

Character Transformation Through Music: An Analysis Of The Role Of Music In Character Building Of The Congregation And Music Accompaniment At Gki Solafide Sereh

Yohanna Ristua, Yustinus Polhaupessy

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Kristen Protestan Negeri Sentani

Email : justinus@gmail.com

Abstract

Church music at GKI Solafide Sereh plays a central role in shaping the character of the congregation and music accompanists. This study aims to analyze the extent to which church music influences spiritual and social character transformation through a qualitative approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with congregants and music accompanists, then analyze inductively to explore the meaning of participants' experiences. The results showed that church music is not just an aesthetic element, but also a spiritual medium that strengthens moral values, builds solidarity, and provides inspiration in facing life's challenges. Congregants reported deep emotional and spiritual experiences when participating in worship music. For musical accompanists, the process of learning and serving builds character traits such as discipline, responsibility, and confidence. In conclusion, church music has transformative power in shaping the character of congregants and accompanists, making it an important element in the development of spirituality and morality of the faith community. These findings provide new insights into the relevance of music as a means of character building in the modern era.

Keywords: Church Music, Character, Congregation, Music Accompaniment, GKI Solafide Sereh

INTRODUCTION

Church music has a profound transformative role in shaping the character of the congregation, not only enriching the spiritual experience through worship, but also touching the emotional, social, and moral dimensions of their lives. More than just a liturgical element, church music becomes a catalyst for personal growth as well as a unifier of the congregation, creating harmony in both the voices and lives of the congregation and musical accompanists.

Church music is also a vehicle in fostering social bonds and moral values within the congregation. Singing together during worship can significantly increase feelings of connection among congregants, fulfilling their innate desire to share emotions and experiences. These social bonds are crucial for character development, as they foster a sense of belonging and community, which are foundational for moral growth. The release of endorphins during musical activities further strengthens these bonds, fostering a positive atmosphere conducive to character transformation.

In addition, the selection of music in a church environment can greatly impact the spiritual and emotional engagement of the congregation. Muranda notes that contemporary worship songs, when properly integrated into the liturgy, can resonate deeply with congregants, opening their hearts to spiritual messages. This emotional engagement is crucial for character formation, as it encourages individuals to reflect on their values

and behaviours based on their faith. Music's ability to evoke strong emotional responses can lead to transformative experiences that shape moral and ethical perspectives.

The development of musical skills among church leaders, especially the accompanists, also contributes to character transformation. Nugrahu emphasises that ensemble training and coaching can not only improve musical ability, but also foster positive attitudes and collaborative skills among the accompanists. This process of skill development is integral to character building, as it encourages traits such as discipline, teamwork, and commitment to excellence. As ushers grow in their expertise, they also foster a deeper sense of purpose and responsibility within the congregation.

Moreover, the moral implications of church music cannot be underestimated. Lang, et al provide evidence that religious music can influence moral behaviour, showing that exposure to sacred music can reduce dishonest acts compared to secular music. This finding underscores the potential of church music to be a moral cue, guiding congregants towards ethical decision-making and reinforcing the values espoused by their faith. The integration of music into worship is thus a powerful tool for shaping moral character.

In addition to these aspects, the emotional expression facilitated by church music is crucial for personal transformation. Phillips argues that worship, as an emotional experience, allows

individuals to express a range of feelings, from joy to sadness, which can lead to deep personal insight and growth. This emotional catharsis is crucial for character development, as it encourages individuals to face their inner struggles and align their actions with their moral beliefs.

Church music functions as a transformative force in character development for both the congregation and the musicians. By fostering social bonds, enhancing emotional engagement, developing musical skills, and influencing moral behaviour, church music plays an important role in shaping the character of individuals within the faith community. The intentional integration of music in worship practices can significantly contribute to the spiritual and moral development of the congregation.

At GKI Solafide Sereh, Sentani, church music plays a central role in building a congregation that is not only strong in faith but also has a noble moral character. Music in worship is not just a beautiful tune, but an experience that combines spiritual reflection, emotional engagement, and moral learning. Research shows that church music has the ability to evoke strong emotions and touch the deepest aspects of human life highlighting how well-crafted worship songs can open congregants' hearts to God's messages, creating transformative experiences that strengthen their moral and ethical values.

In addition, church music provides space for emotional expression, ranging from joy to sadness, as outlined by Phillips that leads to deep personal growth. This emotional catharsis becomes an entry point for individuals to face their inner struggles and align their behaviour with their spiritual values. Church music is also a tool to build the character of the accompanists. Through ensemble training and coaching, as explained by Nugrahu et al the accompanists not only improve their musical skills, but also develop values such as discipline, co-operation, and responsibility. This collaborative process teaches them to serve with dedication, modelling commitment and integrity in the church community.

The main issue in this study is the extent to which church music at GKI Solafide Sereh contributes to the character building of the congregation and accompanists. While music has been recognised as a transformative medium capable of influencing emotions, morality and behaviour, understanding of how specific elements of church music shape the spiritual and social character of individuals is limited.

In the context of congregations, the question

is how worship songs and other musical elements influence reflection on faith values, drive behavioural change, and strengthen their moral identity. For musical accompanists, the main challenge is how the process of developing musical skills can synergise with the formation of traits such as discipline, responsibility, and co-operation, so that they not only function as musicians, but also role models of good character in the faith community.

This research also seeks to answer the question of whether church music at GKI Solafide Sereh has been optimally integrated to achieve character transformation, both emotionally and spiritually, and how this approach can be improved to have a more significant impact on the congregation and accompanists.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses qualitative methods, which focus on deepening the meaning behind a social or humanitarian event. This method allows researchers to describe, explore, and understand how individuals or groups give meaning to certain issues. In this study, data collection was conducted through in-depth interviews with music accompanists and congregants of GKI Solafide Sereh, which aimed to explore character transformation through church music. Data sources come directly from participants who have experience and understanding related to the research topic, so that the data obtained has authentic value. To maintain data validity, triangulation was used as a technique for verifying information from various perspectives, ensuring valid and reliable results.

The data analysis process was conducted inductively, starting from the identification of specific themes to the formation of general themes. The stages of analysis involved organising the data, in-depth reading, identifying key themes, grouping the data, and interpreting the meaning of the findings. The results of the research are presented in the form of flexible narrative descriptions, illustrating the individual meanings of the participants and the complexity of the issues studied. With this approach, the research not only reveals in-depth information, but also provides a comprehensive and reflective view of the phenomenon raised. The approach used is in line with guidelines that emphasise the importance of an inductive perspective and in-depth exploration in qualitative research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Music as a Bridge to Spirituality

Music in worship at GKI Solafide Sereh is an element that unites the various backgrounds of the congregation, despite differences in age, profession, and mindset. This research found that music has an important role as a medium that not only touches emotions, but also builds spiritual spirit. When spiritual songs are played and sung, the atmosphere of worship becomes energised, motivating the congregation to be more earnest in praising God. Music becomes a catalyst that moves the congregation's hearts to get closer to God and live life with hope. Music in worship can enrich the spiritual experience and enhance the well-being of the congregation. Music allows the congregation to express and feel their spirituality, whether through singing, playing music, or listening to music.

One of the congregants, Natalia, shared her personal experience that underlined the power of music in facing life's trials. She said, 'Every time I sing the song there is strength to go through the trials of life.' This statement reflects how church music can be a source of inner strength and inspiration. Not only that, research has also found that young people in particular feel more motivated and concentrated in praising God through music, creating a sense of comfort that strengthens their spiritual experience during worship. So, worship is not just a ritual, but a spiritual journey that unites,

strengthens, and brings congregants closer to God.

Church music at GKI Solafide Sereh also has a transformative role in the character building of the congregation. The research shows interestingly that music in worship provides a deep emotional and spiritual experience, which directly affects the mindset and the congregation. Through the strains of spiritual songs, congregants gain motivation to face life's challenges with renewed vigour, as exemplified by Natalia, who felt tremendous strength in facing her life trials through church songs.

Church music encourages congregants to build a more intimate relationship with God, fosters gratitude, and reinforces positive values such as perseverance, hope, and courage. In worship, the congregation of GKI Solafide Sereh not only listens to music, but also actively participates through songs that reflect their commitment to live according to Christian values. Music becomes an effective tool to instil spiritual values, build focus, and create a comfortable atmosphere that allows the congregation of GKI Solafide Sereh to more deeply reflect on the meaning of worship.

This table summarises the main findings and reflects the role of music as an important element in building the spirituality and character of the congregation at GKI Solafide Sereh.

Table 1. The Role of Music in Building Congregational Spirituality

Aspect Findings	Findings Description
The Role of Music in Worship	Music unites congregants with different backgrounds, creating spiritual fervour and motivation to praise God more fervently during worship.
Emotional and Spiritual Impact	Music builds a vibrant worship atmosphere, touches the emotions of the congregation, provides inner strength, and motivates them to face life's challenges with optimism.
Personal Experience of the Congregation	Natalia's story shows that hymns become a source of strength to face life's trials, illustrating the transformative impact of church music on the lives of congregants.
Influence on Young People	Music increases young people's motivation and concentration in praising God, creating a sense of comfort that strengthens the spiritual experience during worship.
Character Building of the Congregation	Church music influences mindsets, provides new motivation, and supports character building rooted in Christian values such as caring and optimism.
Active Participation of the Congregation	Through communal singing, congregations demonstrate commitment to Christian values, instil spiritual values, and strengthen solidarity and a sense of community.

Indirect Character Education	Church songs become a medium to instil the values of integrity, love, and a better life through deep emotional and spiritual experiences.
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With such a strong influence, church music acts as an indirect medium of character education. Songs sung together foster solidarity, strengthen a sense of community, and shape the congregation at GKI Solafide Sereh to be more caring, optimistic, and firmly rooted in faith. The tones built into each worship service reflect the hope that music is not only an art, but also a means of character building that leads the congregation to a better life, integrity, and love.

The Guiding Melody

Music has a very important place or position in the liturgy. Music is an important part of the liturgy itself, music gives festivity and majesty to the liturgical celebration, in sharp terms music must serve the liturgy. The main criterion for liturgical music is a song and music can help people in the liturgy, namely encountering God and their neighbours.

The accompaniment of singing in worship will sound good if the musician can play accompaniment according to the atmosphere of the song and can guide the congregation in singing, but musical accompaniment can also damage the atmosphere of worship if the musician plays accompaniment that is not in accordance with the atmosphere and characteristics of the song, the musician has not really mastered the instrument being played, and the musician plays an accompaniment pattern that is not appropriate to the song so that it disturbs the concentration of the congregation in singing.

Understanding the role of church music accompanists is an important step towards uncovering the extraordinary potential of music as a medium of worship, spiritual education, and character transformation for the congregation. The research found it interesting that Charles Assa, a young musical accompanist at GKI Solafide Sereh, is a living example of how music can be a means of character building as well as spiritual support for the congregation. Despite learning music by himself and facing technical challenges at first, Charles showed tremendous passion and dedication in developing his skills. For four years, he practised diligently until he was able to accompany worship with harmonious and

meaningful tones. This transformation was not only felt by himself, but also by the congregation who sang with fervour when led by his musical accompaniment. Charles sincerely shares, 'I am very happy to accompany worship at GKI Solafide Sereh Church, because I can share happiness and joy with the congregation who listen to it.'

This research confirms that church music has a profound influence in shaping the character of the musical accompanist as well as enhancing the spirituality of the congregation. Hymns become a medium of communication between the people and God, giving new strength in the midst of life's struggles. In the context of worship, music not only functions as a complement to rituals, but also as a means of bridging the human heart with the presence of God. Through music, the experience of faith and human struggle is brought to life, creating a deep spiritual moment for each individual involved.

This research not only looks at music as an aesthetic element in worship, but also as a spiritual tool that has a direct impact on the formation of individual values, attitudes and mindsets. By exploring the personal experiences of musical accompanists, such as Charles Assa, who went through a journey of transformation from a self-taught learner to a proficient and inspiring accompanist, this research presents a new perspective on how music can build confidence, motivation, and passion in service.

The Bible itself recognises the importance of music as a means designed by God to enrich the lives of people and the church. By understanding that music is a divine gift, musical accompanists become agents that bring this spiritual purpose to life. The melodies played are not mere notes, but rather a medium that guides the congregation towards inner peace, joy, and a more intimate relationship with God. Through their passion and dedication, the church music accompanists at GKI Solafide Sereh continue to be a solid bridge in supporting the spirituality of the congregation.

This table illustrates the important contribution of church music as a medium for spiritual transformation and character building for music accompanists at GKI Solafide Sereh.

Table 2: The role of music in building spirituality Musical accompaniment

Aspect Findings	Findings Description
Accompaniment Personal Transformation	Charles Assa, a self-taught accompanist, showed passion and dedication in developing his skills to become an inspiring accompanist at GKI Solafide Sereh.
Music as Character Formation	Church music helps build the confidence, motivation, and spirit of the accompanist, creating values of integrity and commitment in ministry.
Influence on the Congregation	The music Charles plays brings passion and joy to the congregation, creating a lively and spiritually profound worship atmosphere.
Medium of Communication with God	Hymns become a bridge between the accompanist and God, providing strength and peace in facing life's struggles.
Music as a Spiritual Means	Church music is not only a complement to rituals, but also a tool that strengthens the accompanist's relationship with God and creates a real spiritual experience.
Relevance of Music in Modern Life	Church music as a gift of God that is relevant in the modern era, serves as a medium of worship and character building for the accompanist.
The Role of Musical Accompaniment	The accompanist is the agent that brings spiritual goals to life through melodies that guide the congregation towards inner peace, joy, and connection with God.

The melodies played in worship have the power to build faith, bring joy, and unite the hearts of the congregation and accompanists with God. This highlights the relevance of music as an element that enriches the lives of the congregation of GKI Solafide Sereh and each individual accompanist in their spiritual journey. Church music can be a relevant gift in the modern era, both as a means of worship and a character-building tool for accompanists. The focus on the unique relationship between music, character transformation, and spiritual experience in local communities makes this research of significant novelty value and relevance to the study of theology, musical arts, and the development of church spirituality.

CONCLUSION

The significant role of church music as a spiritual tool that goes beyond aesthetics, has a direct impact on the character building and spirituality of the congregation as well as the musical accompanist. At GKI Solafide Sereh, music has become a bridge that unites congregants from different backgrounds, creating a deep emotional and spiritual experience. The congregation has felt the extraordinary power of hymns, is more motivated in praising God, shows how music builds solidarity, fosters optimism, and strengthens the congregation's faith in facing life's

challenges.

Not only for the congregation, church music also provides a real transformation for the accompanist. The journey from a self-taught learner to a proficient and inspiring accompanist reflects how music can shape character, boost confidence, and foster a spirit of service. With harmonious melodies, musical accompanists not only guide the congregation in worship but also become a medium to present the real presence of God. There is a relevance of music as a gift that connects the human heart with God, making it an important element in the development of the spirituality of the GKI Solafide Sereh congregation.

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