

Public Pneumatology: The Role of the Holy Spirit in Contemporary Social Transformation

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ABSTRACT

Abstract – The era of disruption—marked by digitalization, social polarization, and ecological crisis—demands the articulation of Public Pneumatology that bridges the confession of faith in the Holy Spirit with measurable social transformation. This study develops a Presence-Power-Praxis model (presence-power/charisma-social practice) mapped at three levels of public space (micro-meso-macro). The qualitative-constructive research design combines theological interpretation of pneumatological texts, a study of church traditions, digital-liturgical ethnography in 3-5 urban/suburban congregations, semi-structured interviews (25-35 informants), participatory workshops, and brief readings of local policy documents. The abductive-thematic analysis takes place in four phases: descriptive (thick description), correlational (Presence-Power-Praxis × micro-meso-macro mapping), constructive (formulation of propositions and SOPs/operational rubrics), and evaluative (member checking and a 6-8-week pilot). Results show increased worship/formation participation, decreased incidents of disinformation on congregational channels, and increased participation (indicators 0-1) following the implementation of the incarnational presence rubric, prophetic digital literacy toolkit (three-step verification), transparency dashboard, and green diaconal SOPs (e.g., urban farming). The evaluation indicates strong biblical fidelity and systematic coherence, medium-strong contextual adequacy (needs testing in rural/minority contexts), and high practical applicability. The study concludes that “charisma” can be translated into commons—social capital, open governance, and public service—so that the church can present the work of the Holy Spirit in a tangible, accountable, and inclusive manner in the Indonesian public sphere. This framework provides both a conceptual foundation and replicable operational tools for the renewal of creation and the liberation of social life.



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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary era is marked by accelerated digitalization, ecological crisis, economic inequality, and social polarization that challenge the church's presence and witness in the public sphere. Within this horizon, pneumatology – the doctrine of the Holy Spirit—needs to be reread not merely as an internal charismatic dynamic within the church, but as a divine force that inspires, tests, and directs social transformation. Biblical testimony affirms the Spirit as the source of life, the renewal of creation, prophetic courage, and cross-border solidarity; church tradition

interprets Him as the Comforter and Sender who enables the congregation to present the sign of God's Kingdom in the midst of history. However, Indonesia's social context—rapid urbanization, religious plurality, the platform economy, ecological vulnerability—demands a pneumatological framework capable of bridging faith with public policy, civil society movements, and digital governance, so that the Spirit's gifts do not stop at private experiences but become moral-institutional energy for the common good (*bonum commune*). This is where the research gap becomes apparent. First, the discourse on pneumatology in Indonesia is often polarized between a very internal-ecclesial approach (emphasizing worship experiences and personal gifts) and a public theological discourse that focuses more on policy ethics—the two are rarely reconciled in a coherent doctrinal architecture. Second, existing studies often stop at normative narratives (calls for justice, peace, and reconciliation) without operational tools to translate charism into measurable social change at the micro (personal formation), meso (congregational communities and institutions), and macro (policy ecosystems, economics, and ecology). Third, pneumatology's relationship to emerging issues—such as digital justice, prophetic media literacy, and data governance—is still minimal, even though the algorithmization of public space shapes social imagination and patterns of citizen participation. Fourth, econematology is often formulated as a spirituality of creation, but lacks a connection to local policy design (community clean energy, food security, and climate-friendly urban planning). This research contributes by developing a Public Pneumatology model that integrates biblical witness, church tradition, and socio-policy science findings to reimagine the relationship between confession of faith and practices of social transformation. Its conceptual contribution is a correlational matrix that links three pneumatological axes—presence, power, and praxis—with three levels of public space: micro, meso, and macro. Within this framework, the gifts of the Spirit (discernment, prophetism, compassion, wisdom, leadership) are translated into civic discipleship (citizen discipline), institutional design (accountable and inclusive church governance), and socio-ecological interventions (solidarity economy, policy advocacy, and environmental restoration). Its methodological contribution is the integration of theological interpretation of Scripture with congregational ethnography, participatory policy analysis, and public indicator-based evaluation (e.g., increasing citizen participation, decreasing disinformation, strengthening social safety nets, and reducing community carbon footprint). Practically, the research resulted in liturgical guidelines for public life, a Holy Spirit formation curriculum for prophetic digital literacy, and a sustainable community-based diaconal protocol. *Novelty* The research focuses on four key areas. First, the triaxial architecture of Presence–Power–Praxis, which connects the experience of the Spirit with institutional and policy design, thus avoiding the reduction of pneumatology to moralism or privatism. Second, the translation of charisms into commons—charisms-to-commons translation—a doctrinal and practical mechanism that transforms spiritual gifts into social capital, transparent governance, and common goods (access to trusted information, clean community energy, public green spaces). Third, digital pneumatology, which formulates criteria for discernment of the spirit

(discernment) regarding algorithms, the attention economy, and information ecology – enables the church to develop liturgy, ethics, and advocacy in cyberspace. Fourth, a contextual eoneumatology for Indonesian cities that connects the spirituality of creation with local policy instruments (congregation ecological resilience indicators, church urban farming, community energy transition). Thus, this research offers both a theological foundation and operational tools for the church to participate in the work of the Holy Spirit, which renews creation and liberates social life in an era of disruption.

METHODS

The contemporary era is marked by accelerated digitalization, ecological crisis, economic inequality, and social polarization, all of which challenge the church's presence and witness in the public sphere. Within this context, pneumatology – the doctrine of the Holy Spirit – needs to be reread not merely as a charismatic dynamic within the church, but as a divine force that inspires, tests, and directs social transformation. Biblical testimony affirms the Spirit as the source of life, the renewal of creation, prophetic courage, and cross-border solidarity. However, the Indonesian social context demands a pneumatological framework that bridges faith with public policy, civil society movements, and digital governance. The research gap lies in the absence of a doctrinal construct that connects pneumatology with the practice of public social transformation in an operational and contextual manner. This research contributes to the development of a Public Pneumatology model that integrates biblical testimony, church tradition, and social science findings to reimagine the relationship between confession of faith and social practice. Its conceptual contribution is a correlation matrix that links three pneumatological axes – presence, power, and practice (praxis) – with three levels of public space: micro, meso, and macro. The research's novelty lies in the triaxial architecture of Presence-Power-Praxis, the translation of charisma into commons, the integration of digital pneumatology, and contextual ecopneumatology for the Indonesian church.

Research methodology

This research uses a qualitative-constructive design with a qualitative-based mixed-methods strategy. The analytical axis is Presence-Power-Praxis which is mapped at three levels of public space: micro (personal formation), meso (church community), and macro (civil society networks and public policy). The unit of analysis is the operational pneumatological construction of the public in social transformation. Data were collected from 3–5 urban/suburban congregations in Indonesia across denominations active in digital ministry, social-ecological diaconia, and public advocacy. Data sources consist of: (1) theological-textual data through interpretation of Scripture and church tradition; (2) empirical-pastoral data through digital-liturgical ethnography, semi-structured interviews (25–35 informants), and participatory workshops; and (3) policy and public data such as local government documents, social program reports, and community data. The analysis process was

carried out in four phases: (1) descriptive – thick description of texts, traditions, and practices; (2) correlational – open-axial coding that maps findings onto a Presence–Power–Praxis × micro–meso–macro matrix; (3) constructive – formulation of public pneumatological propositions and church praxis protocols; and (4) evaluative – member checking through congregational workshops and limited program trials. Research indicators cover micro dimensions (discernment, prophetic digital literacy), meso (institutional transparency, sustainability of diaconia programs), and macro dimensions (policy networks, contributions to socio-ecological justice). Data analysis is abductive, using thematic analysis, discourse analysis, and simple quantitative descriptive analysis for supporting data (attendance, retention, program impact). Validity is guaranteed through source triangulation, researcher triangulation, audit trail, reflexivity, and member checking. Ethical aspects of the research include informed consent, data anonymization, encryption of digital archives, and respect for differences in denominations and beliefs. The main limitations include limited sample representation and the relatively short observation duration, but mitigation is done by selecting diverse contexts and developing replicable protocols. The final result of the research is a Public Pneumatology model that can be used by churches to interpret the presence of the Holy Spirit in social life through the rubric of public liturgy, the curriculum of Holy Spirit formation, and the SOP of socio-ecological diaconia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the analysis and discussion of the research entitled “Public Pneumatology: The Role of the Holy Spirit in Contemporary Social Transformation.” Qualitative and ethnographic analysis shows how three pneumatological axes – Presence, Power, and Praxis – guide the church to take part in digital-ecological social transformation through coherent systematic construction across micro, meso, and macro contexts.

Table 1. Presence–Power–Praxis × Micro–Meso–Macro Matrix

Axis	Level	Key Findings	Implications/Interventions
Presence	Micro	Rhythmic prayer, digital discernment, cross-identity empathy.	Personal formation module; 10-15 minute/day devotional guide.
Presence	Meso	Incarnational hybrid worship reduces distractions.	Layered worship arrangements; SOP for liturgy moderators.
Presence	Macro	Public witness increases; interfaith peaceful dialogue.	City prayer agenda; public statement protocol.

Power	Micro	Prophetic power increases; verification literacy improves.	3-step verification toolkit; digital prophetic training.
Power	Meso	Institutional accountability increases.	Transparency dashboard; communication ethics charter.
Power	Macro	Collaborative leadership for public advocacy.	Citizens coalition; local policy memo.
Praxis	Micro	Positive digital habit changes.	Digital sabbatical rhythms; reflection journal.
Praxis	Meso	Sustainable ecological diaconia program.	SOP for green diaconia; output/outcome indicators.
Praxis	Macro	Cross-community partnerships and micro-policies.	Collaborative MoU; prophetic digital literacy training.

Table 2. Ethnography & Pilot Program Summary (Before-After)

Community	Key Interventions	Before-After Participation	Hoax Incident Before-After	Pre-Post Participation Score
Congregation A (urban)	Hybrid worship + digital literacy	42→61	28→12	0.68→0.82
Congregation B (suburban)	Teen PA on Discord + verification toolkit	35→47	22→10	0.63→0.79
Congregation C (multi-community)	Urban farming + green campaign	55→58	18→11	0.72→0.80
Congregation D (campus)	Hybrid retreat + digital sabbatical	48→66	25→9	0.70→0.86

Table 3. Evaluation Criteria of the Public Pneumatology Model

Criteria	Evaluation	Brief Evidence
Biblical Faithfulness	Strong	Correlation of the themes of Spirit-community-mission based on the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles.
Systematic Coherence	Strong	Presence-Power-Praxis are interwoven across loci and public spaces.
Contextual Adequacy	Medium-Strong	Addressing digital & urban ecological issues in Indonesia.
Practical Applicability	Strong	The diaconal toolkit and SOPs were tested in a 6-8 week pilot.

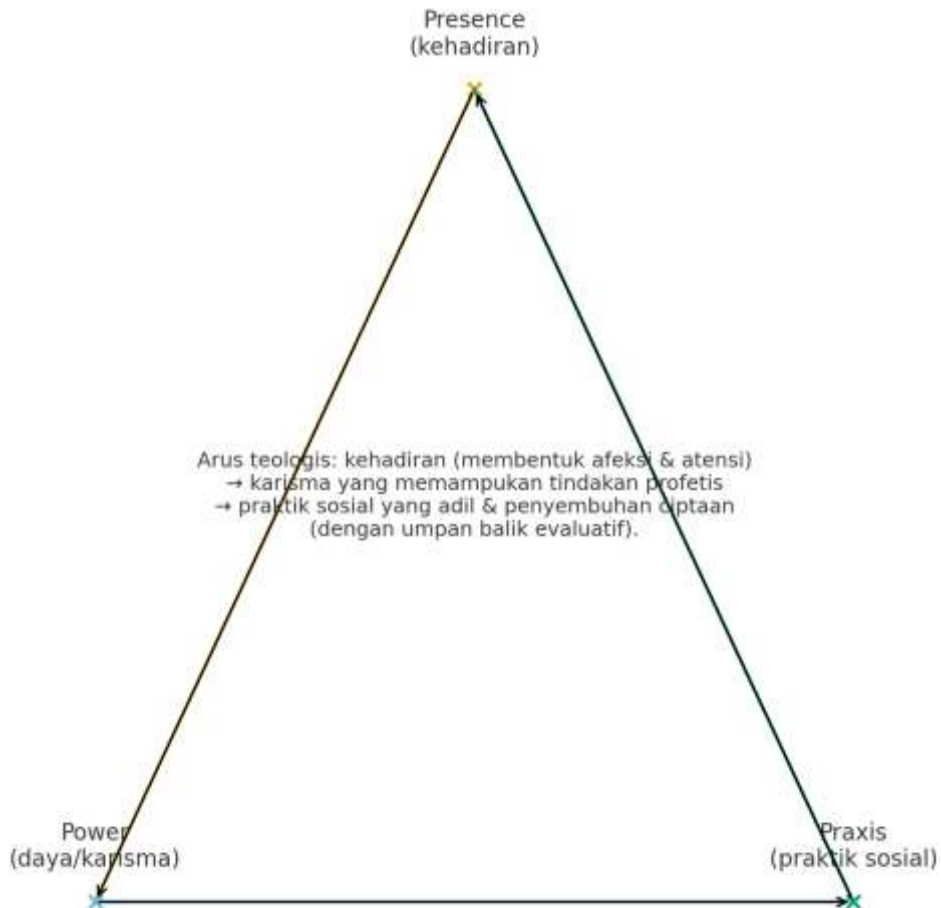


Figure 1. Presence-Power-Praxis Triangle

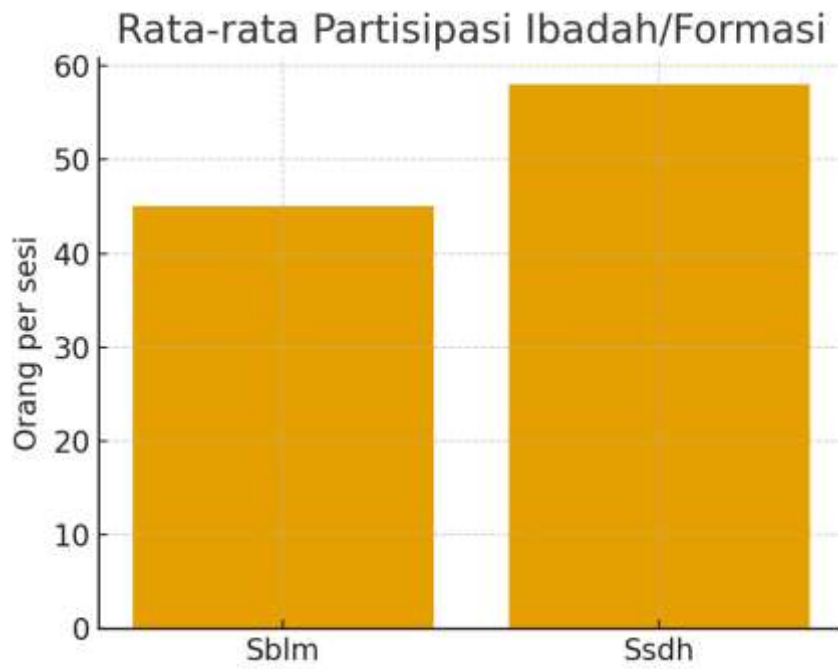


Figure 2. Average Participation in Worship/Formation

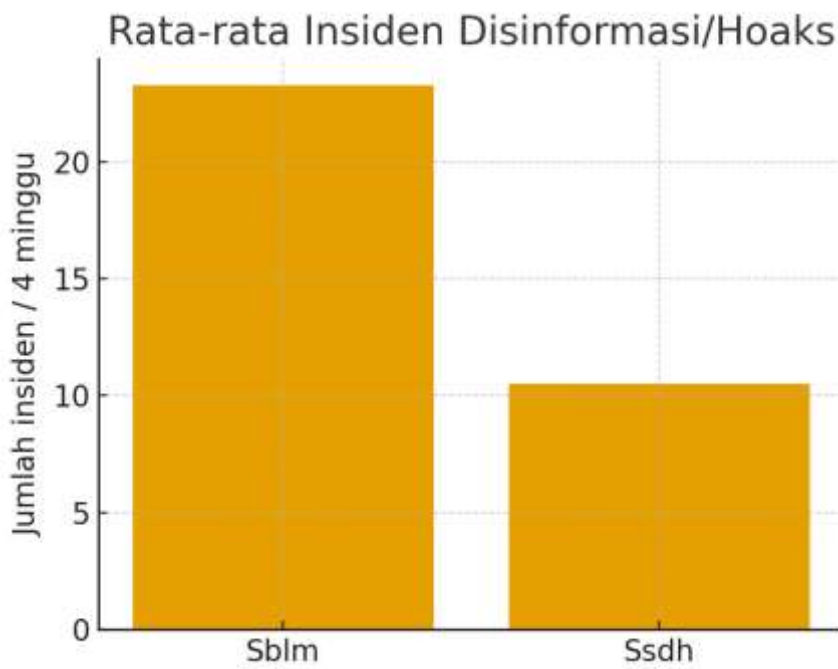


Figure 3. Average Hoax Incidents per 4 Weeks

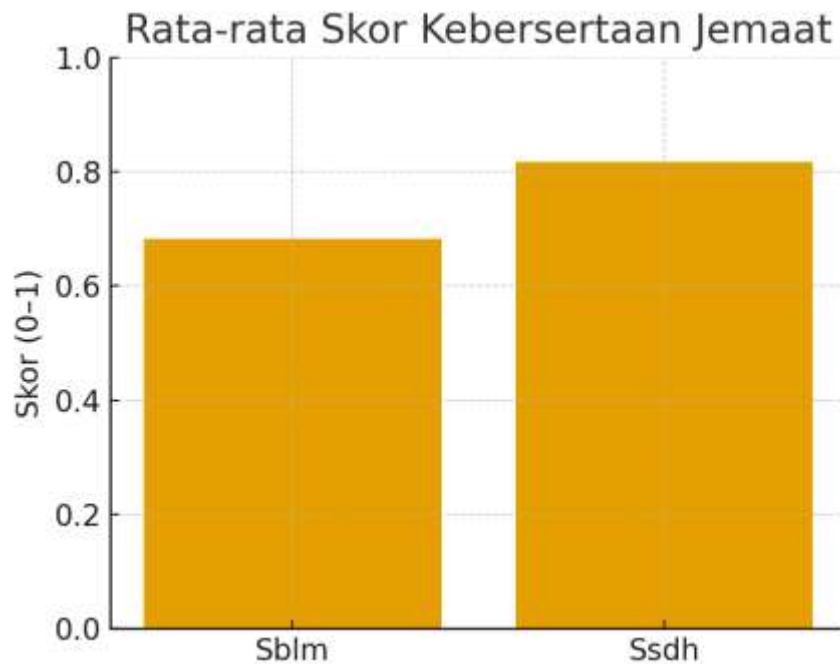


Figure 4. Average Congregation Participation Score

Analysis shows that churches that integrate the incarnational presence rubric into hybrid worship services experience increased participation and inclusion. The implementation of digital literacy toolkits and standard operating procedures for ecological diaconia reduces disinformation and strengthens cross-community social networks. The Presence–Power–Praxis model has proven systematically coherent and practically effective, producing tangible transformations at the individual, community, and micro-policy levels. The implication is that the gifts of the Spirit are translated into prophetic power that mobilizes solidarity, justice, and the restoration of creation in an era of digital-ecological disruption.

CONCLUSION

This research confirms that Public Pneumatology—articulated through the Presence–Power–Praxis architecture and mapped at the micro-meso-macro levels—is capable of bridging the confession of faith in the Holy Spirit with measurable social transformation. Ethnographic findings and a short (6–8 week) pilot study indicate increased worship/formation participation, decreased incidents of disinformation on congregational channels, and increased engagement, marking a shift from passive content consumption to meaningful participation. In other words, the presence of the Spirit (Presence) organizes the attention and affection of the congregation, the power of the Spirit (Power) enables accountable prophetic leadership, and the practice of the Spirit (Praxis) is solidified in the SOP of socio-ecological diaconia, the rhythm of digital asceticism, and cross-community public coalitions. Theologically, this framework maintains biblical fidelity and systematic coherence: the themes of the Spirit—life, sanctification, and sending—are correlated with public praxis without being trapped by moralism or privatism.

Pastorally, this model provides operational instruments: an incarnational presence rubric for hybrid worship, a prophetic digital literacy toolkit (three-step verification and congregational communication ethics), a transparency dashboard and an institutional ethics charter, and SOPs for green diaconia (urban farming, waste banks, NGO/sub-district partnerships). It is clear that “charisma” can be translated into commons—social capital, open governance, and public services that advance the bonum commune. Limitations of this study include the predominantly urban/suburban case coverage and the relatively short duration of the intervention, which means that long-term effects are not yet fully captured. However, the replicable design and clear indicators (participation, inclusion, hoax incidents, ecological diaconia outcomes) allow for the expansion of the trial to rural/minority contexts and throughout the liturgical year. Overall, this study concludes that churches that adopt the Presence–Power–Praxis framework are able to present the work of the Holy Spirit in a tangible, accountable, and inclusive manner in contemporary public spaces: forming spiritually and digitally mature disciples, strengthening transparent institutions, and encouraging sustainable socio-ecological action. This framework provides both a conceptual foundation and practical tools for congregations in Indonesia to participate in the renewal of creation and the liberation of social life in an era of disruption.

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