

Religion and Management: Redefining God's Kingdom Management for Human Resources Post COVID-19

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Abstract: This research analyzes the shifting of management of God's Kingdom to focus on saving human resources in the economic site due to COVID-19. The old paradigm of management of God's Kingdom, which is to save human resources biblically, shifts to humans from the low economic condition. This study aims to redefine the shifting of management of God's Kingdom as the form of human resources development from the economic perspective. This study systematically presents the economy's condition due to COVID-19, the Church's response to it, and the redefinition of God's Kingdom management through the descriptive qualitative method. This research confirms the redefinition of management of God's Kingdom as the Church's response to help human resources. Finally, this research aims to give out some charity programs and skill training in saving human resources in responding to the economic downward due to COVID-19.

Keywords: God's Kingdom; human resource; management; religion.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini menganalisa pergeseran manajemen Kerajaan Allah untuk menfokuskan penyelamatan sumber daya manusia dalam bidang ekonomi akibat COVID-19. Paradigma lama dari manajemen Kerajaan Allah yaitu menyelamatkan sumber daya manusia secara Biblis, bergeser ke manusia akibat dari kondisi ekonomi saat ini. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk meredefinisi pergeseran manajemen Kerajaan Allah sebagai bentuk pengembangan sumber daya manusia dari perspektif ekonomi. Secara sistematis, artikel mempresentasikan kondisi ekonomi akibat COVID-19, response Gereja terhadap kondisi tersebut, dan meredefinisi manajemen Kerajaan Allah melalui metode deskriptif kualitatif. Penelitian ini mengafirmasi redefinisi manajemen Kerajaan Allah sebagai response Gereja untuk membantu sumber daya manusia. Kesimpulan penelitian ini memberikan beberapa ide program kasih dan pelatihan kemampuan dalam menyelamatkan sumber daya manusia dalam menghadapi penurunan nilai ekonomu akibat COVID-19.

Kata Kunci: Kerajaan Allah; sumber daya manusia; manajemen; agama.

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has shifted governance management within organizations, including religious governance. Social restrictions to break the chain of the SARS – Cov 2 virus have resulted in economic fragility with increased layoffs of human resources (Daghriri & Ozmen, 2021; Norouzi, Zarazua de Rubens, Choupanpiesheh, & Enevoldsen, 2020). The ratio of unemployment to labor potential is a burden on religious institutions, which have the function of developing human resources to be physically and mentally healthy. The development of human resources for religious institutions is teaching about the salvation of the soul afterlife through the exposition of religious texts and visiting congregations (Florence & Judith, 2018; Simangunsong & Metekohy, 2019). The spread of the SARS – Cov 2 virus changed management patterns with social restrictions and the

development of technical concepts as a replacement for the traditional concept of church management. The shift from the traditional concept of church management towards a new concept of post-COVID-19 church management is an essential basis for the starting point for redefining the management of the Kingdom of God.

Semobodo and Prabowo review that human resource management is still focused on implementing the concept of saving Biblical human resources (Semobodo & Prabowo, 2021). It is supported by Purwoto and Asih, explaining management as an evangelistic concept (Semobodo & Prabowo, 2021). In other words, the traditional management of the Church still focuses on teaching theology, liturgy, eucharist, and sacramental life as teaching orthodoxy (Porumb, 2017); because of Covid-19 and the use of technology, now must change. Melinda Sharp (2016) shows the development of church management by looking at contextual and intercultural needs in responding to human resource needs and the times. With the SARS – Cov 2 virus outbreak, Lea De Backer (De Backer, 2021) sees a shift in the concept of church management or becoming a kind of theological response to COVID-19 towards social imbalances of sorrow, grief, and loss. The shift in church management due to the COVID-19 pandemic has forced the Church to organize its organization to build humanity for human safety (salvation history) (Lategan & Oosthuizen, 2016). For Oosthuizen and Lategan, shifting church management means organizing and rebuilding church organizations in God's work of salvation for humans, such as the arrangement for the construction of the Tower in the Book of Genesis and the dividing wall in the Book of Nehemiah.

Nicholas Tom Wright, a theological scholar, wrote that the parable of the Kingdom of God is a form of repeating stories about Israel's mistakes – which occurred in the past – it is hoped that they will not be repeated (Johnson & Wright, 1994; Wiryadinata, 2019). Theologically, Ward (2021) observes that the Kingdom of God is only a partial form of God's power in the Kingdom. However, holistically, the concept of God's Kingdom touches on the human resources cultural innovation. The shift in the concept of the Kingdom of God, namely managing the household or households of the Church in the work of God's salvation during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the impact of the human resource economy (Hays, 2005; Nugraha, Utama, Adi, & Sulaiman, 2020; Surhayadi, Asep., Al Izzati, Ridho., and Suryadarma, 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic opened up the digital-based economic sector widely and provided an opportunity to open up a shift in the management of the Kingdom of God towards redefining the concept of the Kingdom of God based on a digital economy in society. The digital economy has claimed human resources, so human costs are too expensive. Zizek (2020) takes a different view that the COVID-19 pandemic brings survivor to the weak and builds new capitalism in responding to the endemic. Therefore, this research aims to redefine the management concept of the Kingdom of God, which is very meaningful in responding to human sacrifices due to the digital-based economy by proposing breakthroughs in human resource development.

The explanation for this research consists of systematic writing. First, the research discusses the economic impact of COVID-19 on church human resources. The spread of the SARS – Cov 2 virus on the condition of human resources and the Church as a religious institution, as well as market panic during social restrictions. The existence of a digital-based economic concept that dominates marketing through products to meet market segmentation impacts the inability of human resources without technology. It causes them to be thrown out of digital economic competition. Second, the Church as a religious institution responds to the existence of a digital-based economic concept through human resource management for the growth of physically and spiritually healthy people. The ability of the Church to redefine the traditional concept of management of the Kingdom of God towards a new concept of management of the Kingdom of God is beneficial for human resource life and reduces human costs. Third, redefining the management concept of God's Kingdom by emphasizing skills development in digitalization, building networks with non-religious organizations, and formulating training programs for human resources to compete after the COVID-19 pandemic. This research relies on books, journal articles, and scientifically valid references through a systematic literature review approach (Snyder, 2019).

2. The Economic Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

One important factor to reflect the impact of COVID-19 is the income of the person or family. This economic income is significant because, based on that income, one can analyze the impact of COVID-19 on their life. According to official statistical data (Central Statistics Agency, 2021), the economic sector is an area that has been heavily affected due to the presence of Covid-19 as a global disaster. More specifically, this impact can be seen in the lives of the most vulnerable, the poor working in the informal sector. In this group, the micro-economic impact can be seen directly: their life, particularly their income. Most of this group experienced a decrease in income. Some even lost income or had no income at all. The following impact is that they lose the ability to shop or buy, as one of the critical social factors today. The result is poverty, which we will discuss in the following section.

Regarding the economic aspect, the impact and economic changes due to Covid can be described like this (figure 1).

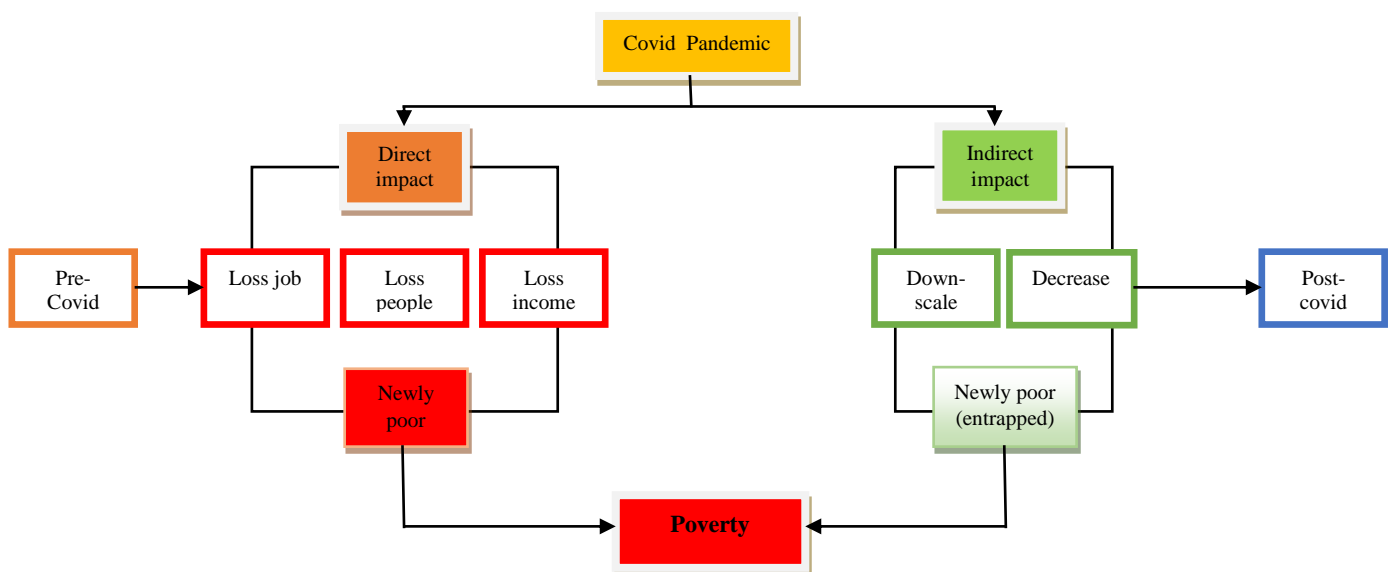


Figure 1 pre- and post-covid-19 scenarios for vulnerable (poor) groups

The figure 1 simply distinguishes the economic impact of covid into two forms: (1) those directly affected, such as loss of jobs, significant people, and income. The first and third groups can be distinguished; the first includes people who have experienced layoffs, while the last people still have jobs, but their income has suddenly disappeared due to covid. For example, innkeepers, sewing service providers, and sellers of services related to physical encounters between -persons. Meanwhile, form (2) is those who are indirectly affected, including those who experience reduced opportunities, for example, food or restaurant sellers, or experience a decrease in income, for example, tailors or transportation business owners.

Accumulatively, the impact of both can be based on the same result, the new poor, or temporarily trapped, as the new poor. Of course, this group – temporarily – needs attention from the State. Because if not, there will be a decrease in purchasing power, which, if left unchecked, will impact production stagnation and disrupt the local or national economic system because the buying and selling wheel does not run typically. That is why the government immediately provides various types of assistance and support to this new poor group: from direct assistance to various relief and other supports designed to avoid the trap of new poor people. For this reason, government efforts like this need to get support.

Further economic analysis of the projections, as shown in Figure 1 above, can be explained this way. In the second quarter, there has been a slowdown in decline with a minus number, of 5.33

percent (Surhayadi, Asep., Al Izzati, Ridho., and Suryadarma, 2020), in fact, Smeru, a research institute has predicted that under the impact of covid 19, the rate of Indonesia's poverty will increase: from 9.2 percent in September 2109 to 9.7 percent by the end of 2020, or it is likely that around 1.3 million people will enter a new poverty trap (Surhayadi, Asep., Al Izzati, Ridho., and Suryadarma, 2020). It happened because of the increase in layoffs which was quite large and caused significant social problems in all aspects of life. Churches with human resources have even been affected by the economic recession both during and after the pandemic (Mueller, 2013).

As a religious institution, the Church serves human resources development that have also been affected by the economic recession during the COVID-19 pandemic. Church, as a representative of God's Kingdom, has an economic impact because the finances of the Kingdom of God come from the people (Sieweke, 2014). Therefore, the management of God's Kingdom is needed to help financial conditions that can result in suffering and humanity. In his argument, Giorgio Agamben (2011) stated that economic theology has 2 (two) poles, namely the transcendent or divinity pole and the immanent or administrative pole. Agamben's concept emphasizes oikonomia as a high assessment of transcendence, so the use of the word oikonomia in Corinth is an administrative activity or an oikonomia of the mystery of redemption (Agamben, 2011). Therefore, household arrangements must undergo redefinition to present an immanent pole during the COVID-19 period.

Human resources as objects of suffering and being thrown out of economic activity. Research by Iza Gigauri (Gigauri, 2020) comments that human resources are objects of insecurity of jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic with social restrictions. Because Joel B Carnevale and Isabella Hatak (Carnevale & Hatak, 2020) state that human resources must adapt to a new economic concept, namely the digital economy. As a religious institution, the Church faces new difficulties in managing management to deal with the digital economy. The old concept of Church management needs to be rearranged in dealing with the digital economy due to COVID-19. Therefore, the Church as a representative of God's Kingdom is strongly affected because the finances of the Kingdom of God come from the people (Sieweke, 2014). That is why the role of religion in the management of the Kingdom of God is urgently needed to overcome financial conditions that can cause suffering and humanity (humility). Quoting Agamben (2011), facing this situation, the Church needs to practice transcendent elements or economic divinity into absolute immanence or administration (Agamben, 2011). Based on this, household arrangements must be redefined to present an immanent pole during the COVID-19 period.

3. COVID-19 and Religion-Based Management of God's Kingdom

Wiryadinata built the concept of the Trinity (*Perihoresis*) in HRM to achieve values from a religious perspective (Wiryadinata, 2020). Perichoresis is the concept of Trinity doctrine. It also means a mutual interpenetration of every Being in achieving the main goal without leaving the essence of His existence. The concept of Perichoresis or Perichoretic, viewed from the theological side, was introduced to provide the concept of equality in the HR position in the organization. Perichoresis is the concept of equality between God the Father and Jesus Christ in divine and human forms. Perichoresis or Perikoretics was used to counter the teachings of an Egyptian believer, Arius, who denied the idea that Jesus was with the Father in eternity because the Father had no beginning, while the Son was from the Father (O'Collins, 1999). Therefore, the Council of Nicaea, 325, declared that Jesus was '*homousios*' (one substance), argued Athanasius of Alexandria when he introduced the word perichoresis and stated that the three persons dwell with each other in dynamic communion, but they have a different essence. The same attributes but different "idion" hypostatic attributes (Artemi, 2017).

Thus, the word perichoresis was first used by the Cappadocian, Cyril Alexandria, Leontius Byzantinus, and Maximus. It denotes equality in position in the Trinity. However, August Deneffe sees further that the use of perichoresis comes from the concept of Stoic philosophical thought which explains the mutual interpenetration of two (2) substances mutually preserve the same intact 'identity' and 'property.' The penetration of Stoic philosophy into Christian theology made perichoresis a

terminus technicus and applied to the concept or hypothesis that the Trinity of God denotes union through personal existence in God's communion. Therefore, Stamatovic stated that perichoresis is a communion of three persons who reside with each other in a dynamic alliance. However, they are of the same essence while having different hypostatic attributes (Stamatović, 2016).

Fairholm's work seeks to review the spiritual heart of leadership in Senge's work, which changed HR management as a learning organization marked by the development of sustainable HR performance in response to changes in consumer behavior (Fairholm, 1998). With changes in consumer behavior, organizations need to add spiritual elements to leadership. However, the works of Senge (M. P. Senge, 2006; P. M. Senge, 2017) and Fairholm discuss and evaluate spiritual concepts at the theoretical level of spiritual leadership to deal with changes in consumer behavior, so they have not been proven at the practical level. Rudnycky provides the concept of Spiritual Economies from the teaching side of Islam and Neoliberalism in Indonesia through the development of the concept of Emotional Spiritual Quotient (ESQ) from Ary Ginanjar at the Krakatau Steel (KS) company (Lizardo, 2011; Rudnycky, 2010). He showed a positive movement that ESQ helped improve the performance of Krakatau Steel's human resources in the era of globalization and global competition in times of crisis. Rudnycky's concept, *From Faith in Development to Developing Faith*, is the beginning of a spiritual element in economic growth.

The work of Ali (reviewed by Babalola) looks at the HR development model from the perspective of the Ten Commandments Perspective or TCs Perspective. The Religious HRM model shows religious, ethical values such as morality, honesty, sincerity, and integrity to get employee commitment to organizational priorities/vision (Ali, Abbas J and Gibbs, 1998). Milliman et al. proposed a spiritual values-based management model was developed by Milliman et al. in organizational commitment with individual variables' intention to quit, job satisfaction, and job involvement to show that the study of spirituality is always associated with organizational functions and practices (Milliman, Czaplewski, & Ferguson, 2003). However, their research is only based on employees with homogeneous religions in building teams by creating awareness of the principles of religious values and maximizing staff retention through sociological staff cohesion (Babalola, Patience, Afolabi, 'Sola, & 'Femi, 2018).

Based on some of the works discussed above, it seems that a new management formula is needed to overcome the problem of church management in the midst of Covid-19. By emphasizing the religious dimension, the Church will be able to design and develop the management of citizens, especially those affected by Covid-19, wisely and touch the profound aspects of faith. Survivor of this pandemic will feel greeted as part of God's Kingdom and are not valued as a "complementary" or "element" of management without a human touch, which has a spiritual dimension of rituality. It means that the Church will be able to provide appropriate services and/or treatment for church members and communities who are suffering from Covid-19 with a management approach without losing the transcendence dimension of the Church as the embodiment of God's Kingdom.

Apart from that, realizing the immanent side of the economy into the practice management side will enable the Church to see socio-economic issues as theological issues. God as the ruler of the Oikos, always emphasizes the economy as a practical embodiment of salvation in human life, whether church members or the general public. Likewise, by emphasizing the mystery's economy, Agamben now encourages us that this mystery must be realized as a praxis of salvation. In other words, financial services, especially for those who are suffering, can be a way to open up to the world that salvation is now confirmed, namely economic prosperity and justice. With economic service programs for those affected by Covid-19, the Church is currently heading for a new management system, namely the management of the Kingdom of God.

4. Redefining Management of the Kingdom of God

The Church, as a religious institution, ideally can provide excellent and positive inspiration for the government in the matter of handling Covid-19 assistance. Throughout its history, diaconal-health services have been part of the Church. In order to carry out these HR services effectively,

Church Diakonia servants play a significant role in helping manage human resources (HR) after COVID-19 (Adi, 2017; Klassen, 2011). Therefore, we need to start with an understanding of Bourdieu's social practice theory of capital, field, and habitus as concepts that explain that individuals influence social space and interact with capital (economic, cultural, and social) to create symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990). For Bourdieu, according to Sieweke, a social field is a component that is structured according to regulations and authority in the environment so that the environment looks dynamic and is formed based on the practices of the actors (Sieweke, 2014; Tatli, Ozbilgin, & Karatas-Ozkan, 2015; Walther, 2014). Bourdieu reinforces it. Bourdieu states, 'Fields are networks of social relations, a structured system of social positions within which struggles or manoeuvres take place over resources, stakes, and access' (Bourdieu, 1990). Thus, if there is a struggle over resources and access, which is capital, it is economic capital, cultural capital, and institutionalization capital to obtain symbolic capital as legitimacy (Walther, 2014). Bourdieu (1977) and Cronin (1996) state that "symbolic capital is found in the form of prestige, renown, reputation, and personal authority." Thus, habitus is understood as a collective dimension influenced by history in a collection of perceptions, thoughts, feelings, evaluations, speech, and behavior as manifestation practices (Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer, 2011).

Bourdieu's habitus concept, in this context, guides a review of the management of the Kingdom of God as a concept that can build a community with skills to face a new life after Covid-19. To build this skill, habitus is needed. In turn, if this habitus materializes in the lives of church members, it will become capital, which plays a significant role in sustaining life. It means that the management of God's Kingdom is part of the social dictionary in helping HR in Post-COVID-19 when the economic recession occurs. Redefining the management of God's Kingdom is vital to make this happen. This redefinition includes how the Church must have the courage to go out and meet and then build synergy with other religions and the government. The goal of such management is to achieve salvation in the public domain. Or, if you use another language, it's how to realize salvation as a political praxis of the Church in the public area. However, politics here seeks to practically express safety in people's lives.

The practical realization of the management of God's Kingdom redefinition, especially in synergy with the government, can be carried out through: (1) in an emergency, like now, a charitable program is indeed needed. However, for the human resources of Church members to continue to develop, management assistance from the Kingdom of God (Hays, 2005) is still needed in the second form, namely (2) developing human resource skills. The skills needed depends on the situation and their respective capacities, in developing the ability to survive in an economic recession; this is where the habitus aspect as part of the management of the Kingdom of God becomes relevant. This skill will enable Church or community members to overcome life's difficulties based on their beliefs. However, as the management of God's Kingdom, the Church doesn't just stop at the skill aspect. To realize salvation as a praxis of life, the Church needs to take action to provide (3) "markets" and "pools,"; and this is carried out, or at least demonstrated, so that the previous two activities have meaning for the dignity of life and sustainable development, as shown in figure 2.

Shortly, the redefinition of church management based on the Kingdom of God is that the Church, to realize salvation as a political praxis in public, must be willing to prepare training for human resources by collaborating with other religions in the scope of joint economic development with the government. Providing HR training will increase HR skills, and HR can escape suffering and humility after the COVID-19 pandemic. Kingdom management not only retells Israel's story but must build on its work for charitable programs in skills building, networking and funding. In other words, redefining the management of God's Kingdom, namely God's Kingdom, must be immanent (administrative) and become concrete evidence of the embodiment of salvation for human resources, church members, and society after COVID-19.

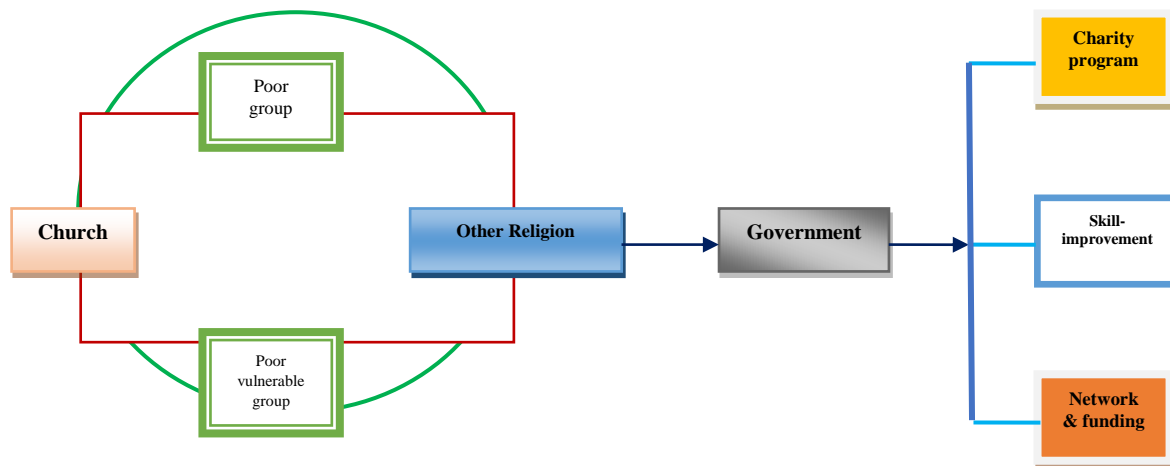


Figure 2 Churches and other religions advocating for survivor of covid 19

Another critical factor to pay attention to in the current condition of Covid-19 is the role of technology. Therefore, increasing the expertise or skills of individuals who will be the subject of church economic programs must be introduced to technology (Bilić, 2018). Digital technology is essential in today's era of social distancing. Therefore, activities to improve skills include at least two critical things: first, basic training on humanity and its potential, and next is the role of technology in supporting people's welfare. Thus, activities and/or programs to increase church expertise amid Covid-19 need to be supported with adequate technological involvement. The types of activities that can be developed are entrepreneurship, human potential, shared economy and justice, the role of technology, digital technology as a support for entrepreneurship, and digital technology for a humane life.

The Church must introduce the role of technology that supports life to be humane in the current pandemic. It means that the expertise acquired during the skills improvement program is complemented by the functions and roles of technology that are more humane in living together in the current Covid-19. Various environmentally and human-friendly digital technologies must be continuously developed to support a fair economy for everyone.

In order to carry out all of these things, attitudes towards other religions must be open, including with the government. With this open attitude, the definition of the Kingdom of God gets a concrete form: an atmosphere or fellowship in which God himself is king and values openness, and everyone has fair access. Everything is done in an atmosphere of non-violence. If that happens, the management of the Kingdom of God – in the Church – will manifest itself practically. It is in a pandemic situation that requires cooperation is very important. The Church must redefine the management of the Kingdom of God.

On the Church's side, in Covid-19, is the role of technology in ecclesiastical ministry and fostering the faithful life of church members. Indeed, there is a massive shift in the use of technology in worship. What needs to be considered is whether digital technology is a substitute for ecclesiastical activities? Or, can technology replace the role of ritual – which is socially practiced – which has been a part of church life so far? It should also be recognized that digital technology has brought democratization of worship (Isbaniah et al., 2020). People can choose which worship to follow using the current technology of YouTube or Streaming. Today's worship, in Covid-19, no longer falls together with church citizenship. Regardless of citizenship, everyone can choose the online worship based on the opportunity, taste, and time that suits them.

Referring to the issues above, the Church itself, in the context of redefining the management of the Kingdom of God, also needs to change the pattern of worship, which is no longer closed. But open worship, which all parties can access – including non-Christians – freely and fairly. It encourages the Church to always voice the "voice of God" rather than human voices. It means that with digital technology that is increasingly open, the Church must create "critical, prophetic, humanist" sermons.

The Church can no longer talk about negative religious sentiments but positive things about humanity. With worship through online digital technology, the Church must become a church that is public and democratic and reflects the Kingdom of God.

5. Conclusion

Training for HR is a repositioning of the notion of management of the Kingdom of God, which is immanent in dealing with post-COVID-19. Skills training is a work of the Kingdom of God (the Church) to build administrative-based HRM (*oikonomos*) in ecclesiastical stewardship in the face of an economic recession in Indonesia. Skills training, as capital, by using charity programs by building networks and funding, the management of the Kingdom of God (the Church) is immanently building human resources in real terms, not separating them from the work of looking for new 'souls' to include in the Kingdom of God. Redefining the management of God's Kingdom must be a repositioning of the Church's position to participate in pandemic and post-pandemic times to build human resources to rise from the economic recession caused by Covid-19.

Skills training in the field of technology is needed to struggle to survive the era of economic recession. Technology skills training in the internet network is one form of building human resource skills in charity programs for all people, Church members, or public members in Indonesia. The Church also needs to improve itself in digital technology so that it is enabled to spread human values in the current public-democratic era

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