



The Meaning of Vocation in the Leadership Journey of Women Pastors: A Narrative Analysis Approach to 20 Women Pastor Figures in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to understand the meaning of vocation in the leadership journey of female pastors by conducting an in-depth analysis of the vocation stories of female pastors in order to provide an understanding of the meaning of vocations as depicted in their leadership journey. This study uses a qualitative type of research with a narrative analysis approach that focuses on analyzing the meaning of vocations to service in leadership carried out by twenty (20) female pastors who serve in various institutions in Indonesia, such as synods, churches, seminaries, Christian universities, Christian schools etc. Data processing used Nvivo software which is very reliable software in such a qualitative research undertaking. Participants emanated from various tribes, ethnicities and from various islands in Indonesia such as Java, Sumatra, East Nusa Tenggara, Bali, Sulawesi, Kalimantan, and Papua. Data collection was through the use of in-depth interviews, surveys, and observations of participants including their families, service partners and followers. The results of the data analysis will hopefully provide a comprehensive process description of the meaning of the vocation in the ministry of the female pastor's leadership which is illustrated in her unique leadership journey. The meaning of the vocation in the female pastor's leadership journey is illustrated in the diversity of vocational motivations that underlie the participants' decisions to enter the seminary. The meaning of the vocation in the female pastor's leadership journey is also illustrated in her leadership journey with the dynamics of issues of gender inequality and socio-cultural views prevailing in society.

Keywords: Vocation, leadership journey, women pastors, motivation, narrative analysis.



Introduction

The term 'Vocation' has an interesting meaning in relation to the religious sphere. The intended religious scope is a Christian perspective which expresses the meaning of calling in services carried out by special people such as those termed servants of God or pastors who serve in Christian institutions. The study of one's own vocation and its relation to religion is a study that has a long historical reference that has been going on since the 10th century and begins with the story of the monks who dedicated, and many still do, dedicate their lives in monasteries because they have felt God's call to perform a special function (Esteves et al., 2018). Research on vocations and ministry has continued in the recent centuries, although the number of theoretical and methodological developments of vocations has been very limited (Christopherson, 1994).

Special callings received by special people such as ministers of God or pastors have vocation stories with various backgrounds such as motivations, mysterious events, feelings of intimidation and vows or promises made by parents to God. The underlying motivation to become a servant of God or a pastor or priest, can be through various entrances such as an interest in becoming a priest or pastor because one sees the figure of a priest pastor as a person who is respected and generally is believed to enjoy a peaceful life (Hui, 2012). Kurniawan (2022) describes various motivations for being called to become a pastor etc, starting from a mysterious experience, namely a person who feels that he has a dream or vision that directs him to become a pastor. Feelings of intimidation could drive one because his parents were pastors and there is a perceived need to continue in one's life as pastor. A *nazar* or promise is often made to God by parents relating to their children from when they are in the womb that the child born will be dedicated to God to serve as a priest or suchlike. The various entrances of the vocation to these special people show the extent of the vocation itself. This further makes research on the meaning of vocation research that is difficult to explain the motivation for this brief study.

Vocation is something that is important to study based on the uniqueness of the meaning of vocation in the context of pastoral ministry in the religious sphere. Christopherson (1994) provides the view that the meaning of vocation can be redefined with the personal identity of the person carrying out the vocation such as a pastor or priest. The redefinition of vocation can be related to various aspects such as vocation and a pastoral career (Christopherson, 1994), vocation and profession (Tamtelahitu, 2018), vocation and mental health (Conway et al., 2015) and the vocation of female priests and their problems (Harris, 2018). The meaning of vocation in this research is directed to the vocation in the ministry of pastoral leadership, specifically with the female gender in mind.

The meaning of vocation is a research theme that is difficult to study. Christopherson (1994) gives an illustration that vocation research is research that has its own complexity and difficulties for the sake of difficulties which are more expressed by the individuals who are in it. Cremen (2018) argues that describing a vocation is not something that is chosen like someone choosing a job or career but something that is indeed a calling. This description emphasizes that vocation is indeed different from a person's desire or will in choosing a particular task or job. Cremen also revealed that vocations are also related to a psychological aspect, namely the awareness of vocations is related to the subconscious. Vocations can appear in a person in a variety of conditions, including during the darkest or most difficult times in human life. The problem of vocations involving one's awareness is a difficult thing to do research on because vocations have various complexities and vocations are not something related only to motivation, but they are also related to individual awareness of the vocation itself.



The calling of God's servants, especially servants of female gender, is an interesting topic to study. The meaning of the vocation of female gender ministers or female pastors in the leadership they carry out presents a dearth of research on women's leadership in general. The presence of women leaders themselves in various political, economic, and social arenas is the best part of the development of women's emancipation in leadership that tends to side with men. Gender issues are issues that are difficult to let go of from the perspective of leadership carried out by women from time to time. Women's leadership still has obstacles even though women are considered equal to men, but obstacles still persist in women's leadership to this day (Pew Research Center, 2015). Prejudice against women's leadership which is considered to imitate the men's style is one of the problems experienced by women leaders, including the leadership of female pastors (Ferguson, 2018). The real difference between leadership by women and men is felt in leadership in the religious sphere, namely the difference in the treatment of for example, congregations or organizations attitudes towards female pastor and male pastors.

Vocations have various kinds of dynamics in carrying out ministry calls specifically for female pastors. The journey in fulfilling God's call to serve has challenges or difficulties in various contexts. The cost of vocation is illustrated in various struggles from a series of studies of women ministers serving in Christian institutions. Bumgardner (2015) study of female pastors in the Adventist church provides an overview of the struggles experienced by female pastors related to their vocation as pastors or clergy, their role as mothers, discrimination in ministry between male and female pastors, challenges faced by both internally and externally, the struggle to remain faithful in the ministry or to leave the ministry. The results of a study of eleven (11) female pastors from the Adventist group show that female pastors really appreciate the meaning of God's calling in depth and it is this calling that enables them to carry out their God-called ministry during problems, challenges, and difficulties faced in life.

Research findings from Greene and Robbins (2015) provides an illustration of the price that must be paid in relation to vocations by female pastors who serve in churches in England. The price paid for their vocation encourages them to make sacrifices in their ministry amidst the issue of discrimination between male and female priests. Smarr et al's research (2018) on issues of gender and race in the leadership ministry of black female pastors encounters obstacles related to abuse of power, congregational attitudes, discrimination, family dynamics, jealousy, lack of financial support, limitations on tradition and self-esteem have been difficult obstacles. Black female pastor leaders especially face many challenges in carrying out their calling to serve.

Vocation is the core of a series of services carried out by pastors. Fulfillment of vocations in ministry carried out by pastors is sadly not always as it should be and there are still pastors who "abandon" vocations by leaving the ministry. Research conducted by Hamn and Eagle (2021) in an article entitled Clergy Who Leave Congregational Ministry, revealed data on clergy who left the ministry before retirement or achieving their emeritus status. Data shows that every year there is a decrease of 1% -2% of pastors from various denominations including Christian and Roman Catholic. The reasons pastors or priests may leave the ministry range from internal or denominational conflict, pursuing personal goals or caring for a family, to loneliness and isolation.

Vocation has a relationship with the gift that accompanies the call itself. Schuurman (2004) in his book *Vocation: Discerning Our Calling in Life*, gives this picture through a Bible character named Paul. The use of the words 'calling' (Romans 1:1) and 'gift' (Ephesians.4:11) which are used interchangeably implies that the gifts possessed by prophets, apostles, pastors, evangelists, teachers, and others are also called upon. Based on this description, understanding the meaning of vocation has complexity because the gift itself is a vocation. Understanding the meaning of



vocations makes the topic of research on the meaning of vocations not an easy study to conduct because vocations have their own uniqueness.

Research Method

This research adopted in this study was a qualitative approach in which the researchers conducted a narrative analysis of the meaning of the vocation in the leadership journey of female pastors who serve in Christian institutions in Indonesia. Narrative analysis was carried out by interviewing participants to tell their experiences or stories, by selecting and compiling their stories, and reflecting their own meanings and giving these meanings to others (Given, 2008). This approach provided the opportunity for participants to tell their stories and their interpretations of related issues, and then the researchers developed their interpretations of stories. Interviews were conducted with twenty (20) female pastors who told the story of their initial vocation before deciding to enter the seminary and finally carry out their vocation and become part of their leadership journey to serve in Christian institutions. Data processing was carried out using the Nvivo software to obtain accurate research results and to describe the meaning of the vocation in the journey of female pastor leadership.

Literature Review

Meaning of Vocation

The word vocation emanates from the Latin word *vocare* which means to call. God calls or invites people to a priestly vocation. Individuals need to make a decision about their vocation, and their choice is a response to an invitation presented by God. Vocation in a broad sense is described as a meaningful experience by individuals and has a subjective nature that can provide motivation from the work done so that it has meaning or purpose (Chen et al., 2019). Research related to vocations can be correlated with work (Duffy et al., 2018) and internal motivation calls (Esteves et al., 2018). Vocation has a special role in the person or individual which defines the various jobs carried out by everyone in various professions. Types of professions in general that are often associated with vocations include professions in the field of education such as teachers, and health workers such as nurses and so on.

Vocations in a special sense are associated with religious understanding having a foundation that comes from the Holy Scriptures. One's pastoral or priestly vocation is the way God invites a person to love and give themselves to others. It is not only giving of one's skills and services and expertise in diverse ways, but mainly about giving one's self in entirety to a path of holiness and care for others. The Bible reveals various stories about God choosing and calling people to do ministry for His people. The Old Testament (OT) shows that God himself elects the people he sends to serve God's people or nation (gk. *laos*) (Nicolaidis, 2010), such as the election of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and so on. The New Testament (NT) also shows the Lord Jesus electing twelve people to become His disciples. Calling and election are things that are inherent in God's own person who elects and calls His chosen people (Schuurman, 2004). The call of a pastor or servant of God is also unique because it is special, that is, a call from God that is given to those He chooses to serve (Zikmund et al., 1998). Women were dynamic in the ministry of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 28:8; Mark 15:41; Luke 1:42) and the apostle Paul (Acts 17:4; Romans 16:12; Philippians. 4:3). Scripture makes it very clear that women pastors and priests in some denominations such as the Anglican Church, are also spiritually gifted and should play a role in church and should be trained in to become highly effective in their ministry. Then there are those



who point to the Order of Melchizedek from who the line of priesthood comes (Genesis 14:18; Psalms 110:4) and they say where is the biblical line supporting women as pastors or priests?

The leadership of female pastors who serve in Christian institutions has a starting point which is called a vocation. Vocation has a religious connotation attached to the church, especially referring to pastors or religious leaders (Schuurman, 2004). Greene and Robbins (2015) emphasize that the ministry of the pastor has a religious vocation as the core of the overall ministry performed. Women pastors serving in Christian institutions in Indonesia also have an encouraging calling to ministry. Vocation is a strong motivation in every individual to do difficult work or ministry, including service in the religious field. Pastors get special 'calls' before they decide to equip themselves in Bible schools and serve in Christian institutions.

Calls in a Christian perspective permeate the concept of the Bible from both the Old Testament (OT) and the New Testament (NT). The Hebrew language used for the call is *qahal* and the Greek *kalein* and these two words give the meaning of God's people called by God Himself to do ministry. According to Schuurman (2004), the words call (vocation) and election have a close relationship if you look at the verb of calling (call), namely *qara* and election, namely *bahar* based on Isaiah 41:8-9 "But you, O Israel, my servant, O Jacob, whom I have chosen, seed of Abraham, whom I love; you whom I have taken from the ends of the earth and whom I have called from its corners, I say to you, "You are my servant, I have chosen you and have not rejected you." God actively calls His chosen people throughout the ages to work on special purposes determined by Himself.

Vocation understood in a religious context is then how God calls one to serve Him in the world. Vocation is clearly a special keyword used in the context of service in the religious sphere. Various studies on vocations show that this concept is important to explore and has relevance in various aspects related to the world of work, including in the context of service. The meaning of a vocation in the context of Christian service has one inherent characteristic, namely its transcendence. Conway et.al (2015) describes a vocation as something that is transcendent that originates outside of oneself, which encourages individuals to focus on roles or work or certain things that have a purpose or value or deep meaning. This image has a close relationship in the world of ministry where the source of a transcendent calling is believed to come from God himself. However it is people in the process who determine God's call for their life in what is known as discernment.

The meaning of vocation in various studies has a range of meanings and ways of manifesting them. Vocation in the context of Christianity is always interpreted as a calling that comes from God and is noble in nature. This call has a side that is not only spiritual but enters all aspects of life in the world, even including daily work. Payne (2017) describes the views of the two reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin who emphasize that vocations are not merely intended to separate from the world but instead call one to enter into the world. Calls that manifest in the form of serving means doing service in the world through serving God's people as His *Ecclesia* (Church) (Nicolaidis, 2010). The pastors who are called by God to serve this call work holistically. The Puritan preacher Thomas Case (1641) gave a comprehensive picture of the Christian's vocation (Schuurman, 2004):

"Reformation must be universal . . . reform all places, all person and calling; reform of the benches of judgment, the inferior magistrates . . . Reform the universities, reform the cities, reform the countries, reform inferior school of learning, reform the Sabbath, reform the ordinances, the worship of God . . . you have more work to do than I can speak . . . Every plant which heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up."



Joynt (2018) describes a shift in the paradigm of vocation specifically in the Christian context, namely during the early church, the middle ages, the reformation period and the modern era. The shift in the meaning of this vocation stems from the initial vocation aimed at the community in the early church. Vocations continued to clergymen in the Middle Ages, then during the reform era there were special levels or classifications for those who received vocations, finally in modern times the vocations have expanded into the secular world. Calling itself in the context for clergy still has meaning as God's call to serve Him and others through being part of a full-time ministry both within the scope of the church or other Christian institutions. The consequence of the full-time ministry of clergymen is the willingness to pay the price for service, having the willingness to be equipped in all learning processes and having a commitment to carry out their lifelong calling. Love is in essence the most basic and characteristic vocation of every human being.

Leadership Journey

The leadership journey that religious leaders go through, including female pastors, is a journey that is based on the calling they receive as a servant of God or as clergy. Exploring the themes of the female pastor's leadership journey in carrying out the mandate as the leader of the congregation or the people she serves, provides an overview of the journey of the vocation itself and an examination of the meaning of the vocation received and lived by the female pastor leaders. The story of the journey of Bible characters in carrying out leadership after receiving a call from God provides a clear standard of the meaning of the call received by the servants of God or clergy.

The leadership journey becomes an interesting study because such a study discusses the development of leadership theory carried out by individuals. Quotb (2015) describes a leadership journey that has a connection with leadership in general and leads to leadership styles such as transformational leadership and resonance leadership. Exploration of the leadership journey of the leaders will illuminate the path of the leadership style adopted by the leaders. Importantly, God does not force one to select a certain path, but rather requires that one listens to His invitation and responds freely.

The uniqueness of the leadership journey especially for women lies in the problems they face and one of them is gender inequality. Women leaders tend to have problems with gender bias in their leadership (Soklaridis et al., 2017). The problem of gender inequality is experienced by women leaders in various fields, including those in the realm of religion. Presentation of the problem of gender inequality experienced by female priests illuminates the vocation journey lived by female pastor leaders and specifically suggestions for inclusive leadership (Minehart et al., 2020). The problem of gender inequality is experienced by women leaders in various fields, including in the realm of religion. Women must however take the lead and an follow their calling. The so called 'glass ceiling' still exists for many women clergy and in fact for most feminists (Van Biema et al., 2004) and there has been "... little change regarding women clergy since 1998; in fact, possible regression has occurred due to male backlash" (Burnett, 2017:20).

The journey of women's leadership follows a unique trajectory because of the gender of the women themselves. Krueger (2020) in his research *The Glass Ceiling: Exploring the Leadership Journey of Men and Women in High-Tech*, provides an overview of the significant differences in the journeys experienced by female leaders and male leaders and this is caused by deep obstacles in the journey of women's leadership which is referred to as The Glass Ceiling. The leadership trajectory that women have gone through to reach the point or peak of their leadership



has interesting factors to study and provides inspiring lessons for women in the future in their leadership roles as women pastors.

The journey of leadership in the context of female pastor leaders also refers to the patterns of the leadership journey of biblical figures written of in the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT) periods. The leadership journey of one of the major figures in the Bible is Moses who has a story of a leadership journey that is not outdated throughout the ages and the story of this journey is written in a book by Norman J. Cohen about *Moses and The Journey to Leadership: Timeless Lessons of Effective Management from the Bible and Today's Leaders*. Cohen (2008) provides a pattern of Moses leadership journey starting with the calling he received while tending his father-in-law's flock of sheep. Moses received the call by seeing the appearance of a thorn bush burning and God conveyed a leadership call to Moses to shepherd the Israelites who were in slavery in the land of Egypt. The journey of Moses' leadership with the phases of his life in Egypt, the life of shepherding the flock of sheep and finally his life of shepherding the Israelites out of Egypt is a story of a leadership journey with a starting point starting with the vocation that God gave to Moses personally. Cohen (2008) emphasized that Moses leadership has an interesting description concerning his journey by saying, "Leaders often develop personal characteristics and skills over time; it takes a series of experiences, each one building on the others, to ensure growth. Leadership is not born overnight."

The first woman in a pastoral role in the Bible is considered to be Deborah, and she was a prophetess and judge of Israel who led the Israelites to victory in battle. Her story is a witness to the authority of women in spiritual and leadership roles. "Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. She used to sit under the palm of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the people of Israel came up to her for judgment" (Judges 4:4-5). Deborah had authority, and the people valued her decisions. The Bible says that God was working through Deborah as a civil judge, as a representative for God, and as a worship leader for His people. Women can certainly teach about spiritual issues. Priscilla is mentioned in Acts 18:26: "He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately." In Romans 16:3–5 Paul refers to Priscilla and Aquila as his "fellow workers" and he reports that they risked their lives for him. Paul worked and lived with them for some time, and they followed him to Ephesus before he left to begin his subsequent missionary journey. Paul says "...in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God" (1 Corinthians 11:5-12).

Result and Discussion

The Meaning of Vocations is Illustrated in the Motivation for Vocations

Participating female pastors recounted when they first received the call to become God's servants before deciding to enter Bible school. The story told has various motivations which are classified below as follows:

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10
Mystical Experience										
Parents Nazar	x							x	x	
Admire the Pastor in the Church		x			x	x				
The Example of Parents as Pastors				x						
Interested in Service			x							



Interested in Theology								x		
Parents Wish										x
Awareness of Vocation										

	P11	P12	P13	P14	P15	P16	P17	P18	P19	P20
Mystical Experience								x		
Parents Nazar										
Admire the Pastor in the Church							x			
The Example of Parents as Pastors										
Interested in Service	x	x	x			x			x	
Interested in Theology										
Parents Wish										
Awareness of Vocation				x	x					x

The meaning of vocation which is described in various motivations such as mystical experience, parents' vows, admire pastor in the church, the example of parents as pastors, interested in service, interested in theology, parents wish, and awareness of vocation is interesting and was in the discussion with participants and it is described as follows:

Mystical Experience	The mystical experience experienced by one female priest participant revealed how suddenly she fell ill and was in an unconscious state and during the recovery period she felt "something" that was difficult to explain in words but a few days later she decided to change direction from majoring in public lectures and made the decision to enter Bible school to become a servant of God.
Parents Nazar	The vows from parents for their children to become God's servants were told by three participants where they chose to obey their parents' vows to God and live the call to become God's servants with joy. Parents have been educating their children since childhood and training them and preparing their children to become God's servants by introducing them to various kinds of ministry.
Admire Pastor in the Church	The example of the local church pastor inspired three participants to have the desire to serve as God's servants. The admiration for the local church pastor in terms of faithfulness to serve, deliver inspiring sermons, sing in a melodious voice is the attraction that inspires participants to dream and serve as pastors in the church.
The Example of Parents as Pastors	Parents as role models for two participants have inspired their children to become pastors. Parents as well as pastors have set an example for the ministry they are calling for and encourage their children to be involved in ministry and even have a desire to become pastors.
Interested in Service	Service has its own charm so that it gave a strong impetus to the six participants to choose the path of calling to be God's servants. Participants meet ministry and see the needs of the people and encourage them to serve and surrender themselves to become God's servants to serve God more optimally.
Interested in Theology	The theology major inspired one participant to enter a Bible school and pursue theology studies and finally surrendered himself to serve as a pastor in the church.
Parents Wish	Parents' hopes for their children to become God's servants were told by one participant and the fulfillment of these hopes by deciding to enter a Bible school and fulfill their calling as God's servants.
Awareness of Vocation	Awareness of being called to be a servant of God and giving oneself fully to serving God was shared by three participants. Participants experienced a moment where they thought, struggled and through spiritual coaching and revival services their calling as God's servants was increasingly strengthened. Participants break away from the desire to pursue a career path in the secular world and choose to devote themselves fully to serving God full time.



The meaning of the term vocation issue as stated by twenty female pastor participants in expressing their motivation to become pastors has an interesting meaning and is related to the concept of the vocation itself. The meaning of the vocation depicted in parents' vows, admiration of the pastor in the church, the example of parents as pastors, being interested in service to God, being interested in theology, adhering to parents wishes, all illustrate how a vocation that originally came from an external motivation turns into an internal motivation that moves participants to step with certainty into the call and path that has been struggled towards and is finally lived through by the participants.

A vocation related to a mystical experience experienced by one participant is a unique vocation experience. Horne (1996) in particular, reveals an interesting connection between mysticism and vocation in his book *Mysticism and Vocation*. The mysticism that is meant here is more to the mystical experience experienced by someone related to the vocation he has received and lived. Horne described mystical experiences in figurative language, using poetic and religious language but also sometimes in psychological language and in simple behavioral forms. Regarding the connection of mystical experience, Horne also relates it to people who experience "Christian vocation" by responding to a call after experiencing a mystical experience which illustrates the paradox between passive acceptance of a vocation and an active decision made after experiencing the mystical experience.

Calls related to awareness of vocation have little to do with psychological aspects. Cremen (2018) in a study entitled *Vocation as Psyche's Call: A Depth Psychological Perspective on the Emergence of Calling Through Symptoms at Midlife*, provides an overview of vocation motivation that is related to psychology. Deep psychology initiated from the theory of . Jung (1875-1961) who emphasized the autonomous soul as a source of wisdom and knowledge, was used by Cremen to offer a perspective to understand the meaning of vocation. Vocation in this perspective can appear through various kinds of psychological symptoms such as dark times, disturbances, and a range of life problems experienced by humans. Participants who have awareness of vocation have stories that tell how various kinds of events, circumstances and even life's problems they experienced awakened awareness of a vocation to live a more meaningful life by becoming God's servant.

The Meaning of Calling is Illustrated in the Journey of Leadership

The leadership journey that was passed through by 20 female participants in their service period ranging between 5-35 years is a unique journey story that illustrates the meaning of the calling itself. Women ministers have received a call in their early days prior to entering a seminary. Their leadership journey as a female pastor is a journey that cannot be separated from one theme, namely gender inequality. In patriarchal societies as encountered the in Bible days, the female gender was not allowed to flourish as such, with a few exceptions, obviously the main one being the Virgin Mary. The problem of gender inequality is still a struggle experienced by female pastor leaders in most countries both at the beginning of their ministry and up to the highest positions they have. The leadership journey of female pastors who serve in Christian institutions in Indonesia is colored by issues of gender inequality which are classified as follows:

Female Gender	The reality that female pastors are gendered becomes an issue that colors the story of the journey of female pastor leaders in serving in Christian institutions. The story told related to this gender issue is the rejection of the placement of female pastors in local churches, the rejection of the placement of female gender in elite positions, the rejection of female gender in the clerical level. These rejections were conveyed either directly or indirectly to the participants.
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Socio-Cultural View

The story of the journey of a female pastor's leadership to reach the position of pastor is colored by stories of struggles over socio-cultural views that place limits on the ministry of female pastors compared to male pastors. Differences in treatment from the congregation or even the leaders above it makes female pastor leaders experience real gender inequality and are aimed at women.

The leadership journey of the female pastor who has gone through various dynamics of life including the issue of gender inequality has not shifted or made the female pastor participants abandon their vocation as a servant of God. Participants still have firmness in their calling as pastors by continuing to serve faithfully amidst the struggles they experience daily in their ministry. The meaning of vocation becomes deeper in the leadership journey taken by the participants while serving in Christian institutions in Indonesia. There are of course many denominations, including Roman Catholics, Southern Baptists, Mormons (Latter-day Saints), and the Orthodox Church that do not permit women to be priests or pastors. 1 Timothy 2:12 reads: "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." It is this verse that is commonly used to oppose the ordination of women as clergy, and leadership roles for women. Many cite 1 Corinthians 14:32–35 and 1 Timothy 3:1–7. It is 1 Timothy 2:12 that is the only New Testament verse that may in fact prohibit women from teaching or having authority over men in a church, but there are those who do not agree with the interpretation in other churches. According to the common theory that abounds, social systems tend to differentiate women as communal with relational attributes and they tend to recognize men as being more assertive with task-driven characteristics (see Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Conclusion

The interpretation of the meaning of the vocation in the leadership journey of 20 female pastors who serve in Christian institutions in Indonesia with various church denominations, cultural backgrounds, geographical locations spread throughout the Indonesian archipelago has at least provided an illustration of the meaning of the vocation itself. Gender inequality is certainly partly based on cultural values of some people in local congregations. It is likely that the apostle Paul wrote this epistle forbidding women ordination to a church that was in a state of crisis and he thus limited the ministries of *both* women and men to save the Church at Ephesus from a high risk of "self-destruction" in what were temporary measures of exception designed to prevent the one particular church in question from disintegration (Bilezikian, 2006). Nonetheless we should be more receptive and open to discussing the issue of women clergy and be more actively supporting them as well.

The conclusions from the above research are formulated in two ways as follows:

1. The meaning of vocation is strongly reflected in the initial motivations told by female priests before they made their decision to study at the seminary. The diversity of motivations that they have has led them to undergo their calling as servants of God and reach positions as pastors. The calling that female pastor leaders undergo is a special calling that they receive from God with the aim of sending them to serve the people and others.
2. The meaning of the vocation is drawn from the leadership journey of the female pastor which is full of dynamics with issues of gender inequality. The struggle regarding gender inequality that is experienced does not make the vocation of female pastors fade away or even leave the ministry, but instead the vocation becomes a strong basis to remain faithful in carrying out the ministry a woman has received from God.



This research has limitations in the theme of the meaning of the vocation of female pastors serving in Christian institutions in Indonesia and is discussed in the initial motivation of the vocation and leadership journey on the issue of gender inequality. Further research can be expanded by linking the meaning of vocation to the leadership style of female pastor leaders so that it can expand the meaning of vocation by looking at the unique style of female pastor leadership and why in fact they are required. Paul also states "There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male or female, but ye are one in Christ Jesus." Furthermore there is no similar statement uttered by Jesus that woman should be subject to man or refrain from teaching (Stanton, 1898).

We need to bear in mind that Adam and Eve were created as equals in the image of God or the *imageo Dei* and both were given dominion over creation (Ware, 2007). Importantly, the Holy Spirit was poured out on both men and women in Acts 2 and Galatians 3 says "There's no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." Many women pastors in Indonesia may experience daily challenges and face some huge limitations from even some congregants when doing their daily work but they should persevere and drive the needed socio-cultural mindset transformation on women pastors.

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