
The Role of Community Engagement in the Actualization of Ecological Citizenship: A Case Study of Riverbank Areas in Banjarmasin City

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ABSTRACT

This study applies Light's theory of ecological citizenship, which emphasizes three key aspects: responsibility for environmental impact, concern for the well-being of others, and efforts to preserve ecological sustainability. The research aims to examine how ecological citizenship is actualized in the daily lives of riverbank residents and how the local government supports this process. It employs a qualitative case study method, with data collected through field observations and interviews involving 32 informants consisting of urban village heads, neighborhood leaders, and residents. Supporting literature and administrative documents were used as secondary sources, and data validation was conducted using triangulation of techniques and sources. The findings show that ecological citizenship in the riverbank areas of North Banjarmasin is reflected in both community participation and government involvement. Residents engage in waste management, voluntary clean-up efforts, and collective sanitation funding, all of which are supported by strong social cohesion. The local government contributes by providing infrastructure, organizing awareness programs, and maintaining sanitation through routine institutional initiatives. To further strengthen ecological citizenship, residents are encouraged to participate in environmental decision-making through public forums and direct communication with authorities. Local governments are advised to facilitate inclusive and informative discussion spaces, use digital platforms to broaden public engagement, and collaborate with universities and community organizations to enhance environmental education. These efforts are essential for fostering a collective sense of ecological responsibility and promoting sustainable practices in riverbank communities.

Keyword: Ecological citizenship; Participation; Riverbank.



INTRODUCTION

In a global context, Indonesia's environmental sustainability status remains worrisome. According to the 2024 Environmental Performance Index compiled by Yale and Columbia Universities, Indonesia ranks 163rd out of 180 countries, reflecting the nation's poor performance in balancing economic development with environmental conservation. This low ranking exemplifies the tendency of countries that prioritize economic growth over environmental protection. The situation is further illustrated by the *2020 Indonesian Environmental Statistics Report* released by *Badan Pusat Statistik* (BPS), which recorded that 57.42% of Indonesian households dispose of domestic wastewater from activities such as bathing, laundry, and cooking directly into drains, gutters, or even rivers.

There is broad consensus that humanity is currently facing an ecological crisis. This awareness underscores the need for a new approach to how nature is treated and calls for a stronger connection between humans and their environment. According to Zeng, Sweet, and Cheng (2016), the theory of ecological citizenship encourages a return to nature, understood as recognition of the deep interconnection between humans and the environment. Meanwhile, Jordan, Sorensen, Biehler, Wilson, and DaLeau (2019) assert that ecological citizenship is realized when communities—whether in urban areas or elsewhere—actively engage in environmental preservation practices. Asilsoy and Oktay (2018) emphasize that ecological

citizenship begins in the personal sphere, as environmentally responsible behaviors in daily life—particularly at home and within one’s immediate surroundings—form the essential foundation before extending into the public domain.

Law Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management, Article 70 paragraph (1), stipulates that the public has equal and broad rights and opportunities to actively participate in environmental protection and management. Furthermore, Article 67 of the same regulation affirms that every individual is obliged to maintain the sustainability of environmental functions and to control pollution and/or environmental damage. Public participation may take the form of social supervision, the provision of opinions, suggestions, objections, and/or complaints, as well as the submission of information and/or reports.

The concept of ecological citizenship first emerged in the 1990s and has since become a focal point for policymakers, scholars, and environmental activists. This concept refers to individuals’ awareness of and responsibility toward the natural environment. This study adopts the theory of ecological citizenship proposed by Light (2003), which emphasizes three key aspects: responsibility for the environmental impacts of one’s actions, concern for the well-being of fellow citizens, and a commitment to environmental sustainability.

Banjarmasin, widely known as the “City of a Thousand Rivers,” carries the environmental mandate to integrate ecological considerations into its urban spatial planning (Hadinata & Muchamad, 2018). The city originally developed from traditional settlements that emerged spontaneously along the riverbanks, giving rise to what is referred to as the *river culture*. This *river culture* reflects the adaptive characteristics of riverbank communities in their physical, social, and economic lives, highlighting their dependence on the river as a source of drinking water, a place for bathing and washing, as well as a means of transportation (Michiani & Asano, 2019).

A study conducted by Muhaimin and Jumriani (2023) revealed that out of 346 respondents, 166 individuals (47.98%) living along the riverbanks in Banjarmasin disposed of their liquid waste into swamps, while 180 individuals (52.02%) discharged it directly into the river. This finding aligns with Angriani, Sumarmi, Ruja, and Bachri (2018), who emphasized the crucial role of both the public sector and the community in river conservation efforts in Banjarmasin. Their research showed that although various initiatives have been undertaken by stakeholders—particularly local governments and community organizations—to improve river conditions, these efforts face significant challenges. The primary obstacles include low public awareness of environmental conservation and the lack of synergy between the government and other parties involved in river management.

The novelty of this study lies in two main aspects. First, it focuses specifically on the North Banjarmasin District, an area characterized by several riverbank settlements that have received limited scholarly attention in previous research. Second, although the theme of ecological citizenship has been widely explored, the specific theoretical framework adopted in this study remains rarely applied in similar contexts. The primary aim of this research is to examine the actualization of ecological citizenship within the daily practices of riverbank residents and the role of the local government in supporting its realization.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method aimed at examining social issues within the community. Data were collected through interviews and in-depth information gathering from informants who provided insights relevant to the research theme. The research applied a case study approach to depict and analyze conditions, situations, and practices within society, supporting the development of community-based Civic Education studies. The researcher sought an in-depth understanding of environmental issues and the actualization of ecological citizenship in North Banjarmasin District.

The research was carried out in the riverbank areas of Banjarmasin City, with reference to *Banjarmasin City Regional Regulation No. 15 of 2016* concerning river management. Article 3 of the regulation identifies three key areas: the Anjir waterways, Handil or Antasan, and Saka. The study focused on Sungai Miai Subdistrict for the Handil or Antasan area and Sungai Jingah and Surgi Mufti Subdistricts for the Saka area. All locations are administratively within North Banjarmasin District. These sites were chosen due to their relevance to the research focus, particularly regarding riverbank conditions and community engagement in environmental preservation. Key issues identified included low civic participation in environmental protection, waste accumulation, and inadequate conservation efforts.

Primary data were obtained through field observations and interviews with 32 informants, consisting of urban village heads (*lurah*), neighborhood leaders (*RT*), and local residents. Secondary data were collected from supporting literature, including books, journals, and administrative documents related to the sub-districts and riverbank communities. The study employed non-participant observation, face-to-face semi-structured interviews, and documentation to complement both methods.

To ensure validity, data were examined through triangulation. Methodological triangulation was conducted by combining observation and interviews, while source triangulation verified the credibility of information across different respondents. The data were described, categorized, and analyzed to identify shared and divergent perspectives. The findings were further validated through a member check process involving several informants.

In practical terms, the results of this study were expected to provide input for local governments in formulating more inclusive and effective community empowerment programs and environmental policies, while also encouraging communities to enhance active participation in maintaining ecological sustainability along the riverbanks.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Banjarmasin, the capital city of South Kalimantan Province, is strategically located between two major regencies: Barito Kuala and Banjar. Astronomically, the city lies between 3°16'46" to 3°22'54" South Latitude and 114°31'40" to 114°39'55" East Longitude. Banjarmasin has an average elevation of approximately 0.16 meters below sea level and is characterized by flat terrain predominantly consisting of swampy land. Geographically, the city

shares its borders with Barito Kuala Regency to the north and west, and with Banjar Regency to the east and south.

Banjarmasin is situated in a lowland area below sea level, which has earned it the nickname "Water City" or "City of a Thousand Rivers." A vast portion of the city is traversed by numerous rivers that play a crucial role in the daily lives of local residents. As the capital of South Kalimantan Province and the most densely populated city on the island of Kalimantan, Banjarmasin has developed with five primary focuses: governance, trade, port activity, industry, and tourism. In each of these sectors, rivers serve as an essential foundation supporting the city's socio-economic dynamics.

Geographically, the city is located at the confluence of the Barito and Martapura Rivers, both of which originate in the Meratus Mountains. This strategic location has established Banjarmasin as a key center of commerce. The city's geographic conditions, influenced by tidal fluctuations, significantly affect its drainage systems and the way of life of its inhabitants. The rivers are utilized not only as waterways for transportation but also as vital components in tourism, fisheries, and trade making them an inseparable part of the city's identity.

Responsibility for Environmental Impact in North Banjarmasin

Resident responsibility for environmental impact is shaped by both economic conditions and social dynamics. The majority of residents, who work primarily as laborers, tend to prioritize meeting their daily needs over participating in environmental preservation efforts. Although social relationships within the community are generally strong, a sense of shared responsibility for maintaining a clean environment is not uniformly internalized. This situation is exacerbated by the persistent practice of littering, which some residents view as a more convenient and practical solution to waste disposal. Compounding the problem are external factors, such as waste carried by river currents and accumulating in residential areas, along with trash from outside parties especially itinerant vendors which indicates that threats to environmental cleanliness arise not only from within the community but also from external sources.

Internal challenges continue to hinder effective environmental management. These include low awareness among some residents who still dispose of household waste into the river, as well as varying levels of education that influence individuals' understanding of environmental issues. Additionally, reluctance to contribute financially to waste collection services has led to continued improper disposal practices in certain areas. Nevertheless, several community-led initiatives have emerged to address these concerns. In some neighborhoods, routine waste collection fees have been implemented, and designated personnel collect household waste directly. Clean-up programs such as "Jum'at Bersih" have also been introduced in several administrative areas as a form of collective community action. Furthermore, there are individuals who voluntarily transport their household waste to designated waste disposal sites, reflecting a growing sense of personal environmental responsibility.

The sub-district administrative office has received and responded to residents' aspirations concerning the need for the construction and repair of drainage systems and river embankments.

However, due to limited authority and insufficient resources, the office can only act as an intermediary by conveying these concerns to the relevant municipal agencies. Despite these efforts, tangible outcomes remain absent, and the proposed solutions have yet to materialize. In the meantime, frequent flooding continues to transport waste that pollutes the environment, particularly in densely populated, low-income areas where garbage accumulation has become a critical issue. This situation is further exacerbated by unmanaged waste generated from the Sasirangan tourism zone, which remains unaddressed.

In response, residents have proposed the deployment of large-capacity waste collection vehicles capable of reaching individual households. They have also called for stricter enforcement and monitoring to deter indiscriminate waste disposal. Furthermore, the community expects the sub-district office to demonstrate greater responsiveness to environmental complaints. Given the vast expanse of riverbank settlements, effective environmental management requires adequate resources, something that remains a significant challenge due to the office's limited operational budget. Complicating the matter further, not all waste found in residential areas originates from local activity. River currents frequently carry debris from upstream areas, which then settles within these communities and contributes to the persistence of environmental degradation.

Concern for Community Welfare along the Riverbanks in North Banjarmasin

A strong sense of kinship continues to foster environmental and social awareness among residents, encouraging mutual assistance in maintaining cleanliness and ecological preservation. However, not all individuals participate actively; some prefer to manage their surroundings independently due to time constraints resulting from work commitments. This has led to suboptimal participation in communal clean-up efforts, despite the shared understanding of its importance. Environmental issues remain a major concern, directly affecting the community's well-being. Poor waste management has led to ongoing sanitation problems, and the increasing frequency of floods continues to disrupt daily activities. While residents express a clear expectation for the construction of drainage infrastructure, the implementation of such projects is often delayed. Additionally, the lack of prompt government response to infrastructure damage caused by flooding further compounds the issue.

Beyond environmental matters, social cohesion remains strong through regular participation in religious activities such as *yasinan* and *burdahan*, which help strengthen community solidarity. Inter-neighborhood forums and community gatherings in areas like Sungai Jingah also serve as platforms for discussing environmental and social challenges faced by the residents. Community members continue to engage in traditional mutual-aid practices, particularly during events such as weddings and other celebrations. Among those living along the riverbanks, especially in village-like settlements, strong kinship ties and familial connections play a significant role in reinforcing social harmony and collective resilience.

The Banjarmasin City Government has demonstrated a clear commitment to improving the welfare of residents living along the riverbanks through various targeted programs, particularly those aimed at disaster mitigation and infrastructure strengthening. Concrete measures include

the installation of culverts and drainage systems to reduce flood risks, land elevation to prevent water intrusion into residential areas, and the construction of concrete embankments around the Miai River. These initiatives reflect a proactive approach to minimizing the vulnerability of riverbank communities to environmental hazards.

In addition to infrastructure, the government has also prioritized the social and health aspects of riverbank residents. This includes organizing health check-up programs in collaboration with universities, distributing social assistance to low-income families, and conducting awareness campaigns on disease prevention, such as dengue fever. Despite these efforts, challenges persist, particularly in encouraging active public participation in community-based activities. Furthermore, equitable access to essential welfare facilities, such as proper sanitation, remains limited. Annual flooding continues to pose a serious threat to the residents' quality of life, with far-reaching impacts on mobility, health, and productivity.

Efforts to Preserve the Riverbank Environment in North Banjarmasin

There remain significant challenges in promoting environmental conservation, particularly due to the low level of environmental awareness among certain segments of the population and the inadequate infrastructure supporting such initiatives. In several areas, the once-active cleanliness task forces that played a crucial role in maintaining environmental hygiene are no longer operational, leading to a shift in responsibility solely to residents. Some community members have taken the initiative to build their own waste collection points, but these efforts have yet to reach optimal effectiveness due to the absence of adequate facilities. Furthermore, the implementation of community-based contributions to finance waste collection personnel has helped reduce waste accumulation in some neighborhoods, though the impact remains limited.

Sanitation infrastructure continues to be insufficient, resulting in waste piling up at various locations. Residents have expressed the need for additional waste collection trucks and an increase in the number of sanitation facilities. Moreover, environmental outreach and community deliberation sessions expected to foster greater public engagement have not been regularly conducted in some administrative areas. Despite these constraints, mutual cooperation remains a primary mechanism for maintaining environmental cleanliness. Residents actively participate in municipal programs, such as riverbank clean-up activities, and engage in community-led clean-up initiatives on a weekly basis or ahead of major public holidays. In addition, a number of individuals independently manage household waste disposal by collecting and transporting it directly to temporary disposal sites.

The Banjarmasin City Government, in collaboration with sub-district offices, has made various efforts to promote environmental conservation. These initiatives include the provision of waste management facilities such as garbage collection vehicles and disposal sites, although their distribution remains uneven across different areas. In addition, several sub-districts have initiated routine cleaning activities that actively involve local residents. Direct community outreach has also been implemented through awareness campaigns, encouraging citizens to refrain from dumping household waste into rivers and to engage in conservation efforts. These

preventive measures are further supported by the installation of banners along riverbanks, explicitly prohibiting littering.

Despite these efforts, environmental challenges persist, particularly in riverbank areas that experience regular flooding. The accumulation of waste under houses, around bridges, and along the riverbanks has worsened environmental conditions. Moreover, the continued use of riverbanks for bathing, washing, and open defecation presents a serious concern, especially since the river water is also used for daily needs. Limited waste collection capacity has led residents to propose the deployment of larger garbage trucks that can reach neighborhood units. There have also been community requests for sanitation infrastructure, such as public toilets, which remain unmet despite being viewed as an urgent necessity.

Discussion

Responsibility for Environmental Impact in North Banjarmasin

Residents' responsibility for environmental impact encompasses a moral obligation to take actions that reduce ecological harm, support environmental policies, and adapt daily habits to minimize degradation (Ford, 2019; Jiang et al., 2019). Citizens play a significant role in addressing environmental challenges by raising awareness, engaging in conservation-oriented behaviors, and mitigating environmental damage (Jagers et al., 2016; Srisathan et al., 2024). Furthermore, such responsibility fosters public participation in environmental decision-making at the local level, contributing to more responsive and sustainable governance (Lee, 2015; Rathnayake et al., 2020). In the context of riverbank communities in North Banjarmasin District, this form of civic responsibility is vital, as local ecological pressures often stem from both daily household behavior and broader socio-environmental systems. A strong environmental ethic among residents may serve as a counterbalance to routine practices that otherwise contribute to river pollution and ecological strain.

Despite its importance, residents often face multiple barriers in fulfilling their environmental responsibilities, including limited resources, insufficient institutional support, and a lack of inclusion in environmental programs (Hadjichambis et al., 2024; Pritchard & Gabrys, 2016). Other contributing factors are low environmental awareness, varying levels of education, and inadequate communication from local authorities, which collectively hinder proactive environmental behavior (Choudri et al., 2017; Vijaikis & Poškus, 2024). Additional obstacles include time constraints, fears of negative consequences, and restrictive governmental mechanisms that limit public participation in environmental efforts (Davis & Garb, 2020; Switzer, 2019). These challenges are particularly evident in North Banjarmasin's riverbank neighborhoods, where both internal and external pressures contribute to suboptimal waste practices. The combination of poor waste infrastructure and informal waste disposal habits continues to obstruct efforts toward sustainable environmental management.

Strengthening environmental responsibility can be achieved through community-based programs that reflect residents' lived experiences and aspirations (Bergstrand & Mayer, 2020; Clapp et al., 2016). Promoting public participation through collaborative initiatives and integrating government efforts into sustainable development planning also serve as effective

strategies (Jones, 2018; Zhang et al., 2020). Lastly, aligning environmental programs with local values and everyday practices offers a culturally grounded approach to reducing environmental harm (Franklin & Dunkley, 2017; Kraft et al., 2015). In North Banjarmasin, several resident-led actions such as regular clean-up days and voluntary waste transport have emerged as meaningful responses to environmental pressures. These grassroots efforts demonstrate a growing awareness that, when supported by inclusive policies, can lead to more resilient and ecologically responsible riverbank communities.

The government holds a critical responsibility in addressing environmental issues through effective policies and actions, while also ensuring the protection of natural areas (Bolleter, 2017; Xiong et al., 2024). Local governments, in particular, bear significant obligations to shield communities from environmental harm and implement localized policies to mitigate such impacts (Hao et al., 2021; Switzer, 2019). The effectiveness of government intervention strongly influences public attitudes and participation, making state action a key determinant in fostering environmental accountability among residents (Holum & Jakobsen, 2024; Hu & Shi, 2021). In the context of riverbank settlements in North Banjarmasin, residents' expectations for meaningful environmental intervention have increased, especially in areas facing recurrent flooding and inadequate waste management. Local administrative offices, however, often act merely as intermediaries due to limited authority and lack of infrastructure to support direct action.

Despite this formal mandate, local governments face numerous challenges in fulfilling their environmental responsibilities, including budgetary constraints, shortages of skilled personnel, and limited public engagement mechanisms (S. Chen & Liu, 2022; Lilly et al., 2024). Addressing environmental problems also requires accurate problem identification, the involvement of relevant experts, and the ability to manage constrained resources efficiently (Farooq et al., 2021; Kulin & Sevä, 2019). However, implementation is frequently hindered by the low prioritization of environmental policies, the ineffectiveness of regulatory enforcement, and the general lack of ecological awareness among decision-makers (Davis & Garb, 2020; Wu & Gai, 2021). These challenges are evident in North Banjarmasin's riverbank areas, where infrastructure proposals for drainage and embankment repair have yet to be realized, leaving residents vulnerable to recurring environmental hazards. Moreover, the absence of immediate institutional responses contributes to the persistence of unmanaged waste in densely populated neighborhoods.

Strengthening governmental responsibility for environmental impact can be achieved by increasing public expenditure, raising community income levels, and enforcing transparent, equitable policy frameworks (Halkos & Paizanos, 2017; Kraft et al., 2015). A more collaborative approach involving strong networks between government agencies and external institutions is also essential to enhance policy implementation (Larson et al., 2017; Pritchard & Gabrys, 2016). Additionally, adopting eco-localism decentralized decision-making supported by central funding and guidance offers a promising direction for localized environmental governance (Eagle et al., 2017; Ercolano & Romano, 2018). For the riverbank settlements in North Banjarmasin, such an approach could enable more tailored, place-based responses to

recurring environmental concerns. With proper resources and institutional support, sub-district offices could move beyond passive mediation and implement proactive measures to address waste accumulation and flood-related challenges.

Concern for Community Welfare along the Riverbanks in North Banjarmasin

The concept of concern for communal welfare emphasizes the importance of mutual care among residents and encourages collaborative actions such as communal clean-up activities, which simultaneously strengthen social bonds and contribute to environmental maintenance (Gearey, 2015; Vine & Greenwood, 2022). Fostering awareness of others' well-being also underscores the need to understand shared hardships, promote solidarity, and cultivate a sense of togetherness within the neighborhood (Bochner & Ellis, 2016; Holgate, 2021). This form of collective concern is especially vital for building emotional solidarity, enhancing environmental resilience, and establishing harmonious social relationships (Esteves et al., 2021; Moghavvemi et al., 2017). In the riverbank areas of Banjarmasin Utara, this collaborative spirit is reflected in ongoing efforts to maintain environmental cleanliness and address local challenges through community-driven initiatives. The persistence of this shared commitment remains evident in religious and social gatherings that reinforce a culture of cooperation.

Despite these ideals, some individuals struggle to establish broader social connections due to limited interaction beyond familiar circles and a tendency to remain within known community boundaries (Lin et al., 2020; Wei & Gao, 2017). Social distrust, anxiety, and prejudice toward neighbors act as significant barriers, reducing residents' willingness to engage in open social interaction (Appau et al., 2019; Paolini et al., 2018). Moreover, economic-based segregation contributes to social fragmentation and weakens efforts to cultivate strong communal ties (L. Liu et al., 2018; Mertes, 2015). In parts of Banjarmasin Utara, particularly among riverbank settlements, such divisions may hinder full participation in communal activities, even as strong kinship bonds continue to sustain basic forms of mutual aid. The disparity in participation levels highlights the need to bridge social gaps through inclusive and trust-building approaches.

Fostering a cooperative environment through community-initiated programs can significantly enhance mutual welfare and social cohesion (Flint-Ashery, 2015; Mumtaz & Kühner, 2025). When mutual support is paired with educational advancement and reinforced social assistance systems, residents are better positioned to improve their collective well-being (Baranowski et al., 2023; Yuliarmi et al., 2020). Lastly, cultivating shared responsibility, encouraging collective efforts, and pursuing sustainable development are essential steps in promoting long-term welfare among citizens (Fleurbay, 2015; Ivankina & Latygovskaya, 2015). These strategies are particularly relevant for riverbank communities in Banjarmasin Utara, where environmental and social vulnerabilities often intersect. By combining social solidarity with structured initiatives, residents can better address persistent challenges such as sanitation, flooding, and infrastructure delays.

The government demonstrates its concern for citizen welfare by encouraging participation that fosters empowerment and strengthens social relationships among residents (Cicognani et

al., 2015; Sung & Phillips, 2018). Public institutions play a vital role in shaping policies and initiatives that influence both the social and environmental well-being of communities (Alaimo & Carman, 2022; Mertes, 2015). Prioritizing citizen welfare involves creating meaningful opportunities for civic engagement that empower individuals to feel capable and valued within their communities (Fenn et al., 2021; Miller & Jones, 2015). In the context of riverbank neighborhoods in North Banjarmasin, such participatory approaches can bridge the gap between institutional action and community needs. This is particularly important as localized efforts to improve living conditions must be supported by both physical infrastructure and responsive governance systems.

However, addressing the welfare needs of residents remains challenging due to diverse individual characteristics, varying priorities, and differing levels of dependency on public support (Fulford et al., 2015; Stewart & Townley, 2020). Compounding these difficulties are policies that often emphasize self-reliance over collective governmental responsibility (Eggers et al., 2019; Vahabi et al., 2020). Institutional culture can also pose a barrier, as bureaucratic frameworks may prioritize objective metrics while overlooking subjective experiences that reflect residents' lived realities (Bochner & Ellis, 2016; Syhlonyk & Seasons, 2021). These systemic limitations can hinder effective service delivery in North Banjarmasin's riverbank communities, where socio-environmental vulnerability demands more adaptive and inclusive interventions. Moreover, improving welfare outcomes in these areas requires recognizing the intersection of everyday hardship and recurring environmental threats.

To enhance public welfare, governments should foster partnerships that address environmental challenges and expand access to comprehensive social services (Ferguson et al., 2018; Martínez-Córdoba et al., 2023). Leveraging simple digital tools can further enable residents to report grievances, request assistance, and access crucial information efficiently (Räisänen, 2023; Wray-Lake et al., 2019). Ultimately, increasing the quality and reach of public infrastructure and services can create positive long-term impacts on residents' quality of life (Damnjanović, 2023; Sirgy, 2018). In North Banjarmasin, targeted welfare programs must be accompanied by continued efforts to reduce flood vulnerability and expand access to health and sanitation. Sustained improvements will require aligning physical development with inclusive policy-making that amplifies the voices of marginalized riverbank residents.

Residents can help preserve the environment by adopting environmentally friendly attitudes and demonstrating a willingness to allocate personal resources for ecological protection (Mayerl & Best, 2019; Thörn & Svenberg, 2016). Their efforts are vital in promoting collective well-being and ensuring a sustainable future for the community (Šorytė & Pakalniškienė, 2019; Spiteri, 2021). By actively participating in sustainability initiatives, raising awareness, and advocating for policy reforms, community members play a crucial role in environmental stewardship (Gulliver et al., 2020; Nicolosi et al., 2021). In Banjarmasin Utara, these forms of participation are reflected in weekly riverbank clean-up activities and individual initiatives to dispose of household waste responsibly. Despite limited access to formal infrastructure, such voluntary actions highlight a growing consciousness among residents.

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Community-based environmental efforts often encounter limitations due to restricted authority, inadequate resources, and insufficient institutional support (Martinez-Alier et al., 2016; Özler & Obach, 2018). Challenges include financial constraints and a lack of assistance for grassroots initiatives, which hinder residents' ability to maintain consistent environmental practices (Jenkins et al., 2017; Mccright & Dunlap, 2015). Furthermore, personal responsibilities such as full-time employment and the absence of responsive government support frequently obstruct these local initiatives (Rachman & Muchtar, 2018; Tripp, 2018). In Banjarmasin Utara, these constraints are evident in the decline of previously active cleanliness task forces, leaving residents to assume full responsibility for waste management. While some neighborhoods have created makeshift waste collection points, their effectiveness remains limited due to inadequate facilities.

Increasing local media attention to environmental issues and promoting youth engagement are critical strategies to strengthen public commitment to ecological preservation (Kenny, 2018; Lamb, 2019). Encouraging broader public participation and inclusive decision-making processes can significantly enhance community-based environmental initiatives (Martinez-Alier et al., 2016; Prasetyo et al., 2019). In Banjarmasin Utara, collaborative mechanisms such as community clean-ups before public holidays and involvement in municipal sanitation programs illustrate a shared responsibility among residents. However, the irregular implementation of environmental outreach programs continues to limit the effectiveness of such initiatives, especially in administrative areas lacking consistent support.

The government plays a critical role in safeguarding the environment by initiating programs and implementing regulations that encourage both citizens and business actors to act responsibly toward nature (Chen et al., 2021; Laurian et al., 2017). This responsibility includes promoting environmentally friendly lifestyles and adopting balanced policies that align ecological protection with sustainable development goals (Peyton & Franks, 2016; Zhang et al., 2021). Furthermore, government involvement is essential in translating policy into action to empower communities and enhance overall social welfare (Cicognani et al., 2015; Ye et al., 2021). In North Banjarmasin's riverbank areas, this approach aligns with ongoing public outreach and the visible installation of environmental signage to foster accountability.

Nevertheless, improving environmental conditions in these neighborhoods still requires consistent collaboration between institutions and residents.

Despite these initiatives, the government faces significant obstacles in executing its environmental agenda, primarily due to limited enforcement capacity and the substantial resources required to restore and preserve ecological systems (Fu et al., 2020; Heijden, 2015). Inconsistent implementation and a lack of strict regulatory enforcement further hinder the effectiveness of environmental policies (Liu et al., 2020; Özler & Obach, 2018). Moreover, local governments often struggle to maintain environmental sustainability due to constraints in manpower, funding, and the challenge of mobilizing sustained community participation (Fusi et al., 2023; Shi et al., 2019). These limitations are evident in North Banjarmasin, where requests for basic sanitation facilities and improved waste transportation remain unresolved. The continued environmental degradation along riverbanks underscores the urgency of strengthening both institutional and community-based responses.

Supporting local organizations in educating residents about environmental issues is crucial for enhancing public participation and reinforcing government-led efforts (Kulin & Sevä, 2019; Saitoh et al., 2020). Strategic public campaigns can promote eco-friendly behavior while fostering a deeper understanding of environmental stewardship (Ford, 2019; Mohanty et al., 2021). One viable solution is the implementation of well-crafted regulations that are developed in consultation with the community to ensure both relevance and compliance (Hafezi & Zolfagharinia, 2018; Sun et al., 2019). In North Banjarmasin, such participatory approaches could address ongoing challenges such as household waste disposal and river contamination. By involving local voices in policy-making, long-term solutions to riverbank environmental problems may become more attainable and effective.

CONCLUSION

The study found that the actualization of ecological citizenship in North Banjarmasin's riverbank areas emerged from the synergy between active community participation and supportive government initiatives. Citizens demonstrated environmental responsibility through waste management, voluntary clean-ups, and collective sanitation funding, all reinforced by strong social cohesion. The government complemented these efforts by providing infrastructure, environmental education, and institutional hygiene programs. To further advance ecological citizenship, future research should explore models for strengthening participatory decision-making and optimizing digital platforms to enhance public engagement, collaboration with local organizations, and partnerships with universities to deepen environmental education and community empowerment.

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