

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