

Entrepreneurial Innovation and the Performance of a Sustainable Organization: A Case Study of a Faith-Based Non-Profit Organization

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ABSTRACT

It is essential for both non-profit and for-profit organizations to maintain sustainable performance. Innovation functions as a crucial performance metric in attaining outstanding results. This study represents a distinctive contribution to the topic of entrepreneurship by concentrating on its use within religious non-profit organizations. The Catholic Archdiocese of Jakarta, situated in Indonesia, possesses a historical legacy spanning nearly two centuries. Throughout its history, the Catholic Church has faced numerous internal and external challenges and dynamics. Priests function not just as spiritual leaders but also as catalysts for innovation within their own parishes. This article analyzes the impact of innovations introduced by parish priests on the Church's performance, based on interviews with 19 parish priests in leadership positions. Furthermore, it examines the tactics utilized by these priests to surmount problems faced in metropolitan regions. This study will underscore the importance of innovation and present new research opportunities for scholars, social managers, and practitioners in this field of study.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Church is charged with a mission (Second Vatican Council, Ad Gentes, 1965). The Church, which represents a minority group in Indonesia, a Muslim-majority country, finds obstacles in carrying out its mission in the midst of a tremendously dynamic culture in which some persons groups reject the Church (Dagur, 2018; Kitamura, 2018). The Church is expected to be competitive in today's world and to hold a place in the hearts of the community in general and Catholics in particular. Being competitive is a difficult endeavor not only for profit-oriented businesses or organizations, but also for non-profit institutions, such as the Catholic Church, which must compete today.

The main focus of this research is on innovation as one of the factors that demonstrate entrepreneurial behavior. Proactiveness, risk taking, competitive aggressiveness, and autonomy are other factors (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Pearce et al., 2010; Wilklund & Shepherd, 2005). Because entrepreneurial activity has contributed to resources, combining development and execution to increase an organization's competitiveness, these five entrepreneurial factors have frequently been used to for profit firms. The goal is to make them more competitive in a highly dynamic and competitive environment. This study looked into our understanding and use of parish priest

innovations in Roman Catholic churches. It also reveals how priests assess the performance metrics of the Church.

Prior research on church innovations in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America was undertaken by John A. Pearce et al. (Pearce et al., 2010). Academics from several countries undertook more research into innovations in religious congregations, including Zimbabwe (Shumba, 2015) and Brazil, with the Neo Pentecostal Church as the subject of study (Corrêa et al., 2017). The study concentrated on Protestant churches with varied congregations; the findings revealed that Protestant churches exhibit entrepreneurial behavior in managing churches to maintain good performance. However, no research has been conducted on the Catholic Church utilizing an entrepreneurial perspective.

The author address several questions in this study: What are the churches' innovations? How do these developments entice Catholics to participate actively in the church? What is the performance of churches in society? What are the indications that show how well the Church performed internally and externally, particularly in the context of the Archdiocese of the Jakarta Catholic Church in Indonesia?

Archdiocese of Jakarta and Challenges

In 1807, the Archdiocese of Jakarta, Indonesia's oldest formal Roman Catholic Church, was created as an Apostolic Prefecture. The Diocese is divided into three cities: Jakarta, Tangerang, and Bekasi, and it has 66 parishes. According to available data, the Catholic Archdiocese of Jakarta had 556,456 worshippers as of December 2024 (Archdiocese of Jakarta). Jakarta, Tangerang, and Bekasi have a combined population of 16,213,357 people (BPS, n.d.). According to these statistics, the Archdiocese of Jakarta has a modest number of Catholics. Even so, this little group must remain appealing and competitive in order for the Church to continue its mission in the neighborhood.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Jakarta not only creates programs for Catholics to make the Church a second home, a place of spiritual development, and to improve the Church's quality of life, but it also responds to various social, economic, and political challenges, particularly among communities opposed to the Church's presence. Managing a congregation with an increasingly active lifestyle, a rising and heavier demand for food and employment, a higher level of education, secularism, and Muslim populations' rejection of the Church's existence is a difficult burden for parish priests. In Indonesia, radical and intolerant groups have forced the closure of around 1,000 churches (Lee, 2015).

Parish priests, in dealing with these numerous issues, must be capable of managing the Church not only as servants of the Church, but also as managers. They must be charismatic in order to maintain relationships with the local population. Parish priests must innovate both within and externally in order for the Church to continue to perform and compete.

Internally, the Church is undergoing a number of reforms. One difficulty is a congregation that is preoccupied with personal matters, making it difficult for the priest to request their availability to perform some service for the Church. Another issue they face is that young Catholics are becoming more critical and technologically savvy. These priests also face stiff competition from Protestant churches seeking to recruit Catholics. All of these issues necessitate specific considerations from priests when developing innovative strategies to reintroduce Catholics to the Catholic Church. According to the priests questioned for this study, many Catholics left the Catholic Church in search of more appealing options. Prior research by Rabuske et al. In 2012, p 264, cited in Corrêa et al., 2017(Corrêa et al., 2017) reveals that Protestant Churches, and more especially, Neo Pentecostal Churches, focus on material wealth. They also discuss the healing of spiritual and physical scars, as well as the resolution of familial and societal concerns. According to Shumba (2015), Protestant churches can create an entrepreneurial spirit in its members. However, Catholics do not change churches as a result of these circumstances. What attracts Catholics to change churches is mainly the charisma of the pastors when delivering sermons. The parish priests have high expectations of them. Some of the comments, whether positive or negative, or the congregants' contribution, indicate that the Church must become a second home for its parishioners.

Externally, the Church exists in a community with a Muslim majority. Some of the churches visited by the author for this investigation faced protest to their existence. The local community and

various people organizations are opposed to the establishment or continuation of a church in their midst. Demonstrators have barricaded and even damaged churches if there are parishioners worshipping there. Fundamentally, the underlying explanation stems from social, economic, and educational disparities between Catholics and the rest of the community. Churches that are located in a generally safe communal context must still ensure the protection of their parishioners. The founding of a Church does not happen by accident. The Church must work hard to secure a building permit, and even then, there remains ambiguity about whether a Church can build an edifice due to external causes (Lee, 2015). Because of the external environment, parish priests must maintain continual communication with local community figures to ensure the safety of the Church's activities. This poses significant challenges to the Catholic Church's local authorities.

The research is unique in that it examines the innovative behavior of parish priests who do not receive a salary or money for their personal lives. An entrepreneur, in this example a parish priest, can stand out because of his abilities to combine behavioral flexibility, practices, and the various methods utilized in his service to improve the parish's performance.

Literature Review

Prior research on organizational setting or religious organizations using an entrepreneurial perspective has always discussed economic growth or the amount of money produced by Church figures (Corrêa et al., 2017; Pearce et al., 2010). Recent research has linked religious attendance and economic growth (Iyer, 2016).

The Jakarta Catholic Archdiocese has altered its methods of serving parishioners and managing the Church. Nonprofessionals/laities assisting the parish, notably the Parish Council, must understand how to run an organization in addition to priests. The Parish Council must also complete a variety of managerial training courses. The purpose of this course is to prepare the Parish Council to work on parish management. Writing financial reports, activity reports, and accountability reports for work completed by the Parish, for example. This corresponds to Iyer's (2016) argument that religious organizations are becoming more professional in how they display and advertise themselves to the public; nevertheless, studies on the setting of the Church have not been widely and thoroughly researched. As a result, an in-depth examination of the Catholic Church through creative means is unquestionably necessary.

Innovativeness

Lumpkin and Dess (1996) define innovation as the organizational character or culture that creatively transforms fresh ideas into new products or services. Nonprofit organizations that focus on social missions, such as the Roman Catholic Church, are driven to better serve society. This incentive drives creativity (Morris et al., 2011). Several religious groups have showed innovation and originality in terms of invention (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996; Pearce et al., 2010).

The Roman Catholic Church innovates in the form of changes in the mission, techniques, or functioning of the organization it exercises, with the goal of providing better social services. Nonprofit organizations are also creative in how they carry out their objective. They have shifted from a philanthropic to an empowerment approach, in which they provide educational facilities, training, and resources to communities that need to become more self-sufficient (Morris et al., 2011). The social return, which is difficult to quantify, is used to gauge the success of innovation.

A study on innovation in the Catholic Church is scarce; yet, what is certain is that the Catholic Church must always innovate in order to keep parishioners' Church-like conduct alive. Furthermore, the Catholic Church must establish a positive and long-term relationship with the local Muslim community. Pearce et al. (2010) also say that research on innovations in the setting of a religious congregation is limited. Even small religious organizations, however, can become inventive and creative (Corrêa et al., 2017; Pearce et al., 2010).

Church Performance

The attendance of congregants in Church activities and the collection (donations to the church) gathered from the congregants are commonly used indicators for congregation performance. Attendance at Church activities is a common indicator used in the context of a Church's performance

(Brizz, 2004; Bruce, 2005). Can these two indications be used to determine if the Church has performed successfully both internally and externally, particularly in the context of the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Jakarta, Indonesia?

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a phenomenological method (Creswell, 2014). Based on the comments of the participants, the author described the participants' personal experiences with the phenomena of entrepreneurial orientation within the setting of a religious congregation, specifically the Catholic Archdiocese of Jakarta. The author employed factors suggested by Miles and Huberman (Miles & Huberman, 1994) in the explanation of the research location and the actors interviewed and observed.

Location. The study was carried out in the Jakarta Catholic Archdiocese. This diocese has 67 parishes spread throughout three cities: Jakarta, Tangerang, and Bekasi.

Actors. The Archbishop of Jakarta (gatekeepers) determined the selection and choice of participants; criteria retained were those of parish priests in charge who had served a minimum of three years at the parish where they were assigned (this is a type of method to determine who the participants are in this research). The author purposefully chose these participants). Every three years, the priests assigned to a parish rotate. Other reasons for interviewing priests with a minimum of three years in the current parish are that the priests in charge have adapted to their new surroundings or with the parishioners in three years. The decision stems from the fact that the Church allocates Catholic priests to many locations, not just the capital or major cities. Most work in remote locations, innovating or breaking new ground in their parishes. If a new priest-in-charge has recently started work in a new parish and is a participant in the survey, he will likely speak about his most recent parish. During these interviews, the priests solely discussed what happened in their various parishes, with no mention of their previous parishes.

The Archdiocese of Jakarta has 19 priests in charge of 19 parishes; they have been on service for more than or for a minimum of three years. Other parishes have priests-in-charge who have only recently commenced their duties. Rotations for priests who are members of a fraternity or order are decided by the leadership of each priest's brotherhood or order. Meanwhile, the rotation of diocesan priests or cities is determined by the Bishop. The author acquired the information from the Archdiocese of Jakarta Secretariat. The nineteen priests had been on duty as priests-in-charge for a minimum of three to ten years at the time the author conducted the research in 2022.

Data collection (Creswell, 2014) *Observation.* The author collected field data and observed the situation of parishes and worshipers. *Interview.* Prior to interviewing the parish priests, the author performed observation and short interviews with 100 Catholic congregants chosen at random between January and February 2022; they are of varied ages, professions, and parishes within the Archdiocese of Jakarta. The author conducted interviews in order to acquire preliminary data on the reactions of worshippers to the Catholic Church. The author also interviewed 19 parish priests between April and September in 2022. The research strategy used in-depth interviews, which lasted an average of two to three hours with each priest. The interviews included semi-open-ended questions, guided talks, smooth and loose conversations (Creswell, 2014). The interviews aimed to examine parish priests' innovation and performance in dealing with internal and external difficulties within the Archdiocese of Jakarta's area.

The author carried out the data analysis procedure in stages, beginning with 1. listening to each recorded interview and analyzing themes and opportunities not before explored. 2. Reviewing interview transcripts and taking further notes 3. Categorization of respondent responses; and 4. Data description and final analysis. Before transcribing the interviews, the author used a tape recorder to record them.

Documentation. Throughout the investigation, the author kept a notebook, requesting images of the participants and recorded their responses.

Data validity and reliability: The validity technique involves triangulating various data and information sources by assessing evidence derived from the interviews and applying it to develop a coherent thematic rationale. The validity of the research might be enhanced if themes were formed based on a variety of perspectives from participants. By bringing a final report and presenting it to

the participants, notably the Archbishop of Jakarta and the 19 participating priests, the author have also used member checking to examine the accuracy of the research results (Creswell, 2014). The author evaluated the transcripts as part of a qualitative reliability method (Gibbs, 2017) to ensure that no evident errors were made during the process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on interviews with 19 parish priests at the Archdiocese of Jakarta, the author identified some characteristics of Catholics in 19 parishes:

- a. In general, the Catholic Church plays a significant role in enhancing the local economy. Local residents, for example, can manage worshippers' parking outside the Church's perimeters during mass, and they can sell food outside the Church's perimeters. The Church provides operational jobs within the Church (cleaning, security, and building maintenance). Finally, impoverished neighborhood youngsters can attend free classes at the Church.
- b. Some lay parishioners become members of the Parish Council, which acts to help the parish priests and may even participate in decision making regarding the ministry that the parish provides.
- c. Young adults or Catholic youths, adults (married couples/families), and elderly are the three age groups of parishioners. The number of Catholic youth organizations varies from parish to parish. Catholic youths are unmarried and between the ages of 16 and 35.
- d. There are three sorts of parishioners depending on economic class: churches having parishioners from the upper, medium, and lower classes.
- e. Parishioners of a productive age who are married tend to focus on earning an income. The main problem for working Catholics in Jakarta, Bekasi, and Tangerang are long travel times due traffic jams. Therefore, they return home late at night.
- f. The Archdiocese of Jakarta's parishioners have highly diverse social and economic lives. Two large groups have been identified by us. The first are parishes where ethnic Chinese parishioners predominate. The second parish has a Javanese majority mixed with ethnic Batak and Flores people. Parishioners in parishes where ethnic Chinese make up the majority are typically from the upper middle class. They are mostly business owners. Parishioners in parishes where the bulk of the parishioners are Javanese are often from the middle and lower middle classes. They are usually employees.

Innovativeness

External

The Church's external challenge is to maintain its mission in the midst of the Muslim community. Several parishes are located near the headquarters of extremist organizations. As a result, parish pastors must innovate so that the Church can operate outside of its comfort zone while also interacting with the surrounding, sometimes hostile, community). Innovations aim not only to secure community support for the construction of a church, but also to provide more to the community in order to maintain harmonious ties. The Church provides numerous activities. It establishes generic polyclinics staffed by Catholic clergy. Every Sunday, it offers free tuition sessions for non-Catholic youngsters as well as aerobics for everyone. Gardens and variety villages are created by the Church. It also provides reflexology services.

The Church also provides socioeconomic support to the community; on every Islamic festival, the Church always contributes through presents and break fasting that is totally paid for by the Church. It arranges public blood donation events; collaborates with moderate Islamic people organizations (FKUB, Banser NU, and GP Ansor), in which case the priests excel in communication tactics. The Church organizes marathon fun races with the topic of plurality and hosts workshops to help the local economy. The Church organizes visits to Madrasahs or Islamic schools, as well as grassroots consolidation with entire cross-religious and cross-cultural communities. It also gives locals access to job openings. Concerning job openings, the Church has provided employment possibilities to locals without attempting to convert them to Catholicism. This is not the case with the Neo Pentecostal Church (Corrêa et al., 2017).

Internal

Internally, the Church's issues include, among other things, meeting the demands of a congregation with a vibrant and secular lifestyle; the hustle and bustle of metropolitan dwellers; and the Catholic youth's lack of activism. A number of parishes are also challenged by the congregations' lower middle socioeconomic level and a lack of cash to create activity spaces. In some circumstances, a few parishes lack sufficient human resources, prohibiting the parish from adhering to the diocese's programs. As a result, the parish priest must make breakthroughs so that parishioners can participate in Church activities and ministry. The following are some of the advances brought about by priests:

- a. Beginning at the age of nine, the church offers vocation development programs such as mass and self-sufficiency classes for children with special needs, blessing service for animals, and ecological awareness to attract and entice young children to attend church.
- b. Catholic youth canteens and cafeterias aim to facilitate parishioner sociability. The Church also provides art and cultural activities, a Catholic Youth Theater, Catechism classes through illustrated comics, and the ORATORI (a gathering place for prayer). In addition, the Church arranges job fairs to help the youth find work.
- c. The Church offers bible study, family gatherings, and courses on finance, politics, and parenting to married couples. The Church offers therapy services with a psychologist for those who are having marital troubles. The Church also provides assistance to couples who seek to marry non-Catholics.
- d. The Church offers health and financial courses to older parishioners. Parishioners renovate Church buildings to make them more creative. Priests renovate the prayers' garden and the Marian grotto so that parishioners might escape the stresses of everyday life.
- e. The Church provides services such as justice and peace, breast milk bank, orphanages, schools for unfortunate children, and job fairs for those in need.
- f. There are teacher organizations that develop Catholic religious education curricula for Catholic youth.
- g. The Church offers entrepreneurial and accredited workshops, such as air conditioner training, at the entrepreneurial level.
- h. Priests also host special Novena prayers, Coffee Morning after Sunday masses, Catechism and devotional shared through WhatsApp groups, with the goal of encouraging parishioners to get to know one another better and form a more cohesive group of worshippers.
- i. Because there is no Church edifice in their neighborhood, priests innovate in the field of parish visits. This occurs because the Church is at odds with organizations that oppose the Church.
- j. Parish priests must innovate in the field of fund raising through the sale of pottery showing the donor's hand and footprints in parishes with lower middle-class parishioners. As a thank you for their contributions, the Church or pastoral building displays ceramics.
- k. The Church offers low-income members home refurbishing or healthy home initiatives, credit unions, and empowerment. The Social Economic Development department aids economically challenged parishioners and implements programs for small company capital distribution.
- l. The Church offers services for seniors such as creative activities, assistance fund plans, carpooling to mass, and health screenings.

Parish priests believe that even if they use a hierarchical system, they can still innovate because the Bishop encourages it in all parishes and priests who use it. The interviews demonstrate that the innovations implemented by the priests in the 19 parishes are diverse and tailored to the requirements of the parishioners. The variety of external and internal innovations developed demonstrates that innovation has a significant impact on the performance of the Church. This contradicts Pearce et al. (2010)'s claim that innovativeness with a more conservative approach has the greatest effect on performance; it also demonstrates that religious congregations that create numerous and more dramatic changes, in addition to being able to emphasize service and new activities, outperform others. This opposes the tremendously dynamic lifestyle of city dwellers, where priests must innovate in a non-conservative manner.

According to religious economic theory, the primary goal of parishioners is to gain legitimacy. Worshippers, as a result, prefer generally known religious rituals to dramatic alterations or innovations in the Church (Dougherty & Heller, 1994). Some parishioners in some areas who are

averse to change and prefer to stick to tradition face this dilemma, proving the soundness of their desire. However, they frequently end up adopting the priests' innovations over time. Indeed, Catholics perform better both internally and externally when they innovate. The Catholic Church's innovations reinforce Pearce et al.'s (2010) claim that religious organizations, no matter how small, may be inventive and creative. Parish priests innovate by developing new ideas and services that allow them to perform well both internally and externally.

Church Performance

The participation of congregants in Church activities is a common indicator employed in the context of Church performance (Brizz, 2004; Bruce, 2005). According to parish priests in the Archdiocese of Jakarta, the Church's performance indicator is a parish with active Catholics not only within the Church but also outside the Church. Catholics are called upon inside the Church to support and implement parish and diocese projects. Outside of the Church, Catholics are encouraged to participate in educational, social, economic, political, and cultural activities in their communities. Without a doubt, the Catholic Church must perform in the middle of a Muslim society, especially if such a Church is confronted with anarchic organizations that may be adverse to the Church's existence. Priests assigned to parishes without a conducive external environment must engage in various approaches to the community, such as "opening" the Church to Muslim activities, providing gifts and fast breaking meals, giving basic commodities, borrowing rooms for prayers, assisting financially when Muslims hold activities or submitting activity proposals, routine visits to community leaders, opening free polyclinics to the public, or holding discussions with community members.

4. CONCLUSION

Parish priests believe that even if they use a hierarchical system, they can still innovate because the bishop encourages it in all parishes and priests who practice it. The interviews demonstrate that the innovations implemented by the priests in the 19 parishes are diverse and tailored to the requirements of the parishioners. The variety of external and internal innovations developed illustrates that innovation has a significant impact on the performance of the Church. This contradicts Pearce et al. (2010)'s claim that innovativeness with a more conservative approach has the greatest effect on performance; it also demonstrates that religious congregations that create numerous and more dramatic changes, in addition to being able to emphasize service and new activities, outperform others. This opposes the tremendously dynamic lifestyle of city dwellers, where priests must innovate in a non-conservative manner. The Catholic Church's innovations reinforce Pearce et al.'s (2010) claim that religious organizations, no matter how small, may be inventive and creative. Parish priests innovate by developing new ideas and services that allow them to perform well both internally and externally.

Collection is merely one operational assistance provided by a church and is not a main performance indicator. Because each church contains parishioners from various economic backgrounds, the size of the collection is not a fundamental metric of Catholic effectiveness. Parishioners who perform may be lacking in parishes with big Church collections. Parishes with tiny Church collections, on the other hand, may not have parishioners who do not perform.

The Jakarta Archdiocese has parishes that carry out its initiatives. There are mandatory and elective programs. Parish priests who took part in this study said that their parishes' success in implementing the diocese's initiatives ranged between 40 and 80%. Not all parishes are able or willing to implement the diocese's programs, particularly parishes with low education or economic insecurity, despite the fact that a few priests have stated that the percentage of parishes that implement the diocese's programs is one of the Church's performance indicators. According to the findings of this study, there are three sorts of Church performance: internally, externally, and both internally and externally. Parish priests recognize that these innovations get Catholics of all ages involved in church activities and improve their performance.

Innovative behaviour has been shown to be an effective method for analyzing church performance. This study can help managers in non-profit or non-governmental organizations learn how to deal with issues. There are several disparities between previous literature and the findings of

this study in terms of the literature. The author suggest broadening the definitions of innovation and performance.

Within the Catholic Church, innovation happens in reaction to the dynamics of the congregation and external forces. The Church's external environment could be included in the scope of innovation. Another element to consider is the presence of Bishops and the Parish Council.

Communication or public speaking could be another factor in innovativeness. Internally, parish priests' communication with congregants, the Parish Council, and the Diocese is critical in assessing the Church's effectiveness. The wider impact is that the priests' communication influences congregants' willingness to participate in Church activities. Externally, because the Church exists in the midst of Muslim situations and interacts with anarchical people organizations, the priests' communication style can open doors to establish a suitable environmental state. Managers/expatriates working in non-profit organizations, particularly in rural areas, should learn a local/regional language. It is critical to mix and build sustainable communication with locals through normal activities.

This study responds to the recommendations for additional research by Corrêa et al., (2017), who note that their current research has demonstrated widespread innovativeness only for Neo Pentecostal pastors from independent Brazilian churches. This is not to say that pastors from other sorts of churches would not behave similarly. As a result, innovations are dependent on the setting in which the church operates.

The author who wish to present a study on this topic should look into the following issues: the role of the Diocese and the Parish Council of the Roman Catholic Church, the role of priests' public speaking in improving the Catholic Church's marketing, and the exchange of experts between parishes to improve the Church's performance, particularly in implementing the diocese's programs.

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