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Embodied Islamic Discursive Tradition in the Patorani Fishing Communities of South Sulawesi

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Abstract

This study examines how the Patorani maritime tradition of Palalakkang Village in South Sulawesi operates as a culturally embedded medium for transmitting Islamic values. While previous research has emphasized economic or ritual dimensions of maritime life, limited attention has been given to how indigenous coastal traditions function as mechanisms for internalizing *aqidah*, *sharia*, and *akhlak*. Using a qualitative–interpretive approach, the research combines discourse and narrative analysis. Data were collected from 12 purposively selected Patorani practitioners, supported by extended participant observation of sailing rituals and community interactions, as well as documentation of local manuscripts and ethnographic records. All materials were transcribed and coded using a hybrid inductive–deductive scheme focused on moral vocabularies, ritual lexicons, authority markers, and vernacular Islamic concepts. The findings show that *aqidah* values are expressed through collective prayers, tauhid-oriented invocations, and acts of *tawakkul* and *syukur*. *Sharia* values emerge in practices of *shura*, adherence to communal norms, and moral accountability, while *akhlak* values appear in cooperation, honesty, patience, responsibility, and mutual respect. The study proposes Maritime Cultural Da'wah as a theoretical contribution, capturing how Islamic teachings are embodied and sustained through ritual labor, seafaring ethics, and localized cultural repertoires. Empirically, the study demonstrates that the Patorani tradition is not merely a ritual practice but a culturally grounded mechanism of Islamic moral internalization. The findings underscore the broader significance of indigenous maritime traditions in preserving Islamic identity and ethical orientation within rapidly changing coastal environments.

Kata Kunci : Embodied Islam; Islamic Moral Transmission; Maritime Cultural Da'wah; Patorani Tradition

1.   Introduction

Cultural da'wah is understood globally as a culturally embedded mechanism for conveying Islamic teachings in heterogeneous societies. Studies demonstrate that its effectiveness rests on the ability of religious actors to articulate Islamic messages through locally resonant cultural symbols, consistent with intercultural communication theory and the indigenization of Islam (Elvira et al 2023; Puspitasari and Ultriasratri 2023). When normative Islamic messages are situated within familiar symbolic systems, da'wah minimizes sociocultural friction and mitigates tensions that often arise at the intersection of universal norms and deeply rooted cultural identities. Thus, cultural da'wah is not merely a pedagogical tool for doctrinal transmission, but a socio cultural negotiation process that facilitates cognitive, affective, and behavioral acceptance of Islam across diverse communities.

Within this global theoretical landscape, Indonesian scholarship illustrates how cultural da'wah enhances communal receptivity by recognizing and refining indigenous values that align with Islamic ethics. Concepts such as mutual cooperation, social solidarity, and reverence for elders have been shown to sustain both religious commitment and cultural continuity when integrated into da'wah narratives (Wibowo et al 2024; Safei 2021). Artistic and performative traditions, including music, ritual expressions, maritime rituals, and traditional dance, operate as affective channels that strengthen message retention and emotional resonance (Abdullah 2009). These insights affirm that cultural practices constitute dynamic spaces where Islamic moral transformation and cultural sustainability are negotiated simultaneously.

Although previous studies on the Patorani tradition have richly documented fishing technologies, maritime ecological knowledge, symbolic rituals, and Bugis Makassar cosmology, they have not yet examined how Islamic da'wah values are internalized, embodied, and transmitted within this maritime tradition. Existing research largely situates Patorani in the domains of maritime ethnography and cultural heritage, stopping short of conceptualizing it as a medium of Islamic communication. This oversight is striking in light of broader theoretical discussions: Talal Asad conceptualizes Islamic practices as "discursive traditions" shaped through embodied cultural forms; Clifford Geertz defines religion as a system of symbols that sustains ethical and social order; Robert Hefner argues that Indonesian Islam is articulated through local ritual life and everyday practices. Despite these theoretical precedents, no study has systematically analyzed how aqidah, sharia, and akhlak are woven into the rituals, moral norms, and communal governance of Patorani fishermen.

This knowledge gap matters because the Patorani tradition clearly displays Islamic ethical patterns through its ritualized prayers, collective decision making, expressions of tawakkal, and intergenerational transmission of seafaring ethics. Understanding these elements as da'wah processes expands our comprehension of how Islam is lived, embodied, and reproduced in maritime societies. It also contributes to global discussions on localized Muslim identities, indigenous Islam, and culturally grounded da'wah, areas that remain underdeveloped in contemporary Islamic studies.

The present study addresses this gap by examining how Islamic da'wah values are internalized within the Patorani tradition and how maritime cultural life shapes forms of religious expression among coastal Muslim communities. Specifically, the research introduces the novel concept of **maritime cultural da'wah**, highlighting how aqidah, sharia, and akhlak are embedded in ecological

knowledge, collective risk taking, ritual performances such as songkabala and pammaca doangan, and the intergenerational moral regulation of coastal livelihoods. This analytical lens positions Patorani not merely as a socio economic or ritual phenomenon, but as an embodied arena for the production and transmission of Islamic ethical life.

The study advances the argument that Islamic da'wah in maritime South Sulawesi is lived rather than spoken, enacted rather than merely taught, and continually negotiated through the rhythms of coastal livelihood. By conceptualizing Patorani as part of the Islamic discursive tradition, this research contributes a distinctive perspective to global debates on cultural da'wah and offers a theoretical foundation for understanding how place based cultural ecologies shape Muslim religiosity in diverse world contexts.

2. Literature Review
Cultural Da'wah and the Dynamics of Religious Transmission

The Cultural Da'wah is a process of inviting people to believe in Allah Swt. by emphasizing an approach that reexamines the formal doctrinal relationship between Islam and politics, or Islam and the state (Cultural Islam). Believing in and obeying the Islamic values brought by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in order to worship Allah Swt. and be saved in this world and the hereafter (Hadisaputra et al., 2021).

The concept of Cultural Da'wah occupies a central position in contemporary Indonesian Islamic scholarship as an approach that integrates religious teachings with local socio-cultural structures. Within existing Indonesian literature, Cultural Da'wah is conceptualized as a process of religious communication embedded in community life, utilizing cultural practices, shared symbols, and social institutions as vehicles for transmitting Islamic values. The uploaded document describes this paradigm as a form of community

empowerment that builds moral cohesion through congregational activities, social groups, and grassroots initiatives

This means that congregational da'wah becomes a medium for cultural da'wah that focuses on empowering and developing the community through the formation of congregations as social units (communities). The preaching of culture builds strength from the grassroots, namely the community, through a socio-cultural approach that occurs within the community so that in carrying out its preaching activities, it can form unity through social groups within the community (Kurniawati, 2024). Essentially, da'wah is related to activities that build a society based on and grounded in the values of truth, goodness, and human rights contained in the Qur'an and Hadith (Khoriyah, 2016). Through this perspective, da'wah can be culturally and functionally related to the resolution of humanitarian problems, including social problems.

It emphasizes that da'wah activities are not merely doctrinal declarations but mechanisms of cultivating truth, goodness, and human rights rooted in the Qur'anic worldview. However, this indigenous formulation becomes far more complex when situated in global debates concerning the relationship between religion, culture, and ritual practice. Traditionally, studies of da'wah tend to emphasize textual orthodoxy and formal religious authority. By contrast, the cultural da'wah framework reorients attention toward embedded religious experience—how Islamic values are enacted, embodied, negotiated, and reproduced within localized cultural ecologies. This move shifts the conversation from doctrinal purity to religious praxis: the everyday production of piety through interactions with tradition, space, ritual, and community. This perspective allows for a richer understanding of how local customs and Islamic values can coexist and evolve, ultimately enhancing both cultural identity and religious life.This approach highlights the importance of contextual preaching strategies that respect

local traditions while aligning them with Islamic principles, fostering a deeper religious consciousness within the community.

The Indonesian context, with its diverse ethnolinguistic groups and syncretic cultural landscape, provides fertile ground for the development of cultural da'wah. Rituals such as the maritime Patorani tradition, which merges indigenous cosmology with Islamic devotion, exemplify the dynamic process through which religious transmission becomes articulated through cultural forms. As the literature suggests, da'wah rooted in cultural ritual involves a synergistic interplay between Islamic values—such as aqidah, sharia, and akhlak—and local epistemologies that shape how communities understand morality, responsibility, and social order

Thus, cultural da'wah must be re-evaluated as more than strategic adaptation; it is a complex, multi-layered process where religious ethics, indigenous knowledge, and cultural identity become mutually constitutive

Anthropology provides a foundational framework for analyzing how cultural rituals function as sites of religious meaning-making. In the symbolic–interpretive tradition, Clifford Geertz (Routledge) conceptualizes religion as a system of symbols that generates enduring moods and motivations by articulating a shared conception of order. Ritual, therefore, becomes a "cultural text" that must be interpreted to reveal the worldview it encodes. Applied to cultural da'wah, this perspective positions Patorani as a pedagogical arena where Islamic moral values are enacted through prayer recitations, offering rites, and invocations of divine protection—elements that translate Islamic ethics into culturally resonant forms. Yet, Talal Asad (Oxford) critiques the limits of symbolism by arguing that religion is sustained through *discursive tradition*, comprising discipline, normativity, and embodied regulation. From this view, Patorani habituates discipline, honesty,

courage, and work ethic as. Complementing both, Brill's scholarship on vernacular Islam (Woodward, Hefner) shows how localized ritual engagement with the maritime environment mediates orthodoxy and culture. Thus, anthropology reveals ritual as symbolic representation, disciplinary formation, and vernacular expression.

Sociology of religion elucidates how religious values become embedded in social structures. Berger's model of internalization–objectification–externalization (Oxford Handbook) explains how cultural da'wah transforms values into shared realities: rituals objectify Islamic norms, participation internalizes them, and collective enactment externalizes them as communal expectations. Durkheim's collective effervescence clarifies how Patorani rituals generate emotional solidarity, producing a cohesive moral community. Weberian sociology further shows how values—discipline, honesty, industriousness, membentuk etika kerja dan keteraturan sosial. Melalui proses ini, partisipasi ritual mengonsolidasi identitas "Pelaut Muslim Patorani," yang memadukan kesalehan, etika maritim, dan kebersamaan.

The Value of Da'wah

Based on Loners and Malpass (1994), values involve general beliefs about desirable and undesirable behaviors. Based on Hofstede (1986), values are a broad tendency to prefer or choose certain situations over others. Values are a deep-seated process possessed by members of society that often determine the actions or behaviors of members of society (Wahid, 2021).

Therefore, the conclusion about values is that they are abstract, not concrete. It can only be thought about, understood, internalized, and is something that is spiritual in nature regarding human behavior and has a broad impact on almost all aspects of human behavior in a social context.

Islam has values that every preacher needs to pay attention to in order to carry out their preaching well and smoothly (Widoyo et al., 2023). These values are:

a. Aqidah means something that is believed and trusted by the human heart to be true, in accordance with Islamic teachings based on the Qur'an and Hadith (Hanna et al., 2022). As written in the words of Allah Swt., in Surah An Najm verses 3-4, which read:

وَمَا يَنْطِقُ عَنِ الْهَوٰى اِنْ هُوَ اِلَّا وَحْيٌ يُّوْحٰى�

Translation: "nor did he speak (about the Qur'an and its explanation) based on his own desires. It (the Qur'an) is nothing but a revelation conveyed (to him)." (QS. An Najm (53) :3-4)

In this verse, Allah states that what Prophet Muhammad SAW conveyed was truly a revelation from Allah, not something fabricated or invented by Prophet Muhammad himself. Akhlakul Karimah means everything that is habitually done or good character. In Islam, morals are derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah (Shavir, 2021). Meanwhile, Sharia refers to the rules created by Allah or the principles created so that humans adhere to them in their relationship with Allah, with fellow Muslims, with fellow humans, as well as their relationship with the surrounding environment and their relationship with life (Wahid, 2021).

According to Muhammad Sulthon, as quoted by Nurseri, value is a certain view related to what is important and what is not important.

The Quran is believed to contain high values established by Allah Swt. and are His official values. 1. Ilahi values, which originate from the Qur'an and Sunnah; 2. Worldly values, which originate from Ra'yu (thought), customs, and natural realities.

Some universal values of da'wah that can be applied in the lives of the people, including (Hendra et al., 2023):

Discipline is not only for soldiers or police officers, but also for everyone who wants to be successful. Discipline does not mean living a rigid life and finding it difficult to smile. Discipline is closely related to time management (Abdullah,

2009). The time given by God, 24 hours a day, can be used as best as possible to achieve success in this world and the hereafter.

Three important things can be applied in our lives to eradicate dishonesty and other crimes: first, rectifying one's faith by believing and sincerely worshipping only Allah. Second, behaving honestly and not hurting others. Third, do not destroy the earth (Hendra et al., 2023). The point can be expanded beyond its literal meaning to include not damaging a well-established system as a result of dishonest individual behavior..

Those who are sincere will surely succeed. (man jadda wajada). This Arabic proverb is a social law that applies universally to society, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or language. The hardworking Chinese will surely reap the rewards of their hard work. Conversely, lazy Muslims will surely receive little in return for their laziness (Hadisaputra et al., 2021).

Muslims are often introduced to and encouraged to maintain cleanliness. Every discussion of Islamic jurisprudence begins with a discussion of cleanliness, such as removing major and minor impurities, using clean and purifying water, performing ablution, and so on. Maintaining cleanliness is a universal value that can be practiced by anyone, especially Muslims, who clearly have a strong foundation for maintaining cleanliness (Khoriyah, 2016).

Moreover, Islam does not prohibit its followers from competing, because competition is one of the most common psychological motivations possessed by every human being. Every student will have the motivation to compete among their friends

Many values of da'wah can still be developed or derived from the sources of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an and Hadith. These universal values of da'wah are constantly socialized to the community so that they become habits, traditions, or norms that apply in society.

Internalized values crystallize into shared social identity, producing cohesive communities characterized by solidarity, mutual accountability, and a shared sense of divine and ecological responsibility. This multi-theoretical synthesis produces a comprehensive understanding of cultural da'wah as a socio-religious formation that transcends doctrinal and cultural binaries.
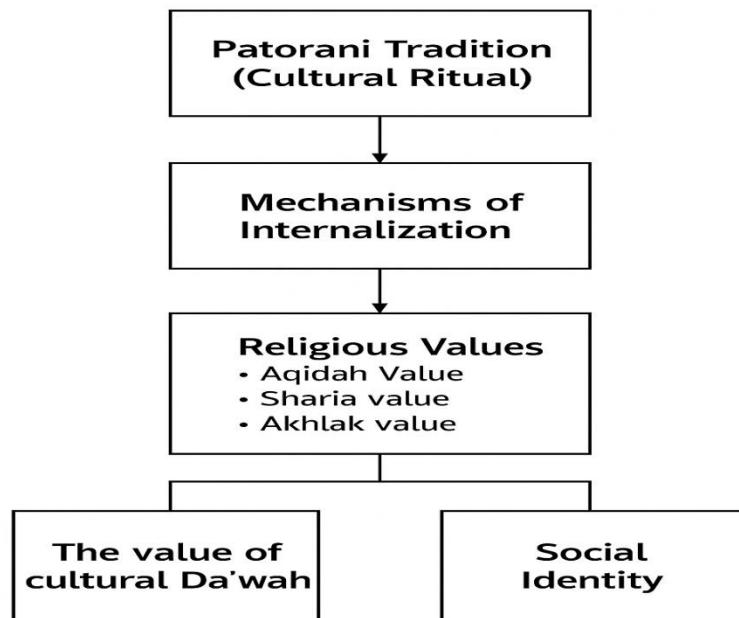
Figure 1. The Value of da'wah in the *Patorani* Tradition in Palallang Village, Galesong Subdistrict, Takalar Regency.

3. Methods

This study implements Discourse and Narrative Analysis grounded in the Sociology of Religion tradition (Oxford Handbook) to model the mechanisms through which religious values are internalized within a maritime Muslim community. The dataset comprises (a) formal religious instruction (ceramah, khutbah), (b) oral narratives and ritual explanations, and (c) indigenous Islamic terminologies and community moral norms as documented in the uploaded literature

All textual and oral materials were transcribed and segmented into analytically coherent discourse units that correspond to the fishermen's own thematic structuring of religious talk and ritual explanation. These segments were then coded through an inductive–deductive scheme: inductively to capture emergent moral vocabularies, ritual lexicons, and vernacular theological expressions, and deductively to track theoretically informed categories such as authority indexing, moral framing, and normative stabilization.

Narrative Analysis was applied to interview and observational data to examine how speakers position themselves and others (e.g., anrong guru, punggawa, crew members), how evaluative stances toward risk, divine protection, and moral duty are articulated, and how sequences of action—preparation, prayer, departure, and return—are morally ordered. Cross-source comparison was then used to integrate sermons, ritual explanations, and indigenous terminologies, enabling the identification of internalization mechanisms that recur across data types, including discursive authority (who has the right to define religious meaning), narrative positioning (how actors articulate their role in moral life at sea), and moral sequencing (how values are embedded into action through repeated ritual cycles). Analytical reliability was strengthened through coder cross-checking, triangulation across observational, interview, and documentary sources, and reflexive memoing to track interpretive decisions throughout the analysis. These methodological steps collectively feed into the construction of the study's internalization model, ensuring that the resulting framework is empirically grounded in the lived religious discourse of the Patorani community.

4. Results

This section presents empirical findings derived from in-depth interviews with fishermen, *anrong guru* (ritual specialists), religious leaders, and customary leaders within the Patorani fishing community. The analysis reveals five thematic

patterns which, for analytical clarity, are consolidated into two major sub-sections: (1) Ritualized Risk Governance in Maritime Life, and (2) Moral–Collective Order in Patorani Social Organization. Verbatim quotations preserve the emic voice of participants and ensure transparency in the interpretive process.

Ritualized Risk Governance in Maritime Life:
Ritualized Risk Management and Tawakkul

Findings show that going to sea is not perceived merely as an economic undertaking but as engagement with a fluid and unpredictable environment. This uncertainty is managed through ritualized practices closely tied to *tawakkul*, which functions simultaneously as emotional regulation and collective preparedness.

> A senior fisherman articulated this perspective vividly:
> "Going to sea is not only about whether the weather is good or not. Out there, Ibu, there is nothing we can really rely on except God. So before we go down to the boat, we usually pray together. I always say in my heart: *'oh Karaeng, salamakangngi angngalle'ki, salamakangngi angngabali'ku.'* That is our only capital." (Interview, Fisherman A, 2025)

It constitutes part of a short, inherited supplication seeking protection for both departure and return, underscoring the intimate and deeply embedded character of Patorani religious practice. The combination of ritual actors involved, the specific types of prayers recited, and the sequence in which they are performed demonstrates that the pre-departure prayer is not a single, discrete event but a multi-sited ritual process unfolding across several locations. Taken together, these dispersed yet interconnected invocations form the fishermen's primary moral and spiritual capital for confronting the inherent uncertainties of the sea.

This statement demonstrates how *tawakkul* is conceptualized as a pragmatic response to environmental volatility. It reduces anxiety, synchronizes emotional states among crew members, and frames risk within a relational cosmology involving human action, natural forces, and divine will.

The *anrong guru*—responsible for ritual prayers at the season's commencement—reinforced this outlook:

"The boys come and ask me to recite prayers for them. I always tell them: effort is still number one, but the heart must be calm. Prayer is what calms the heart because the sea cannot be predicted. They do not believe in the offerings themselves; they believe in the blessing from the Almighty."(Interview, Anrong Guru, 2025)

In the Patorani tradition, the prayers requested from the anrong guru are typically performed in clearly defined ritual spaces—most often at the shoreline beside the boats, sometimes on the deck before departure, and occasionally at the teacher's home when crews visit at dawn. When the anrong guru explains that "the boys come and ask me to recite prayers," he is describing this spatially anchored practice in which younger fishermen seek doa selamat to steady their emotions before facing the unpredictable sea. His emphasis that "effort is number one, but the heart must be calm" highlights the dual logic of technical preparation and emotional regulation that structures Patorani risk management. His clarification that they "do not believe in the offerings themselves, but in the blessing from the Almighty" reflects the community's shift toward prayer-centered rituals while retaining the moral significance of these ritual spaces.

Rather than functioning as superstition, ritual becomes a structured form of risk governance, choreographing the rhythm of work and stabilizing the affective environment before departure.

The village imam similarly noted:

"I never forbid them from praying or having their traditions before they go. As long as what they recite are prayers, nothing else. Life as a fisherman is very hard. They need something to hold on to, so they can be confident, not overly fearful." (Interview, Religious Leader, 2025)

In the Patorani context, the traditions referenced by the village imam do not merely denote generic communal prayers or conventional devotional gatherings, but rather a set of maritime ritual practices deeply embedded in the cultural repertoire of Bugis–Makassar fishing communities. These include the collective doa keberangkatan performed on the shore or at the prow of the vessel, the recitation of selected passages from Surah Yasin or Barazanji, and the enactment of tolak bala prayers accompanied by the sprinkling of blessed rice on the boat as a symbolic invocation of protection. In some crews, the imam also leads short hereditary prayers invoking the guardianship of Allah and the intercessory figure of Nabi Khidir, who occupies a longstanding place in the moral–spiritual imagination of South Sulawesi seafarers. When the imam remarks that he "never forbids their traditions," he is referring to this coherent ritual assemblage—practices he permits as long as they consist of legitimate supplications and avoid elements deemed theologically problematic. For Patorani fishermen, these rites serve as a critical affective scaffold: they mitigate fear, cultivate composure in the face of volatile seas, and reinforce collective morale before departure. Thus, the "traditions" in question constitute a culturally specific spiritual infrastructure that stabilizes emotions, sustains moral confidence, and prepares crews to confront maritime uncertainty with a shared sense of divine protection.

Taken together, these narratives show that ritualized spirituality constitutes a structural component of risk management, extending beyond individual coping to shape collective readiness and cohesion. It also challenges classical economic models that frame risk as calculable probability, revealing instead a relational and moral framing of marine uncertainty.

Moral–Collective Order in Patorani Social Organization

Collective Governance and Layered Shura

Patorani social organization is built upon deliberative governance or *musyawarah*, conducted routinely before sailing. Through this process, fishers evaluate environmental signs, assess vessel readiness, determine crew roles, and decide whether to depart.

A customary leader described this process:

"When the weather is bad, no one dares to decide alone. We first sit together and listen to everyone's opinion. Some look at the wind, some look at the stars, some check the condition of the boat. The decision is the result of everyone's words, not just one person's wish."(Interview, Customary Leader, 2025)

Although participants do not always explicitly refer to "*shura*," the structure clearly mirrors this principle of consultative decision-making. However, the practice is **not egalitarian**. Age, maritime experience, and symbolic standing influence who speaks first and whose voice carries more authority.

A younger fisherman described this stratification:

"Young people like me cannot speak first. But if I know something about the weather, I still say it. They will listen if it makes sense. No one gets angry. But in the end, it is still the elders who decide." (Interview, Fisherman B, 2025)

Thus, Patorani governance can be characterized as layered collectivity— participatory but hierarchically structured.

A religious leader emphasized the stabilizing effect of such deliberation:

"If the decision is not made together, later out at sea they will suspect each other. Musyawarah is not only about technical matters, but about making everyone feel safe. Once an agreement is reached, no one will blame the others." (Interview, Religious Leader, 2025)

Deliberation therefore performs dual functions: it aggregates knowledge (epistemic robustness) and prevents conflict (social cohesion).

Moral Economy and the Ethics of Distribution

The distribution of catch follows principles of fairness and solidarity rather than market rationality. Income is shared equally among crew members, regardless of ownership or minor differences in task.

A net hauler explained:

> "When the catch is big, we divide it evenly. No one ever takes more. If I get three million rupiah, the others also get three million. No one is allowed to cheat." (Interview, Fisherman C, 2025)

Such distribution embodies a **moral economy** grounded in relational equality. Even boat owners refrain from claiming a privileged portion:

> "Even though I am the owner of the boat, I do not take my portion first. We divide the catch according to the agreement from the beginning. If I take more, they will feel offended. We are a family at sea." (Interview, Boat Owner, 2025)

This norm **limits economic dominance** and preserves trust necessary for collective labor in high-risk environments. The moral economy extends beyond crew boundaries into neighborhood relations:

> "Usually, when my husband comes home and the catch is abundant, before selling it, we bring some fish to our neighbors. That is our custom. It feels wrong not to share."(Interview, Female Villager, 2025)

Here, the catch becomes a social resource that reinforces broader community solidarity.

Negotiating Tradition and Modern Rationalities

Findings also reveal hybrid knowledge practices, as younger fishermen integrate digital weather applications with traditional readings of wind and skies. As one fisherman noted:

> "Now we can check the weather through an app, so we can see more clearly where the wind is coming from. But we still recite prayers. That will never disappear."(Interview, Fisherman D, 2025)

Traditionalists express concern about this shift:

> "If the young ones rely too much on their mobile phones, I am afraid they will forget how to read the wind. What if the battery dies? The sea cannot be read only with a machine." (Interview, Customary Leader, 2025)

Rather than a rupture, the data show an adaptive blending of technoscientific and experiential knowledge—confirming the emergence of hybrid rationalities.

Integration of Spirituality, Deliberation, and Solidarity

These practices collectively form a maritime social order wherein spirituality, governance, and economic ethics reinforce one another.

A senior fisherman summarized:

> "If we have already prayed, already held musyawarah, and then we share the results fairly, our hearts are calm. No one suspects the others, no one feels superior. That is what allows us to keep going to sea." (Interview, Fisherman E, 2025)

This integrated system stabilizes both psychological readiness and social cohesion, enabling the community to navigate ecological uncertainty and intergenerational change.

Across the two major sub-sections, the findings highlight three overarching patterns:

1. Risk is governed through ritualized spirituality, forming an affective and moral infrastructure for decision-making at sea.
2. Collective governance operates through layered shura, balancing participation and hierarchy.
3. Economic interactions follow a moral economy, reinforcing solidarity within and beyond fishing crews.

Together, these insights extend theoretical discussions on risk, governance, social capital, and moral economy in maritime anthropology.

4.1 Diagram: Relationship Between Ritual, Tawakkul, Emotional Regulation, and Uncertainty

MARINE UNCERTAINTY
(weather volatility, environmental risk)
▼
MARITIME RITUALS
(collective prayers, blessings)
▼
TAWAKKUL
(trust in God + disciplined human effort)
▼
EMOTIONAL REGULATION
(calmness, reduced fear, shared confidence)
▼
COLLECTIVE READINESS & COHESION
(solidarity, coordinated action, group harmony)
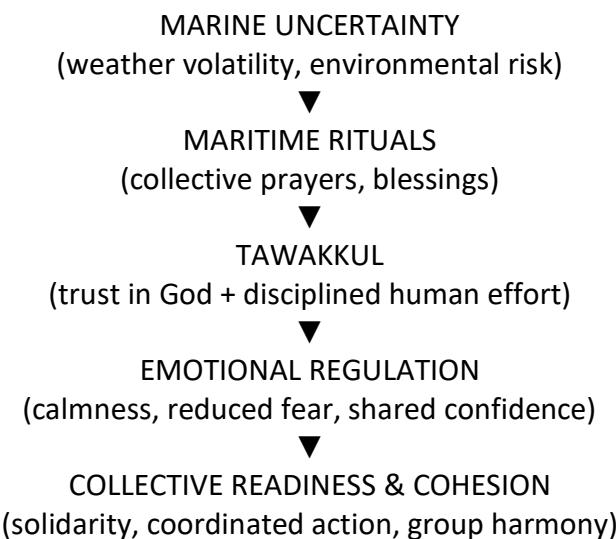
5. Discussion

The Maritime cultural da'wah in the Patorani community reveals a striking paradox: although coastal societies worldwide experience rapid cultural erosion due to globalization, industrial fisheries, and ecological decline, certain ritual fishing traditions in South Sulawesi not only persist but intensify as sources of ethical formation and religious identity. This endurance challenges the common assumption that indigenous ritual life inevitably weakens under modern pressures, showing instead that cultural ecologies can become sites of heightened religious embodiment.

Such persistence becomes intelligible when viewed through the embodied nature of Islamic moral transmission. For Patorani fishers, da'wah does not operate through formal preaching but through repeated engagement with ecological uncertainty, collective risk management, and ritualized seafaring labor. These everyday practices cultivate dispositions of tawakkal, syukur, sabar, and communal obligation, demonstrating that moral pedagogies rooted in labor and ecology can be as influential as textual instruction in shaping lived Islam.

The findings also show that maritime religious expression is structured through a set of cultural logics that bind ritual, ecology, and Islamic ethics into a coherent moral system. The integration of prayers, offerings, and collective pammaca doangan before sailing illustrates how religious meaning is enacted through bodily performance and communal rhythm – a pattern consistent with research on embodied religiosity in Southeast Asian Muslim communities (Acciaioli 1989; Ammarell 2002; Lowe 2021). Patorani rituals therefore function not as cultural residues but as dynamic technologies of moral regulation.

Evidence from global scholarship reinforces this interpretation. Asad's concept of *discursive tradition* explains how Islamic practices endure by being continually reembodied in local forms (Asad 2009). In maritime communities, ecological precarity creates a moral environment in which Islamic virtues become operationalized through daily encounters with the sea. This aligns with recent studies on ecological religiosity, which show that environmental risk intensifies embodied moral reasoning and ritual participation (Ghazali et al 2023; Milligan and Lowe 2020; Kusumawati and Visser 2023). Thus, the sea functions as both a material workspace and a moral landscape.

The Patorani case also extends the anthropology of Indonesian Islam. While Geertz's symbolic theory emphasizes meaning embedded in cultural forms (Geertz 2013), and Hefner (2019) highlights the civility of Indonesian Muslim pluralism, neither explicitly foregrounds ecological labor as a generator of

religious ethics. This study demonstrates that maritime work – navigation, weather sensing, collective decision making – becomes an axis through which Islamic values are transmitted and naturalized. Such evidence provides a corrective to earlier ethnographies that interpreted maritime rituals primarily as cosmological survivals (Pelras 1996; Sather 1997), overlooking their da'wah function.

These results also carry wide social and policy implications. The strengthening of Islamic moral life within Patorani practices indicates that preserving maritime cultural heritage is not merely cultural conservation but also the safeguarding of community based religious ethics. As climate change threatens marine ecosystems and reduces opportunities for traditional seafaring labor, the cultural infrastructures sustaining this embodied da'wah may weaken. Supporting coastal cultural resilience therefore becomes a critical strategy for maintaining indigenous Islamic expressions.

In conclusion, this study illustrates that maritime cultural da'wah constitutes a distinctive mode of Islamic discursive tradition – one that emerges from ecological lifeworlds rather than textual instruction alone. By conceptualizing Patorani ritual life as an embodied field of Islamic ethical formation, the study advances theoretical debates on indigenous Islam, expands the anthropology of da'wah, and lays the groundwork for comparative research on maritime Muslim communities across the Indo Pacific region.

6. Conclusion.

This study demonstrates that the Patorani tradition constitutes a distinctive form of maritime cultural da'wah in which Islamic values are not merely articulated verbally but are embodied through ecological labor, ritual performance, and intergenerational seafaring ethics. The findings refine the understanding of Islamic discursive tradition by showing that religious meaning is produced and sustained within the material and environmental conditions of coastal life. Through practices of risk navigation, collective rituals such as *pammaca doangan*, and moral dispositions cultivated at sea, Patorani fishers internalize aqidah, sharia, and akhlak as lived orientations rather than abstract doctrines. This ecological embodiment expands existing theories of indigenous Islam and challenges interpretations that separate religious transmission from cultural and environmental context. However, the continuity of this maritime da'wah is increasingly threatened by climate change, coastal degradation, and the decline of traditional fisheries, underscoring the need for policies that protect both cultural heritage and the ecological foundations that sustain it. By conceptualizing maritime livelihood as a field of Islamic ethical formation, this study contributes a

new analytical lens for examining how localized Muslim identities emerge from place based cultural ecologies, offering a foundation for comparative research across other maritime Muslim societies in the Indo Pacific.

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