

Internalizing Islamic Ecotheology: An Ethnography of Communication Using the SPEAKING Framework at Lake Sipin

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Abstract

This study explores environmental communication patterns and the internalization of ecotheological values by the community of the Sipin Lake Ecotourism Area in maintaining the ecosystem of Sipin Lake in Jambi City. Although visual promotions have successfully increased tourist interest, the lake faces ecological challenges such as household waste and invasive weeds. This study uses a communication ethnography method with Dell Hymes' SPEAKING framework to analyze conversational events and communicative actions within the community. Data were collected through participant observation and in-depth interviews with the lakeside community in Legok Village. The results show that the community effectively internalizes ecotheology by framing environmental issues within religious narratives, such as

"Cleanliness is part of faith" and "Nature is a divine mandate." This internalization occurs through informal conversations in raft houses and religious gatherings. This study finds that this spirituality-based communication bridges the gap between the community's economic needs and environmental conservation. This study contributes to environmental communication theory by highlighting the importance of religious identity in mobilizing local ecological action.

Keywords: Communication, Ecotheology, Ethnography, Environmental, Sipin_Lake

1. Introduction

The Danau Sipin area in Jambi City is currently at a crossroads between economic expansion and ecological degradation. As a natural oxbow lake, it is vital for the city's hydrological balance. However, the transformation from traditional aquaculture to a dynamic tourism epicenter (Saputra et al., 2022) has resulted in an ecological paradox: increasing popularity alongside rising domestic waste and invasive water hyacinth (Heriberta et al., 2025).

This imbalance creates an 'aesthetic-ecological gap'—a term used here to describe the tension between the curated visual beauty of tourism landmarks and the degraded biophysical reality beneath the surface. For local communities in Kelurahan Legok, this presents a dilemma: the need for tourism-driven economic growth versus the destruction of their ancestral environment. This research argues that this crisis is not merely technical but rooted in a failure of environmental communication. Administrative top-down patterns have failed to trigger behavioral change among local traders who prioritize daily income over abstract sustainability goals.



Figure 1. Visual contradiction between modern tourism infrastructure and the reality of domestic waste and weed invasion in the Lake Sipin area.

Environmental issues in Lake Sipin cannot be viewed merely as technical-biological problems, but as fundamental environmental communication problems. The failure of formal-administrative communication patterns—which tend to be instructional and top-down—is evident in the inability to change community behavior around the lake. Based on sociodemographic data, the majority of traders and micro-business actors in Kelurahan Legok have a secondary education background (high school) and are highly dependent on daily income turnover from the tourism sector (Basri & Putra, 2022). For this group, environmental sustainability issues are often considered an abstract government domain, far removed from the reality of urgent economic needs. On the other hand, environmental socialization efforts carried out in a technical-bureaucratic manner often fail to touch the deepest aspects of community morality and inner awareness (Saputra et al., 2022). This condition indicates a wide communication gap; while visual promotion succeeds in "selling" the lake's beauty, educational communication fails to instill ecological responsibility. Consequently, a dissonance occurs where tourism economic progress is directly proportional to the acceleration of natural destruction.

This gap reflects a failure in the process of collective meaning construction regarding the lake as a fragile ecosystem. The communication built so far tends to be transactional and short-term, where nature is positioned as a passive object freely exploited for material gain alone. This dominant anthropocentric view creates behavior that ignores environmental impacts because the community does not feel a spiritual or moral bond toward the preservation of the lake water (Pezzullo & Cox, 2025). Therefore, the challenge of environmental communication in the Lake Sipin area is not just about delivering technical information regarding waste collection schedules or pollution hazards, but about a deep reconstruction of the relationship between humans, water, and the Creator. A communication language is needed that can penetrate the barriers of economic pragmatism and touch the "ecological spirituality" of the community, so that environmental preservation is understood not as a government regulatory burden, but as a manifestation of gratitude and obedience to God's mandate (Andrianos & Tomren, 2021).

Seeing the deadlock of formal communication patterns, a communication bridge is required that can integrate the social identity and spirituality of the religious Jambi community into real environmental rescue actions (Halim et al., 2023). This study aims to explore how ecotheological values are internalized through community communication patterns to overcome the environmental crisis. Ecotheology, defined here as the interdisciplinary study of religious teachings regarding human responsibility toward the environment, offers an understanding that the environmental crisis is essentially a manifestation of human spiritual crisis (Luetz & Leo, 2021). The researcher sees an urgent need to study this spiritual communication aspect because, so far, the discourse on Lake Sipin's development has been stuck in materialistic and managerial approaches. Previous studies tend to focus on the effectiveness of visual promotion and visiting interest (Yanto et al., 2022), capital and education factors affecting traders' income (Basri & Putra, 2022), and macro-economic impact analysis (Saputra et al., 2022). No study has been found that deeply dissects the spiritual-participatory communication dimension carried out by local communities as a form of resistance to ecosystem degradation.

The urgency of this approach is even more evident when faced with the socio-cultural characteristics of the Malay Jambi community, which places religion as the main pillar of life. In the context of the Legok community, ecotheological narratives are not just religious rhetoric, but a potential driving force capable of changing the community's perspective on water resources (Siregar & Herman, 2025). Without transcendental value internalization, environmental preservation efforts will always be defeated by the temptation of pragmatic short-term economic gains. Therefore, the reconstruction of environmental messages through the language of faith becomes crucial so that the community views Lake Sipin not just as an economic commodity, but as a sacred ecosystem whose preservation correlates directly with their spiritual quality. This study attempts to fill the gap in environmental communication literature in Jambi by focusing on the role of organic communities in translating theological values into collective field actions.

The novelty of this research lies in its methodological and conceptual originality, where the ethnography of communication method is used as an instrument to dissect language micro-dynamics in the process of transforming theological doctrine into practical ecological ethics (Ayrton, 2017). This study goes beyond mere textual analysis of scriptures, entering the heart of daily interactions of the urban religious community on the outskirts of Lake Sipin. Through in-depth observation of the

activities of the Lake Sipin Ecotourism Area Society, this research presents a communication anatomy of how religious narratives are reconstructed as social persuasion tools to change destructive behavior, such as throwing trash into the water, into a theocentric awareness that views the lake as a "sacred mandate of the Creator" whose ecological dignity must be maintained. This study provides a significant theoretical contribution to the field of environmental communication by reinforcing the position of religious identity not just as a cultural background, but as a motor for grassroots ecological activism. Practically, the results of this research are expected to serve as a strategic prototype for local governments, the Environmental Office, and non-governmental organizations in designing more humanistic public communication designs based on local wisdom values and having strong spiritual resonance (Poocharoen, 2025). This approach offers an alternative to one-way information campaigns that have been devoid of meaning and failed to trigger permanent behavioral changes in society.

Furthermore, the urgency of this research is also grounded in the 'environmental communication crisis' phenomenon often occurring in rapidly developing regions in Indonesia, where sustainability messages often lose out to more 'glittering' physical development narratives. At Lake Sipin, the Sipin Lake Care Community tries to break this deadlock by creating emancipatory communication spaces through a grounded ecotheological approach (Nugroho et al., 2022). This study explores how the community builds an 'ecological social contract' based not on formal legal sanctions alone, but on social-spiritual sanctions far more respected by the Malay Jambi community. By dissecting the SPEAKING patterns in their interactions, this study reveals hidden layers of meaning from the use of local idioms capable of breaking traders' resistance to environmental issues. Thus, this research does not just record community activities but presents a theoretical construction of how communication can become an instrument for 'ecological conversion', highly needed for the sustainability of water tourism destinations in the future.

This study fills that gap by asking: (1) How do the micro-speech events constructed by the community internalize ecotheological values? (2) How do religious symbols act as catalysts to bridge the conflict between profit and planet? The novelty lies in using the Ethnography of Communication to dissect how theological doctrine is transformed into practical ethics at the grassroots level.

2. Method

This research operates within the framework of an interpretive paradigm, which views social reality not as something objective and singular, but rather as the result of symbolic construction by the social actors involved within it (Moleong, 2021). In this context, the researcher seeks to capture the subjective meaning behind the communicative actions performed by the Lake Sipin Ecotourism Area Community. The method employed is Ethnography of Communication, an approach popularized by Dell Hymes to study the patterns, functions, and styles of communication within a specific speech community (Meier zu Ver1, 2022). The selection of this method is based on the need to explore in depth how the speech culture of the Malay Jambi community on the outskirts of the lake influences the internalization of ecotheological values.

The research location is intentionally focused on Kelurahan Legok, Danau Sipin District, Jambi City. This area serves as the heart of the most dynamic socio-cultural and economic interactions around the lake, where traditional floating houses (*rumah rakit*) stand alongside modern tourism infrastructure. As a meeting point for community members, street vendors, tourism managers, and tourists, Kelurahan Legok becomes an ideal 'living laboratory' to observe how environmental messages are negotiated amidst diverse interests (Saputra et al., 2022).

Informants in this study were selected using a purposive sampling technique, which involves selecting samples based on specific considerations to ensure the data obtained is relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2017). We selected 7 informants through purposive sampling, including the KPDS Chair, 1 religious leader (Tuan Guru), 2 boat drivers, and 2 traders. As researchers from an Islamic university in Jambi, we acknowledge our position as "informed outsiders." We maintained reflexivity by using a bracketing strategy—setting aside our personal theological biases to focus on the community's own interpretations. With this diversity of backgrounds, the researcher can perform source triangulation to obtain a comprehensive overview.

The data collection procedure was conducted through three primary techniques common in qualitative research (Moleong, 2021):

1. Participant Observation: The researcher was actively involved in the daily activities of the Sipin Lake Care Community for a period of six months (January - June 2024). Observation focused on speech events in floating houses and physical lake-cleaning actions.
2. In-depth Interviews: The researcher conducted open dialogues to delve into the informants' meaning-making regarding the concept

of ecotheology. Interviews were held in natural settings, such as residents' porches.

3. Documentation: Collecting digital artifacts (Instagram/WhatsApp) as well as outdoor media (banners/posters) related to environmental preservation.

Data analysis was performed cyclically through the stages of reduction, display, and verification (Sugiyono, 2017). The researcher applied the S-P-E-A-K-I-N-G model (Elzaghaf, 2021) to dissect the micro-anatomy of the community's environmental communication. The validity of the findings was tested through triangulation techniques and member checks to ensure that the researcher's interpretations align with the reality of the Sipin Lake Care Community.

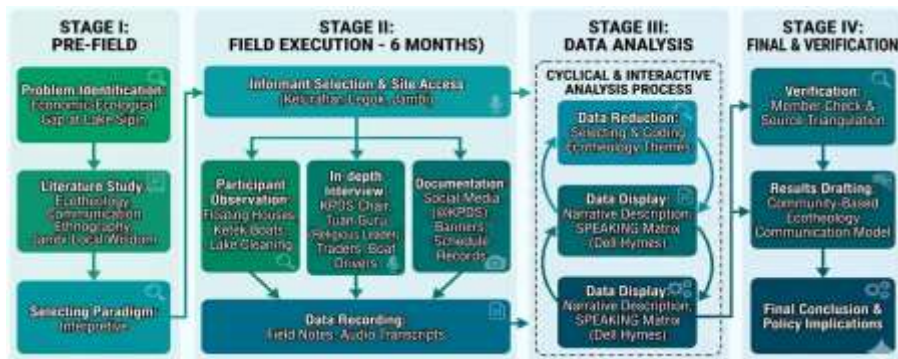


Figure 2. Flowchart of the communication ethnography research in ecotheology internalization

3. Results

This research profoundly finds that the effectiveness of the community in the Lake Sipin Ecotourism Area as an agent of change is rooted in their ability to mobilize "insider" language or an emic perspective. In the socio-cultural context of the Malay Jambi community in Kelurahan Legok, identity as a local resident with a history of emotional proximity to the lake serves as invaluable social capital. The Sipin Lake Care Community (KPDS) members do not position themselves as outsiders, teachers, or bureaucratic instructors; instead, they present themselves as fellow residents sharing a collective concern for the future of "Solok Sipin." This use of emic language breaks down the psychological defense walls of residents who are typically resistant to formal government regulations.

The process of internalizing ecotheological values within this community is not conducted through rigid religious indoctrination or

judgmental theological dogmas (*rigid doctrinal approach*). Instead, KPDS applies a highly organic and fluid communication strategy through a series of "daily speech events" that are persuasive, intimate, and emotionally resonant. Messages regarding the maintenance of water purity and moral responsibility as guardians of God's creation are not delivered via rigid announcements but are neatly wrapped in the thick Jambi dialect. Sustainability narratives are often cleverly inserted amidst lighthearted conversations regarding fish catch fluctuations or tourism economic developments in floating houses. Consequently, faith values (ecotheology) are no longer understood as abstract concepts confined to mosque pulpits but are transformed into practical life principles that merge with the cultural identity and economic needs of the lakeside residents.

3.1 Speech Events in Floating Houses and Ketek Boats

In-depth observation reveals that floating houses (*rumah rakit*) are not merely residential spaces or fish cultivation facilities but function as vital organic public spaces for the Kelurahan Legok community. Based on six months of observation, these houses serve as liminal locations where the boundary between private and public affairs becomes extremely fluid. The researcher noted routine interaction patterns where residents gather every afternoon for coffee on the raft porches directly facing the lake waters. This open, relaxed, and non-formal spatial characteristic is strategically utilized by KPDS members to launch informal "environmental preaching" activities. Distinguishable from environmental campaigns or government socialization efforts, which are often perceived as distant and instructional, the communication established in these floating houses prioritizes equality (*low power distance*).



Figure 3. Floating houses as centers of interaction and informal internalization of sustainability values through local speech culture.

Research findings mapped through the SPEAKING analysis framework (Table 1) demonstrate that ecotheology internalization works most effectively when the message is integrated into the daily conversation flow (*act sequence*). Based on observation, KPDS members initiate conversations from issues highly personal to the residents: their livelihood (*rezeki*). This process is then transformed into spiritual awareness through subtle meaning-linking techniques.

Table 1. SPEAKING Analysis of KPDS Educational Speech Events

Component	Description in the Field
Setting	Resident rafts and Lake Sipin traditional boat (<i>ketek</i>) pier areas.
Participants	KPDS Members (Communicator), Local traders, and boat drivers.
Ends	Building awareness that lake cleanliness determines the blessing (<i>berkah</i>) of livelihood.
Act Sequence	Greeting -> Exchanging news on livelihood -> Pointing to lake conditions -> Linking to faith values.
Key	Relaxed, utilizing Jambi dialect, yet firm regarding cleanliness principles.
Instrumentalities	Face-to-face oral communication supported by the visualization of waste in direct view.
Norms	Prioritizing neighborly etiquette and respect for "ancestral heritage."
Genre	Relaxed chat (<i>ngobrol</i>) and collective instructions during lake cleaning actions.

Descriptive analysis of Table 1 shows that the success of this communication lies in the *Key* (tone) and *Instrumentalities* (means) employed. The use of Jambi's "Bahasa Dusun" (village dialect) proved to break down social hierarchy barriers. This is reinforced by the interview with Informant LH:

"If we use formal language, residents feel hesitant and distance themselves. So, our approach is through 'chatting' on the rafts. While waiting for boats or feeding fish, we slowly mention that a dirty lake means we are ungrateful for

God's blessings. We invite them to guard our own home (local: kito ajak jago rumah kito dewek)."

This statement was validated by field notes recording that speech events on rafts often began with friendly greetings about the day's fish catch. When residents complained about decreasing fish or smelly water, KPDS members entered with theological advice. Interview data with Informant HS (a fisherman and boat driver) provides a clear picture of this perception shift:

"He said that this water is God's mandate; if we poison it, our fortune (rezeki) will also be obstructed. Now, we feel ashamed of ourselves if we want to throw plastic waste into the lake."

Field documentation also reveals that this internalization is supported by visual evidence right before their eyes. While communicating, members of the Sipin Lake Care Community often point directly to piles of plastic waste caught in the raft pillars as tangible evidence of a "betrayal" of God's mandate. The synergy between oral speech events, the proximity of the actors, and this documented visual evidence creates a new social norm in Kelurahan Legok: that caring for Lake Sipin is no longer merely an instruction from the city government, but a form of faith-based obedience as a religious society.

3.2 Religious Symbols in Environmental Communication

Analysis of the message transformation process (Table 2) shows that KPDS performs a highly tactical "theological translation" process. They do not merely quote sacred texts but link them to physical reality and traders' economic needs in the field. This process works by overhauling the community's perception of nature from a mere economic commodity into a sacred spiritual entity. Based on observation, KPDS members actively construct the meaning that Lake Sipin is a reflection of the faith quality of Kelurahan Legok residents.

Table 2. Transformation from Dogma to Practical Ethics

Dogma	Community Internalization	Practical Action
<i>Cleanliness is Faith Khalifah (Steward)</i>	Dirty water ruins the purity of worship (<i>wudhu</i>). Protecting the lake is a sacred mandate for locals.	Independent trash bins at stalls. Reminding tourists not to litter.
<i>Dosa Jariyah</i>	Waste in water is a sin that	Voluntary weekly

Descriptive analysis of Table 2 shows fundamental changes in three main dogma axes. First, the dogma "Cleanliness is part of Faith" is no longer understood solely as bodily or clothing cleanliness during prayer, but is expanded to include the cleanliness of the water source. KPDS instills the understanding of how residents can perform ablution peacefully if the water flowing under their rafts is full of plastic waste. This is supported by the interview with Informant MS (a food vendor):

"The KPDS boys said, we pray for fortune, but we ourselves dirty our 'prayer mat' (the lake). If this lake is dirty, our wudhu water becomes spiritually unclear. That's why I now provide a large trash bag in front of my cart; I don't want my fortune to lack blessing because my buyers' trash falls into the lake."

This statement proves that ecotheology internalization has successfully united economic motives (fortune) with spiritual motives (blessing). Second, the role of humans as *Khalifah* (stewards) is reconstructed as a mandate of local residents' sovereignty over their territory. KPDS communicates that Legok residents are "hosts" and "gatekeepers" of God's creation. The effect is the emergence of residents' courage to remind tourists. The researcher documented a speech event where a boat driver firmly but politely reminded visitors:

"Sorry, this lake is God's mandate for us residents here; please don't dirty it with plastic bottles. Let's guard it together so everyone's fortune flows smoothly."

This shows that residents no longer feel inferior to tourists, but rather feel they have the moral authority to protect the ecosystem.

Third, the concept of "Prohibition of destruction" is transformed into a frightening spiritual threat for a religious society: "Continuous Sin" (*Dosa Jariyah*). KPDS builds a narrative that trash thrown into the lake will never just disappear; as long as that trash poisons the water, the sin for the perpetrator continues to flow. This logic resonates deeply with residents who have strong afterlife orientations. As expressed by Informant DE (a KPDS youth member):

"We emphasize to friends here that if we throw plastic into water, it doesn't rot for hundreds of years. That means we are piling up continuous sins that

don't stop. It's not worth the effort we put into cleaning the lake every week. Thank God, now the youth here are more enthusiastic about gotong royong without being told; we are just afraid of sin."

Documentation of data in the form of an independent mutual cooperation schedule displayed at the community post strengthens the finding that the internalization of these values has manifested into sustainable collective action, going beyond mere administrative compliance with government policies.

3.3 Digital Visual Communication and the "Shame" Strategy

Our findings show that religious identity is a stronger driver for behavioral change than legal threats. While (Heriberta et al., 2025) Noting the failure of administrative governance, our study shows that spiritual sanctions, specifically the fear of Dosa Jariyah and the sense of Shame (Malu), are far more effective for the Malay Jambi community.

Interview results with Informant AN (KPDS Social Media Admin) reveal the logic behind this campaign:

"We intentionally post photos of plastic waste piles caught in fish nets, then next to it, we put a Quranic caption about water as the source of life. The goal is so that those who see it feel 'indirectly criticized.' We want to evoke their sense of shame. If they claim to be believers, how could they dirty God's creation that provides them with a livelihood?"

This statement indicates that the 'Green Visual' strategy of the Sipin Lake Care Community is designed to trigger a sense of shame as an internal social control mechanism. In the sociology of the Malay Jambi community, the concept of 'shame' (*malu*) serves as a powerful moral instrument for regulating individual behavior within the community. The Sipin Lake Care Community leverages this cultural sentiment by positioning environmental destruction as a spiritual disgrace.

The technique of juxtaposition between portraits of the lake's real conditions and religious tenets creates a powerful spiritual resonance. The researcher's documentation of interactions within the Kelurahan Legok residents' WhatsApp groups illustrates how photos of 'ecological violations' (such as images of individuals dumping domestic waste into the lake) uploaded by community members often trigger discussions that lead to collective corrective actions. The audience is indirectly confronted with a moral mirror: that throwing a single plastic bottle into the water constitutes a betrayal of a 'sacred mandate.' This sense of shame operates more effectively than administrative fines, as individuals feel spiritually

guilty if their actual behavior in the field contrasts with the image of sanctity they consume on social media. Thus, social media has transformed from a mere promotional tool (Yanto et al., 2022) into a digital instrument for 'ecological conversion' that encourages active community participation without the need for physical coercion.



Figure 4. Weed and plastic waste cleaning activities by the community as a form of integrated environmental communication in action.

4. Discussion

The internalization of ecotheological values in the Lake Sipin area is not merely an ordinary environmental empowerment activity, but a unique communication phenomenon due to its ability to bridge the wide gap between motifs of economic pragmatism and the demands of ecological idealism. For years, the community in Kelurahan Legok was trapped in a dilemma between the desire to exploit the lake for rapid tourism income and the necessity of maintaining water quality for long-term survival. This research reveals that the Sipin Lake Care Community (KPDS) succeeded in constructing a 'bridge narrative' that transformed this rigid perspective, where environmental preservation is no longer viewed as an enemy to income, but as an absolute prerequisite for ensuring that the acquired livelihood is 'blessed' (*berkah*) and sustainable.

The significance of these findings becomes increasingly apparent when contrasted with previous studies. While research by Heriberta et al. (2023) indicates a failure of environmental governance conducted through administrative means, where government instructions often remained mere rules on paper without voluntary compliance from residents, this study offers evidence to the contrary. Value internalization based on community and spirituality has proven to be far more effective in changing the behavior of the community in Kelurahan Legok. This is because the ecotheological approach touches upon the 'inner morality'

dimension of the religious Malay Jambi society. The community is more compliant with the threat of 'continuous sin' (*dosa jariyah*) than administrative sanctions, and they are more moved by the call of 'God's mandate' (*amanah Tuhan*) than the official schedules of environmental agencies. Consequently, the effectiveness of the Sipin Lake Care Community lies in its ability to transform top-down government regulations into bottom-up obligations of faith.

4.1 Addressing the Economic-Ecological Paradox

Based on data presented by Saputra et al. (2022), the development of the Lake Sipin area has triggered a contradictory paradox: on one hand, infrastructure development and tourism promotion significantly stimulate the local economic pulse; on the other hand, this phenomenon is accompanied by a drastic decline in ecosystem quality. This paradox is rooted in a strong "Anthropocentric" perspective among micro-business actors, where the lake is positioned merely as a passive object whose potential is freely drained for short-term financial gain (Mama, 2018). The Lake Sipin Ecotourism Area Community intervenes to break this paradigm deadlock by performing a process of reorienting meaning from an Anthropocentric view toward a "Theocentric" view, a concept that places nature not as human property, but as a mandate or "sacred trust" from the Creator that possesses ecological rights to be protected (Johnston, 2022).

The communication strategy implemented by the Sipin Lake Care Community (KPDS) works by "softening" rigid and technocratic environmental jargon into the language of *rezeki* (livelihood/fortune), which is highly familiar to the trading community. KPDS provides an easily digestible, logical understanding that ecosystem sustainability is an absolute prerequisite for their own economic sustainability. Through daily interactions, this community instills awareness that tourists will not be interested in visiting and, ultimately, no economic transactions will occur if the lake conditions are filled with the foul stench of domestic waste or carpets of water hyacinth that obscure the landscape's beauty. In line with the findings of Basri & Putra (2022), income stability is the primary motivation for local residents; KPDS leverages this motivation by framing lake-cleaning actions as a "long-term investment" to maintain tourism appeal as well as a form of gratitude to God for providing a source of livelihood.

Thus, the internalization of ecotheological values by the Sipin Lake Care Community has successfully dissolved the barrier between "stomach" interests (economics) and "planet" interests (ecology). Traders in Kelurahan Legok have begun to realize that caring for the lake is not a

financial sacrifice, but a strategic action to ensure their *rezeki* continues to flow smoothly and possesses the value of blessing (*berkah*). This shift in meaning proves that a communication approach touching on spirituality is capable of offering solutions to economic-environmental conflicts of interest that formal administrative policies have historically failed to resolve. Lake Sipin is no longer viewed as a "money mine" to be exploited, but as a "collective worship space" where every act of nature preservation is considered a tangible manifestation of devotion to the Creator.

4.2 The Power of Communication Ethnography in Behavioral Change

The methodological and practical superiority of the Sipin Lake Care Community's approach lies in its ability to operate outside the often-rigid framework of formal communication. From the perspective of communication ethnography, a message is not only judged by its content but also depends heavily on the context (Setting), who conveys it (Participants), and the tone in which the message is delivered (Key). The findings of this research indicate that the use of the Jambi dialect and a familiar communication style (low power distance) are the primary keys to why ecotheological messages from KPDS are far more accepted by the Legok community compared to environmental campaigns conducted by government agencies through megaphones or bureaucratic banners (Mulyana & Phd, 2022).

Based on the Hymes (1974) framework, the Key (tone) and Norms components in community interaction play vital roles in the process of social persuasion. Members of the Sipin Lake Care Community, most of whom are local natives, are viewed as having strong moral authority by their neighbors. They are not outsiders coming to lecture, but peers who share the same fate. When they say that throwing trash in the lake will "reduce the blessings of life" or "sever the chain of *rezeki* for future generations," the message creates a deep spiritual resonance. This is because the message is no longer perceived as a distant legal threat, but as brotherly advice rooted in the religious value system they have embraced for generations.

Furthermore, the power of this communication ethnography is evident in the shift of social norms in Kelurahan Legok. Through consistent speech events at floating houses and docks, KPDS has successfully created "positive social pressure." Residents have begun to feel "watched," not by forest rangers, but by the moral eyes of their own community. A sense of shame arises when someone violates the collective agreement to protect the lake, as such an action is now viewed as spiritually unethical. This behavioral transformation proves that

sustainable social change at the grassroots level can only be achieved if messages of change can adapt to the local speech culture and touch the community's deepest spiritual identity.

4.3 Visualizing the Ecotheology Communication Model

The model of ecotheology value internalization in the Lake Sipin area can be visualized as a cyclical and transformative communication ecosystem. This model represents how the Sipin Lake Care Community acts as a crucial "Interpretive Filter" or cultural translator. In this flow, high and universal theological dogmas are not directly cast upon the community, but first enter the "community meaning space." In this space, KPDS filters these religious values and reduces them into everyday language that touches the local sensitivities of the religious yet pragmatic Kelurahan Legok society.

The advantage of this model is its ability to simplify heavy theological concepts (such as God's sovereignty over water) into a series of "Practical Communicative Actions" that are very close to the residents' economic reality. This is highly relevant given the sociodemographic characteristics of the local community, where the majority have a secondary education background and a primary focus on daily livelihood (Michael et al., 2021). This model shows that instead of giving theoretical environmental lectures, KPDS frames lake sustainability as a prerequisite for the "blessing of *rezeki*." Thus, residents do not feel they are being doctrinally lectured, but rather invited to collaborate in maintaining their own life-support system.

This visualization also depicts the psychological-spiritual transition from the "Understanding" stage (cognitive) to the "Concern" stage (affective), and finally to the "Ecological Action" stage (psychomotor). The success of this model is seen in the emergence of pro-environmental behaviors that are voluntary and persistent, such as providing independent waste containers and collective reprimands toward tourists who litter. Theoretically, this model offers a contribution to environmental communication studies by asserting that religious identity can be a driving variable far stronger than financial incentives or legal threats, provided it is communicated through cultural channels that are appropriate and credible in the eyes of the local community.



Figure 5. Flow of Community-Based Ecotheology Value Internalization

5. Conclusion

Internalizing ecotheology through organic community communication is a highly effective strategy for ecosystem preservation. By utilizing informal speech events, local dialects, and religious metaphors, the community bridges the gap between economic pragmatism and ecological needs

Implications: These findings imply that the Jambi City government should not solely rely on physical development and visual promotion in managing tourism areas, but must also involve local communities as spiritual communication actors. Environmental messages should be framed within faith-based values to create sustainable behavioral change.

Limitations: This research is limited to a single community (Sipin Lake Care Community) and has not yet quantitatively measured the long-term impact on tourist behavior.

Contribution: This article contributes to the development of environmental communication theory based on local wisdom and spirituality (ecotheology) in Indonesia, particularly within the context of urban water resource management.

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