

The Role of Individual Practice in Musical Performance at GPDI Galilea, Sendangan Tengah, Kawangkoan District, Minahasa Regency

Gratia Tumbelaka^{1*}, Glenie Latuni², Widyata Sarayar³

¹⁻³ Program Studi Pendidikan Seni Drama, Tari, dan Musik, Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni, Universitas Negeri Manado, Tondano 95618, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: May 6, 2026	This study examines the contribution of individual practice to the quality of musical performance in worship ministry at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan. Individual practice is considered important because church musicians are required not only to master technical skills but also to demonstrate musical understanding, coordination, confidence, and spiritual responsibility during worship. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach conducted at GPDI Galilea, Sendangan Tengah, Kawangkoan District, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi, from October 2025 to April 2026. Participants consisted of musicians involved in keyboard, electric guitar, bass, and drum ministries. Data were collected through direct observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation, and were analyzed through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. The findings indicate that individual practice contributes significantly to musicians' technical readiness by improving chord mastery, rhythmic stability, song structure recognition, and instrument-specific skills. Individual preparation also strengthens team cohesion by allowing group rehearsals to focus on synchronization, dynamics, interpretation, and musical expression rather than basic technical difficulties. Furthermore, consistent practice enhances musicians' musical understanding, self-confidence, and performance stability during worship. Beyond technical and psychological benefits, individual practice has a spiritual dimension, as musicians perceive preparation as an expression of responsibility, discipline, and commitment to ministry. Despite barriers such as limited instruments, time constraints, and differences in motivation, musicians employ adaptive strategies to maintain practice. The study concludes that individual practice is a multidimensional foundation for effective church music ministry.
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1. Introduction

Music is an important component of church worship because it functions not only as an artistic element but also as a medium for communicating faith, expressing spirituality, and shaping congregational religious experiences. Through melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics, and song lyrics, music can create a reflective atmosphere and encourage congregants' emotional engagement in worship. In the church context, music also contributes to shaping worship experiences through congregational participation in singing and musical responses. Liturgical music can shape emotional experiences while enhancing congregational participation in worship.

The quality of church music ministry is determined not only by technical skills but also by musicians' ability to manage musical expression, emotion, and interpretation (López-Íñiguez & McPherson, 2021). Therefore, church musicians require musical readiness, responsibility, and commitment in carrying out their ministry (Kiring et al., 2025). Such readiness is important because technical errors, inaccurate tempo, inappropriate dynamics, and poor coordination among musicians can reduce the quality of musical performance and weaken the role of music in supporting the worship atmosphere.

One important factor in developing such readiness is individual practice. Purposeful practice helps musicians improve technical skills, understand musical structures, and develop independent learning abilities (Nusseck & Spahn, 2021). The effectiveness of practice is determined not merely by its duration but also by the ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate the practice process (Suzuki & Mitchell, 2022). A study by dos Santos Silva et al. (2024) involving 300 musicians demonstrated that musical practice is associated with self-regulated learning processes, particularly through the use of organizational strategies, personal resources, and external resources. Hidayatullah et al. (2024) similarly found that self-regulation in musical practice involves planning, monitoring, and evaluating performance.

In ensemble settings, individual practice is also associated with the effectiveness of group rehearsals. Mastery of individual parts before group rehearsal allows rehearsal time to be devoted to improving harmonization, interpretation, coordination, and musical expression. Schmidt and Gruber (2024) further highlight that mastery of individual contributions provides an important foundation for collective performance, while individual and collaborative practice are interconnected in musical development. More recent research by Schmidt et al. (2025) indicates that musicians in ensembles use goal setting, performance monitoring, and feedback during both individual and collective practice to improve performance quality.

In the context of music ministry at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan, the ministry system is organized through scheduling, song selection by the worship leader, distribution of song materials several days or approximately two weeks before worship, and group rehearsals prior to services. This system requires each musician to take personal responsibility for preparing the musical materials through individual practice (Miksza & Brenner, 2023). Individual practice provides musicians with opportunities to understand the character of songs, develop technical proficiency, and prepare themselves before joining group rehearsals (Schmidt & Gruber, 2024). However, field findings indicate differences in the consistency of individual practice among musicians. Some musicians prepare seriously and consistently, whereas others remain more dependent on group rehearsals.

Differences in individual readiness can affect rehearsal effectiveness and the quality of music ministry. Musicians who engage less in individual practice tend to require more time to understand chord progressions, tempo, dynamics, and song structures, whereas those who prepare individually tend to be more confident and able to coordinate more effectively with other team members (López-Íñiguez & McPherson, 2024). This condition may cause group rehearsals to focus primarily on addressing basic technical problems rather than developing interpretation, ensemble cohesion, and musical expression (Scherer, 2023). Hatfield and

Williamon (2025) demonstrate that deliberate practice is associated with successful performance and lower levels of performance anxiety among musicians, indicating the importance of purposeful practice for musical readiness.

Academically, previous study on musical practice have largely focused on formal education, individual skill development, and musical performance. Meanwhile, research on individual practice within church music ministry that integrates technical readiness, team coordination, performance quality, and spiritual dimensions remains relatively limited. Therefore, this study positions individual practice not merely as a technical activity but as a practice that contributes to musical readiness, team cohesion, and the quality of music ministry during worship. This study aims to explain how individual practice contributes to improving the quality of musical performance in worship at GPD Galilea Kawangkoan.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study employs John B. Watson's theory of behaviorism and the learning theory of Hilgard and Bower as its primary theoretical foundations. From a behaviorist perspective, behavior is formed through stimulus-response relationships that are repeatedly reinforced until they become established habits (Watson, 1913; Skinner, 1953; Hilgard & Bower, 1975). In relation to musical performance practice, individual practice can be understood as a repeated stimulus that produces musical responses in the form of technical accuracy, adaptability, and stability in performing songs. In other words, musicians who practice independently and consistently tend to develop increasingly automatic and directed patterns of performance. This concept is consistent with the theory of *deliberate practice*, which explains that structured, repetitive, and goal-oriented practice is a major factor in the development of musical expertise (Ericsson et al., 1993). Previous studies indicate that research on musical practice has increasingly emphasized the quality of practice strategies, *self-regulation*, and *deliberate practice* as important aspects of musical development (How et al., 2022; Passarotto et al., 2022).

Hilgard and Bower's learning theory further supports this explanation by emphasizing that learning involves a relatively permanent change in behavior resulting from experience and repeated practice (Hilgard & Bower, 1975). In the context of music, repeated practice strengthens motor skills, cognitive coordination, and mastery of musical forms. This study interprets the theory practically within the context of church music ministry, where individual practice is not merely the repetition of songs but a learning process that strengthens understanding of song structures, dynamics, timing, and accuracy of musical execution. Recent systematic research has shown that studies of musical practice increasingly emphasize the importance of reflective practice, *self-regulated practice*, and continuous evaluation as components of effective music learning (How et al., 2022).

In addition to these two theories, the literature review in this study draws on scholarship addressing the relationship between music, emotion, musical expectations, *deliberate practice*, and spirituality. Huron (2006) emphasizes that music is closely associated with the formation of expectations in listeners' brains, meaning that an understanding of musical structure and progression can strongly influence the quality of musical experience. Levitin (2006) demonstrates that elements such as rhythm, harmony, tempo, and musical structure contribute to the ways in which the brain responds to music. Ericsson et al. (1993) explain that musical expertise develops through *deliberate practice*, namely practice undertaken consciously and consistently and accompanied by evaluation of individual weaknesses. Recent research indicates that effective musical practice depends not only on the duration of practice but also on the quality of practice strategies, self-regulation, concentration, and the ability to reflect on practice outcomes (How et al., 2022; Passarotto et al., 2022). The development of instruments for measuring *deliberate practice* further indicates that practice characterized by specific goals, feedback, and consistency is an important predictor of improvements in musical ability (Passarotto et al., 2022).

However, the findings of this study indicate that behaviorist and learning theories do not fully explain all of the findings, particularly the spiritual dimension of church music ministry. Individual practice is not understood solely as a process of skill development but also as a means of preparing the heart, developing spiritual responsibility, and understanding ministry as an act of worship. Thus, this study offers a distinctive perspective by demonstrating that individual practice in the context of church music is simultaneously technical and spiritual. Consequently, the success of music ministry is determined not only by mastery of musical techniques but also by mental readiness, practice discipline, ministry responsibility, and the spiritual commitment of each music minister.

3. Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of how individual practice contributes to the musical performance of music ministers at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan. This approach was selected because the study focuses on the musicians' subjective experiences, habituation processes, meanings of ministry, and understandings of the individual practice they undertake (Busetto et al., 2021; Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The study was conducted from October 2025 to April 2026 at GPDI Galilea, Sendangan Tengah Subdistrict, Kawangkoan District, Minahasa Regency, North Sulawesi Province.

The research participants consisted of musicians actively involved in the church's music ministry, including keyboard, electric guitar, bass, and drum players. Data were collected through direct observation, in-depth or semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observation was conducted to directly examine rehearsal processes and worship services. Interviews were used to explore the musicians' practices, experiences, and perceptions of individual practice, while documentation included photographs, videos, and personal notes related to the preparation of music ministry (Saldaña, 2021; Kiger & Varpio, 2020).

Data analysis followed the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification, as described in the thesis (Miles et al., 2020; Saldaña, 2021). Through these stages, the collected data were organized into major themes, including technical readiness, team cohesion, musical understanding, self-confidence, challenges in individual practice, strategies for overcoming these challenges, and the spiritual dimension of music ministry. This methodological structure is consistent with the journal template requirements, which call for an explanation of the research approach, participants, procedures, data collection techniques, and data analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Individual Practice and Improved Technical Readiness

The findings indicate that individual practice plays a significant role in improving the technical readiness of musicians at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan. Field observations revealed a clear difference between musicians who regularly practiced individually and those who did not practice consistently. Musicians who developed a habit of individual practice appeared more fluent, composed, and prepared during both group rehearsals and worship services. They no longer needed to spend considerable effort identifying chord progressions, guessing song structures, or following the basic tempo because these fundamental aspects had already been mastered through personal practice.

This finding is consistent with the concept of *deliberate practice*, which emphasizes structured, goal-oriented, effortful, and feedback-based practice as an important mechanism for improving performance (Ericsson et al., 1993). Rather than simply repeating a song, musicians who practice individually can focus on specific weaknesses and gradually improve particular aspects of their performance. A systematic review by How et al. (2022) also demonstrates that research on music practice increasingly emphasizes deliberate practice,

practice strategies, metacognition, self-regulation, and self-efficacy as important dimensions of effective musical development. Thus, the technical readiness observed at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan can be understood not merely as the result of repetition but as the result of repeated practice directed toward specific musical objectives.

From a technical perspective, each musician developed a different practice focus according to the characteristics of their instrument. Keyboard players repeatedly practiced chord progressions and chord transitions to ensure smooth movement, particularly in sections involving rapid changes. Electric guitarists focused on mastering chords, melodies, and dynamics so that they could improvise appropriately without disrupting the flow of worship. Bass players emphasized harmonic stability and their foundational role in maintaining the direction of the ensemble. Meanwhile, drummers repeatedly practiced specific sections of songs to maintain a stable tempo and ensure that transitions between verses could be performed without sudden rhythmic changes.

These findings demonstrate that individual practice functions as a process of skill individualization. Each musician not only learns the same songs but also translates them into specific technical requirements according to the function of their respective instrument. This interpretation corresponds with Schmidt and Gruber's (2024) finding that individual and collective practice are interconnected in popular music groups. Their study shows that prior mastery of individual musical contributions is an important basis for collective performance, because ensemble performance requires musicians to coordinate their movements and sound production with other members.

This study also highlights the development of motor automatization as an important outcome of individual practice. Through consistent repetition, musicians gradually internalize chord patterns, finger positions, rhythmic patterns, and song transitions. Consequently, during worship, musicians no longer need to focus excessively on the mechanical aspects of performance but can devote greater attention to ensemble integration and responses to the worship leader. Hidayatullah et al. (2024) similarly demonstrate that self-regulated instrumental practice involves planning, monitoring, and evaluating performance, allowing musicians to identify weaknesses and develop more effective practice strategies.

Therefore, individual practice at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan should not be understood merely as repeated playing of songs. It is a process through which musicians identify technical problems, develop instrument-specific solutions, monitor their progress, and gradually transform musical patterns into more stable performance habits. This process strengthens technical readiness and allows musicians to participate more effectively in worship.

4.2 Individual Practice and Music Team Cohesion

In addition to improving individual abilities, individual practice was found to have a substantial influence on music team cohesion. In church music ministry, performance quality is determined not only by each musician's individual ability but also by their capacity to listen, respond, and integrate with one another. This study found that teams whose members had practiced individually before group rehearsals tended to achieve musical synchronization more quickly. Rather than spending rehearsal time learning the basic structure of songs, they could immediately focus on synchronizing tempo, dynamics, musical nuances, and arrangements.

This finding is strongly supported by Schmidt and Gruber (2024), who found that individual and collective practice are closely interconnected among members of professional and semi-professional popular music bands. Their study emphasizes that individual mastery of a musician's contribution is a basic requirement for effective collective performance. Thus, the quality of group rehearsal depends partly on the level of preparation that each musician brings into the rehearsal process.

This condition is particularly important because church rehearsals are subject to time

constraints. If all musicians arrive without adequate preparation, rehearsal time is consumed by repeatedly reviewing basic song materials, causing the team's energy to be spent on matters that should already have been addressed individually. Conversely, when each musician arrives adequately prepared, group rehearsal becomes a space for synchronization and refinement of the performance. Individual practice therefore functions as a foundation for effective and efficient teamwork.

In an interview cited in the thesis, one musician emphasized that practicing individually at home helped the musicians identify and correct parts of the songs that were not yet accurate, including incorrect chords or *tutti* sections. This statement demonstrates that individual practice benefits not only the individual musician but also enhances their ability to contribute to team correction and development. Musicians who practice individually come to group rehearsals not merely as participants waiting for instructions but as active members capable of strengthening the quality of collective performance.

The relationship between individual preparation and group performance can also be understood through the broader literature on music practice. How et al. (2022) identify practice strategies and self-regulation as major themes in music practice research, while Miksza and Brenner (2023) demonstrate that advanced musicians' practice behavior involves changes in the way they organize and regulate their individual practice. These findings suggest that effective ensemble performance begins before musicians enter the rehearsal room, because individual preparation determines how efficiently they can respond to collective musical demands.

Theoretically, these findings can be explained through behaviorist and learning theories, which emphasize the formation of automatic responses through repetition. When each musician becomes familiar with their respective musical patterns, their responses to tempo changes, worship leader directions, or dynamic changes become considerably faster. Team cohesion therefore does not emerge solely from collective rehearsal but also from personal readiness that has been developed beforehand. For this reason, individual practice can be regarded as an important prerequisite for effective teamwork in church music ministry.

4.3 Individual Practice and Musical Understanding

Another important finding is that individual practice encourages musicians to develop deeper musical understanding. In worship music ministry, musicians need more than simply memorizing sequences of notes or chords. They must also understand song structure, the function of each section, the direction of dynamics, and how a song develops from beginning to end. The findings indicate that musicians who regularly practice individually demonstrate better understanding of the introduction, verse, chorus, bridge, ending, and points of harmonic change within a song.

This understanding provides a significant advantage in worship settings because church songs are often not performed rigidly according to the original recording. A worship leader may repeat a chorus, extend a worship section, change the dynamics, or move spontaneously into a bridge according to the atmosphere of the service. In such situations, musicians who merely memorize songs superficially may become confused. In contrast, musicians who possess a clear song map and understand the structure of a song can adapt more calmly and accurately.

Individual practice also provides opportunities for musicians to engage in reflective learning. The thesis indicates that some musicians develop the habit of taking notes on chord progressions, difficult sections, and specific transition markers as part of their individual practice. This habit demonstrates that musicians are not merely repeating musical material but are actively identifying problems and developing solutions. Such behavior corresponds with the self-regulated practice model described by Hidayatullah et al. (2024), in which musicians regulate learning through planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own

performance.

Passarotto et al. (2022) further emphasize that *deliberate practice* in music can be distinguished from unstructured or merely enjoyable playing because effective practice involves purposeful activities directed toward improvement. Therefore, the practice behaviors observed among musicians at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan—such as repeatedly working on difficult sections, noting chord changes, and identifying problematic transitions—can be interpreted as forms of purposeful and reflective practice.

The findings are also consistent with perspectives on music and expectation proposed by Huron and Levitin. Musical understanding allows musicians to anticipate what is likely to occur within a musical sequence and therefore respond more effectively to structural changes. In church music ministry, this ability is particularly important because worship leaders may extend, repeat, shorten, or modify sections of a song. Musicians who understand the internal structure of the song can respond to these changes more effectively than those who depend entirely on memorization.

Thus, individual practice contributes to the development of musicians who are not merely executors but also interpreters of musical structure. They become increasingly aware of what they are playing, why a particular section requires a particular dynamic, and how their instrument contributes to the overall musical expression. Musical understanding therefore represents an important bridge between technical mastery and expressive worship.

4.4 Individual Practice, Self-Confidence, and Performance Stability

This study also found that individual practice directly contributes to musicians' self-confidence during ministry. In this context, self-confidence refers not merely to the courage to perform but to the mental and emotional readiness that develops from mastery of the musical material. Musicians who had practiced beforehand tended to perform more calmly, were less nervous, and remained more focused during worship. They were less overwhelmed by the fear of making mistakes because they already had confidence that the fundamental material had been mastered.

This finding is supported by recent research on deliberate practice and performance outcomes. Hatfield and Williamon (2025), in a study of 281 aspiring professional musicians, found that greater involvement in deliberate practice was associated with greater perceived performance success and lower performance anxiety. Their findings indicate that deliberate practice is not exclusively a technical activity but can also be associated with psychological outcomes relevant to performance readiness.

In one interview excerpt, a musician stated that after practicing at home, they felt calmer when playing at church and could focus more on God rather than merely worrying about making mistakes. This statement illustrates the close relationship between technical readiness and mental-spiritual stability. When the technical aspects of performance are relatively secure, the musician's attention can shift from anxiety toward the experience of ministry.

This finding can also be related to the role of self-regulation in music practice. How et al. (2022) identify self-regulation and self-efficacy among the most frequently investigated topics in music-practice research. Individual practice allows musicians to monitor their own weaknesses before they are exposed to the social and psychological demands of public performance. The result is not necessarily the complete elimination of mistakes but greater confidence in responding to mistakes when they occur.

In addition to reducing nervousness, individual practice helps musicians remain stable when mistakes occur. In ministry practice, minor mistakes may still happen, such as entering at the wrong moment, missing a rhythm, or misreading a change in the song section. However, musicians who have practiced individually tend to recover more quickly and are less likely to panic. They possess an internal reserve of understanding and experience that enables them to return to the musical flow more rapidly than less-prepared musicians.

The self-confidence developed through individual practice also affects the overall quality of team performance. Musicians who are calm and confident in their respective parts can communicate more effectively through nonverbal cues, respond more sensitively to the worship leader's directions, and maintain worship dynamics more consistently. Conversely, musicians who are inadequately prepared tend to hesitate, frequently look to other musicians for cues, and panic more easily when unexpected changes occur.

Therefore, individual practice has a preventive function in maintaining the quality of ministry. Its contribution extends beyond technical correctness to psychological readiness and performance stability. This finding reinforces the argument that the quality of individual practice should be considered an important component of preparation for church music ministry.

4.5 Individual Practice and the Spiritual Dimension of Ministry

One of the most important findings of this study is that individual practice contributes not only to technical, musical, and psychological aspects but also carries profound spiritual meaning. In the context of GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan, individual practice is understood as part of preparing the heart before ministry, rather than merely as a means of presenting a polished performance before the congregation. The pastor of GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan emphasized that music ministry is not an opportunity to display musical skills but a ministry for God that must be prepared as thoroughly as possible, including through individual practice at home.

This finding is particularly relevant to recent research on church music in Indonesian Pentecostal contexts. Bemey (2026) argues that church music in Indonesian Pentecostalism functions not merely as liturgical accompaniment but also as a medium for spiritual experience, congregational participation, and character formation. Similarly, Purnama et al. (2025) demonstrate that music in GMIM worship operates at the intersection of liturgy, spirituality, cultural identity, and congregational participation. These findings provide a broader context for understanding why musical preparation in a Pentecostal church such as GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan may carry significance beyond technical performance.

The spiritual dimension identified in this study can therefore be interpreted as a form of ministry responsibility. A musician is not only expected to master an instrument but also to manage motivation, sincerity, discipline, and commitment to ministry. In another interview, one musician stated that individual practice is a form of responsibility for the abilities given by God and should not be regarded casually or undertaken carelessly. Thus, individual practice functions as a means of developing a serious, disciplined, and spiritually conscious ministry ethic.

The spiritual impact can be observed in several ways. First, individual practice helps musicians prepare their hearts before worship because, while repeatedly listening to and playing the songs, they can also reflect on the messages conveyed through the songs they will perform. Second, individual practice contributes to developing sincerity in ministry because musicians learn to evaluate themselves, recognize their weaknesses, and improve inadequate sections without always waiting for correction from others. Third, individual practice can influence the congregation's worship experience because orderly, sensitive, and calm musical performance can help congregants engage more deeply in worship.

This interpretation is consistent with Bemey's (2026) finding that church music can structure congregational participation and contribute to spiritual experience through musical repetition, emotional intensity, and collective practice. Consequently, technical preparation by musicians may indirectly contribute to the broader worship experience of the congregation. The musician's responsibility is therefore simultaneously musical and ministerial.

These findings also reveal the limitations of the behaviorist and learning theories used as the theoretical foundations of this study. These theories are adequate for explaining the

formation of habits, skills, and responses through repetition. However, they are insufficient to fully explain spirituality, worship consciousness, the meaning of ministry, and the relationship between music and worship that emerged strongly from the findings.

This is where the analytical contribution of the study lies. Individual practice in church music ministry should be understood as a multidimensional practice encompassing technical, musical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions. The technical dimension concerns mastery of the instrument; the musical dimension concerns interpretation and structural understanding; the psychological dimension concerns confidence and stability; the social dimension concerns coordination with the music team; and the spiritual dimension concerns responsibility, sincerity, and preparation for worship.

4.6 Barriers to Individual Practice and Strategies for Overcoming Them

Although individual practice provides substantial benefits, this study also found that its implementation is not always easy. The main barriers identified include limited access to musical instruments at home, limited time due to work, school, or family responsibilities, and differences in motivation and discipline among musicians. These barriers result in different levels of individual practice among team members. Consequently, some musicians arrive at group rehearsals adequately prepared, while others have not yet developed a sufficient understanding of the musical materials.

This finding demonstrates that effective practice is influenced not only by individual motivation but also by the availability of resources and the surrounding environment. Ericsson et al. (1993) already emphasized that the development of expert performance occurs through prolonged effort while individuals negotiate motivational and external constraints. In the context of GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan, these external constraints are visible in the availability of instruments, time, and opportunities to practice.

Limited access to musical instruments is a significant barrier, particularly for instruments such as drums, keyboards, and electric guitars. Not all musicians have complete instruments at home, meaning that individual practice may sometimes rely on supporting media such as listening to recordings, using available instruments, or practicing with alternative instruments. In one interview excerpt, a musician stated that they did not yet own an electric guitar for practicing at home and therefore used an acoustic guitar to continue practicing. This finding demonstrates that commitment to individual practice is not always determined by the availability of complete facilities but also by creativity in dealing with limitations.

Limited time is another dominant barrier. Some musicians only have opportunities to practice shortly before a worship service and must find time between other activities. Under such circumstances, repeatedly listening to song materials through a mobile phone becomes an important strategy for developing an initial understanding of song structures. Musicians also use personal notes and communication with other team members to clarify sections that remain unclear. The thesis records that some musicians use available time while traveling or between activities to listen to the songs that have been shared and then ask other musicians about sections they do not yet understand.

These strategies demonstrate that individual practice at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan has developed adaptively. In other words, individual practice does not always have to take place under ideal conditions but can be conducted in various forms according to each musician's circumstances. This finding is consistent with How et al. (2022), whose review portrays music practice as a multifaceted activity involving not only physical playing time but also strategies, mental practice, metacognition, self-regulation, and self-efficacy.

Schmidt and Gruber (2024) further demonstrate that individual and collective practice should not be viewed as separate activities but as mutually related components of musical development. This is particularly relevant to GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan because the limitations experienced by individual musicians can be addressed partly through

communication and cooperation within the team. Individual preparation reduces the burden on collective rehearsals, while collective rehearsals provide opportunities to resolve problems that cannot be addressed individually.

The findings therefore suggest that the solution to barriers in individual practice does not necessarily require ideal facilities. More important are realistic practice strategies, access to song materials before rehearsals, effective communication among team members, and a culture that encourages personal preparation. Hidayatullah et al. (2024) show that self-regulated practice can be developed through planning, monitoring, and evaluation even within an individual learning context. Such principles can be adapted to church music ministry by encouraging musicians to establish specific practice priorities before each worship service.

From a behaviorist perspective, environmental factors can support or hinder the formation of practice habits. However, this study demonstrates that spiritual motivation and commitment to ministry can also serve as driving forces that help musicians maintain individual practice despite facing various limitations. Individual practice at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan therefore represents not simply a technical obligation but a form of personal responsibility that connects musical preparation with collective service and spiritual commitment.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that individual practice has a multidimensional contribution to church music ministry. It improves technical readiness, strengthens musical understanding, facilitates team cohesion, enhances confidence and performance stability, and develops a sense of spiritual responsibility. At the same time, barriers such as limited instruments, restricted time, and differences in motivation require adaptive strategies. The central finding of this study is therefore that the quality of church music ministry is not determined solely by what musicians do during group rehearsals or worship services, but is substantially shaped by what each musician prepares individually before entering the collective musical space.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that individual practice plays a highly important role in improving the quality of musical performance in worship ministry at GPDI Galilea Kawangkoan. This role is reflected in improved technical readiness, the development of more stable playing habits, enhanced team cohesion, deeper musical understanding, and increased self-confidence among musicians during ministry. Individual practice also contributes to the spiritual dimension of ministry by helping musicians prepare their hearts, engage more deeply with the songs, and view music ministry as a form of responsibility to God.

Theoretically, the findings support Watson's behaviorist theory and Hilgard and Bower's learning theory in explaining the importance of repetition and habituation in the development of musical skills. However, the study also found that these theories do not fully explain the dimensions of spirituality, worship consciousness, and the meaning of ministry that develop through individual practice. Thus, the contribution of this study lies in expanding the understanding that individual practice in church music is not merely a technical activity but also a process of musical and spiritual formation.

This study has several limitations, particularly its focus on a single local church context and its use of a qualitative approach involving a limited number of participants. Therefore, future research could extend this study by comparing individual practice practices across different churches, examining their influence on congregants' worship experiences in greater depth, or employing more specific theoretical perspectives to explain the relationship between music, ministry, and spirituality.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

Authors' Contribution

Gratia Tumbelaka: Conceptualization, Investigation, Methodology, Data curation, Formal analysis, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

Glenie Latuni: Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Formal analysis, Writing – review & editing.

Widyata Sarayar: Investigation, Data curation, Formal analysis, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing.

All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Statement on the Use of AI

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools were not used to conduct data analysis, interpret research findings, or generate the research results. AI was used only for language editing and improvement of the manuscript's English language.

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