

Effect of Preaching Quality, Ministers' Behavior, and Pastoral Counseling Assistance on the Increase of Fathers' Churches Attendance In Sunday Worship at Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Church of District 1v, Toba

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Abstract

The research problem is the decreasing fathers' church attendance during Sunday services at Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Churches of District IV, Toba. The study aims to determine effect of preaching quality, ministers' behavior, and pastoral counseling on the increase of fathers' attendance during Sunday services at Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Churches of District IV, Toba. This research employed a quantitative research method. Its population was all of members of Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Churches of District IV, Toba. Probability sampling technique was used to determine its samples. They consisted of 99 married male members of the churches. Its data were collected by means of questionnaire. Before use, all of questionnaire items were tested and declared valid and reliable. The result of the analysis shows that the coefficient values of preaching quality, ministers' behavior, and pastoral counseling assistance was 0.352, 0.210, and 0.187 respectively, indicating that the preaching quality, the ministers' behavior, and pastoral counseling assistance had a positive and significant effect on the increase of the fathers' attendance in Sunday services at Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Churches of District IV, Toba either partially or simultaneously. Based on multiple regression analysis, the result was $Y = 0.181 + 0.352 X_1 + 0.210 X_2 + 0.187 X_3$, meaning that the coefficient of determination (adjusted R²) was 0.986 (98.6%).

Keywords: Preaching, ministry's behavior, pastoral counseling assistance, and increasing fathers' attendance in Sunday services.

Introduction

The presence of the fathers in the family is very significant for all family members. However, in today's modern era, a lot of fathers do not understand and realize that its presence has lost its function and role. Busy work and hectic activities make many families unable to enjoy other family members' company. Home has only been a place to rest after doing activities and work. There is no family altar, no gathering together to talk to each other, eat together, watch together, and share. Everyone is busy, but that's the reality of life that we have to see, and maybe most of us have to face the same situation.

The role of a father who should be a priest, the head of the family, a husband for his wife, and a father for his children, turns out to be abandoned because he has no time with his family. With his busy schedule, the father is absent and plays a role in educating, teaching, building, and loving his family. Many children have lost the figure of a father who influences them in building a self-image and determines how they relate to other men. When they don't find attention and affection from their father, they will look for it outside and there they will easily fall into promiscuity.

Referring to the Bible text in Psalm 128:1, the role and responsibility of the head of the family from a Christian perspective is to fear God. In verse 4, it is stated again that God blesses a man who fears God. This shows that a father must be a father who fears God. It indicates that the father in the bible is the father who carries out his function and role as a priest in the family, guides their children in introducing them to God, and encourages his family to worship God through reading the Bible and praying together so that children will see directly the figure of a father who sets an example of faith for them.

A good father is a father who educates the lives of his children according to the word of God. The father who in his whole life, his work, his activities, his love, and his teachings brought his whole family to fear God. But, the most essential part of a father's job is to turn the hearts of his children to their Heavenly Father. If he can demonstrate what faithfulness to God looks like by his example as well as his words as a father in everyday life, that father will give his children the keys to peace in this life and eternal life in the world to come. For example, a father who reads God's word to and with his children introduces them to God's voice. A husband/man is appointed by God to be someone who holds the authority to lead all family members to worship God (1 Corinthians 7:3).

The author has noticed that lately, the presence of fathers' attendance during Sunday services at church is very concerning. It is supported by the opinion of Norm Selfi Tanaem (2019) who said that there are many reasons why many fathers do not attend services or are not involved enough in worship, one of which is his hustle in relation to responsibilities as a husband and as the head of the family. Job is the main reason for not many fathers are actively involved in Sunday services.

Gerald Corey (2010:77-78) stated that the congregation is unwilling to come to church due to climate, whether the weather is too hot or it's raining heavily, having problems with other people which could be with fellow congregations or church officials, or even the pastor, the location of congregation's residence which is too far from the church, ashamed and afraid feeling when they have to come to church to meet many people, a feeling of doubt in following God, a sense of no longing for God, and busy activities.

Andrew Murray, (2011, p. 39), mentioned that every church leader must have the motivation to become a man of God, namely to devote his whole life to the service and glory of God. The church leader must be able to influence others to come to God. They must have the power and presence of God in their life because of a personal fellowship with God like what Moses has in influencing Joshua to be prepared to replace him as the leader of the nation of Israel due to God's authority in him. Moses as a leader equipped Joshua as a cadre to continue his duties as a church leader.

Tumpal Sinaga, (22 November 2021), said that The presence of fathers is very important in the church because fathers' attendance is very significant to the church. According to Rev. Tumpal Sinaga, the church needs people who are productive and creative, not people who are weak and gloomy, and let the church be crushed by the times. Fathers must appear as creative people who can help the church create innovations in church ministry so that the church is filled with people who can bring change.

Sunarto (2017), states that society needs strong leaders who live with integrity. Integrity

is seen as a very basic and absolute requirement for a preacher. The Bible talks a lot about the basics of the importance of integrity after the first human sin. Jesus is an example of a preacher with perfect integrity. The gospel of the kingdom preached by Jesus has called sinners to repent before God. What is preached is not to please sinful human will, but so that they live in repentance. The fulfillment of aspects of integrity for a preacher when combined with quality preaching will make the listener's faith grow as desired by God. This need is urgent because the integrity of a preacher and the quality of his preaching have implications for the spiritual growth of believers.

Daniel Fajar Panuntun Haryono, (2019), stated that the ministry's behavior will increase fathers' attendance during Sunday services at church. This current era is referred to as era 4.0 where everyone really needs information and media. At this time, the media is needed to access all information, both print media and electronic media which are influenced by technological advances. This is also needed by the ministries in this era to gain knowledge in serving the congregation. The existence of this era has risen the lifestyle of God's servant in conveying the truth of God's word.

Mulyo Kardamanto, (2018) mentioned that the current era of globalization influences technology which places the world in a phase called the Industrial Revolution 4.0. This current phase has its own impact or challenge on social life. This may also be a challenge for the church.

Calvin Sholla Rupa, (2018) explained that the Industrial Revolution 4.0 can have an impact on social life. The interaction between individuals is easier by using various applications on social media. Communication is not as difficult as it used to be. But with the development of various types of applications, someone can be a selfish individual and only interacts with his virtual friends. It causes the motivation of the preacher to change, which initially the preacher explaining things about the kingdom of God but because of the demands, their behavior sometimes went wrong. The motivation of the preacher had changed and sometimes turn to misdeeds which only led to heresy. Because only to please human hearts, the preacher blasphemed the truth which sometimes will lead to wrong teaching and behavior.

P. Pardede (June 26, 2021) stated that the behavior of ministries does not fit to be exemplary. Unfortunately, ministers lately have been more worried about their lives than their congregations. They want to get rich quickly, feel greater, and no longer show an attitude to serve but to be served.

Hendri Wijayatsih (2011), posited that pastoral counseling assistance is signified by the nature of caring as a general and universal human characteristic. In the church, caring is transformed into pastoral care with respect to motivation and context. It is the awareness of acting towards one another out of God's love brought upon us and it is done within the church and also as representatives of the community of faith. But there are certain situations of human suffering for which pastoral care is not enough. Therefore, the church needs to carry out a special treatment technique called pastoral counseling.

Florentina Sianipar (2019) mentioned that the weaknesses of pastoral counseling assistance in increasing the enthusiasm of the congregation in worshipping at the church are that the church has not provided responsive, fast, and serious attention and control in following up

on the low enthusiasm of the congregation in worshipping at the church. The reason for the inadequate role of the pastoral counseling service in increasing the enthusiasm of the congregation in worshipping at the church is that the Church lacks the ability to assist in the form of pastoral counseling services for congregations who are experiencing problems in their personal lives. Another reason is that the Church lacks the ability to provide assistance in the form of pastoral counseling services for congregations who experience a decrease in enthusiasm for church worship.

J. Siahaan (26 June 2021), stated that the lack of a pastoral role performed by the church ministry, especially for fathers in providing pastoral counseling assistance also has an impact on the lack of interest of fathers to attend Sunday services at the Church.

The problem formulations are as follows:

1. How does the quality of preaching affect the increase in the fathers' attendance in Sunday services at Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Churches of District IV, Toba?
2. How is the effect of the ministers' behavior on the increase of the fathers' attendance in Sunday services at Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Churches of District IV, Toba?
3. How is the effect of pastoral counseling assistance on the increase of the fathers' attendance in Sunday services at Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Churches of District IV, Toba?
4. How do the preaching quality, ministers' behavior, and pastoral counseling simultaneously affect the increase of fathers' attendance in Sunday services at Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Churches of District IV, Toba?

Literature Review

Nopa (2018) mentioned that preaching is one of the means to convey the word of God to the congregation in a church or fellowship so that the preaching itself becomes the center of Christian worship. Preaching will usually be adjusted to the topic and material that has been determined with a specific purpose for the crowd according to the situation and conditions at that time. However, a preach is not the same as speeches or lectures, because preaching is a delivery of God's word which is based on the Bible and not on personal human experience or the mind of the preacher himself (not the result of the preacher's subjective thoughts). Preaching is a form of one-way communication because the congregation cannot immediately respond to the preacher. It is not a process to make listeners become Bible experts but to introduce God through the words.

Antone, H.S (2012, p.111), states that the quality of good preaching is not measured by how many listeners attend it, nor is it measured by whether the church is large or small. However, the quality of the preaching is also not measured by the amount of use of a foreign language or the original language of the Bible. The quality of good preaching is signified through the quality or weight of the material and the application of proper communication to listeners.

Sarah (2015), stated that the quality of the preaching refers to the level of how good a preach delivered by a preacher. Preaching has good quality if it has a high level of quality and in terms of delivery (communication), it can be easily understood by its listeners.

Vines and Shaddix (2009, p.127), posited that quality preaching can be reflected in the message delivered by a preacher. The preaching material is not prepared based on personal pleasure or interest. The material presented must only take a source from the message of truth found in the Bible.

Anderson (2010, p.39) mentioned that quality preaching must be supported by two aspects, namely: correct preaching material and good delivery. Good material will save weak delivery, while good delivery can save weak preaching material. Quality preaching must combine these two aspects, namely good material and good delivery.

Thomas H. Groome (2011, p. 46), quality preaching takes into account the hermeneutical aspects, preaches the truth from God, not to please humans alone, has a clear structure, based on the purpose of delivering the word of God, and has the quality material and the right communication.

Asih Rachmani Endang Sumiwi and Joseph Christ Santo (201, p.94), explained the qualifications of God's Servant in fulfilling the call of service. In 1 Timothy. 3:2 Paul says that as a servant of God, one must be "above reproach". The word "above reproach" comes from the word *ανεπιλημπτον* (anepilemton) which implies the fact that a minister should be someone free from defects of character that might make people doubt his ability to serve the congregation.

Sonny Eli Zaluchu (2018), stated that the behavior of a servant is *doulos*, *huperetes*, *diakonos*, *oiketes*, *therapon*, and *leitourgos*. In this case, these behaviors are how should one serve the Biblical God.

Zakaria Harefa (2021), said that the ministry's behaviors containing the essence of serving are *doulos*, *huperetes*, *diakonos*, *oiketes*, *therapon*, and *leitourgos*. If seen from this meaning, God's Servant is a servant of Christ who is aware that his life belongs to Christ, must commit to one master, namely Christ, and have obedience and humility. From every description of Paul's greetings in his epistles, several important points can be used as material for implementation or application in the current service that able equips God's servants in serving and building relationships with the congregation.

Jacob Daan Engel (2007), stated that pastoral counseling assistance is a companionship that grows and also develops the personality of the counselor and counselee in the awareness that he is also the one who endures the hurt. In the process of meeting, the counselor wants to heal himself and heal the counselee. Pastoral counseling assistance in the function of repairing those in need. So that people may need pastoral assistance for the rest of their lives but it is conducted when someone experiences a crisis.

Foskett and Lyall (2000, p.141), argued that pastoral counseling is a characteristic of church life. Pastoral counseling assistance keeps Christians on the path of Christian tradition, bothin their social life and church.

Clebsch and Charles (2004), in the book *Basic Types of Pastoral Care & Counseling*, said that traditionally there are four functions of pastoral assistance and counseling, namely: healing, supporting, guiding, and reconciling.).

Clinebell (2010) added one function of pastoral assistance, namely nurturing. It means that the function of pastoral counseling assistance aims to be able to develop his "divinity" in his life's journey, both in joy and sorrow.

Van Beek (2020), added a sixth function, namely restoring/repairing which has a central function because it is the main goal of pastoral counseling assistance. It is a central goal because it strengthens human life in all aspects of life, namely physical, social, mental, and spiritual. Human suffering exists because of damaged or disturbed physical, social, mental, and spiritual aspects. Therefore, restoring serves to whole again all aspects so that humans experience recovery in their lives.

Abineno (2017, p.71), stated that the presence of fathers in the church is an indicator of balanced church growth in quantity, quality, and organizational complexity. Therefore, evangelism and apprenticeship are parts of one process. Quantitative and qualitative growth must develop simultaneously and in good balance. Conversely, if qualitative development does not include quantitative development, the product will be an unhealthy mutation.

Ginting (2011, p.132), explained that the presence of fathers in the church is the focus of the Church on quantity and quality. The role of fathers is very visible in participation, however, attendance should receive more attention and receive special motivations in terms of worship and fellowship. Indeed there must be motivation for fathers that occurs continuously, so then the motivation can be a reason for them to be actively involved (Ariawan, 2018). However, in some cases, the organization exists but the mechanisms are not working. For example, there is the committee for fathers, but each of its members is not active enough in the ministry role.

Tannenbaum, and Weschler (2001, p.118), stated that the presence of fathers in Sunday services at church can be influenced by an unfavorable climate, leadership in the church, the organizational structure in the church, objectives, and tasks that are not in accordance with the vision and mission of the church and its identity.

Research Method

The research was conducted at Batak Protestant Christian (HKBP) Churches of District IV, Toba, with a population of 13,720 male congregations and a sample of 99 people using the Slovin formula as the proportionate random sampling technique. The data collection technique was by distributing questionnaires, which was preceded by conducting a questionnaire trial, then conducting the validity and reliability tests. Data analysis techniques employed the classical assumption test through (the normality test, multicollinearity test, heteroscedasticity test, multiple linear regression test), hypothesis testing (partial t-test, and simultaneous f-test), and the coefficient determination test.

Results

The results are as follows: 1) the validity test with $DF = 97$ and a significance of 5% resulting in $r_{table} = 0.1975$ signifies that all statements are valid because $r_{count} > r_{table}$ for each question. 2) Reliability test variable X_1 (Quality of Preaching) using Cronbach's value (0.637) > 0.6 , variable X_2 reliability test (Ministers' Behavior), Cronbach's value (0.938) > 0.6 , variable X_3 reliability test (Pastoral Counseling Assistance), Cronbach's value (0.948) > 0.6 , reliability

test of the variable Y (Increasing the Fathers' attendance in Sunday services at the Churches), Cronbach's value (0.662) > 0.6, shows that all statements are reliable because all variables had Cronbach Alpha values > 0.60. 3) The classic assumption test with the normality test method of Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) showed an asymp.sig value of 0.080 greater than 0.05, so it can be said that the data was normally distributed; multicollinearity test with a tolerance value of > 0.01, and VIF value < 10 showed that there were no symptoms of multicollinearity; heteroscedasticity test using the Spearman Correlation method with Sig X₁ = 0.268, X₁ > 0.05, Sig X₂ = 0.877, X₂ > 0.05, Sig X₃ = 0.915, X₃ < 0.05, indicates that heteroscedasticity did not occur because all variables Sig > 0.05, 4) Multiple regression analysis shows $Y = 0.181 + 0.352 X_1 + 0.210 X_2 + 0.187 X_3 + e$. 5) After the test the hypothesis with the t-test, Sig X₁ = 0.000 < 0.05, X₁ affected Y, Sig X₂ = 0.000 < 0.05, which means that X₂ affected Y, Sig X₃ = 0.000 > 0.05, means that X₃ affected Y, then X₁, X₂ and X₃ Accepted; The F test shows the value of Fcount 2308.927 with Fsig. 0.000, due to Fsig. 0.000 was less than 0.05, then H₀ was rejected. It means that simultaneously the quality of the sermon (X₁), the behavior of the minister (X₂), and the pastoral counseling assistance (X₃) had a significant effect on the increase of the fathers' attendance in Sunday services at church (Y). 6) The coefficient determination test of the contribution to the R² value was as many as 0.986, or 98.6%.

Recommendation

Because the attendance of fathers in Sunday services at church has recently decreased, researchers suggest that church officials (ministers) improve the quality of the preaching, maintain their behavior as God's servants, and improve pastoral counseling services.

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