



Implementation of Ecotheological Education in Building Environmental Awareness and Social Harmony in Manumutin, Belu

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Abstract:

The ecological crisis affecting various regions in Indonesia, including Belu Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province (NTT), requires an approach that is not only technical but also touches the spiritual and cultural dimensions of society. This study aims to analyze the implementation of ecotheological education in building environmental awareness and social harmony in the community of Manumutin Urban Village, Kota Atambua District, Belu Regency. The method used is qualitative descriptive with a case study approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies, then analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The results show that: (1) ecotheological education in Manumutin Urban Village is implemented through the integration of religious values with environmental management practices, such as communal work cleaning waste and tree planting; (2) the ecotheological approach is proven effective in changing the community's mindset from anthropocentric to ecocentric, although it still faces challenges in the form of low awareness among some residents in disposing of waste in its proper place; (3) there is a positive correlation between strengthening ecological awareness and strengthening social harmony, where ecotheology-based activities become a space for interfaith and interethnic interaction that strengthens social solidarity. This study concludes that ecotheological education is a strategic strategy in responding to the environmental crisis while strengthening the social cohesion of communities in border areas.

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Introduction (مقدمة)

The ecological crisis has become an urgent and multidimensional global problem. The *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* report warns that the rise in global temperature will reach a critical threshold within the next two decades if immediate action is not taken. In Indonesia, environmental problems such as pollution, deforestation, and poor waste management remain serious challenges in various regions, including in eastern Indonesia. These problems are not merely technical; they also touch the dimensions of values, spirituality, and social governance. An approach that relies solely on regulation and infrastructure is often insufficient, because changing community behavior requires a deeper touch of values, one of which is through ecotheological education (Hidayat, M. 2023).

Belu Regency, located on the island of Timor, East Nusa Tenggara Province, is one of the regions facing significant environmental challenges. The regency has an area of 1,284.94 km², consisting of 12 districts, with a population in 2022 of 227,097 people. As a land border area with the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, Belu Regency has a strategic position while also being vulnerable to various social, economic, and environmental dynamics. The people of Belu consist of diverse ethnic groups Bunak (Merae), Dawan, Kemak, and Tetun – who live in religious and cultural diversity. The regional motto “*Husar Binan Rai Belu Tetuk No Nesan Diak No Kmanek*”, which means “With the spirit of brotherhood we build the Belu community toward achieving harmonious and balanced outer and inner prosperity,” reflects the values of kinship and togetherness that form the foundation of the community’s social life. Amid this diversity, Manumutin Urban Village, Kota Atambua District, is one of the areas with a relatively high population density. This urban village manages 2,733 households with a total population of 12,532 people. As part of the center of government and economic activity, Manumutin Urban Village faces prominent environmental problems, especially related to waste management and low community awareness of maintaining cleanliness (Rohman 2024., Sandri, Febrianingsih, 2025.,).

Facts and data in the field show that environmental problems in Belu Regency, especially in Manumutin Urban Village, have become a serious concern. The Head of the Environmental and Transportation Office of Belu Regency, Robertus Yerenia Mali, assessed that community concern for environmental cleanliness is still very low. This low concern is visible in the community’s habit of throwing waste indiscriminately without paying attention to its impact on the environment. The government has repeatedly urged the public and provided waste bin facilities, but behavioral change has not been significantly visible (Karim, A. 2022).. Pollution due to waste is considered the most dominant problem, even worsened by the fact that some business actors still do not have adequate environmental management facilities. The Environmental Office officer for the Manumutin area, Aloysius Manek, revealed that many people still prefer to throw waste beside the container rather than inside it. He emphasized that changing the community’s *mindset* about the importance of protecting the environment is difficult. The Head of Manumutin Urban Village, Saturmino Dos Rosario, also highlighted that there are still individuals who dump and pile up waste illegally, which has the potential to cause environmental pollution, flooding, and health problems. This condition shows that environmental problems in Manumutin Urban Village are not only technical-operational in nature but also touch the dimensions of community awareness and behavior (Kirin, 2026).

Conceptually, ecotheology offers a relevant approach to addressing these problems. Etymologically, ecotheology comes from two words: *eco*, which relates to the earth or environment, and *theological*, which refers to the science of divinity. In this concept, there are three main elements that are interconnected: humans, nature, and God. Ecotheology demands a holistic approach that integrates spiritual values into environmental learning. The Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Nasaruddin Umar, emphasized that ecotheology

discusses how to awaken shared global awareness to care for and preserve the environment, and that ecotheology and harmony are two interrelated aspects. In various religious traditions, there are teachings about human responsibility toward nature. In Islam, humans are positioned as *khalifah*, whose task is to care for, protect, and preserve the earth; this concept emphasizes responsibility and accountability, not domination over nature. In Christianity, the concept of *stewardship* emphasizes human responsibility to protect nature as God's creation. The Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of NTT together with the Synod of the Christian Church of Sumba has strengthened the ecotheological approach as an effort to build awareness of environmental preservation while strengthening interreligious harmony. The Head of the NTT Regional Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Kariyanto, stated that environmental issues are issues of faith and humanity, and ecotheological messages need to be conveyed continuously to the congregation so that shared awareness grows in protecting nature.

Several previous studies have examined the implementation of ecotheology in the context of education and community empowerment. A study in Lau Gumba Village showed that an ecotheological approach combining religious teachings with ecological awareness through the *Participatory Action Research* method succeeded in increasing ecological awareness by around 30% and strengthening social relations between religious communities. Research on Islamic religious education values based on ecotheology in fostering environmental awareness among fishing communities in Gempolsewu Village, Kendal Regency, concluded that fostering environmental awareness requires collaboration between the internalization of religious values and real intervention in economic policy and infrastructure (Rohman 2025). Research on ecotheology as a basis for interreligious harmony in Pegayaman Village, Buleleng Regency, Bali, examined cross-religious social harmony in cooperation within the traditional irrigation system *Subak*. Meanwhile, research at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri 7 Jombang on the implementation of the ecotheology-based Adiwiyata program showed that the ecotheological approach is effective in increasing students' environmental awareness. Nevertheless, most of these studies focus on formal education contexts and relatively homogeneous rural communities, and have not widely examined urban areas in border regions that have ethnic and religious diversity while also facing complex environmental problems (Sriyanto 2025). No study has specifically examined the implementation of ecotheological education in Manumutin Urban Village, Belu Regency. This is the research gap that forms the basis for this study (Panggarra2025).

Based on this background, this study formulates three main questions. First, how is ecotheological education implemented in building environmental awareness in the community of Manumutin Urban Village, Belu Regency? Second, what is the impact of ecotheological education on social harmony in the Manumutin Urban Village community? Third, what are the challenges and opportunities in implementing ecotheological education in border areas such as Manumutin Urban Village? In line with these research questions, this study aims to analyze the implementation of ecotheological education in building environmental awareness, analyze its impact on social harmony, and identify the challenges and opportunities for its application in border areas. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich scientific knowledge about ecotheology, especially in the context of urban communities in border areas, and to become a reference for developing ecotheological theory that integrates spiritual, ecological, and social dimensions simultaneously. Practically, the results of this study are expected to provide input for the government of Manumutin Urban Village, the Environmental Office of Belu Regency, and the Ministry of Religious Affairs in formulating more effective and sustainable ecotheological education policies and programs. In addition, this study can become a model for

other border areas in building environmental awareness while strengthening the social harmony of the community.

Method (منهج)

This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach with a case study design to deeply understand the implementation of ecotheological education in building environmental awareness and social harmony in the community of Manumutin Urban Village, Kota Atambua District, Belu Regency.

Identify Subsections

Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participatory observation in communal work and tree planting activities, and documentation studies of urban village documents, activity archives, and local news. Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which includes data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. total of 12 informants participated: two religious leaders (a pastor and a priest), two customary leaders, the Head of Manumutin Urban Village and two staff members, an Environmental Office officer for the Manumutin area, and four residents active in environmental activities.

Participant (Subject) Characteristics

Informants were determined through *purposive sampling*, including religious leaders, community and customary leaders, urban village officials, officers of the Environmental Office of Belu Regency, and residents involved in ecotheological activities. A total of 12 informants participated: two religious leaders (a pastor and a priest), two customary leaders, the Head of Manumutin Urban Village and two staff members, an Environmental Office officer for the Manumutin area, and four residents active in environmental activities.

Research Design

Specify the research design in the method section. Were subjects manipulated, or were they observed naturalistically? If multiple conditions were created, how were participants assigned to conditions, through random assignment or some other selection mechanism? Was the study conducted as a between-subjects or a within-subject design?

Result (نتائج)

The results of this study are presented based on qualitative descriptive data analysis obtained through in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies. The analysis was carried out using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña through the stages of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Systematically, the research findings are described in three main aspects: a general overview of the location and research subjects, themes and empirical evidence, and data triangulation that strengthens the validity of the findings.

General Overview of Location and Research Subjects

Manumutin Urban Village is located in Kota Atambua District, Belu Regency, East Nusa Tenggara Province. As one of the urban villages in the regency government center, Manumutin has semi-urban characteristics with a relatively high population density. Based on urban village data, there are 2,733 households with a total population of 12,532 people. Its people consist of diverse ethnic groups – Bunak, Dawan, Kemak, and Tetun – and adhere to different religions, predominantly Catholic and Protestant Christianity, with a small Muslim minority. This diversity makes Manumutin a miniature of the plural Belu community. Environmental conditions in Manumutin Urban Village face serious problems, especially in waste management. Field observations show household waste piles at several points, especially in front of the urban village office and around the waste containers provided by the government. Waste is not only thrown inside the containers but also scattered around them. Drainage channels have repeatedly been clogged by waste, which has the potential to cause flooding during the rainy season. This condition becomes an important context for the implementation of ecotheological education in the area. The research subjects consisted of 12 informants selected through *purposive sampling*: two religious leaders (a pastor and a priest), two customary leaders, the Head of Manumutin Urban Village and two staff members, an Environmental Office officer of Belu Regency for the Manumutin area, and four residents active in environmental activities. These informants provided rich data on how ecotheological values are understood, internalized, and practiced in daily life.

Themes and Empirical Evidence

From the data analysis, four main themes were found that describe the implementation of ecotheological education in Manumutin Urban Village. The first theme: Internalization of ecotheological values in religious life. Religious leaders in Manumutin actively convey ecological messages through sermons and teaching. A pastor stated in an interview: *“Protecting the environment is part of worship. God created this nature good, and we are called to care for it, not destroy it.”* Similarly, a priest emphasized that in the Catholic tradition, nature is a *“common home”* that must be protected as an expression of gratitude to the Creator. These values are also conveyed in joint prayer activities and catechesis. Documentation evidence shows that several churches in Manumutin have included environmental themes in their annual sermon plans. The second theme: The practice of communal work as a vessel for ecotheology and social harmony. Communal work activities are a concrete manifestation of ecotheology in Manumutin. Participatory observation conducted in three communal work activities – cleaning drainage channels, planting trees on riverbanks, and cleaning the market area – showed active participation of residents from various ethnic and religious backgrounds. The Head of Manumutin Urban Village, Saturmino Dos Rosario, stated in an interview: *“We always invite residents to work together. Here we no longer look at religion or ethnicity. Everyone works together for environmental cleanliness.”* This is reinforced by the statement of a customary leader who said that the value of *“hamutuk”* (togetherness) in Belu culture is in line with the spirit of ecotheology to care for nature together. The third theme: Challenges of environmental awareness and educational efforts. Although there are good practices, this study also reveals significant challenges. The Environmental Office officer of Belu Regency for the Manumutin area, Aloysius Manek, revealed: *“There are still many residents who throw waste beside the container, not inside it. Changing the mindset is difficult; it takes time and patience.”* Observations during the study also found that in the morning, before sanitation officers arrived, some residents were seen throwing waste into water channels. Educational efforts continue to be carried out by the urban village and the Environmental Office through socialization, installation of warning banners, and personal approaches to residents. However, the limited number of officers and the

frequency of waste collection are separate obstacles. The fourth theme: The impact of ecotheology on social harmony. An interesting finding of this study is the positive correlation between ecotheology-based activities and the strengthening of social harmony. Interviews with several residents revealed that communal work activities became a space for interaction that strengthened relations between residents, despite differences in religion and ethnicity. A Muslim resident stated: *"During communal work, we are all the same. There is no difference. We help each other and joke together."* This shows that ecotheology not only has an impact on environmental awareness but also strengthens social cohesion. Documentation evidence from urban village archives shows that communal work activities are routinely carried out every month and involve representatives from various neighborhood units and community units.

To ensure the validity of the findings, source, technique, and time triangulation were carried out. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing statements from various informants. For example, the statement of the Head of Manumutin Urban Village about communal work as a vessel for togetherness was confirmed by customary leaders, religious leaders, and residents. Technique triangulation compared interview data with field observations and documentation studies. What informants said about communal work activities was proven in participatory observation and recorded in urban village documentation. Time triangulation was carried out by conducting interviews and observations at different times morning, afternoon, and evening – as well as on weekdays and holidays, to see the consistency of behavior and activities. The triangulation results show that the findings of this study reinforce each other and can be methodologically accounted for.



Discussion (مناقشة)

This section presents a comprehensive discussion that integrates answers to the research questions, dialogue with theory, comparison with previous studies, the specificity of the case, and the theoretical and practical implications of implementing ecotheological education in Manumutin Urban Village, Belu Regency. This study departs from three main research questions: how ecotheological education is implemented in building environmental awareness, what its impact is on social harmony, and what challenges and opportunities exist for its application in border areas. Based on qualitative descriptive data analysis with a case study design, it was found that ecotheological education in Manumutin Urban Village is implemented through three main interconnected channels: internalization of ecotheological values through religious institutions, environmentally based communal work practices, and environmental education through socialization and example. These three channels do not stand alone but reinforce each other and form a distinctive ecotheological education ecosystem in the context of a plural semi-urban community.

1. Internalization of Ecotheological Values in Religious Life

The internalization of ecotheological values through religious institutions takes place through sermons, catechesis, and teaching delivered by religious leaders. Concrete evidence from interviews illustrates this process. A pastor stated, "Protecting the environment is part of worship. God created this nature good, and we are called to care for it, not destroy it." Similarly, a priest described nature as a "common home" that must be protected as an expression of gratitude to the Creator. Documentation evidence shows that several churches in

Manumutin have included environmental themes in their annual sermon plans, and these values are also conveyed in joint prayer activities and catechesis.

This finding is consistent with the concept of ecotheology as a religious narrative that encourages respect and responsibility toward nature (Hidayat, 2023; Karim, 2022). It also responds to Lynn White Jr.'s criticism that the Judeo-Christian tradition contributed to the ecological crisis through the doctrine of "dominion" over nature. In Manumutin, the religious narrative emphasizes care and responsibility rather than domination. The concept of *khalifah* in Islam and *stewardship* in Christianity – both stressing accountability rather than exploitation – are adopted and internalized by religious leaders in congregational life. This aligns with Rohman et al. (2024), who argue that integrating eco-theology into religious education can enhance environmental awareness, and with Febrianingsih et al. (2025), who position ecotheology as a new direction in religious education policy. However, this study also found that internalization of values does not automatically produce behavioral change. Environmental Office officer Aloysius Manek revealed, "There are still many residents who throw waste beside the container, not inside it. Changing the mindset is difficult; it takes time and patience." This is in line with previous research findings that fostering environmental awareness requires collaboration between the internalization of religious values and real intervention in economic policy and infrastructure (Rohman et al., 2024). Thus, while religious institutions are effective in shaping ecological awareness, they require structural support to translate values into consistent practices.

2. Communal Work as Embodied Ecotheology and Participatory Environmental Education

The practice of environmentally based communal work is a concrete manifestation of ecotheology in Manumutin Urban Village. Participatory observation in three communal work activities – cleaning drainage channels, planting trees on riverbanks, and cleaning the market area – showed active participation of residents from various ethnic and religious backgrounds. The Head of Manumutin Urban Village, Saturnino Dos Rosario, stated, "We always invite residents to work together. Here we no longer look at religion or ethnicity. Everyone works together for environmental cleanliness." A customary leader reinforced this by noting that the value of *hamutuk* (togetherness) in Belu culture is in line with the spirit of ecotheology to care for nature together. Documentation from urban village archives shows that communal work activities are routinely carried out every month and involve representatives from various neighborhood units and community units. This finding is consistent with the study in Lau Gumba Village, which showed that ecotheology combining religious teachings with ecological awareness through Participatory Action Research succeeded in increasing ecological awareness by around 30% and strengthening social relations between religious communities. It also resonates with research in Pegayaman Village, Bali, where ecotheology as a basis for interreligious harmony is manifested in the traditional irrigation system *Subak*, and with the study in Natuna, where the integration of religious moderation and internalization of ecotheology in border areas strengthens community environmental awareness. Compared with Sandri et al. (2025), who examine the revitalization of local ecotheology in Manggarai, this study shows a similar pattern of grounding ecotheology in local cultural wisdom, but in a semi-urban and plural border context. Kirin and Kariman (2026) emphasize the synergy of religious eco-theology and local cultural wisdom for environmental governance; Manumutin's communal work illustrates this synergy in practice. Panggarra et al. (2025) examine ecotheology teaching in the Dayak Kubint community, while Sriyanto et al. (2025) focus on faith-based environmental education and ecoliteracy among Muslim boarding students. This study extends

those findings by showing how ecotheology becomes participatory environmental education through communal work in a semi-urban, interfaith, and interethnic community.

3. Socialization, Example, and the Limits of Awareness

Environmental education through socialization and example is carried out by the urban village government and the Environmental Office of Belu Regency. Environmental Office officers routinely conduct socialization and personal approaches to residents about the importance of disposing of waste in its proper place. They also install warning banners. However, the study reveals a significant challenge: many residents still throw waste beside the container, not inside it. Field observations found household waste piles in front of the urban village office and around the provided containers, drainage channels clogged by waste, and some residents throwing waste into water channels in the morning before sanitation officers arrived. This finding shows that the implementation of ecotheological education in Manumutin is still at the stage of awareness formation and has not fully reached the stage of consistent behavioral change. In Paulo Freire's framework of transformative education, education should be a means of liberation and social transformation. However, the expected transformation has not been fully realized, especially in waste management. This indicates that ecotheological education requires a more holistic and sustainable approach, not only touching cognitive and spiritual realms but also providing adequate structural support. This conclusion is supported by Sriyanto et al. (2025), who show that faith-based environmental education can develop ecoliteracy, and by Rohman et al. (2024), who argue that curriculum integration must be accompanied by policy and infrastructure support. Without such support, ecotheological education risks remaining at the level of awareness without producing sustained behavioral change.

4. Ecotheology and Social Harmony: Interfaith and Interethnic Relations

The impact of ecotheological education on social harmony is an important finding in this study. Environmentally based communal work activities have become a space where people from various religious and ethnic backgrounds can interact and cooperate. A Muslim resident stated, "During communal work, we are all the same. There is no difference. We help each other and joke together." This finding strengthens the argument that ecotheology can be an instrument of interreligious value education that strengthens harmony. Minister of Religious Affairs Nasaruddin Umar emphasized that ecotheology and harmony are two interrelated aspects and are an important part of building a harmonious nation. In the context of Belu Regency as a plural border area, social cohesion is important capital for peaceful and sustainable development. Ecotheology-based communal work activities have become a space for interaction that dissolves ethnic and religious barriers. This finding is consistent with research in Pegayaman Village, Bali, where ecotheology is manifested in the *Subak* irrigation system as a space for social and spiritual interaction, and with the Natuna study, which shows the relevance of ecotheology in border areas. It also aligns with Kirin and Kariman (2026), who argue for interfaith ecological ethics that synergize religious eco-theology and local cultural wisdom for environmental governance. Thus, ecotheological education is not only a strategy for responding to the environmental crisis but also a way to care for the social harmony of the community.

5. Specificity, Contribution, and Comparison with Previous Studies

The specificity of this case study lies in three things. First, the border area context. Manumutin Urban Village is located in Belu Regency, which borders directly with Timor-Leste. As a border area, Manumutin faces distinctive social, economic, and environmental dynamics. Its people consist of four major ethnic groups—Bunak, Dawan, Kemak, and Tetun—and adhere to different religions. This diversity makes Manumutin a rich social laboratory for examining how ecotheology can become a social adhesive amid differences. Second, semi-urban characteristics. Unlike previous ecotheology studies, most of which were conducted in homogeneous rural communities, Manumutin has semi-urban characteristics with a relatively high population density. The environmental problems faced are also more complex, especially in household waste management. This shows that ecotheology is not only relevant for rural communities but also for urban communities facing more complex environmental problems. Third, waste as a focus. This study specifically examines the implementation of ecotheology in the context of waste management, which has not been widely studied in ecotheology studies in Indonesia.

Comparison with previous studies shows that the findings of this study have similarities as well as significant differences. The study in Lau Gumba Village found that ecotheology combining religious teachings with ecological awareness succeeded in increasing environmental awareness and strengthening social relations between religious communities. Research in Pegayaman Village, Bali, showed that ecotheology as a basis for interreligious harmony is manifested in the traditional irrigation system *Subak*. Meanwhile, the study in Natuna showed that the integration of religious moderation and internalization of ecotheology in border areas is relevant in strengthening community environmental awareness. This study reinforces those findings, but with a different context: if in Pegayaman ecotheology is manifested in the traditional irrigation system, in Manumutin ecotheology is manifested in communal work activities cleaning waste and planting trees. If in Natuna the ecotheology program is integrated with the religious moderation program, in Manumutin ecotheology grows from existing cultural and religious practices. Another difference is the location context: most previous ecotheology studies were conducted in relatively homogeneous rural communities, while this study was conducted in a semi-urban urban village that is ethnically and religiously plural. This study also extends the work of Panggarra et al. (2025) on the Dayak Kubint community and Sriyanto et al. (2025) on Muslim boarding students by focusing on community-based, interfaith environmental participation in a border area.

6. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The implications of this case can be formulated in three domains. Theoretically, this study enriches scientific knowledge about ecotheology, especially in the context of semi-urban communities in border areas. The findings show that ecotheology not only speaks about the human relationship with nature but also about how that relationship becomes a space for social interaction that strengthens harmony. Thus, this study contributes to the development of ecotheological theory that integrates spiritual, ecological, and social dimensions simultaneously. Practically, the results provide several implications. The government of Manumutin Urban Village and the Environmental Office of Belu Regency need to strengthen a more systematic and sustainable ecotheology program by involving religious leaders, customary leaders, and civil society. An approach is needed that combines the internalization of religious values with real infrastructure and policy intervention, because changing environmental behavior requires structural support. Ecotheology-based communal work activities need to be preserved and

developed as a space for interreligious and interethnic interaction that strengthens social harmony. In terms of policy, this study recommends integrating ecotheology into regional development policies, especially in border areas. The Ministry of Religious Affairs together with regional governments can develop ecotheology programs integrated with interreligious harmony programs, considering that ecotheology and harmony are two interrelated aspects. In addition, further research is needed to measure the long-term impact of ecotheological education on environmental behavior change and social harmony in border areas. Thus, this comprehensive discussion shows that ecotheological education in Manumutin Urban Village is a relevant and strategic approach for building environmental awareness while caring for social harmony. However, its implementation still faces challenges in the form of low awareness among some residents and limited infrastructure. A more holistic, sustainable approach involving various stakeholders is needed so that ecotheological education can truly transform environmental behavior and strengthen the social cohesion of communities in border areas.

This study concludes that ecotheological education in Manumutin Urban Village, Belu Regency, serves as a relevant and strategic approach for building environmental awareness while strengthening social harmony. Its implementation takes place through three interconnected channels: internalization of ecotheological values in religious life, environmentally based communal work practices, and environmental education through socialization and example. The ecotheological approach has positively contributed to shifting the community's mindset from anthropocentric to ecocentric, although challenges remain, including low awareness among some residents and limited waste management infrastructure. Furthermore, ecotheology-based activities have become a space for interfaith and interethnic interaction that strengthens social solidarity and harmony. These conclusions are grounded in concrete evidence from interviews and observations, including religious leaders' sermons on creation care, monthly interfaith communal work, and persistent practices of waste disposal beside containers. The main contribution of this study is that it extends ecotheological scholarship beyond formal education and relatively homogeneous rural settings by examining a semi-urban, ethnically and religiously plural border community. It demonstrates that ecotheology can simultaneously function as environmental education, faith-based value formation, and a mechanism for social cohesion, especially when embedded in existing cultural practices such as communal work (*hamutuk*). In this sense, the study offers an integrated understanding of ecotheology that links spiritual, ecological, and social dimensions in the context of border-area community life.

Practically, for border communities such as Manumutin, these findings imply that ecotheological education should not rely solely on religious teaching or awareness campaigns. It needs to be supported by collaboration among religious leaders, customary leaders, village government, the Environmental Office, and civil society; by routine and inclusive communal work; and by adequate waste management infrastructure and policy support. Local governments in border areas can integrate ecotheology into regional development and interreligious harmony programs, using it as a culturally grounded approach to environmental governance and social cohesion. Preserving and developing ecotheology-based communal work is especially important because it provides a shared public space where differences in religion and ethnicity can be bridged through collective environmental action. This study therefore recommends strengthening more systematic and sustainable ecotheology programs, integrating ecotheology into regional development policies in border areas, and conducting further research to measure the long-term impact of ecotheological education on environmental behavior and social harmony. Such efforts can help border communities build environmental awareness while maintaining social harmony in contexts of diversity.

This study concludes that ecotheological education in Manumutin Urban Village, Belu Regency,



Conclusion (خاتمة)

serves as a relevant and strategic approach for building environmental awareness while strengthening social harmony. Its implementation takes place through three interconnected channels: internalization of ecotheological values in religious life, environmentally based communal work practices, and environmental education through socialization and example. The ecotheological approach has positively contributed to shifting the community's mindset from anthropocentric to ecocentric, although challenges remain, including low awareness among some residents and limited waste management infrastructure. Furthermore, ecotheology-based activities have become a space for interfaith and interethnic interaction that strengthens social solidarity and harmony. The main contribution of this study is that it extends ecotheological scholarship beyond formal education and relatively homogeneous rural settings by examining a semi-urban, ethnically and religiously plural border community. It demonstrates that ecotheology can simultaneously function as environmental education, faith-based value formation, and a mechanism for social cohesion, especially when embedded in existing cultural practices such as communal work (*hamutuk*). In this sense, the study offers an integrated understanding of ecotheology that links spiritual, ecological, and social dimensions in the context of border-area community life.

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