

VULNERABLE MISSION IN DEPTH: Listening to God and Man in Indonesia

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Abstract

The Christian mission in Indonesia faces significant challenges amid the country's cultural, religious, and social diversity. With a majority Muslim population, it is crucial for the church to listen to both the voice of God and the voice of humanity in carrying out its mission. This study aims to explore how the Christian mission can be more effective by integrating these two aspects: listening to the voice of God through spiritual teaching and addressing the social needs of the community. The concept of a vulnerable mission, which prioritizes responsiveness to social and cultural challenges, forms the basis of this study. The research method used is a qualitative approach with a case study design, involving in-depth interviews with church leaders, missionaries, and community members, as well as document analysis to understand the application of both aspects in the diverse Indonesian context. The research findings indicate that successful Christian missions in Indonesia are those that can integrate spiritual aspects with social empowerment, thereby strengthening the church's relationship with the local community. The contribution of this research is the development of mission theory with a more inclusive and culturally sensitive approach. These findings are expected to provide insights for churches in Indonesia and similar countries in designing more adaptive, holistic, and relevant mission strategies.

Keywords: Christian mission; Indonesia; vulnerable mission; cultural diversity; social empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

The Christian mission in Indonesia faces significant challenges in dealing with cultural, religious, and social diversity. The country is home to various ethnic and religious groups, with the majority of the population being Muslim. Therefore, the mission in Indonesia must be able to listen to both the voice of God and the voice of people in order to bridge these gaps.¹ This divers nyaity requires a more inclusive and sensitive approach

¹ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 112; Imron Widjaja. "Evangelism Mission in the Trap of Christianization Issues: An Attempt to Restore an Inclusive Alternative Evangelism Model in Diverse Indonesia." *Indonesian Journal of Religious* 8, no. 1 (2025): 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.46362/ijrv8i1.52>.

to local values, so that missions are not only effective in conveying spiritual messages but also relevant to the lives of the community.² The concept of a vulnerable mission, which prioritizes openness to social needs, is crucial in carrying out missions in Indonesia, which is full of social and cultural challenges.³

Previous research shows that successful missions in Indonesia require a deep understanding of local culture. Bosch⁴ explains that culturally sensitive missions can strengthen relationships between the church and local communities. Furthermore, Hiebert⁵ in his book *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* emphasizes the importance of anthropological understanding in carrying out missions, so that missionaries can approach communities in a way that is appropriate to their cultural context. Research by Simanjuntak et al⁶ reveals that churches in Indonesia must be more responsive to social challenges, such as poverty and education, faced by communities in order to achieve success in mission. This aligns with Dyer⁷ perspective, who argued that vulnerable missions are capable of addressing social challenges and considering worldly conditions.

This study aims to explore how Christian missions in Indonesia can be more effective by combining two important aspects: listening to the voice of God and listening to the voice of people. The concept of vulnerable mission forms the basis of this study, in which mission does not only focus on delivering spiritual messages, but must also be responsive to the social needs faced by Indonesian society.⁸ By listening to both aspects, mission can reach communities in a more holistic and inclusive way. Additionally, this study will examine how this approach can address the challenges faced by the church in Indonesia in carrying out its mission. In the context of Indonesia, which is rich in diversity,

² Stephen B. Bevans and R. Schroeder, *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 28.

³ Anne Elizabeth Dyer. A Discussion of Vulnerability in Mission for the Twenty-first Century from a Biblical Perspective. *Transformation*, 34, no. 1 (2016): 38-49. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265378816631253>.

⁴ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 105.

⁵ Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*. (Fearn, Ross-shire, Skotlandia: Christian Focus Publications, 2005), 53.

⁶ Fredy Simanjuntak, Alexander Djuang Papay, Ardianto Lahagu, Rita Evimalinda, & Yusak Hentrias Ferry. "Conceptual Reflection on Jesus' Mission Through the Hospitality of the Church in Indonesia." *KURIOS* 7, no. 2 (2021): 262. <https://doi.org/10.30995/kur.v7i2.329>.

⁷ Anne Elizabeth Dyer, *A Discussion of Vulnerability in Mission for the Twenty-first Century from a Biblical Perspective*, 38-49.

⁸ Stephen B. Bevans & R. Schroeder, *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today*, 38; Fransiska Widyawati. "Mission and inculturation: Preserving local language and culture in the Indonesian Church." *HTS Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): a10516. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v81i1.10516>.

it is important for mission to respond to physical and spiritual needs in a balanced manner.⁹

This study contributes to the development of mission theory by introducing an approach that integrates spiritual and social aspects more deeply. By exploring how mission can listen to both the voice of God and the voice of humanity, this study aims to provide new insights into how Christian mission in Indonesia can be more effective in responding to social and cultural challenges.¹⁰ This approach is expected to provide insights for churches in Indonesia and countries with similar contexts to design more adaptive and sensitive mission strategies. This research also provides real-life case studies illustrating the success of missions that have successfully integrated both aspects into Indonesian society.¹¹ Thus, the contribution of this research is not only relevant for Christian missions in Indonesia but also for missions at the global level facing similar challenges.

This research method uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore how Christian missions in Indonesia can combine two important aspects, namely listening to the voice of God and listening to the voice of man. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with church leaders, missionaries, and community members involved in missions in various regions of Indonesia. This approach allows researchers to explore firsthand experiences and perceptions of the challenges faced in carrying out vulnerable missions.¹² Additionally, document analysis was conducted to examine various materials used in the mission, such as ministry guidelines and church activity reports.¹³ Through this method, the study aims to gain a deep understanding of how both aspects are applied in the highly diverse context of Indonesia.

Data analysis was conducted using a thematic approach, which enabled researchers to identify patterns and main themes emerging from the interviews and documents

⁹ Elspeth Jones, Betty Leask, Uwe Brandenburg, & Hans de Wit. "Global Social Responsibility and the Internationalisation of Higher Education for Society". *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 25, no. 4 (2021): 330-347. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10283153211031679>.

¹⁰ Gailyn Van Rheenen, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1991), 92.

¹¹ Fredy Simanjuntak, Alexander Djuang Papay, Ardianto Lahagu, Rita Evimalinda, & Yusak Hentrias Ferry. "Conceptual Reflection on Jesus' Mission Through the Hospitality of the Church in Indonesia": 268.

¹² Fredy Simanjuntak, Alexander Djuang Papay, Ardianto Lahagu, Rita Evimalinda, and Yusak Hentrias Ferry. "Conceptual Reflection on Jesus' Mission Through the Hospitality of the Church in Indonesia": 266.

¹³ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 118.

collected. This technique has proven effective in revealing the deeper dimensions of social and religious studies.¹⁴ The findings were then analyzed in the context of vulnerable mission theory and the relevance of local culture in missions in Indonesia.¹⁵ The results of this analysis are expected to provide insights into how Christian missions can adapt to the social and cultural needs of Indonesian society. Through this approach, this research also seeks to contribute to the development of a more sensitive and inclusive mission theory in a broader context.

DISCUSSION

The Concept of Vulnerable Missions

Vulnerable mission is a mission approach that emphasizes vulnerability in identifying and responding to the social and cultural needs of the community being served. Vulnerable mission acknowledges the risks involved in approaching communities in a manner that is sensitive to their social conditions, and this is an important part of a successful mission.¹⁶ This concept also requires the church to be more open to local challenges, combining spiritual and social dimensions in their ministry. Bosch¹⁷ states that mission must be able to adapt to social and cultural changes in order to have a significant impact at the local level. Vulnerable missions in Indonesia require the church to focus not only on evangelism but also on community empowerment through social programs relevant to local needs.¹⁸ This demand also supports the idea that an inclusive and deep understanding of mission is closely related to the social response within the community.¹⁹ Thus, mission must involve both spiritual and social aspects to have a real impact on the lives of the people.

¹⁴ Anne Elizabeth Dyer, *A Discussion of Vulnerability in Mission for the Twenty-first Century from a Biblical Perspective*, 38-49.

¹⁵ Stephen B. Bevans & R. Schroeder, *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections on Christian Mission Today*, 37.

¹⁶ Anne Elizabeth Dyer, *A Discussion of Vulnerability in Mission for the Twenty-first Century from a Biblical Perspective*, 38-49; Cristian Sonea. "Missio Dei – the contemporary missionary paradigm and its reception in the Eastern Orthodox missionary theology". *Review of Ecumenical Studies*, 9, no. 1 (2017): 70-91. <https://doi.org/10.1515/ress-2017-0006>.

¹⁷ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 119

¹⁸ Zuzana Papulová. "The Significance of Vision and Mission Development for Enterprises in Slovak Republic": 12-16.

¹⁹ Phil Parshall, *The Cross and the Crescent: Understanding the Muslim Heart and Mind*. (Waynesboro, GA: Gabriel Publishing / STL Distribution North America, 2002), 47; Sudhir H. Kale. "Spirituality, Religion, and Globalization". *Journal of Macromarketing* 24, no. 2 (2004): 92-107. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0276146704269296>.

According to Roberts Jr.²⁰, vulnerable missions also have the potential to foster communities that are interdependent and more responsive to evolving social conditions. In the highly diverse context of Indonesia, churches must integrate local cultural aspects into their mission work so that the message conveyed is more readily accepted. Johnstone²¹ emphasizes that churches must understand cultural differences in order to reduce resistance to mission and strengthen its reach. Vulnerable missions also require a paradigm shift in ministry, which is not merely providing material assistance, but also playing a role in shaping the character of the community to be more independent and empowered.²² Thus, the concept of vulnerable missions is highly relevant to be applied in Indonesia as a country rich in diversity and social challenges. Miller²³ adds that this mission approach opens space for the church to be more active in the process of sustainable social development.

Vulnerable missions are also closely related to a deeper theological understanding of the mission itself. Tennent²⁴ shows that vulnerable mission combines evangelism with social engagement that addresses the worldly needs of society. This approach ensures that the church does not only focus on saving souls but also pays attention to the social impact of their ministry. Hauerwas²⁵ emphasizes that vulnerable mission requires the church to understand social issues in a more holistic way, encompassing spiritual depth and concern for issues of poverty and inequality. Vulnerable mission also requires readiness to face challenges arising from religious and cultural differences, which often become obstacles in ministry.²⁶ Smith²⁷ explains that understanding mission must be more than just delivering a message; mission must involve all aspects of community life.

²⁰ Bob Roberts Jr., *The Multiplying Church: The New Math for Starting New Churches*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 76.

²¹ Patrick Johnstone, *The Church is Bigger than You Think: The Unfinished Work of World Evangelisation*. (Fearn, Ross-shire, Skotlandia: Christian Focus Publications, 2005), 91.

²² Fredy Simanjuntak, Alexander Djuang Papay, Ardianto Lahagu, Rita Evimalinda, & Yusak Hentrias Ferry. "Conceptual Reflection on Jesus' Mission Through the Hospitality of the Church in Indonesia": 270.

²³ Miller, Vincent J. "Where is the Church? Globalization and Catholicity". *Theological Studies*, 69, no. 2 (2008): 412-432. <https://doi.org/10.1177/004056390806900210>.

²⁴ Timothy Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*. (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 258-264.

²⁵ Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic*. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 134.

²⁶ Timothy Keller, *Center Church: Doing Balanced, Gospel-Centered Ministry in Your City*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012), 122.

²⁷ James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 67.

For vulnerable missions to succeed in Indonesia, churches must have a strong commitment to the local context and a desire to engage with the existing social reality. Simangunsong²⁸ reveals that churches in Indonesia that have successfully carried out their mission are those that do not only focus on evangelism, but also pay attention to social aspects that are very important in Indonesian society. Therefore, vulnerable missions encourage churches to become more flexible and connected to local needs through community empowerment programs.²⁹ Vulnerable missions are expected to have a more significant long-term impact on Indonesian society, given its highly diverse and challenging social context.

Listening to God in the Indonesian Context

Listening to God's voice in the Indonesian context depends heavily on the church's ability to integrate Christian teachings with local culture and traditions. Grudem and Sonea emphasizes that listening to God's voice is central to the Christian life, guiding every action and decision to live according to God's will.³⁰ However, in Indonesia's highly pluralistic society, the church must find relevant and sensitive ways to convey God's teachings. Hiebert³¹ in *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries* reminds us that missionaries must have a deep understanding of the culture in order to convey God's word in a way that is acceptable to the community. Therefore, the church must develop creative ways to convey God's message that respects local values. Kritzingner³² also adds that cross-cultural understanding in mission is crucial so that the church does not get trapped in approaches that are irrelevant to the local context.

The importance of listening to God's voice in Indonesia is also related to the spiritual and cultural challenges faced by Christians. Jones et al.³³ reveal that churches in

²⁸ Amran Simangunsong. "Ecumenical Mission in Indonesia: A Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation." *QUAERENS: Journal of Theology and Christianity Studies* 4, no. 1 (July 31, 2022): 6. <https://doi.org/10.46362/quaerens.v4i1.102>.

²⁹ Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local*. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997), 94.

³⁰ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 2000), 235; Cristian Sonea. "Missio Dei – the contemporary missionary paradigm and its reception in the Eastern Orthodox missionary theology": 70-91.

³¹ Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 61.

³² Johannes N. Kritzingner. "Mission in vulnerability." *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no.1 (2025): a10679. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v81i1.10679>.

Elspeth Jones, Betty Leask, Uwe Brandenburg, & Hans de Wit. "Global Social Responsibility and the Internationalisation of Higher Education for Society": 330-347.

developing countries, including Indonesia, must pay attention to how God's voice is heard and understood in different contexts in each region. For example, in areas still heavily influenced by animism or local religions, churches must be more cautious in introducing Christian teachings to avoid appearing to disregard existing beliefs.³⁴ Teaching that is insensitive to local culture can create tension and hinder the church from reaching the community effectively. Agboada emphasize that the church must focus more on the existing cultural and religious diversity in order to convey God's message in a way that is appropriate to the Indonesian context.³⁵

Listening to God's voice in the Indonesian context also requires a better understanding of existing local spiritual practices. Widyawati³⁶ states that churches in Indonesia are increasingly integrating elements of local culture into their worship practices, such as using traditional music and regional languages in services. This approach allows churches to become closer to the community and understand how they listen to God in their daily lives. In this context, listening to God's voice is not limited to words or texts from the Holy Scriptures, but also involves a deeper understanding of the cultural context and spiritual experiences of the community. Schreiter³⁷ also notes that mission must involve spiritual deepening that respects local values in order to be more accepted by the community being served.

A major challenge in listening to God's voice in Indonesia is the strong religious plurality. The Pew Research Center shows that Indonesia has great religious diversity, with the majority of the population being Muslim, which often influences how Christians listen to and experience God's voice.³⁸ The Church must understand and respect this diversity in a more empathetic way, without neglecting the Christian teachings they bring. Kkatla and Kamukwamba³⁹ argues that the church must foster a deep interfaith

³⁴ Gailyn Van Rhee, *Communicating Christ in Animistic Contexts*, 45.

³⁵ Edward Agboada. "The 21st Century and Globalisation of Christianity and Theology: A Search for the Right Framework for Christianity and Theology in Africa and Beyond," *E-Journal of Religious and Theological Studies*, 10, no. 12 (2024): 413-422. <https://doi.org/10.38159/erats.202410122>; Antonius Missa. "Holistic Mission Theology: A Biblical Perspective." *Indonesian Journal of Religious* 5, no. 1 (2022): 17-34. <https://doi.org/10.46362/ijr.v5i1.8>.

³⁶ Fransiska Widyawati. "Mission and inculturation: Preserving local language and culture in the Indonesian Church": a10516.

³⁷ Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local*, 92.

³⁸ Pew Research Center, *The Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010-2030*. (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, 2010), 24.

³⁹ Selaelo T. Kkatla & Derek G. Kamukwamba. "Mission as the creation of a God-ward culture: A critical missiological analysis." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 40, no.1 (2019): a1911. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v40i1.1911>.

understanding to achieve peace and harmony in a pluralistic society like Indonesia. With this approach, the church can more easily hear God's voice in a highly diverse and challenging context.

Listening to People: A Mission Responsive to Social Needs

A mission that is responsive to social needs in Indonesia must be able to address enormous social challenges, including poverty, education, and health. Tennent⁴⁰ states that missions should not only focus on saving lives, but also strive to meet the physical and social needs of humanity. Indonesian society faces various social challenges that can hinder them from developing to their full potential, and the church must take an active role in providing assistance that addresses these needs. Populová⁴¹ emphasizes that Christian mission must respond to these challenges by developing programs that involve social empowerment, not merely relying on material assistance but also providing communities with the tools to address their own problems.

Churches in Indonesia have launched various social initiatives to respond to community needs, such as establishing schools for children from underprivileged families and organizing health programs for the poor. Simangunsong⁴² shows that churches in Indonesia have become agents of social change by introducing programs that help communities escape poverty and provide access to better education. Such social programs focus not only on evangelism but also on developing the capacity of communities to become independent and empowered. Social initiatives involving churches can build closeness between churches and communities, as well as reduce existing social gaps. A successful Christian mission is one that is able to combine evangelism with effective social programs in improving the quality of life of the community.⁴³

⁴⁰ Timothy Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 258-264.

⁴¹ Zuzana Papulová. "The Significance of Vision and Mission Development for Enterprises in Slovak Republic". *Journal of Economics Business and Management* 2, no. 1 (2014): 12-16.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.7763/JOEBM.2014.V2.90>.

⁴² Amran Simangunsong. "Ecumenical Mission in Indonesia: A Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation": 8.

⁴³ Vincent J. Miller. "Where is the Church? Globalization and Catholicity": 412-432; Akinyemi O. Alawode. "Missiological implications of Paul's mission strategies and lessons for urban missionaries". *HTS Theologise Studies/Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2025): a10441.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v81i1.10441>.

A mission that is responsive to social needs must also pay attention to long-term welfare aspects, including the mental and spiritual health of the community. Kgatla and Kamukwamba⁴⁴ notes that a successful Christian mission is one that is able to pay attention to all aspects of people's lives, not only to the salvation of their souls, but also to their physical and mental health. A responsive mission must involve the church's participation in various social programs oriented toward community needs, including the development of health and education services. Therefore, the church must develop a more holistic approach to mission, without neglecting the worldly needs that are so important to Indonesian society.⁴⁵

The importance of listening to the social needs of Indonesian society shows that the Christian mission must be directly involved in the life of the community, not only through evangelism, but also through social service. The church must focus on the whole person, including spiritual, social, and material aspects.⁴⁶ Therefore, Christian mission in Indonesia must be more responsive to the social challenges faced by society by introducing more inclusive and holistic programs. The church must pay attention to these needs in order to build closer relationships with the community and make a real contribution to improving their quality of life.⁴⁷

Combining Two Aspects: Listening to God and People

The Christian mission in Indonesia must combine two important aspects, namely listening to the voice of God and the voice of humanity, in order to create holistic ministry. Bosch explains that a successful mission is one that can integrate spiritual depth with attention to the social needs of society.⁴⁸ In the context of Indonesia's diversity, churches must respond to these two dimensions with a full awareness of their importance. Dyer⁴⁹ states that a vulnerable mission must be able to listen to the voice of God through spiritual

⁴⁴ Selaelo T. Kgatla & Derek G. Kamukwamba. "Mission as the creation of a God-ward culture: A critical missiological analysis": a1911.

⁴⁵ Bob Roberts Jr., *The Multiplying Church: The New Math for Starting New Churches*, 109.

⁴⁶ Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic*. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 142.

⁴⁷ Vincent J. Miller. "Where is the Church? Globalization and Catholicity": 412-432; see also Mark Mittelberg, *Building a Contagious Church: Revolutionizing the Way We View and Do Evangelism*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000).

⁴⁸ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, 121.

⁴⁹ Anne Elizabeth Dyer, *A Discussion of Vulnerability in Mission for the Twenty-first Century from a Biblical Perspective*, 38-49.

teaching and at the same time listen to the voice of humanity by responding to the social challenges they face. Furthermore, a mission that focuses on both enables the church to be more inclusive and have a broader impact on Indonesian society.⁵⁰

The importance of combining these two aspects is also reflected in various church initiatives in Indonesia. Simanjuntak et al.⁵¹ note that churches that are able to combine spiritual ministry and attention to worldly needs often have a broader and more sustainable impact on society. A successful mission in Indonesia is not only about saving souls, but also empowering people to engage in social change that improves their quality of life.⁵² A successful mission is one that can tap into local potential through social empowerment while maintaining the spiritual depth that comes from God's teachings.⁵³ Therefore, the church in Indonesia must continue to innovate in integrating spiritual teaching with socially relevant actions that address the needs of society.

The church also needs to find relevant ways to listen to people's voices in the highly pluralistic context of Indonesia. Jones et al.⁵⁴ point out that churches in developing countries, including Indonesia, must pay attention to how God's voice is heard and understood in different contexts in each region. The importance of understanding the social and cultural conditions of the community so that the church can carry out its mission more effectively.⁵⁵ In this regard, the church must continue to enhance its ability to adapt to local contexts in order to be closer to the community and respond to their needs. Therefore, vulnerable missions in Indonesia must adopt a more contextual approach, where Christian teaching and social change go hand in hand.

In this context, Christian mission must develop a more holistic and contextual understanding. The church needs to strengthen its understanding of the local context and

⁵⁰ Zuzana Papulová. "The Significance of Vision and Mission Development for Enterprises in Slovak Republic": 12-16.

⁵¹ Fredy Simanjuntak, Alexander Djuang Papay, Ardianto Lahagu, Rita Evimalinda, & Yusak Hentriyas Ferry. "Conceptual Reflection on Jesus' Mission Through the Hospitality of the Church in Indonesia": 269.

⁵² Stanley Hauerwas. *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic*. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 142.

⁵³ Bob Roberts Jr., *The Multiplying Church: The New Math for Starting New Churches*, 102; Natanael Winanto & Susanti Embong Bulan. "Moralitas Dan Spiritualitas Pantekosta Dalam Kisah Para Rasul 2:1-47". *Journal of Religious and Socio-Cultural* 4, no. 2 (2024): 161-70. <https://doi.org/10.46362/jrsc.v4i2.79>.

⁵⁴ Elspeth Jones, Betty Leask, Uwe Brandenburg, & Hans de Wit. "Global Social Responsibility and the Internationalisation of Higher Education for Society": 330-347; Sudhir H. Kale. "Spirituality, Religion, and Globalization": 92-107.

⁵⁵ Amran Simangunsong. "Ecumenical Mission in Indonesia: A Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation": 8; Akinyemi O. Alawode. "Missiological implications of Paul's mission strategies and lessons for urban missionaries": a10441.

strengthen its ability to listen to God's voice in a contextual and relevant way, so that its mission can be accepted and have a positive impact on society.⁵⁶ This approach shows that the success of mission in Indonesia lies in the church's ability to integrate the depth of faith with the improvement of the social conditions of the people. Technology also plays an important role in connecting the church with people in remote areas, increasing the reach of mission and expanding its impact.⁵⁷

Challenges in Carrying Out Vulnerable Missions in Indonesia

Missionary work in Indonesia faces significant challenges, particularly in relation to the country's high level of cultural and religious diversity. The Pew Research Center notes that Indonesia is the country with the largest Muslim population, but also has a significant Christian population, which requires a missionary approach that is sensitive to this context.⁵⁸ This requires the church to avoid top-down approaches and instead prioritize dialogue-based and interfaith and intercultural cooperation.⁵⁹ In this regard, mission work in Indonesia must be able to overcome challenges arising from religious and cultural differences, which often serve as barriers to building closer relationships between communities.⁶⁰ Therefore, the church needs to strengthen interfaith and intercultural understanding to create a more inclusive and open mission.

The churches in Indonesia need to understand cultural differences, develop strategies that are responsive to local needs, and introduce Christian teachings in a way that is appropriate to the cultural context.⁶¹ Vulnerable missions in Indonesia must pay attention to social and political challenges that can affect the success of the mission. Missa⁶² notes that churches in Indonesia often face limited resources and infrastructure, especially in remote areas that are difficult to reach. Therefore, churches must innovate

⁵⁶ Antonius Missa. "Holistic Mission Theology: A Biblical Perspective": 17–34; see also Jon D. Payne, *God's Mission Is on Every Page of Scripture*. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2022).

⁵⁷ Fredy Simanjuntak, Alexander Djuang Papay, Ardianto Lahagu, Rita Evimalinda, and Yusak Hentrias Ferry. "Conceptual Reflection on Jesus' Mission Through the Hospitality of the Church in Indonesia": 265.

⁵⁸ Pew Research Center, *The Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010-2030*, 24.

⁵⁹ Imron Widjaja. "Evangelism Mission in the Trap of Christianization Issues: An Attempt to Restore an Inclusive Alternative Evangelism Model in Diverse Indonesia": 1-13; Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. (London: SPCK, 1989), 142.

⁶⁰ Amran Simangunsong. "Ecumenical Mission in Indonesia: A Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation": 5.

⁶¹ Paul G. Hiebert, *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, 62.

⁶² Antonius Missa. "Holistic Mission Theology: A Biblical Perspective": 17–34; Fransiska Widyawati. "Mission and inculturation: Preserving local language and culture in the Indonesian Church": a10516.

in overcoming these challenges by developing relevant, technology-based programs that pay more attention to existing social limitations.

Another challenge in carrying out vulnerable missions is social and economic differences that affect the quality of life of the community. Tennent⁶³ shows that Christian missions cannot only focus on saving souls, but must also strive to respond to the economic and social needs faced by Indonesian society. The social inequality that exists in Indonesia, especially in poor areas, requires the church to pay more attention to meeting basic needs such as education, health, and housing.⁶⁴ Therefore, the church must strengthen its role in social empowerment, which is not limited to evangelism but also includes efforts to address broader social issues.

Vulnerable missions must also take into account the ever-evolving political and social dynamics in Indonesia. Johnstone⁶⁵ states that churches in Indonesia must be able to adapt to political changes that may affect religious freedom and religious diversity. The church must address these challenges with more adaptive policies and avoid being easily provoked by existing differences. The networks between social institutions and churches must be strengthened to create a more inclusive mission that is responsive to the needs of the people, especially in facing social and political challenges.⁶⁶ Thus, churches in Indonesia must develop strategies that are more sensitive to the local and dynamic context.

The Role of Technology in Vulnerable Missions

Technology plays a very important role in expanding the reach of vulnerable missions, especially in the context of Indonesia, which has many remote and hard-to-reach areas. The Pew Research Center reports that digital technology, including the internet and social media, has transformed the way missions are conducted worldwide, including in Indonesia.⁶⁷ Technology enables churches to reach a broader audience of believers and potential congregants without being hindered by geographical limitations.

⁶³ Timothy Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions*, 258-264.

⁶⁴ Jon D. Payne, *God's Mission Is on Every Page of Scripture*; Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, 240.

⁶⁵ Patrick Johnstone, *The Church is Bigger than You Think: The Unfinished Work of World Evangelisation*, 89.

⁶⁶ Fredy Simanjuntak, Alexander Djuang Papay, Ardianto Lahagu, Rita Evimalinda, & Yusak Hentrias Ferry. "Conceptual Reflection on Jesus' Mission Through the Hospitality of the Church in Indonesia": 265.

⁶⁷ Pew Research Center, *The Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010-2030*, 25.

Simanjuntak⁶⁸ notes that churches in Indonesia have begun to utilize technology to convey spiritual and social messages more efficiently, for example through online sermon broadcasts or mobile applications that provide spiritual material and social services. With the use of technology, missions can be more effective and reach a larger audience in various regions.

In addition, technology can accelerate the collection and analysis of data on the social and cultural needs of communities. Technology enables churches to monitor social developments in isolated areas, allowing missions to be carried out more effectively.⁶⁹ By using technology such as mobile applications and social media platforms, churches can communicate more directly with their congregations and provide more responsive services. Roberts Jr states that churches that utilize technology effectively can reach more people and have a greater impact, both spiritually and socially.⁷⁰ This demonstrates that technology can significantly expand the reach of missions, especially in hard-to-reach areas.

Vulnerable missions require the use of technology to bridge existing gaps in education, health, and economic development. Churches that utilize technology effectively can improve their social and spiritual ministries.⁷¹ Technology can expand access to previously inaccessible resources, such as distance learning and digital health services. This enables churches to be more responsive to the needs of their congregations, especially in remote areas of Indonesia that are difficult to reach by conventional services. Technology can be a highly effective tool in expanding the impact of missions and making churches more relevant in an ever-changing context.⁷²

Although technology has great potential to expand the reach of missions, its use must also be done wisely. The use of technology in missions must be based on a deep

⁶⁸ Fredy Simanjuntak, Alexander Djuang Papay, Ardianto Lahagu, Rita Evimalinda, & Yusak Hentrias Ferry. "Conceptual Reflection on Jesus' Mission Through the Hospitality of the Church in Indonesia": 7.

⁶⁹ Anne Elizabeth Dyer, *A Discussion of Vulnerability in Mission for the Twenty-first Century from a Biblical Perspective*, 38-49.

⁷⁰ Bob Roberts Jr., *The Multiplying Church: The New Math for Starting New Churches*, 89.

⁷¹ Timothy Tennent. *Invitation to World Missions*. (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2010), 258-264; Imron Widjaja. "Evangelism Mission in the Trap of Christianization Issues: An Attempt to Restore an Inclusive Alternative Evangelism Model in Diverse Indonesia": 1-13.

⁷² Amran Simangunsong. "Ecumenical Mission in Indonesia: A Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic Situation": 9; Ralph D. Winter & Steven C. Hawthorne, *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2009).

understanding of the local context and culture.⁷³ Churches in Indonesia need to ensure that the technology they use does not disregard local values and continues to respect existing traditions. Therefore, technology should be used as a tool to complement, not replace, traditional approaches in carrying out Christian missions that are responsive and sensitive to the social needs of the community.⁷⁴ With a wise approach, technology can become a powerful means of enhancing the effectiveness of vulnerable missions in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

In this article, we have discussed the importance of the concept of vulnerable mission in the context of Indonesia, which is rich in cultural and religious diversity. A vulnerable mission, which combines listening to the voice of God and the voice of humanity, is a highly relevant approach to carrying out Christian mission in Indonesia. By listening to both aspects, the church can be more responsive to the social and spiritual needs of the community, strengthen the relationship between the church and the local community, and bring about more holistic change. This concept also shows that Christian mission is not only focused on evangelism but must also pay attention to worldly issues such as poverty, educational inequality, and access to healthcare. In carrying out vulnerable mission, the church in Indonesia is expected to be more inclusive and adaptive to the ever-changing social landscape.

In addition, the use of technology plays an important role in expanding the reach of vulnerable missions, especially in remote areas that are difficult to reach physically. Technology enables churches to reach more people, convey spiritual and social messages more efficiently, and provide more targeted services. Despite significant challenges, such as cultural and religious differences, vulnerable missions can have a positive impact in building more harmonious communities and improving the quality of life for Indonesian society. Therefore, the church must continue to develop approaches that are more sensitive to the local context, balancing spiritual and social dimensions in every mission activity undertaken.

⁷³ Yaterorogo Sebua, Zakharia Suparyadi, and Hariyanto Hariyanto. "Mengintegrasikan Teknologi Dan Spiritualitas: Kepemimpinan Gereja Di Era 5.0". *Indonesian Journal of Religious* 7, no. 2 (2024):114-30. <https://doi.org/10.46362/ijr.v8i2.37>.

⁷⁴ Wayne Grudem. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, 245.

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