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Patterns of Spiritual Development of Christian Communities in the Social Context of Village Communities: Research at GKII Pondok Daud, Gombolharjo Village

David MARTONO

Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Kanaan Nusantara
Jl. Kyai Sono No.2, Ungaran, Genuk,
Kec. Ungaran Barat, Kabupaten Semarang,
Jawa Tengah 50512, Indonesia

Email: davidmartono209@gmail.com

Ndawa KABORANG

Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Kanaan Nusantara
Jl. Kyai Sono No.2, Ungaran, Genuk,
Kec. Ungaran Barat, Kabupaten Semarang,
Jawa Tengah 50512, Indonesia

Email: ndawakaborang0104@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Spiritual development in Indonesian rural communities faces unique challenges due to the strong traditional values, especially in Java, which uphold ancestral harmony and traditions. Studies of the spiritual development of Javanese Christian communities in villages are still limited, while previous research has shown that programs that ignore the local cultural context achieve low participation. The study aims to explore the pattern of spiritual development of Christian communities in the village social context, especially the integration of Javanese cultural values with Christian teachings. The research was carried out at GKII Pondok Daud, Gombolharjo Village, a rural community that upholds traditional Javanese values. Using qualitative methods with a flexible ethnographic case study approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the meaning of spiritual formation practices. The research identified four patterns of contextual coaching: (1) direct social approaches through active community involvement; (2) contextual theological strategies to bridge Javanese-Christian spirituality; (3) liturgical-cultural adaptation; (4) contextual Bible immersion. Positive impacts include the growth of the faith of the congregation and interfaith social harmony. Contextual-inclusive spiritual coaching is effective in helping the congregation gain social acceptance while maintaining the integrity of the faith. A model that integrates positive Javanese cultural values with Christian teachings succeeds in creating communities rooted in local culture without losing faith identity.

Keywords: Spiritual Development, Christian Communities, Social Context, Village Communities, GKII Pondok Daud, Gombolharjo Village.

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual development in the context of rural communities in Indonesia faces unique challenges due to cultural diversity and the strength of traditional values that are still held tightly by their communities (Siswanto, 2017). Village communities, especially in Java, have social characteristics that uphold harmony, cooperation, and respect for ancestral traditions that have been inherited from generation to generation (Aksa, 2024; Kholiyudani & Hipni, 2024). These values become an integral part of daily life that cannot be separated when a person adheres to certain beliefs, including Christianity.

In Indonesia, a contextual approach to spiritual formation is increasingly realised in its urgency, considering that there is no single model of formation that can be applied to all conditions of the congregation. Neslaka & Balukh (2022) emphasized that contextual congregational coaching is necessary, considering that there is no single model of coaching that can apply to all congregational conditions, especially in Indonesia, a country that has diverse ethnicities, cultures, religions, and races. This statement emphasises the importance of understanding the local context in carrying out spiritual formation.

The Apostle Paul himself gave an example of how faith formation must take into account the cultural and environmental context of the people served (Andi et al., 2020; Neslaka & Balukh, 2022). This approach is the basis for churches in Indonesia to develop a coaching model that is more relevant to the local context. Contextual theology, as a branch of Christian theology, specifically examines how Christian teachings can be relevant in different contexts (Sabbat et al., 2022; Sampeliling, 2022; Tomatala, 2021).

Gombolharjo Village, the location of this study, is a community that upholds traditional Javanese values and customs, where social and cultural life is a central aspect of the daily life of its people. The existence of the Indonesian Gospel Tabernacle Church (GKII) Pondok Daud in the midst of this village community creates an interesting dynamic between Christian values and local cultural values. Members of the church congregation who are of Javanese origin live in a duality of identity that needs to be appropriately accommodated in their spiritual formation.

Research on contextual spiritual development has been conducted in various regions in Indonesia, but a special study examining the pattern of spiritual development in the Javanese Christian community in Gombolharjo Village is still very limited. Several previous studies have shown a similar pattern in other areas, such as the spiritual development of the people of Kabiraan Village, Majene Regency carried out by STIBA Makassar KKN students (Aswar et al., 2021). Research by Siswanto (2017) revealed that spiritual coaching in rural communities in Indonesia faces unique challenges due to the strong influence of kinship systems and local traditions. Aswar et al.'s study in Kabiraan Village, Majene, showed that coaching programs that ignored the local cultural context only achieved a 34% congregation participation rate, while a customary-based participatory approach increased participation by up to 68% (Gunarto et al., 2024). Sahartian's (2018) analysis of 15 rural churches in Central Java revealed that 41% of spiritual formation programs fail due to the inability of church leaders to understand informal power structures in villages. Based on previous research, this research not only fills an academic gap but also offers a practical framework for rural churches in Java. Research on spiritual guidance has been carried out by several researchers before, but the socio-cultural context is different from that of the Javanese people in Gombolharjo.

Studies on contextual theology and cultural inculturation in Christianity in Indonesia have developed, as revealed in research on the inculturation of Chinese culture

in Christianity in Indonesia (Chang & Listijabudi, 2024). However, similar studies in the context of Javanese culture, especially in Gombolharjo Village, have not received adequate attention. This creates a knowledge gap that needs to be bridged to understand the dynamics of spiritual formation in the context of rural Javanese culture.

Bevans has developed contextual theological models, one of which is the translation model (Chang & Listijabudi, 2024), which can serve as a theoretical framework for understanding how Christian teachings are translated in the context of local cultures. However, the application of this model in the context of spiritual formation at GKII Pondok Daud Gombolharjo has never been systematically explored.

In line with this, studies of local spirituality in Javanese villages have shown how spiritual values such as the Merti Desa tradition in Mangunrejo Village contain spiritual values that include: gratitude to God, respect for ancestors, and hope for protection from God (Siswayanti, 2022). This pattern shows the integration of local spirituality values that need to be considered in contextual spiritual coaching.

This research builds on a conceptual framework that integrates contextual theological theory and a spiritual formation approach that takes into account sociocultural contexts. Contextual models of approaches, such as the Accommodation Model, that are respectful and open to indigenous cultures, provide a theoretical foundation for understanding how spiritual formation can be done with respect for local cultural values (Setiyawan et al., 2022).

The contextual-interpersonal coaching model assumes that each congregation is unique and is within a specific cultural context that influences their understanding and practice of faith (Neslaka & Balukh, 2022). In the context of GKII Pondok Daud Gombolharjo, this framework helps to understand how spiritual formation needs to be articulated in a language and symbols that are understood and appreciated by congregations from Javanese cultural backgrounds.

The concept of inculturation, which involves dialogue between the Christian faith and local culture (Chang & Listijabudi, 2024), is also an important foundation in this research. Inculturation differs from syncretism in that it maintains the integrity of Christian teachings while using elements of local culture as a vehicle to express and live the faith.

The formulation of this research problem is what is the pattern of spiritual development of the Christian community in the context of the village community at GKII Pondok Daud Gombolharjo? This study aims to identify and analyze the pattern of spiritual guidance carried out at GKII Pondok Daud Gombolharjo.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research method with an ethnographic case study approach (Malahati et al., 2023). The selection of qualitative methods is based on the characteristics of research that aims to understand the phenomenon of spiritual formation in depth and comprehensively in a natural context (Malahati et al., 2023). The qualitative method allows researchers to examine human behaviour in depth and explore the meanings contained in the practice of spiritual formation in rural communities. The design of this research is flexible and develops according to the situation and conditions found in the field.

This research was carried out at GKII Pondok Daud, Gombolharjo Village, which is one of the churches in rural areas that has a significant role in the spiritual development of the local community. Gombolharjo Village was chosen as the location of the research because it represents the characteristics of the village community with distinctive social dynamics, where the church plays a role not only as a religious institution but also as an agent of social empowerment.

The research population consisted of all individuals involved in and affected by spiritual development activities at GKII Pondok Daud, Gombolharjo Village. This population includes church leaders, congregations, and village communities who interact with the church's spiritual development programs. This study used a sample of 12 informants selected by purposive sampling. The study used purposive sampling with a snowball sampling technique as a support. This study uses data collection by in-depth interview methods, participatory observation.

This study uses Miles and Huberman's analysis, which includes three main stages: 1) Data Reduction. The process of selecting, simplifying, and transforming raw data from field notes and interview transcripts. The data were reduced based on themes relevant to the research focus on spiritual coaching patterns; 2) Data Display. Presentation of data in the form of a matrix and chart to facilitate analysis and conclusion. The data is presented based on the informant category and the theme of spiritual formation; 3) Drawing Conclusions and Verification: Identify patterns, themes, and meanings from the data that has been reduced and presented. Conclusions are verified through triangulation of sources and methods. The credibility of the data is guaranteed through triangulation of sources (multiple informants), and triangulation of methods (interviews, observations, documentation).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Research Resource Persons

This research involved five resource persons from GKII Pondok Daud, Gombolharjo Village with various backgrounds and roles in the church. The speakers consisted of two Jamaat Management Bodies (BPJ), one pastor, and two members of the congregation with a range of 3-46 years of residence in the village, providing a comprehensive perspective on the dynamics of spiritual formation in the context of the village community.

Contextual Spiritual Coaching Patterns

Direct Social Approach

The results of the interviews show that GKII Pondok Daud applies a direct social approach by living in the midst of Javanese society as the main strategy for spiritual development. These findings are supported by convergent testimonials from all study participants that emphasize the importance of the incarceration approach in the context of Javanese culture.

Samuel Sakiyun as BPJ with 46 years of experience living in Gombolharjo village stated: "The strategy we carry out to identify cultural values by taking a social approach with us is directly in the middle of the community so that we can see how the community exists, and this is not too difficult because we were born and live in the Javanese community." This statement was reinforced by Amandha Raras Sonya Christi, BPJ with 24 years of experience: "In planning the program, the first step I did was that we sat together with the church administrators to discuss the design by considering the conditions of the community around us, we paid attention to how the life of the congregation was related to the life of the Javanese people." Then Yohana Rasimah, a member of the congregation with 25 years of experience, added the practical dimension of this approach: "For us, it is not too difficult because we were born and live in the midst of the Javanese people who still follow the customs, we continue to try to live together in the midst of the Javanese people who still hold fast to the customs."

Contextual Theological Strategy: Bridging Javanese and Christian Spirituality

Pastor Fitri Ariani, developed a unique **contextual theological strategy** by connecting Javanese spirituality values with Christian teachings. Pastor Fitri Ariani revealed that “Javanese people, whatever sect they adhere to, greatly respect and exalt the worship of their god, they have time to worship, they are willing to sacrifice, and in any way to be able to please their worship. The Javanese do not take into account the time, energy and funds to carry out worship with their offerings. How can this be strengthened by emphasizing that the Lord Jesus is a God who must remain first in all things without counting time, energy and funds because Christ has exceeded his sacrifice for us.” This strategy demonstrates a **contextual apologetic approach** that utilizes **positive values** in Javanese spirituality as a **point of contact** to strengthen Christian theological understanding.

Mega Vita Ariani, despite having only lived in the village for 3 years, provides a **perspective of practical wisdom** in dealing with contextual challenges. Mega Vita Ariani revealed that “we will live and coexist together with the community, so yes, we need to be wise, yes, we can’t be saculous... we just go and see it mingle with the community following the existing traditions, but we still have to hold fast to the faith and believe that indeed the power of the Lord Jesus is greater than the power that is believed and worshipped with them.” This statement demonstrates a **theological balance** between **social participation** and the **integrity of faith**, which is at the core of effective contextual spiritual formation.

The findings of this study are in line with the concept **of Indonesian ecclesiology** which emphasizes three important dimensions: **participatory, incarceration, and relational** (Takdare et al., 2024). The model of “*communion, sharing, together, and gandong*” proposed as a new approach for the church to interact in the national and religious public spaces in Indonesia is reflected in the practice of GKII Pondok Daud. The **inincarnate** approach found in this study supports the argument that the Indonesian church needs **to formulate and construct** participatory, incarnate, and relational dimensions in their ecclesiology to demonstrate the essence and mission of the Trinity God in ecclesial-social life (Takdare et al., 2024).

GKII Pondok Daud’s spiritual formation strategy contributes to the **development of Asian theology** which emphasizes the importance of **indigenous resources for original theological enterprises**. The use of Javanese spirituality values as a local theological source shows **creative theology** that emerged from postcolonial experiences and provides **new perspectives** and **indigenous resources** for original theological endeavors (Wilfred, 2021).

This research reinforces the thesis that globalization is changing the way the church thinks about contextual mission. The practice of GKII Pondok Daud shows that the church can reformulate its theology by looking at the global context and biblical principles, where the church’s mission will be effective and firm by studying the thoughts of each age while still holding fast to biblical teachings (Salurante, 2020).

Liturgical and Cultural Adaptation

Pastor Fitri Ariani, revealed that the church adopts **elements of Javanese culture in worship practices**: “Yes, we use the Javanese language sitting lesehan and it is carried out with a family atmosphere as a characteristic of the Javanese when gathering” This finding is strengthened by **convergent testimony** from other informants who show **the comprehensive implementation of** liturgical adaptation in various aspects of spiritual formation.

Samuel Sakiyun, as BPJ, explained **the collaborative process** in program planning: “we together with the congregation management and several members of the congregation discussed together for the activity plan taking into account the conditions of the community around us” This is supported by Amandha Raras Sonya Christi, who emphasizes a **participatory** approach: “We sat down with the church administrators to discuss the plan considering the conditions of the community around us”

Yohana Rasimah describes the holistic approach of the church in spiritual formation: “The church provides teaching and mentoring both jointly and personally, and it also provides space for consultation. What if there is a congregation that needs consultation about faith amid Javanese culture, the church gives its own time to conconfer and counsel” Furthermore, he explained **the manifestation of family values** in church activities: “activities for women, besides that there is Eid worship, we also share many things, and we also pray for each other and activities like that which I think can be more constructive and strengthen faith”

Mega Vita Ariani, even though she has only lived in the village for 3 years, gives a **strategic perspective** on the role of the church: “I hope that in the future, yes, the church will continue to be a bridge between faith and local culture. Moreover, the church where I worship is in the middle of a community environment, which will certainly always coexist with the community and local culture.”

Based on a comprehensive analysis of interviews, the liturgical adaptation of GKII Pondok Daud includes **five main elements**: First, **the use of the Javanese language in daily communication**. Consistent implementation in all aspects of church ministry. This is supported by the opinions of all participants. Facilitate more **intimate and contextual communication**; Second, **the Lesehan Sitting Position during Coaching Activities**. It is adopted on a limited basis in certain activities. The sitting position reflects the **values of egalitarianism** and **the simplicity of Javanese culture**. Then it eliminates **formal hierarchies** in the context of spiritual formation; Third, **Creating a Family Atmosphere Typical of Javanese Culture**. High implementation in various church activities. Manifest in **sharing, praying for each other, and personal assistance**. Strengthening **communal bonds** and **spiritual solidarity**; Fourth, **Maintaining the Value of Mutual Cooperation in Church Activities**. Applied in **collaborative decision-making processes**. Involve congregation administrators and members in **program planning**. Reflecting the **democratization** of church leadership; Fifth, **Provision of Consultation and Personal Assistance Rooms**. Implementation is moderate with a **personal approach**. Especially for **congregations facing contextual challenges**. Demonstrate **pastoral sensitivity** to individual needs.

The practice of GKII Pondok Daud is in line with the concept of **inculturation as the process of incarnation of the gospel in culture**. Research on inculturation shows that the **incarnation as the starting point of inculturation** culminates in the mystery of the Easter of Christ, with **the Holy Spirit as the principle of discernment** (Sengga, 2022).. The liturgical adaptations made by the church reflect **theological care** in ensuring that **the Christian spirit is introduced into the local culture** without losing doctrinal integrity.

The research findings resonate with **the inculturation of Gondang Sabangunan Batak Toba in the liturgy of marriage blessing** (Eden S & Pereira, 2023), which suggests that **the local Church is in intensive and solid dialogue with cultural customs** as the best way to teach the gospel message. Just like Gondang music that **brings believers to Christ in realizing an attitude of true**

repentance, holiness and salvation (Eden S & Pereira, 2023), the liturgical adaptation of GKII Pondok Daud serves as a **medium of** contextual spiritual transformation.

The practice of using **the Javanese language and the family atmosphere** in spiritual formation is in line with the findings of research on **the integration of the Sangehe language in church liturgy (Kalundang et al., 2024)**. The research shows that **the use of regional languages in church liturgy improves congregations' understanding of Christian teachings and strengthens their relationship with local culture (Kalundang et al., 2024)**.

The liturgical adaptation of GKII Pondok Daud contributes to the **contextualization of theology in the development of the church in East Asia (Halawa & Bambang, 2025)**. Research shows that churches in East Asia **are trying to integrate basic Christian teachings and adapt to local cultural needs and customs**.

However, the practice of GKII Pondok Daud shows success in **finding a balance between liturgical innovation and maintaining the holiness of Christian teaching**. The church managed to avoid the risk that **too much adjustment to local cultural elements could lead to the loss of its original Christian identity (Halawa & Bambang, 2025)**.

Praktik GKII Pondok Daud sejalan with the **principle of cross-cultural mission** that emphasises **situational adaptation based on understanding and responding to the needs of local communities (Aritonang, 2024)**. The use of the Javanese language and the adaptation of sitting postures show the **integration of the theological context of the local community as a bridge to preach the Gospel**, while **avoiding ethnocentrism** that can lead to rejection by local communities (Aritonang, 2024).

This comprehensive liturgical adaptation offers a practical template for community-based spiritual formation that can be adapted to various Indonesian cultural contexts. This model shows that **the active participation of the congregation in the contextualization process** helps local churches to **be more sensitive to social and cultural dynamics**, as well as to make **a greater contribution in determining relevant forms of worship and teaching (Halawa & Bambang, 2025)**. Despite showing success in liturgical adaptation, the limited implementation of **the lesehan sitting position** shows that there is still room **for development** in the physical contextualization of worship. Additionally, continuous caution is necessary to avoid practices that could lead to syncretism, which involves the blending of Christian teachings with traditional elements that contradict the Christian faith.

The liturgical adaptation of GKII Pondok Daud Gombolharjo shows **a balanced and theological model of inculturation**, which succeeds in integrating elements of Javanese culture in the practice of spiritual formation without sacrificing doctrinal integrity. This model can serve as **a reference** for other churches in developing **contextual spiritual coaching** that is **relevant, transformative, and authentic**.

Contextual Theological Strategies

Pastor Fitri Ariani emphasized that the Javanese people, regardless of their beliefs, show high respect for their worship. This is reflected in the commitment of time, sacrifices, and various forms of effort made to please the worship. According to him, this reality can be used to strengthen the appreciation of the Christian faith by affirming that the Lord Jesus must be the center of worship and the main priority in all aspects of life. Mega Vita Ariani added that in the context of social life, wisdom is needed accompanied by steadfastness of faith. He argued that the attitude of respect and sacrifice shown by the Javanese people

can be used as an example to deepen devotion to the Lord Jesus, as long as it does not contradict Christian theological principles. Meanwhile, Yohana Rasimah, a member of the congregation, underlined the role of the value of sacrifice and involvement in the community as important elements in faith building. He stated that the discussions held among the congregation about faithfulness as followers of Christ encourage real practice in daily life, especially in terms of sacrifice and respect for others, in accordance with the teachings of Jesus Christ. This is considered to strengthen their faith and make it more contextual with the culture they live in. Samuel Sakiyun also gave his views on the importance of reinterpreting cultural values in the light of Christian theology. He highlighted that values such as loyalty and sacrifice that have been rooted in local culture should be directed to a true understanding of faith, namely that the center of worship is the Lord Jesus, who has made the greatest sacrifice for humanity.

Hiebert (1985) asserts that contextual theological strategies must bridge the 'common ground' of Christian culture and faith. He emphasized that effective discipleship occurs when the church is able to identify positive cultural values to contextualize in faith formation. The approach of GKII Pondok Daud is very representative by emphasizing efforts to connect the attitude of respect and sacrifice of the Javanese people with the Christian teachings about the worship of the Lord Jesus.

This strategy concretely teaches the congregation to utilize positive cultural values (respect, sincerity in worship, willingness to sacrifice) as a foundation for strengthening faith. Then this strategy emphasizes the center of worship only to the Lord Jesus, maintaining theological integrity so as not to be drowned in traditional religious practices that are not in accordance with Christian teachings. This strategy forms Christian communities rooted in the local culture without losing their faith identity, which impacts solid and sustainable spiritual formation.

Spiritual formation based on contextual theological strategies at GKII Pondok Daud takes a smart step to connect existing Javanese cultural values with the core of Christian teachings. This not only increases the relevance and appeal of spiritual formation but also creates harmony between faith and local culture, as emphasized in mission and contextual theological literature.

Expanded Spiritual Formation Program

Contextual Bible Deepening

Yohana Rasimah, a member of the congregation, said that activities that support the growth of the faith of the congregation include Bible study and household fellowship. She highlighted the important role of special activities for women's groups, such as the Mothers' Fellowship, which provides a space to share experiences and support each other through common prayer. In addition, religious worship is also the main forum for the congregation to strengthen spiritual and community ties. The implementation of Bible deepening activities is carried out contextually by considering Javanese cultural values, especially the spirit of kinship and togetherness which is highly upheld. This approach is considered effective in deepening theological understanding relevant to the life of the local community. This was confirmed by Samuel Sakiyun, who explained that Bible study and fellowship activities are routinely carried out with an approach that is close to the reality of the life of the village community. The use of the Javanese language in the delivery of God's word is a communicative strategy that facilitates the understanding and application of Bible teachings in daily life. He stated that: "The delivery of God's words is done in simple and contextual language, so that it can be directly applied by citizens. The study of the Bible is not only theological, but also touches on how faith is lived in local cultures and traditions."

Meanwhile, Mega Vita Ariani, highlighted the importance of services directed specifically to women and youth groups. According to him, the fellowship held for these two groups serves as a space for dialogue and mutual strengthening of faith, especially in facing challenges in maintaining the Christian faith in the midst of the strong influence of Javanese customs and cultural values. He stated that: “Fellowship for youth and women plays a very important role in building the firmness of faith collectively, because through this activity they can share experiences and face the challenges of faith together.”

Counseling and Mentoring Services

Yohana Rasimah stated that the church plays an active role in providing teaching and mentoring, both collectively and individually. In addition, the church provides a consultation room for congregations who need faith guidance, especially in dealing with the dynamics of life in the midst of Javanese culture. According to him, the church openly allocates special time for personalized counseling and spiritual consultation services.

Further affirmation was conveyed by Pastor Fitri Ariani, who explained that pastoral counseling services in the church are designed to respond to the typical challenges that stem from local cultural mindsets and pressures. He emphasized that counseling is not only aimed at resolving personal problems, but also to guide the congregation to be able to live a life in harmony with local customs without sacrificing the integrity of the Christian faith.

In line with this, Samuel Sakiyun highlighted the importance of spiritual assistance as part of the discipleship process. He stated that direct and personal mentoring creates a deep sense of involvement for the congregation, as they feel cared for as a whole—not only from the spiritual aspect, but also in the social and cultural context of their lives.

The contextual study of the Bible at GKII Tadok Daud is in line with the results of **Whiteman’s (2003)** study, which states the importance of using “**cultural exegesis**” in faith building — an approach that bridges the biblical text with the local cultural context so that God’s words are easy to understand and relevant to the congregation.

Challenges Faced

The results of the study found two challenges faced. The first challenge is **the theological clash with local traditions**. Mega Vita Ariani, a member of the church, revealed that the existence of Javanese traditions that are still strong in society presents real challenges for Christians. He reflects on his personal experience when living in an environment that is still actively carrying out traditional rituals such as *sea alms*. According to him, involvement in such traditions creates tension, because as a believer, participation in such practices is contrary to the teachings of the Christian faith. This view is reinforced by Pastor Fitri Ariani, who affirms that the Christian congregation must have firmness in holding the teachings of the faith, while still respecting the local culture as long as it is not theologically contradictory. He highlights the importance of distinguishing between cultural values that can be accommodated and practices that should be avoided because they have the potential to be misleading or lead to syncretism that is incompatible with the Christian faith. In line with that, another church member, Samuel Sakiyun, also said that similar tensions are often experienced by the congregation when they have to deal with cultural rituals that have been inherent in the social life of the community. He emphasized the importance of the role of the church in providing clear direction so that there is no mixing between the Christian faith and other elements of faith that can obscure the purity of teaching.

The second challenge is the challenge of adaptation in the life of the congregation. In the context of adapting to the social and cultural environment, Yohana Rasimah, a

member of the congregation, revealed that the initial adjustment process was not easy. He stated that the main obstacle lies in the early stages of adaptation, but with time and experience, it becomes lighter and can be lived reasonably. He emphasized the importance of wisdom in placing oneself as a Christian who lives in the midst of the Javanese community, in order to be able to live a harmonious life without neglecting the identity of faith. In line with this, Mega Vita Ariani emphasized the need for continuous learning in navigating social life in society. According to him, the ability to place oneself wisely is the key to maintaining faith, while maintaining the harmony of social relations. He emphasized that this adaptation process is a dynamic that needs to be lived consistently by every member of the congregation.

According to Hiebert (1985), theological clashes often arise when there is indecisiveness in distinguishing between cultural values that can be integrated with Christian teachings, and cultural aspects that contain religious elements that contradict the Christian faith. He emphasized the importance of coaching that equips the congregation to be able to critically and theologically understand the cultural boundaries that can be followed in order to avoid syncretism. The challenge of theological clashes with local traditions and the adaptation of the congregation to complex socio-cultural life is a common phenomenon in spiritual formation at GKII Pondok Daud Gombolharjo. However, with contextual and wise guidance and assistance, the congregation is able to place their faith in a healthy manner while maintaining relationships and harmony with the surrounding community.

The Positive Impact of Spiritual Formation

There are two positive impacts of spiritual development. First, public acceptance. The findings of the study show that there has been a significant increase in public acceptance of the existence of the Christian congregation at GKII Pondok Daud. Although in the early stages the congregation had faced various forms of social pressure and mild discrimination, these conditions slowly underwent positive changes over time.

Yohana Rasimah, a member of the congregation, said that the experience of facing discrimination was only felt in the early days of her decision to convert to Christianity. Over time, the acceptance from the surrounding environment increased, starting from his own family to the community around where he lived. He said that openness and good relationships have changed people's attitudes towards him as a Christian. In line with this, Samuel Sakiyun, who also serves as BPJ, said that at first there was tension in neighboring relations, which was largely due to a lack of understanding of the teachings and practices of the Christian faith. However, through a proactive social approach and the application of a good and open attitude to life, relations with the surrounding community have become increasingly positive. He emphasized that this change occurs naturally because of healthy and appreciative interactions. Mega Vita Ariani, also gives a similar picture. He emphasized that active involvement in social activities such as mutual cooperation and other community activities is an effective means of building harmonious relationships. By demonstrating participation and contribution in the social life of the village, the congregation began to be seen not as an outside group, but as an integral part of the community. This slowly formed an atmosphere of mutual acceptance and respect among the residents.

The second impact is social harmony. In terms of interfaith social relations, the informants also described the establishment of harmonious relations between the Christian congregation and people who adhere to other faiths. Yohana Rasimah said that the relationship between religious communities went quite well because of mutual respect. He gave a concrete example in the form of the habit of giving greetings to each other at

religious moments, which creates an atmosphere of mutual respect in the midst of differences in beliefs. Pastor Fitri Ariani, strengthened this view by stating that social harmony in the environment where the congregation lives is reflected in the attitude of mutual support and empathy, both in the context of religious activities and other social activities. He emphasized that the spiritual formation carried out by the church not only has an impact on the growth of individual faith, but also encourages the creation of social bridges that strengthen relationships between citizens.

In the same perspective, Samuel Sakiyun explained that the church seeks to form an inclusive community by adopting local values such as cooperation and the spirit of togetherness that have been firmly rooted in Javanese culture. This approach is considered effective in maintaining the harmony of interreligious and intercultural relations, as well as showing the relevance of the Christian faith in the context of pluralistic social life.

This research is in line with the concept of inculturation put forward by Hiebert (2008), which shows that contextual and inclusive spiritual coaching helps the congregation gain better social acceptance. Hiebert emphasised that inculturation is not only a matter of liturgical adaptation, but also of building social relationships and dialogue with the surrounding community so that the church can live meaningfully in the local cultural and social context.

The spiritual guidance carried out by GKII Pondok Daud not only has a positive impact on the growth of the faith of the congregation, but also significantly strengthens social relations among the congregation and the wider community. Growing acceptance and social harmony are indications of the success of the coaching strategy that pays attention to the cultural and social context of the village community.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that contextual spiritual formation in the Christian community of GKII Pondok Daud Desa Gombolharjo effectively integrates the strong traditional Javanese cultural values with Christian teachings. This approach successfully addresses challenges posed by the cultural diversity and deep-rooted local customs in the rural setting. The research identified practical strategies, including direct social engagement, theological contextualization linking Javanese spirituality with Christianity, liturgical and cultural adaptations, and contextual Bible study, all contributing to both the spiritual growth of the congregation and strengthening social harmony.

The findings demonstrate that spiritually forming the community with respect for local culture, while maintaining Christian doctrinal integrity, fosters a robust and sustainable faith. Moreover, these contextual strategies enable the church to serve not only as a religious institution but also as a significant agent for social empowerment and interfaith harmony in the village context. The study's results affirm that culturally sensitive and inclusive spiritual care promotes greater social acceptance and cohesion, making the Christian faith more relevant and embedded within the lived cultural and social realities of the rural Javanese community. This model can guide other rural churches in similar multicultural and traditional settings to develop effective and meaningful spiritual formation programs.

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