

Musical Aesthetic Dimensions in the Practice of Praise and Worship during the Sunday Morning Service at GBI Sekinah Glory

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze and describe the musical aesthetic dimensions manifested in the practice of praise and worship during the Sunday Morning Service at GBI Sekinah Glory, Karang Panjang, Ambon City, Maluku. Academic studies that specifically examine musical aesthetics in a technically measurable manner within the context of Charismatic church worship in Eastern Indonesia remain limited. This research seeks to address that scholarly gap. Employing a qualitative approach with a case study design, the study utilized two categories of data. The first consisted of musical data, including audio recordings, melodic transcriptions, chord progressions, instrumentation, and dynamic structures obtained through participatory observation and documentation. The second consisted of experiential and interpretive data collected through semi-structured interviews with nine informants. Musical data were manually transcribed from audio recordings and visualized using MuseScore 3.3.4. The analysis was informed by Hanslick's theory of musical formalism and Piston's theory of harmony as complementary analytical frameworks. The findings reveal that musical aesthetic dimensions are systematically manifested through melodic construction, harmonic construction, dynamic architecture, and instrumentation across the three songs analyzed. Each song demonstrates distinctive melodic and harmonic characteristics, including nondominant seventh chords, borrowed chords, modal degrees, added ninth chords, suspended fourth chords, and carefully designed dynamic architectures supported by musical scores as verifiable evidence. Furthermore, GBI Sekinah Glory exhibits three consistent aesthetic practices: the use of the piano as the central instrument, the gradual entry of accompanying instruments, and deliberate aesthetic consideration in chord selection. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on musical aesthetics in Charismatic worship and provides a significant scholarly contribution by representing the underexplored context of Eastern Indonesia.

Keywords: Musical aesthetics; praise and worship; Charismatic church; harmonic analysis; GBI Sekinah Glory.

INTRODUCTION

Music has been an inseparable component of Christian worship since the earliest existence of the Church. Its presence is not merely complementary to worship services but serves as a medium for expressing faith that embodies both artistic and spiritual significance. In this context, church music aesthetics may be understood as a branch of philosophy specifically concerned with the beauty of music within ecclesiastical settings. Such music is employed to support worship activities, strengthen congregational faith, and facilitate the Church's mission of fellowship, witness, and service (Handoko, 2022, p. 72). Furthermore, music functions within ritual contexts to support the spiritual dimension of human life. Religious communities, through their respective places of worship, continuously cultivate musical aesthetic values within their activities, including Christian worship services, whether through vocal music in the form of congregational singing or through instrumental accompaniment within liturgical music (Handoko, 2022, p. 73).

The rapid growth of Charismatic churches in Indonesia has contributed a distinctive character to contemporary worship music practices. Within the

Charismatic worship tradition, two interconnected yet distinct forms of musical expression are commonly recognized: praise and worship. Drawing on Ingalls, praise refers to communal musical expressions that are energetic, celebratory, and highly expressive, whereas worship refers to expressions that are more personal, intimate, and contemplative. Together, these forms constitute a goal-oriented liturgical progression designed to facilitate an encounter between the congregation and God (Ingalls, 2015, p. 7). Despite the central role that praise and worship have assumed within Indonesian Charismatic churches, scholarly understanding of how their musical aesthetic constructions are formed and function within specific local church contexts remains limited. This gap in academic attention provides the primary motivation for investigating the phenomenon within the context of GBI Sekinah Glory.

This reality can be observed concretely in the worship practices of GBI Sekinah Glory. Located on Pitu Ina Street, Karang Panjang, Ambon City, Maluku, and serving approximately 225 active members, GBI Sekinah Glory places music at the center of its worship practices. Preliminary

observations conducted on March 22, 2026, indicated that the church's praise and worship practices are built upon a consciously designed musical-aesthetic construction. This was affirmed by the senior pastor, who emphasized that the quality of music reflects the sincerity of ministry (Pdt. Rosdiana Nainggolan, personal communication, March 22, 2026). Such a statement provides important contextual support for the present investigation into musical aesthetics. At the same time, preliminary interviews revealed that no previous academic study had specifically examined the musical aesthetic dimensions of praise and worship practices at GBI Sekinah Glory through a technical and measurable analytical approach. This circumstance further reinforces the urgency and relevance of the present study.

Although scholarly studies on music in Indonesian Charismatic worship have continued to develop, analyses that specifically investigate the technical and measurable construction of musical aesthetics within a particular local church context remain scarce. Wijayanto (2015), for example, examined musical strategies in praise and worship rituals from a performing arts perspective, providing substantial discussion of musical elements such as genre, harmony, and dynamics. However, the study was general in scope and did not focus specifically on musical aesthetics within a particular local church setting. Similarly, Wijoyo (2014), in his study of GBI Gajah Mada Semarang, analyzed the forms and functions of praise and worship music, yet his aesthetic discussion remained largely functional and did not explore harmonic construction, dynamic architecture, or instrumentation in depth. Handoko (2022), meanwhile, discussed church music aesthetics from a broader theological perspective but did not specifically investigate praise and worship practices within a particular Charismatic congregation using measurable musical analysis. In other words, no previous study has specifically analyzed the technical and measurable construction of harmony, dynamics, and instrumentation within the praise and worship practices of a particular local Charismatic church. This scholarly gap constitutes the principal point of departure for the present research.

Furthermore, existing studies have generally concentrated on churches located in Java and other major urban centers, resulting in limited scholarly attention toward Charismatic churches in Eastern Indonesia, including those in Maluku. To date, no

study has specifically examined the musical aesthetic construction of praise and worship practices at GBI Sekinah Glory. This absence represents a significant academic gap, particularly because each local church possesses distinctive musical-aesthetic characteristics and worship practices that cannot simply be generalized from studies conducted elsewhere.

A review of existing literature demonstrates that research on musical aesthetics within Christian worship has developed along multiple directions. In order to position the present study more systematically within the existing scholarly landscape, it is necessary to examine relevant previous studies and identify the unresolved academic gap that forms the rationale for this investigation.

Research on church music aesthetics has shown that music within worship contexts possesses objective and measurable aesthetic dimensions rather than functioning merely as a subjective ritual accompaniment. Miller and Strongman (2002, p. 9) demonstrated that the structural composition of music contains identifiable aesthetic foundations. Through the analysis of melody, harmony, rhythm, and dynamics, researchers can determine specific musical components that possess distinct aesthetic qualities. Their findings suggest that musical beauty within worship is not entirely subjective but rests upon measurable structural foundations that can be examined through scholarly inquiry.

Within the specific context of Charismatic worship, Wijayanto (2015, p. 125) observed that Charismatic musical practices are shaped by structured aesthetic constructions and distinctive stylistic identities, including the use of popular music genres, electric instrumentation, basic harmonic frameworks enriched by parallel harmonies, simple melodic phrases, and highly expressive dynamic contours. Such findings suggest that musical choices within Charismatic worship are not arbitrary but rather reflect identifiable aesthetic identities that can be examined academically.

Nevertheless, studies that specifically investigate harmonic construction, dynamic architecture, and instrumentation within praise and worship practices at a particular local Charismatic church—especially within the context of Eastern Indonesia—remain extremely limited. No study has yet examined these dimensions at GBI Sekinah

Glory. Accordingly, the present research seeks to address this scholarly gap through a concrete and academically rigorous investigation.

Through the background and problem identification presented above, this study aims to analyze the musical aesthetic dimensions reflected in the musical elements of praise and worship during the Sunday Morning Service at GBI Sekinah Glory. Specifically, the investigation focuses on musical elements such as harmony, dynamics, and instrumentation. Based on this objective, the study is guided by the following research question: **How are the dimensions of musical aesthetics manifested in the musical elements of praise and worship during the Sunday Morning Service at GBI Sekinah Glory?**

This study deliberately limits its scope to the objective and measurable dimensions of musical aesthetics. Such a limitation should not be interpreted as a methodological weakness but rather as a conscious research decision. The present article constitutes one component of a broader master's thesis project, within which only a single research problem is addressed, namely the dimension of musical aesthetics. Other aspects, including music theology, the integration of aesthetics and theology, and congregational religious experience, will be examined comprehensively within the larger thesis. This delimitation also preserves the integrity of the musicological analysis by maintaining its focus on intrinsic musical structures, consistent with Hanslick's formalist philosophical position, which serves as the primary theoretical foundation of this study.

To address the research question systematically, this study employs two complementary theoretical frameworks as analytical lenses. These frameworks were selected because each contributes a distinct yet mutually supportive perspective for examining musical aesthetics in an objective and measurable manner.

First, the study draws upon Hanslick's theory of musical formalism as articulated in *On the Musically Beautiful* (1854). Hanslick argues that musical beauty is objective and intrinsic, deriving entirely from the relationships among tones and the artistic connections established between them rather than from external meanings or emotions projected onto the music. This framework is utilized to examine how musical aesthetic

dimensions are manifested through harmonic construction, dynamic movement, and instrumentation within the praise and worship practices of GBI Sekinah Glory.

To complement the aesthetic analysis with a more technically grounded musicological perspective, the study also employs Piston's theory of harmony (1987), particularly his concepts of harmonic progression, harmonic rhythm, modulation, and nondominant harmony. These concepts provide a technical framework for explaining the structural organization of musical elements and for accounting musicologically for the harmonic choices found within the praise and worship repertoire of GBI Sekinah Glory.

This study explicitly offers three forms of scholarly novelty that distinguish it from previous research. First, it represents the first study of Indonesian Charismatic worship music to analyze musical aesthetic dimensions through the combined application of Hanslick's theory of musical formalism and Piston's theory of harmony as complementary analytical frameworks. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, this integrated approach has not previously been applied within the context of Indonesian Charismatic worship music.

Second, the study addresses a significant gap in the academic literature through its research locus, namely GBI Sekinah Glory. As a contemporary Charismatic church located in Eastern Indonesia, GBI Sekinah Glory provides a context that has received little scholarly attention. The study therefore contributes to expanding the geographical and cultural scope of research on Charismatic worship practices beyond the dominant focus on churches in Java and major metropolitan areas, particularly by representing the context of Maluku.

Third, the study provides verifiable musical evidence through musical scores generated from manual transcriptions of worship audio recordings. These scores function as objective analytical foundations that strengthen the validity of the aesthetic claims advanced in this study. At the same time, the inclusion of accessible musical documentation creates opportunities for future researchers to replicate or extend similar analyses in other Charismatic church contexts.

Taken together, these contributions position the present study as both a theoretical and empirical advancement in the study of musical aesthetics

within Christian worship. By integrating philosophical aesthetics, musicological analysis, and contextual worship practices, this research seeks to deepen scholarly understanding of how musical beauty is constructed and experienced within contemporary Charismatic worship settings.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. The case study design was selected because the research focuses on a specific case, namely the practice of praise and worship during the Sunday Morning Service at GBI Sekinah Glory. According to Zaluchu (2020, p. 32), qualitative research predominantly utilizes descriptive forms of data, including interview records, field observation reports, conversation transcripts, and observational notes, which are subsequently organized into analytical narratives. Given the objective of exploring musical aesthetic dimensions within a particular worship context, the qualitative case study approach was considered the most appropriate methodological framework.

The study involved nine informants representing four different groups. These consisted of one worship leader, Reni Tetelepta; two church musicians, Mordekai Silahooy and Gerald Maail; five congregational members, namely Tinetjoa, Christin Talahatu, Syearon Uktolseya, Thesya Usmany, and Alberthina; and one senior pastor, Pdt. Rosdiana Nainggolan. Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on different criteria for each participant group. The worship leader and church musicians were selected because they had actively served at GBI Sekinah Glory for a minimum of two years and were therefore considered to possess substantial knowledge of the church's praise and worship practices. The five congregational informants were selected based on the researcher's observations during worship services, specifically focusing on individuals who demonstrated the highest levels of engagement and participation during praise and worship sessions. The senior pastor was chosen as a key informant due to her position as the highest ecclesiastical authority within the congregation and her comprehensive theological and pastoral understanding of worship practices at GBI Sekinah Glory.

Data collection was conducted in three stages. The first stage took place on March 22, 2026, and consisted of preliminary observation accompanied by an initial interview with the senior pastor to obtain an overview of praise and worship practices

at the church. The second stage was conducted on April 10, 2026, and involved follow-up observations as well as interviews with the worship leader and two church musicians. The third stage occurred on April 12, 2026, during the Sunday Morning Service held at 09:00 Eastern Indonesian Time (WIT). This stage included direct observation of the worship service, interviews with the five congregational informants, and a follow-up interview with the senior pastor.

The data collected in this study were categorized into two complementary types. The first category consisted of musical data, including worship audio recordings used as audio references, melodic scores, and chord progressions obtained through participatory observation and documentation during the Sunday Morning Service of April 12, 2026. Musical data were manually transcribed from audio recordings through the identification of vocal melodies and chord progressions. The resulting transcriptions were subsequently visualized in the form of musical scores using MuseScore version 3.3.4.

The second category consisted of experiential and interpretive data, encompassing the perspectives and experiences of worship participants. These data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with the nine informants, including the worship leader, church musicians, congregational members, and senior pastor. The two categories of data were analyzed through different yet complementary approaches. Musical data were examined using Hanslick's theory of musical formalism (2018) and Piston's theory of harmony (1987) as technical musicological frameworks, whereas experiential and interpretive data were analyzed as liturgical-pastoral responses that enriched the contextual understanding of the musical-aesthetic findings.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted using a prepared interview guide. Each interview lasted approximately fifteen to twenty-five minutes, resulting in a total interview duration of approximately two to three hours. Observation, interviews, and documentation were applied simultaneously to the same data sources. As explained by Sugiyono (cited in Alfansyur, 2020, p. 149), researchers may combine observation, interviews, and documentation in order to obtain more credible conclusions.

The trustworthiness of the data was ensured through two complementary triangulation

strategies. First, source triangulation was employed by comparing information obtained from different participant groups, namely the worship leader, church musicians, congregational members, and senior pastor. According to Alfansyur (2020, p. 149), source triangulation involves cross-checking information by comparing data derived from multiple sources. Second, methodological triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained through three different data collection techniques—semi-structured interviews, participatory observation, and documentation—applied to the same sources in order to verify the consistency of the findings.

In addition, member checking was conducted by returning the research findings to the informants for confirmation, ensuring that the researcher's interpretations accurately reflected the meanings and experiences conveyed by participants. Prior to the commencement of the study, official permission was obtained from the senior pastor of GBI Sekinah Glory. All informants participated voluntarily and were fully informed about the purpose of the research, thereby fulfilling the ethical requirements of the study.

Data analysis followed the three-stage model proposed by Sahir (2021, pp. 20–22), consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected and focused on relevant information from interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentation. The data were subsequently categorized according to the primary theme corresponding to the research question, namely the musical aesthetic dimensions of praise and worship practices during the Sunday Morning Service at GBI Sekinah Glory, including harmonic construction, dynamics, and instrumentation. Data unrelated to this theme were excluded to maintain analytical focus.

During the data display stage, the reduced findings were presented through a combination of descriptive narratives and musical analysis tables. The musical analysis tables were constructed according to the principle of differentiation, whereby each table contained only those harmonic elements that were genuinely distinctive and capable of differentiating one song from another. This approach ensured that the analysis remained non-repetitive while highlighting the unique aesthetic construction of each song. Descriptive narratives were subsequently used to interpret the

technical findings through Hanslick's aesthetic framework.

Finally, during the conclusion drawing and verification stage, conclusions derived from recurring patterns within the data were continuously re-examined against the original field data. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentation were revisited to ensure that all conclusions remained firmly grounded in empirical evidence rather than reflecting subjective interpretation alone.

RESULTS

Worship Flow Structure and Song Selection

Structurally, the praise and worship session during the Sunday Morning Service was organized according to a predetermined worship flow with a total duration of approximately forty minutes. The worship leader explained that song selection is consistently aligned with the worship theme established by the senior pastor, with each song intentionally chosen to support and reinforce the central message of the service. Furthermore, the sequence of songs follows an established liturgical pattern in which the opening song focuses on exalting God, gradually progressing toward worship songs that are more personal and intimate in character (Reni Tetelepta, personal communication, April 10, 2026).

During the Sunday Morning Service held on April 12, 2026, three songs were identified within the praise and worship session: *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini* ("Victory Happens Here") as the opening song, *Sukacitaku* ("My Joy") as the praise song, and *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* ("Though the Mountains Are Not Moved") as the worship song that served as a transition toward the sermon. It should be emphasized that these songs were not composed by GBI Sekinah Glory itself but are contemporary Christian worship songs that are widely used within Indonesian churches. Nevertheless, the manner in which GBI Sekinah Glory performs and presents these songs demonstrates distinctive aesthetic characteristics that become evident through analyses of melody, harmony, dynamics, and performance structure.

The instrumentation employed during the praise and worship session consisted of piano, bass guitar, drums, and filler instruments. The piano functioned as the central instrument throughout the worship service, while the remaining instruments entered progressively according to the dynamic

requirements of each song (Mord Silahooy, personal communication, April 10, 2026).

Technical Findings: “Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini”

The first song analyzed was *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini*, performed in the key of G major at a tempo of $\text{♩} = 65$.

From a melodic perspective, the song spans a range from A3 to B4, covering fourteen semitones. The melodic contour follows an arch-shaped trajectory, beginning in the lower register, gradually ascending toward its highest pitch, and subsequently descending toward resolution. The melody is predominantly conjunct, progressing smoothly through stepwise motion.

From a harmonic perspective, the verse progression consists of:

G — GM7 — Bm7 — Am7 — D

while the chorus progression consists of:

G — D/F# — Em7 — CM7 — C — Am7 — D7

The most distinctive harmonic elements are the appearance of GM7 in measures 1–2 and E \flat M7 in measure 8. These harmonic choices contribute a unique color and richness to the song’s harmonic language.

From a dynamic perspective, the song exhibits a gradual progression from mezzo piano (mp) during the verse section to forte (f) at its climactic point.

Table 1: Technical Analysis of “Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini”

Element	Chord	Technical Function	Theoretical Analysis and Interpretation
Tonic Seventh	GM7 (I ⁷)	Nondominant seventh chord	“Their relative importance as harmonic effects should be taken into account” (Piston, 1987, p. 228). GM7 produces a richer harmonic texture than a conventional G major triad while retaining its tonic function as the tonal center.
Borrowed Chord	E \flat M7	Harmonic color	“The procedure gave harmonic color by the addition of new notes and increased the sense of direction and movement in the harmony” (Piston, 1987, p. 151). E \flat M7 is borrowed from the parallel key of G minor. All of its tones (E \flat , G, B \flat , D) lie outside the G major scale, producing the most dramatic and unexpected harmonic coloration within the song.

Technical Findings: “Sukacitaku”

The second song analyzed was *Sukacitaku*, performed in the key of D major at a tempo of $\text{♩} = 120$, making it the fastest song among the three compositions examined in this study.

Its musical character is established immediately from the opening measure through the entrance of the drum set without any preceding instrumental introduction. From a melodic perspective, the song spans a complete octave, ranging from B3 to B4 (twelve semitones). The melodic contour is consistently undulating throughout the song, characterized by continuous ascending and descending motion without a single dominant melodic peak. The highly conjunct melodic movement, combined with the fast tempo, creates a melodic rhythm that is energetic and continuously active.

From a harmonic perspective, the verse progression consists of:

Gadd9 — Em7 — CM7 — Dsus4 (measures 1–8)

while the pre-chorus progression consists of:

Cadd9 — Gadd9 — CM7 — Em7 — D (measures 17–23).

Unlike the previous song, *Sukacitaku* contains no modulation. The key of D major is maintained throughout the entire composition. Musical intensity is generated through harmonic rhythm and progressively increasing dynamics rather than tonal shifts. The dynamic trajectory develops from mezzo piano (mp) during the verse to fortissimo (ff) during the third chorus.

Technical Findings: “Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah”

The third song analyzed was *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah*, performed in the key of D major at a tempo of $\text{♩} = 65$.

From a melodic perspective, the song spans the widest range among the three compositions analyzed, extending from F#3 to B4 and covering seventeen semitones. The melodic contour follows an arch-shaped structure, beginning in the lower register, gradually ascending toward its highest point, and subsequently descending toward

resolution. Unlike the previous two songs, this composition incorporates several disjunct melodic intervals within the chorus section, creating greater melodic contrast and expressive variation. The predominance of longer note values contributes to a slower and more flowing melodic character.

From a harmonic perspective, the verse progression consists of:

D — Em/G — C#/A — Bm7 — A/F#m — Em7 (measures 1–6)

while the chorus progression consists of:

F#m — Em — A — D — A/C# — Bm7 (measures 14–19).

Two harmonic features distinguish this song from the previous compositions. First, it incorporates two modal degree chords simultaneously, namely Bm7 (vi⁷) and F#m (iii). Second, it exhibits the most extensive and consistent use of

slash chords, including Em/G, C#/A, A/F#m, A/C#, and D/F#. These harmonic choices contribute to smoother bass-line movement and create a richer harmonic texture.

From a dynamic perspective, the song displays a five-stage dynamic architecture:

piano → mezzo piano → mezzo forte → forte → piano

This structure differs from the previous songs because the dynamic intensity gradually rises toward a climax before returning to a quiet conclusion. The song begins with solo piano accompaniment, expands into a full-band texture at the climactic sections, and concludes once again with solo piano, creating a symmetrical dynamic design.

Table 2: Technical Analysis of “Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah”

Element	Chord	Technical Function	Theoretical Analysis and Interpretation
Modal Degrees	Bm7 (vi ⁷) + F#m (iii)	Dual modal degrees	“Mediant and submediant are called the modal degrees. They have very little effect on the tonality but suggest the mode, since they are different in major and minor” (Piston, 1987, p. 32). The simultaneous use of Bm7 and F#m enriches harmonic color without displacing the tonal center of D major.
Slash Chords	Em/G — C#/A — A/F#m — A/C# — D/F#	Layered inversions	“What is sought particularly is smoothness” (Piston, 1987, p. 20). These chord inversions create the smoothest and most consistent bass-line movement among the three songs analyzed.

Verifiable Musical Evidence

The complete musical scores of the three songs analyzed in this study, together with the audio recordings of the Sunday Morning Service at GBI Sekinah Glory on April 12, 2026, are accessible through the QR code provided below. These

materials serve as verifiable musical evidence supporting all technical findings presented in this study. Complete chord progressions for each section of the songs are included within the score documentation.



Figure 1: QR Code Providing Access to Musical Scores and Worship Audio Recordings of GBI Sekinah Glory.

Comparative Analysis of the Three Songs

To facilitate a clearer understanding of the distinctive musical characteristics of each

composition, Table 3 summarizes the principal melodic, harmonic, dynamic, and instrumental features identified through the analysis.

Table 3: Comparative Analysis of the Three Songs

Musical Element	Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini	Sukacitaku	Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah
Key	G Major	D Major	D Major
Tempo	$\text{♩} = 65$	$\text{♩} = 120$	$\text{♩} = 65$
Melodic Range	A3–B4	B3–B4	F#3–B4
Number of Semitones	14	12	17
Melodic Contour	Arch	Undulating	Arch
Melodic Motion	Conjunct	Highly Conjunct	Conjunct + Disjunct
Distinctive Chords	GM7 + E \flat M7	Gadd9 + Dsus4	Bm7 + F#m + Slash Chords
Modulation	Present	Absent	Present
Dynamic Structure	mp \rightarrow f	mp \rightarrow ff	p \rightarrow f \rightarrow p
Instrumentation Pattern	Piano \rightarrow Gradual Band Entry	Immediate Drum Entrance	Piano Solo \rightarrow Full Band \rightarrow Piano Solo

The comparative analysis reveals that each song possesses a unique musical identity despite functioning within a unified liturgical progression. *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini* emphasizes harmonic color through the use of borrowed harmony and nondominant seventh chords. *Sukacitaku* generates musical energy through rapid tempo, harmonic rhythm, and progressive dynamic growth without modulation. In contrast, *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* achieves its aesthetic effect through modal degree chords, layered slash-chord structures, and a carefully designed five-phase dynamic architecture.

These findings demonstrate that the praise and worship practices at GBI Sekinah Glory are not constructed randomly but rather exhibit deliberate musical-aesthetic planning manifested through melodic organization, harmonic construction, dynamic design, and instrumentation strategies.

DISCUSSION

Musical Aesthetic Dimensions in Praise and Worship Practice

The analysis of praise and worship practices during the Sunday Morning Service at GBI Sekinah Glory demonstrates that musical aesthetic dimensions are manifested systematically and intentionally through three principal components: melodic construction, harmonic construction, and the organization of dynamics and instrumentation. These components do not emerge randomly but are arranged according to a structured liturgical progression that moves from praise to worship and ultimately leads into the preaching of the Word. Within this progression, each song exhibits distinct melodic, harmonic, and dynamic characteristics corresponding to its specific liturgical

function. *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini* functions as an opening song that establishes an atmosphere of exaltation, *Sukacitaku* serves as a praise song that encourages communal participation and celebration, and *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* functions as a worship song that guides the congregation toward a more contemplative state prior to the sermon. As explained by the worship leader, the sequence of songs follows an established worship structure intentionally designed to support the flow of the service (Reni Tetelepta, personal communication, April 10, 2026).

In examining these musical aesthetic dimensions, this study employs the harmonic terminology and analytical concepts proposed by Piston (1987) as technical musicological references, while their aesthetic significance is interpreted through Hanslick's philosophical framework. Hanslick (2018) argues that genuine musical beauty is "independent and not in need of an external content, something that resides solely in the tones and their artistic connection." According to this perspective, musical beauty emerges from the internal relationships among tones rather than from external meanings imposed upon them. The findings of this study support this proposition by demonstrating that aesthetic value within the praise and worship practices of GBI Sekinah Glory can be identified objectively through measurable musical structures, including melodic contour, harmonic organization, dynamic architecture, and instrumentation.

This interpretation is consistent with the perspective of the senior pastor, who emphasized that "the quality of music reflects the sincerity of ministry" (Pdt. Rosdiana Nainggolan, personal

communication, March 22, 2026). Although this statement emerges from a pastoral context, it indirectly acknowledges that musical quality constitutes an integral component of worship practice. The findings therefore suggest that musical aesthetics should not be viewed merely as decorative embellishment but rather as an essential dimension of worship that contributes to the overall organization and effectiveness of liturgical experience.

The present findings also resonate with Miller and Strongman's (2002) argument that music possesses objective structural properties capable of generating identifiable aesthetic effects. Through analyses of melody, harmony, rhythm, and dynamics, the researchers demonstrated that musical beauty may be examined through concrete structural characteristics rather than being reduced entirely to subjective emotional responses. Similarly, the musical structures identified within the praise and worship practices of GBI Sekinah Glory reveal deliberate aesthetic planning that can be analyzed and described using musicological methods.

Furthermore, the findings support Wijayanto's (2015) observation that Charismatic worship music is characterized by distinctive musical identities involving popular music influences, structured harmonic frameworks, and expressive dynamic movement. However, while Wijayanto's study examined these characteristics from a broader performing arts perspective, the present study extends this discussion by providing detailed technical analyses of harmony, dynamics, and instrumentation within a specific local church context. Through the use of transcribed musical scores and verifiable musical evidence, the present study offers a more precise account of how musical aesthetic dimensions are constructed and realized in practice.

Taken together, these findings indicate that the musical aesthetics of praise and worship at GBI Sekinah Glory are neither incidental nor purely subjective. Rather, they emerge from deliberate musical decisions that shape the organization of melodic movement, harmonic progression, dynamic architecture, and instrumental interaction. In this respect, the aesthetic character of worship music can be understood as a structured musical phenomenon that is accessible to scholarly analysis while remaining fully integrated within the broader liturgical context of Christian worship.

Analysis of "Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini"

As the opening song of the Sunday Morning Service, *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini* functions to establish an atmosphere of exaltation and anticipation. The song's aesthetic effectiveness is grounded in the interaction between its melodic structure, harmonic design, and dynamic development. From a melodic perspective, the arch-shaped contour extending from A3 to B4 creates a sense of gradual ascent and release. The predominance of conjunct motion contributes to melodic smoothness and accessibility, enabling the congregation to participate comfortably while maintaining a sense of musical direction. Hanslick (2018, p. 40) identifies melody as one of the primary manifestations of musical beauty, arguing that aesthetic value emerges through the organization of tones themselves. The melodic construction of this song exemplifies such a principle through its coherent and internally balanced movement.

From a harmonic perspective, the song demonstrates a richer harmonic vocabulary than a conventional worship song based solely on primary triads. The appearance of GM7 in measures 1–2 introduces a nondominant seventh chord that enriches the tonal texture while preserving the stability of the tonic function. According to Piston (1987, p. 228), nondominant seventh chords contribute important harmonic effects that extend beyond basic functional harmony. In this context, GM7 provides warmth and harmonic depth without disrupting tonal coherence.

The most distinctive harmonic event occurs with the appearance of E♭ M7 in measure 8. As a borrowed chord derived from the parallel minor key, E♭ M7 introduces a striking harmonic color that contrasts sharply with the surrounding tonal environment. Piston (1987, p. 151) notes that borrowed harmony expands harmonic color through the introduction of tones outside the prevailing key structure, thereby increasing the listener's sense of direction and movement. The presence of E♭ M7 exemplifies this principle by creating a moment of harmonic surprise that enhances the expressive richness of the composition.

From Hanslick's perspective, the significance of this harmonic event does not depend upon external associations or emotional narratives but resides in the intrinsic relationship between the tones themselves. The contrast between the stable tonic

environment and the unexpected borrowed harmony generates an aesthetic effect that emerges directly from the musical structure. Consequently, the beauty of the passage can be understood as a product of tonal relationships rather than as a reflection of extra-musical meanings.

The interview findings further support this interpretation. Gerald Maail explained that harmonic choices are made intentionally, particularly in sections where greater harmonic richness is desired. This observation suggests that harmonic variation within the song is not accidental but results from conscious aesthetic decision-making. The deliberate use of GM7 and E \flat M7 demonstrates how musical beauty is constructed through carefully selected harmonic relationships that contribute to the overall aesthetic identity of the worship experience.

Taken together, the melodic contour, harmonic color, and dynamic progression of *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini* reveal a carefully designed musical structure that aligns with its liturgical function as an opening song. The song illustrates how aesthetic value may emerge from the organization of musical elements themselves, thereby supporting Hanslick's assertion that musical beauty is rooted in the internal logic of musical form.

Analysis of "Sukacitaku"

Among the three songs analyzed, *Sukacitaku* exhibits the highest level of kinetic energy through its fast tempo, highly conjunct melodic movement, and progressively intensifying dynamic structure. Functioning as the principal praise song within the worship sequence, it is designed to encourage collective participation and joyful expression. Its musical identity is established immediately through the entrance of the drum set at the beginning of the song, creating an energetic atmosphere from the opening measure.

The melodic construction of *Sukacitaku* differs significantly from that of *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini*. Rather than following a clear arch-shaped contour, the melody exhibits a consistently undulating pattern characterized by continuous upward and downward motion. The absence of a single dominant melodic climax contributes to a sense of perpetual movement. Hanslick (2018, p. 41) argues that the content of music consists of "forms moving in sound," and this song provides a

particularly clear example of such movement through its uninterrupted melodic activity.

From a harmonic perspective, the song derives much of its aesthetic character from the use of Gadd9, Cadd9, and Dsus4. The added ninth chords introduce harmonic tones that enrich the texture without fundamentally altering the underlying harmonic function. According to Piston (1987, p. 228), such harmonic additions contribute distinctive harmonic effects that enhance the aesthetic quality of a musical passage. The resulting sonority is more spacious and resonant than that produced by conventional triadic harmony.

Similarly, Dsus4 functions as a suspended chord that delays harmonic resolution by temporarily replacing the third of the dominant chord with the fourth scale degree. This creates a sense of anticipation that encourages forward harmonic movement. Piston (1987, p. 18) emphasizes that dominant-to-tonic resolution remains one of the most satisfying harmonic gestures in tonal music, and the suspended fourth chord intensifies this satisfaction by postponing the expected resolution.

A particularly noteworthy feature of *Sukacitaku* is its ability to generate increasing musical intensity without employing modulation. Whereas many worship songs rely on key changes to create climactic effects, this composition maintains D major throughout its entire structure. Instead, musical energy is produced through harmonic rhythm, increasing instrumental density, and progressive dynamic growth from mezzo piano to fortissimo. This demonstrates that aesthetic intensity can emerge through structural organization rather than through tonal displacement.

From a Hanslickian perspective, the song's aesthetic power resides in the continuous transformation of musical relationships rather than in any external emotional narrative. The interaction between melodic motion, harmonic rhythm, and dynamic escalation generates a self-sufficient musical beauty grounded in the formal organization of sound. This finding reinforces Hanslick's contention that musical meaning is located primarily within the relationships among tones and their artistic arrangement.

The worship leader's explanation that *Sukacitaku* was selected because of its capacity to generate enthusiasm and participation further illustrates the connection between musical

structure and liturgical function. The song's energetic tempo, harmonic richness, and dynamic progression collectively contribute to its effectiveness as a praise song while simultaneously demonstrating a coherent and measurable aesthetic design.

Analysis of “Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah”

As the final song in the praise and worship sequence, *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* serves a distinct liturgical function. Unlike the preceding songs, which emphasize exaltation and communal celebration, this composition facilitates a transition toward a more reflective and contemplative atmosphere in preparation for the preaching of the Word. Its aesthetic construction is evident from the opening measures, where the song begins with solo piano accompaniment before gradually expanding into a fuller ensemble texture. This design immediately establishes a musical environment characterized by restraint, spaciousness, and gradual development.

From a melodic perspective, the song exhibits the widest melodic range among the three compositions analyzed, extending from F#3 to B4 and covering seventeen semitones. Similar to *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini*, the melodic contour follows an arch-shaped structure in which the melody ascends gradually toward a climactic point before descending toward resolution. However, unlike the previous songs, *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* incorporates several disjunct intervals within the chorus section. These larger melodic leaps introduce moments of contrast and expressive emphasis within an otherwise predominantly conjunct melodic framework.

Hanslick (2018, p. 43) describes musical beauty as emerging from internally organized tonal forms that possess their own intrinsic logic and coherence. The melodic structure of *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* illustrates this principle through its carefully balanced combination of conjunct motion, occasional disjunct leaps, and extended note values. Rather than relying on external associations, the melody generates aesthetic interest through its internal organization and proportional design.

From a harmonic perspective, the song contains two distinctive features that are absent from the previous compositions. The first is the simultaneous use of the modal degree chords Bm7 (vi⁷) and F#m (iii). According to Piston (1987, p.

32), the mediant and submediant are referred to as modal degrees because they contribute modal coloration while exerting relatively little influence on tonal stability. In this composition, the use of Bm7 and F#m enriches the harmonic palette without displacing D major as the tonal center. Their presence deepens the harmonic texture and introduces subtle modal inflections that contribute to the song's contemplative character.

The second distinctive feature is the extensive use of slash chords, including Em/G, C#/A, A/F#m, A/C#, and D/F#. These harmonic inversions create smooth and continuous bass-line movement, producing a greater sense of harmonic fluidity. Piston (1987, p. 20) emphasizes that one of the principal goals of harmonic voice leading is smoothness, and the consistent use of inversions within this song exemplifies that principle. Compared with the other two songs analyzed, *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* exhibits the most sophisticated and sustained application of inversion techniques.

The dynamic structure of the song further contributes to its aesthetic distinctiveness. Unlike the linear dynamic growth observed in *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini* and *Sukacitaku*, this composition follows a five-phase dynamic architecture:

$p \rightarrow mp \rightarrow mf \rightarrow f \rightarrow p$

This design creates a complete dynamic journey in which intensity gradually increases toward a climactic point before returning to a quiet conclusion. Hanslick (2018) characterizes musical movement as a process of ascent and descent, expansion and contraction. The dynamic architecture of *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* exemplifies this principle through its symmetrical progression from stillness to fullness and back to stillness. The aesthetic effect emerges not from external emotional symbolism but from the formal organization of dynamic relationships within the composition itself.

Instrumentation also plays a crucial role in shaping the song's aesthetic identity. The worship musicians explained that the piano functions as the central instrument throughout all worship settings at GBI Sekinah Glory. In this particular composition, the decision to begin and conclude with solo piano accompaniment was made deliberately as part of the overall aesthetic design of the worship experience (Mord Silahooy, personal communication, April 10, 2026). The

piano therefore serves not merely as an accompanying instrument but as an organizing musical force that frames the entire dynamic trajectory of the song.

From a broader aesthetic perspective, *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* demonstrates how musical beauty can emerge through the interaction of melodic structure, harmonic sophistication, dynamic architecture, and instrumental design. The combination of modal degree chords, layered inversions, expansive melodic range, and carefully controlled dynamics produces the most structurally complex aesthetic construction among the three songs analyzed. Consequently, the song provides particularly strong evidence for Hanslick's proposition that musical beauty resides within the formal relationships of musical elements themselves rather than in meanings external to the music.

Taken together, the findings suggest that the aesthetic effectiveness of *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* derives from the deliberate integration of multiple musical dimensions. Through its sophisticated organization of melody, harmony, dynamics, and instrumentation, the song functions not only as a worship composition but also as an example of highly structured musical artistry within the context of contemporary Charismatic worship.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has addressed the question of how musical aesthetic dimensions are manifested in the musical elements of praise and worship during the Sunday Morning Service at GBI Sekinah Glory. Through an analysis of the three songs performed on April 12, 2026—*Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini*, *Sukacitaku*, and *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah*—using Hanslick's theory of musical formalism (2018) as the primary aesthetic framework and Piston's theory of harmony (1987) as the technical musicological reference, and supported by musical scores transcribed manually from audio recordings as verifiable musical evidence, this study found that musical aesthetic dimensions are systematically and intentionally manifested through melodic construction, harmonic construction, dynamic architecture, and instrumentation.

From a melodic perspective, the three songs exhibit distinct characteristics while remaining aesthetically structured. *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini* spans a range from A3 to B4 (fourteen

semitones) and features a contour that ascends from lower pitches to a climax before descending toward resolution, with predominantly conjunct melodic movement. *Sukacitaku* spans a range from B3 to B4 (twelve semitones) and is characterized by a consistently undulating contour and highly active melodic rhythm, corresponding to its tempo of $\text{♩} = 120$. *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* possesses the widest melodic range among the three songs, extending from F#3 to B4 (seventeen semitones), with an arch-shaped contour, a slow tempo of $\text{♩} = 65$, and several disjunct melodic leaps within the chorus section that provide meaningful melodic variation.

From a harmonic perspective, each song demonstrates distinctive characteristics that are not present in the others. *Kemenangan Terjadi Di Sini* relies on GM7 as a nondominant seventh chord that produces a gentle harmonic texture within the verse and is reinforced by the appearance of E♭M7 as a borrowed chord from the parallel key of G minor, creating the most dramatic harmonic coloration within the song, particularly in measures 1–2 and measure 8. *Sukacitaku* employs Gadd9 and Cadd9, which generate fresh and open harmonic textures, together with Dsus4, which creates a sense of harmonic suspension and forward movement, particularly in measures 1–8 and measures 17–23. *Walau Gunung Tak Berpindah* incorporates two modal degree chords simultaneously, namely Bm7 and F#m, which enrich harmonic color without shifting the tonal center, and it exhibits the most extensive and consistent use of slash chords among the three songs analyzed.

Beyond the individual song analyses, this study identified three distinctive and consistent aesthetic characteristics within the musical practices of GBI Sekinah Glory: the piano functions as the central instrument throughout the worship service, the gradual entry of instruments serves as the primary strategy for building musical intensity, and deliberate aesthetic consideration informs every harmonic choice. These characteristics demonstrate that the manner in which GBI Sekinah Glory presents worship music constitutes an authentic aesthetic expression that can be identified concretely through musical analysis.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm Hanslick's (2018, p. 3) assertion that the object of inquiry in musical aesthetics should be beauty itself rather than the subjective experience of the listener. The musical beauty manifested within the

praise and worship practices of GBI Sekinah Glory possesses objective, structured, and identifiable dimensions that can be examined through the analysis of concrete musical elements. This study offers two significant scholarly contributions. First, it introduces an analytical approach to musical aesthetics that has not previously been applied within the study of Indonesian Charismatic worship music, namely the integration of Hanslick's theory of musical formalism and Piston's theory of harmony as complementary analytical frameworks, supported by transcribed musical scores as verifiable musical evidence. Second, it addresses a notable gap in the academic literature concerning Charismatic worship practices in Eastern Indonesia, particularly within the context of Maluku, which has received relatively limited scholarly attention. It is hoped that these findings will provide a foundation for future studies exploring other dimensions of praise and worship practices at GBI Sekinah Glory and in other Charismatic churches throughout Eastern Indonesia.

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