

The Direct Instruction Learning Model for Fa'qi Music as an Accompaniment to Puja Bhakti Singing for Students at Buddhist Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to apply a direct instruction learning model for students and to analyze the characteristics, form, function, and meaning of *Fa'qi* music as an accompaniment to devotional hymns at a Buddhist College. Research on *Fa'qi* music was conducted through the direct instruction learning model, covering both theory and practice. A qualitative method was used in this study with an interdisciplinary approach. Data sources included participant observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis utilized theories of aesthetics, ethnoreligion, and semiotics. The research findings include: (1) the direct instruction model facilitates students' practice and mastery of *Fa'qi* music accompanying the Puja Bakti chants of Mahayana Buddhists in the form of chanting through the following stages: wensin, namaskara, incense-offering gatha, vandana, and praise gatha; (2) *Fa'qi* music, as an accompaniment to the devotional songs of Mahayana Buddhists, serves as a medium connecting the faithful to the Buddha and facilitating communication with him, as a medium for aesthetic expression, a means of strengthening social bonds, and as an identity marker for Mahayana Buddhists; (3) the significance of *Fa'qi* music as an accompaniment to devotional songs. The findings indicate that a hands-on learning model facilitates students' ability to learn, understand, and practice *Fa'qi* music based on the concepts of Buddha Ghosa, including: the structure and composition of the music have proven ideal for accompanying devotional chants continuously recited by Mahayana Buddhists during every ritual activity at the temple; these chants can be understood, comprehended, and practiced wisely by the congregation.

Keywords: Direct Instruction Learning Model, *Fa'qi* Music, Puja Bakti Chants, Buddhist College Students

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INTRODUCTION

Mahayana Buddhism in Indonesia has existed since the Dutch and Japanese colonial periods, after many Chinese monks, particularly from *fújiàn pútíán* Province (福建莆田), arrived in the country; some of them settled in Pangkalan Berandan, Medan, Palembang, Batavia, Bogor, Bandung, Tanjung Pinang, Semarang, and Madiun. If we trace its historical background, it can be traced back to the early period of the history of the Indonesian archipelago, namely from written sources on the Telagabatu inscription (Casparis, 1956: 41), which reveals the territory of the Sriwijaya kingdom. The oldest Sriwijaya inscriptions from the 7th and 8th centuries were discovered in the city of Palembang and its surrounding areas, as well as in Jambi and on the island of Bangka. These findings indicate that Sriwijaya served as a center for Buddhist studies.

Mahayana Buddhism first developed in India as one of the sects within Buddhism. By the 9th century, Mahayana teachings in Indian Buddhism exerted a dominant influence on the rapid spread of Buddhism throughout East Asia and Southeast Asia. In East Asia, Mahayana Buddhism flourished in China and is known as Chinese Han-Transmitted Mahayana Buddhism (*zhōngguó*

hànchuán fójiào / 中国汉传佛教). Meanwhile, in Southeast Asia, Mahayana Buddhism once flourished in Indonesia during the heyday of the Sriwijaya Kingdom.

A brief history of the development of Mahayana Buddhism in Indonesia reveals the existence of a community that built places of worship known as viharas. The community's worship routines are scheduled on a weekly basis as a form of mandatory devotion. Various ritual activities take place within these viharas, including devotional chants accompanied by *Fa'qi* music to facilitate the community's prayers.

Fa'qi music must be studied from adolescence through adulthood—and can even be studied at Buddhist higher education institutions—to ensure this time honored cultural tradition does not die out. Both formal and non-formal education that preserves this unique style of music-making, with its distinctive characteristics, supports its continued preservation. Mastering *Fa'qi* music requires skill, dedication, and a spirit of service. Music education is an integral part of Buddhist rituals. The study of *Fa'qi* music represents a musical tradition rooted in Mahayana Buddhism.

The role of arts education—which is multilingual, multidimensional, and multicultural—can fundamentally be utilized to shape the whole human personality. Arts education not only develops human abilities in the field of aesthetics but also plays a role in developing abilities in the fields of logic and ethics. Furthermore, arts education is capable of fostering multicultural awareness and self-discipline (Salam, 2011: 12).

In general, Mahayana Buddhists have a unique type of music known as *Fa'qi*—a form of percussion music that accompanies devotional hymns as a means of prayer and worship of the Buddha. Learning this spiritually-infused music requires perseverance in practice, particularly for students at Buddhist religious colleges. This study aims to identify an appropriate learning model for students, namely the direct instruction model, in which students must understand the form, function, and aesthetic significance of devotional hymns and *Fa'qi* music as their accompaniment. The distinctive characteristics of Mahayana Buddhism are reflected through its spiritual activities at monasteries and in its cultural arts. Cultural arts in the lives of Mahayana Buddhists include religious music or prayer music—specifically, the presence of *Fa'qi* as a medium for prayer. According to Émile Durkheim, religion is a system of beliefs concerning sacred matters, in which beliefs and practices coalesce to form a single moral community. The issue is that devotional chanting is part of the prayer ritual, while *Fa'qi* music serves as an accompaniment to the prayers, guiding the congregation in a state of reverence toward the Buddha; therefore, it is important for students to learn to play this percussion music, given its presence in the temple as part of the devout congregation.

Based on the findings of this study, it was discovered that to date, there has been no research on the ethno-religious aesthetics of the Puja Bakti chant accompanied by *Fa'qi* music that can serve as a reference for passing on the cultural heritage of Mahayana Buddhists' ancestors. Given the uniqueness and characteristics of *Fa'qi* music, specialized training is necessary so that this type of percussion music can be passed down from generation to generation and worship activities can continue to be conducted with reverence. There is concern that *Fa'qi* music may eventually be replaced if the community does not understand how to play these instruments; its unique characteristics are crucial as accompaniment for prayers through devotional hymns. The concept of Buddha Ghosa, which forms the basis of this study, encompasses the structure and composition of *Fa'qi* music as an accompaniment to the “Puja Bakti chants” of Mahayana Buddhists—a role that cannot be replaced by other types of percussion music. When accompanying the “Puja Bakti chants,” *Fa'qi* music creates a harmonious and deeply moving experience due to its integration with other elements. *Fa'qi* music is a medium of expression whose characteristics are well-suited to channeling the emotions of the congregation as they sing, and this form of musical performance is recognized as a living art.

The novelty of this study lies in the music learning process for students using the direct instruction model, in which the teacher leads all activities, provides explanations starting with the material, identifies *Fa'qi* musical instruments, and trains students step-by-step in playing the instruments or conducts live demonstrations. The characteristics of *Fa'qi* music's form and function distinguish it from other performing arts that require rehearsal and a stage for their performances. In addition to hands-on practice, learning *Fa'qi* music requires basic musical knowledge, skills, and the performer's musical sensitivity to accompany the congregation's prayers in a way that is both direct and profound.

Literature Review

A study relevant to this paper is Hwee-San Tan's article titled "*Fanbai*: Chinese Buddhist Monastic Chant," published in the Journal of the Music Library Association (2012). This article provides information on Chinese Buddhist liturgical chanting based on records from canonical Buddhist literature, which is said to have developed between the 6th and 8th centuries, and references the origins of Chinese Buddhist music, specifically hymns and praise songs. According to historical studies, descriptions by Dharma propagators and musicians of that era, as well as several records of rituals and ceremonies, focus on the development of chants originating from various Buddhist sects that emerged after the Tang Dynasty (618–907 CE).

There are similarities between this text and writings on Chinese Buddhist liturgical chanting that refer to hymns and praises, whereas the difference lies in the fact that it does not discuss chanting originating from other Buddhist sects of the past. The relevance of *Embracing the Paradox: A Bodhisattva Path to Fa'qi* music as an accompaniment to devotional chants in the Mahayana Buddhist tradition lies in the commonality of Buddhist teachings regarding the Bodhisattva. Mahayana Buddhists use devotional hymns, whereas *Embracing the Paradox: A Bodhisattva Path* does not present devotional hymns as part of Mahayana Buddhist teachings.

Alvita Fitri Ningsih's journal article, "The Implications of the Pattidana Tradition on the Religious Maturity of Theravada Buddhists at Mendut Vihara, Mungkid City, Magelang, Central Java" (2017), reveals that the Pattidana tradition is one of the traditions of Theravada Buddhists. The Pattidana tradition aims to transform Theravada Buddhists who find it difficult to perform acts of merit into those who wish to perform such acts and eventually take joy in doing so. This tradition embodies the vision of alleviating the suffering of ancestors through acts of merit. The Theravada Buddhists at Mendut Vihara in Mungkid City, Magelang, Central Java, perform Puja Bakti to alleviate the suffering of their ancestors are practice clearly distinct from the Puja Bakti chants accompanied by *Fa'qi* music, in which devotees offer prayers of worship that serve as a direct medium of connection and communication with the Buddha, as well as a means of self-actualization, strengthening bonds with one another. In this context, Mahayana Buddhists use *Fa'qi* music to chant praises in order to draw closer through a personal relationship of worship. Sudirga et al., in their article titled "Traces of Karawitan in the Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha: A Study of Form, Function, and Meaning" (2015), state that there are two versions of the Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha that contain internal criticism through translation, followed by an interpretation of the translations of the two Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha manuscripts, and a historiography of the traces of karawitan in the Kakawin Arjuna Wiwaha: a study of form, function, and meaning. Changes in the form and naming of gamelan instruments mentioned in the Arjuna Wiwaha kakawin include the mredangga, which is now known as the 'bedug'. Another name change occurred from 'berebet' to 'ceng ceng'; it is believed that the naming of these instruments was based on the sounds they produce—the bedug because it sounds like "dug dug dug," and the ceng ceng because when played, it sounds like "ceng ceng ceng." The relevance of this research to *Fa'qi* music accompanying the Puja Bakti chant lies in the similarity of the research subjects, both of which examine traditional instruments associated with specific sound patterns. Jeffrey W. Cupchik, in his article titled "Buddhism as Performing Art; Visualizing Music in the Tibetan Sacred Ritual Music Liturgies," published in the Yale Journal of Music & Religion (2015), states that when a melody is composed symbolically, it represents a visualized scene within the sub-ritual segments of these religious rites. Monica Bhattacharjee's journal article, "Embracing the Paradox; A Bodhisattva Path" (2022), explores the paradoxical nature of Buddhist wisdom. Through two texts in the Mahaprajnaparamita sutras of Mahayana Buddhism, several vital components within a larger ontological unity are identified and recognized as supporting the Bodhisattva's path. In Buddhist teachings on the Bodhisattva, Buddhists use devotional hymns, whereas *Embracing the Paradox: A Bodhisattva Path* does not present devotional hymns as part of Mahayana Buddhist teachings.

Dayu Dhira Wintako, Suharno M., and Danang Tri Purnomo, in their journal article titled "The Acculturation of Javanese Culture and Jawi Wisnu Buddhism in Kutorejo Hamlet, Kalipait Village, Tegal Subdistrict, Banyuwangi Regency" (2021), note that since 1955, Jawi Wisnu Buddhism has flourished in Kutorejo Hamlet, following the arrival of Romo Resi Kusuma Dewa. The growth of the Jawi Wisnu Buddhist community is characterized by the acculturation of Javanese culture and Buddhism. This is evidenced by the fact that worship of Jawi Wisnu Buddhism at the temple is conducted while wearing traditional Javanese attire. The Jawi Wisnu Buddhist community in Kutorejo Hamlet, Kalipait Village, Tegalalimo Subdistrict, Banyuwangi Regency does not use the

Puja Bakti chant. There is concern that Faqi music, if not used in worship, will become extinct without efforts to regenerate the tradition among the younger generation or teenagers who are capable of playing *Fa'qi* music to accompany prayers.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative method with an interdisciplinary approach. Data analysis utilizes aesthetic theory, ethnoreligious theory, and semiotic theory. An interdisciplinary approach involves solving a problem by integrating various perspectives from relevant related fields of study.

Observations were conducted both directly and indirectly. Direct observations involved witnessing the performance of *Fa'qi* music as an accompaniment to the Puja Bakti chants recited by the congregation in the morning, afternoon, and evening at Mahayana Buddhist temples, as well as during in-class instruction by students at Buddhist higher education institutions. Indirect observations were conducted through interviews with informants, including musicians, monks and nuns, as well as Mahayana Buddhists.

This study utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. The primary data sources used in this study include the Devotional Hymn processions, selected informants, religious leaders, monks, and Mahayana Buddhists. These informants were selected based on their expertise and in accordance with the research needs. Some of these informants include: the temple head as the key informant; monks; panditas; priests; Mahayana Buddhist leaders; students; music instructors; and members of the “Puja Bakti chants” choir as additional informants. Meanwhile, secondary data consists of information obtained indirectly through the sacred texts of the Mahā-Tripiṭaka, books, documentary photographs, and existing research journals. Secondary data consists of information obtained through literature review using books relevant to the research, such as sacred texts, newspaper articles, performance recordings (cassettes, CDs, and VCDs), minutes of discussions and seminars, and scientific journals related to the research subject and the cultural phenomena and communal environment of the temple.

The results of interviews with informants regarding the creative process through *Fa'qi* music—which accompanies the expressive “Puja Bakti chants” (Hymn of Devotion), following the flow of emotions expressed spontaneously—significantly influence and engage the feelings of the congregation. This means that through a direct musical performance, *Fa'qi* music is able to give voice to the innermost feelings that touch the heart; the combination of music and the congregation's vocals becomes a form of the congregation's inner communication with the Buddha.

The research instrument used to collect primary data was a structured interview guide, designed to elicit in-depth data and address the research questions that had been formulated. This was done to ensure the validity of the data collected. The researcher served as the primary research instrument, conducting interviews with selected informants using a questionnaire prepared in advance based on the research questions. The results of the data analysis were presented descriptively to provide an understanding of the ethno-religious aesthetics of the Puja Bakti chants at the temple.

In addition to the questionnaire, this study also utilized several other supporting instruments to obtain the necessary data, including recording devices such as cameras, cell phones, tape recorders, and video recorders. All research instruments used to collect field data were highly effective in the data collection process, particularly regarding the forms of percussion instruments including their repertoire, functions, and meanings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Puja Bakti chant is a form of worship sung by the congregation during services, accompanied by percussion instruments known as *Fa'qi* music. This chant is performed by Mahayana Buddhists every morning, afternoon, and evening, as well as on important festive days at the temple. Puja Bakti is a practice performed by Mahayana Buddhists to honor the Three Jewels (the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha).

Generally, devotional music in Mahayana Buddhism can be classified into two categories: percussion-based music and Mahayana Buddhist contemplative songs. The Puja Bakti chants performed by Mahayana Buddhists are a form of offering through devotional songs containing poetry and sutras. The musical style of these chants consists of recitations of prayers and hymns of praise directed toward the Three Jewels—namely, the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha—to seek the protection of these three. These devotional chants, accompanied by percussion

instruments, feature Han-language zànsòng texts from the Chinese Mahayana Buddhist tradition, excerpted from the sacred Tripitaka (三藏经典).

The Puja Bakti rituals consist of daily Puja Bakti, annual Puja Bakti, and Puja Bakti during specific celebrations related to the human life cycle. First, the daily Puja Bakti is a ritual of repentance performed by devotees to attain perfection and be reborn as an arya, a bodhisattva, or a deity. Puja Bakti is performed so that Mahayana Buddhists may pay homage to (Thian) or the heavens, (Te) the earth, and (Din) the ancestors. Buddhism is rooted in the teachings of the Tridharma or Sam Kauw (Buddha, Tao, and Confucius) as found in the scriptures Dewi Kiu Tian Hian De, Kiu Se Cin King, and Kiu Thian Hian De Thi Sim Siuau Giap Cin King.

Devotional worship is divided into two categories: (a) devotional worship to Thian (God), which is performed by Tridharma Buddhists every morning and evening to worship and glorify Thian (God), Dewi Kiu Thian Hian De, and the Sin Bing (gods and goddesses); (b) Ancestor worship, which is performed by Tridharma Buddhists every morning and evening and on specific days. Ancestor worship aims to pray for the ancestors (Kong Co or Co King) so that they may attain happiness in their next life.

In theory, students at Buddhist higher education institutions need to have a basic understanding of the worship of the Buddha through devotional chants that embody the philosophy of Mahayana Buddhism. *Fa'qi* music, which accompanies these prayers, is not merely a form of percussion but carries profound meaning through the sounds that convey the prayers; it must be studied using relevant theories. Muhajir (1996) states that theory is necessary in research to guide researchers in synthesizing knowledge into a system and predicting facts. Theory is an intellectual abstraction that combines a rational approach with empirical experience.

There are three theories underpinning this study. The first is aesthetic theory, which refers to the values of beauty, artistic expression, and the noble values embodied in cultural heritage (artistic musical instruments) that emerge from the combination of ethnic and religious identities within a specific culture. This aesthetic integrates visual, auditory, and performative elements that not only reflect spiritual beliefs but, through contemplative awareness, are capable of creating beauty. Specifically, this study draws on the theory of Eastern Aesthetics to analyze the characteristics of *Fa'qi* music in relation to Chinese aesthetics namely, Zen Buddhism, which centers on feeling, intention, and reality. This constitutes a philosophical approach to beauty and artistic expression. Eastern aesthetics encompasses Chinese, Indian, Japanese, and Javanese aesthetics; however, in the context of *Fa'qi* music performed as an accompaniment to the Puja Bakti chants, it ncept originating from China namely, Zen Buddhist aesthetics.

In the late 5th century, the Chinese philosopher Hsieh Ho formulated six fundamental principles known as the aesthetic canon. These principles are concepts closely tied to Buddhism. In Chinese, these principles are called Ch'i Yun Sheng Tung; Ch'i (key) is the central concept in all Chinese theories of art. In human beings, Ch'i expresses character and personality—an individual's ability to align themselves with their soul. Ch'i carries moral implications, while Yun signifies vibration or resonance; its fusion with Ch'i expresses the interplay between an individual's vital force and natural forces. Sheng Tung signifies movement or the rhythm of life. This research reflects on objects by describing their forms, meaning it is consistent with the objects it organizes into the musical characteristics of *Fa'qi*. The third principle suggests that every object has its proper form (Mulyadi, 1986). Furthermore, based on Eastern Aesthetics, there is a very clear connection to Zen Aesthetics regarding simplicity, emptiness, and tranquility, with an emphasis on direct experience, spontaneity, and 'taste' (रस). Indian aesthetics encompasses a profound, emotional aesthetic experience known as taste, which includes feelings of affection and tranquility. The expression and reception of this profound rasa are realized through art and performance in classical Indian dance, music, drama, and literature. Indian aesthetics embrace simplicity and minimalism, utilizing simple lines and empty space to create balanced and meditative compositions. This becomes an emotional and spiritual experience, revealing deep and reflective feelings toward life.

To explore the aesthetics of form and function in *Fa'qi* music as an accompaniment to the Puja Bakti chant, we observe the simplicity and tranquility (Zen aesthetics) of the chant. The simple melodic structure and soothing rhythm create a meditative atmosphere. Second is the ethnoreligious theory, which integrates sacred religious symbols with elements of local culture. Ethnoreligion reflects the fusion of local musical traditions and religious elements. In this case,

those found in Mahayana Buddhist temples. When combined, these two theories form the theory of ethnoreligious aesthetics as follows: (1) elements including melody, harmony, rhythm, and timbre—which are both ethnic and religious elements; (2) cultural identity and beliefs, which constitute the religious expression of an ethnic group that influences and shapes perceptions and expressions of beauty; (3) aspects of art and ritual, which are influenced by traditions, beliefs, and religious practices as well as ethnic cultural heritage, manifesting in various values. Third, ethnomusicological theory serves as a framework used to examine and uncover the connections and functions of an ethnic group's music within its cultural context, a framework whose validity has been established. According to Rai S. (2004: 2), to study ethnic music, one must consider two elements: the musical element and the extra-musical element. These two elements are referred to as musical associations and extra-musical associations.

In essence, the Puja Bakti chants is a prayer or a teaching of Mahayana Buddhism that governs the lives of its Buddhist adherents. Therefore, the existence of the Puja Bakti chants can be understood through structural-functional theory. In functional theory, Parsons defines “function” as “a set of activities directed toward the fulfillment of specific needs or the needs of the system.” Using this definition, Parsons maintains that there are four essential functions required by all systems: adaptation (A), goal attainment (G), integration (I), and latency (L)—or pattern maintenance. Collectively, these four functional imperatives are known as the AGIL schema (Ritzer, 2014: 23). A system must manage the interrelationships among these four key functions (A, G, I, L). In this context, the existence of the Puja Bakti chant, directly or indirectly, is capable of fostering togetherness and unity among its Mahayana Buddhist adherents; (d) latency (or pattern maintenance): a system must equip, maintain, and refine both individual motivations and the cultural patterns that create and sustain those motivations. As a religious art form, the Hymn of Devotional Praise is capable of providing energy, motivation, and enthusiasm for Mahayana Buddhists to carry out Dharma activities.

The Concept of Buddha Ghosa

Literally, Buddha Ghosa can be interpreted as the Voice of the Buddha's Teachings. This name consists of two Pali words: Buddha, referring to “Buddha,” meaning one who has attained enlightenment or the highest wisdom namely, Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism; and Ghosa, meaning “voice” or “speech.” Generally, Buddha Ghosa can be interpreted as someone who voices the Buddha's teachings or spreads the voice of the Buddha's teachings. The concept of Buddha Ghosa, which encompasses the teachings on devotional chanting, must be practiced by Mahayana Buddhists every morning, afternoon, and evening, as well as on other important days at the temple. The concept of Buddha Ghosa in this study encompasses the performance of the Devotional Hymn, the stages of its performance, the types of hymns sung, the structure of the singing, and the musical composition accompanying the Devotional Hymn. Elements involved in the performance of the Devotional Hymn include: the sacred site, the congregation, the ceremony leader, the singers, and the musicians. The structure of the Devotional Hymn performance follows these stages: namaskara, incense-offering gatha, vandana, and praise gatha, with the hymns structured around themes of praise, repentance, exhortation, and hope. Meanwhile, the musical composition consists of vocal chants, percussion, and a slow tempo. The purpose of the Puja Bakti chant is to ensure that all beings on this earth live in peace.

The Puja Bakti Procession at the Temple

This Puja Bakti is led by the Sangha monks every Sunday, on Uposatha days, and on holidays at the temple. In addition to Buddhist laypeople, this Puja Bakti ceremony also involves monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen. Traditionally, Puja Bakti (gòngxiū) uses incense, flowers, candles, tea, fruit, music, food, jewels, prayer beads, and sangati as part of the ritual offerings. These ritual offerings are accompanied by the recitation of mantras, dharani, and several sutras—such as the Amitabha Sutra, the Lotus Sutra (Sadharmapundarika Sutra), the Vajrachedika Sutra, and the Sacred Text of the Eighty-Eight Buddhas (bāshíbā fó / 八十八佛)—as well as the singing of hymns of praise accompanied by *Fa'qi* music in worship of the Triple Gem. After completing the offerings, the recitation of sutras and scriptures, the chanting of mantras, and the singing of hymns, the gòngxiū tradition concludes with pradaksina, walking meditation, and prayers for the happiness of all sentient beings.

Characteristics of *Fa'qi* Music

Fa'qi music is a type of percussion music specifically, a type of struck instrument used in monastic activities at Buddhist temples that combines elements of harmonic sound and vocal

music. This instrument is a traditional Chinese ethnic percussion instrument used in the context of religious activities for the Taoist and Buddhist faiths. The percussion instruments consist of (i) *dàqǐng* (大/ symbol (c)); (ii) *mùkyú* (木鱼/ symbol O); (iii) *yǐnqǐng* (引磬/ II); (iv) *diàozhōng* (吊钟/ II); (v) *hāizi* (钹子/ O); and (iv) *gǔ* (鼓/ O). This means that the Dharma percussion ensemble consists of six instruments used to accompany devotional hymns.

They are played according to a mandatory tempo to indicate the speed which a song must be sung during devotional hymns, using symbolic notation. This symbolic notation is found in the book *The Buddhism Mahayana Liturgy*. Percussion instruments serve as a system of sound markers that use the instruments themselves as time codes (*kala*) in their performance. The lyrics of the Puja Bakti chants are analyzed through the use of simple words that invite contemplation full of spiritual meaning, while *Fa'qi* music has a rhythm that brings tranquility. According to Soedjono (2007: 34), the aesthetic value of a work of art is the emanation of values of beauty reflected in the work itself, which imparts specific qualities and character.

When examined from the perspective of its unique and distinctive form and function, *Fa'qi* music reveals that this musical work expresses the feelings of the human soul, conveyed through the sounds of percussion instruments blended with the human voice (vocals), which then merge into a fantastic work of art that carries a moral message offering spiritual education.



Figure 1. Students Practicing *Fa'qi* Music

Fa'qi percussion is played by five to six people, known as *upasaka* and *upasika*, during Puja Bakti (*gōngxiū* / 共修) ceremonies; it is specifically used to sing spiritual hymns (*zànsòng* / 赞颂), the texts of which are excerpted from the sacred Maha-Tripitaka scriptures. (*sāncáng jīngdiǎn* / 三藏经典).

Furthermore, *Fa'qi* music plays a highly influential and integral role in its presentation as accompanying music to be enjoyed directly. This means that the presence of *Fa'qi* music is capable of empowering the emotions of the congregation through Puja Bakti to alleviate inner stress or life's problems, which are conveyed through prayer, while the expressive form of the music serves to purify the aesthetic experience. This signifies an affirmation of purity, the essence of which is the total expression of the faithful's souls as they sing accompanied by *Fa'qi* music.

The function of artistic expression, in particular, is not merely entertainment for inner satisfaction but can take the form of appeals, criticism, and enlightenment regarding human will. Applicable not just to individuals but to a community as a whole. In addition to the sound of the music, another key factor is the facial expressions that convey the mood and emotions of the congregation; this demonstrates a three-way communication between the congregation, the music, and the Buddha. Similarly, the conventional movements which arise from the musical and rhythmic responses played by the *Fa'qi* musicians serve to communicate with the congregation as they guide them toward the Buddha.

Analysis of *Fa'qi* Music Form

Fa'qi music, a type of percussion music, is analyzed using aesthetic theory, in which musical elements include aspects directly related to the elements of music itself, such as pitch, rhythm, tempo, structure, ornamentation, and others.

Fa'qi music, which accompanies the devotional hymns, is arranged as follows:

- a. Singing the opening incense-offering song (*lú xiāng zàn* / 卢香赞)
- b. Singing the *Gatha* (*zàn fó jì* / 赞佛偈)
- c. Reciting the *Sutra* (*sòngjīng* / 诵经);

- d. Reciting *mantras/dharani* (*niànzòu* / 念咒),
- e. Reciting the Buddha's Name (*niànfó* / 念佛); singing the repentance chant (*chàn huǐ wén* / 忏悔文)
- f. Chanting *the Three Refuges* (*sān guī yī* / 三皈依)
- g. Chanting the Praise of *Skandha Bodhisattva* (*wéi tuó zàn* / 韦驮赞)
- h. Hymn of Praise to *Sangharama Bodhisattva* (*qié lán zàn* / 伽蓝赞)
- i. Singing the closing *Gatha* (回向偈)

The devotional hymns are accompanied by six (6) *Fǎ qì* (法器) percussion instruments. These instruments are: (1) *Yǐn Qǐng* (引磬), a small bell with a wooden handle. This instrument produces a rhythmic beat to signal the awakening of consciousness and to pave the way at the start of the service; (2) *Dāng Zǐ* (铛子), shaped like a shallow plate with a handle made of plastic or wood. This *Fǎ qì* instrument provides an accent in the song and a rhythmic beat that regulates the precision of the melody's long and short notes; (3) *Mù Yú* (木鱼), shaped like a fish-shaped wooden block, comes in various sizes. This instrument serves as a rhythmic accompaniment with a bass beat to accompany the song; (4) *Hā Zǐ* (钹子), shaped like a *cymbal*, made of an alloy of copper, and measuring 15 cm. This instrument serves as a signal for the lower beat; it consists of two small discs that are struck to produce the beat count for the song; (5) *Dà Gǔ* (大鼓), shaped like a drum and made of cow or goat skin. This instrument serves as both a song accompaniment and a rhythmic accompaniment for the bass beat; its sound follows that of the *mù yú*, *hā zǐ*, and *gǔ*, and is used as a signal for every activity at the monastery. Signal (O); (6) *Dà Qǐng* (大磬), shaped like a bowl or small gong, is struck with a wooden mallet and placed on a small cushion. This instrument serves as a signal to begin and end the chanting; its sound awakens the sublime awareness of the Buddha-nature, and it is said to reach as far as thousands of universes and the ten directions of the world (*trisahasra-mahasahasra lokadhatuh*). These six percussion instruments are shown in the table below.

Table 1. Classification of *Fǎ Qì* Percussion Instruments Used in Devotional Hymns

No.	Nama Alat Perkusi <i>Fǎ Qì</i>	Posisi Pemain di Altar	Gambar Alat Perkusi	Tanda Simbol
1.	<i>Yǐn Qǐng</i> (引磬) Bentuk: berupa bel kecil yang mempunyai pegangan gagang kayu. Fungsi: menghasilkan bunyi ketukan tempo atas sebagai aba-aba untuk membangkitkan kesadaran, dan sebagai pembuka jalan pada saat memulai kebaktian.	Posisi pemain di altar sebelah kanan. (tampak depan)		(II) Ketukan tempo atas
2.	<i>Dāng Zǐ</i> (铛子) Bentuk: menyerupai piring ceper mempunyai gagang yang terbuat dari bahan plastik atau kayu. Fungsi: bunyinya memberikan suatu aksan dalam lagu, dan ketukan tempo atas yang mengatur ketepatan panjang dan pendeknya melodi.	Posisi pemain di altar sebelah kanan. (tampak depan)		(II) Ketukan tempo atas
3.	<i>Mù Yú</i> (木鱼) Bentuk: menyerupai kentungan berbentuk ikan, besar kecilnya terdiri dari berbagai macam ukuran. Fungsi: sebagai pengiring ritmik ketukan tempo bawah dalam mengiringi lagu.	Posisi pemain di altar sebelah kiri. (tampak depan)		(O) Ketukan tempo bawah

4.	<i>Ha Zi</i> (钹子) Bentuk: menyerupai <i>Cymbal</i>, bahannya berupa tembaga campuran, ukurannya 15 cm. Fungsi: bunyinya sebagai tanda ketukan tempo bawah, alat ini terdiri dari dua buah piringan kecil dipukul sehingga bunyinya sebagai hitungan tempo ketukan lagu.	Posisi pemain di altar sebelah kiri. (tampak depan)		(O) Ketukan tempo bawah
6.	<i>Dà Qǐng</i> (大磬) Bentuk: menyerupai mangkok atau gong kecil yang dibuyikan dengan alat pemukul yang terbuat dari kayu, yang ditata di atas bantal kecil. Fungsi: sebagai aba-aba memulai dan mengakhiri lantunan lagu, bunyinya membangkitkan kesadaran agung Buddha, konon dapat mencapai maha besar ribuan alam semesta, dan sepuluh penjuru dunia (<i>trisahasra-mahasahasra lokadhatuh</i>).	Posisi pemain di altar sebelah kanan (tampak depan).		(©) Ketukan tempo bawah

Banoe (2003) states that music is a branch of art that explores and organizes various sounds into patterns that are comprehensible to humans. Musical composition encompasses musical structure, namely melody, rhythm, harmony, and tempo. Meanwhile, instruments refer to the types of musical instruments used and their role in supporting the chanting. Devotional chants are recited so that all beings on this earth may live in peace; these chants can foster a sense of balance between the physical and spiritual realms. Therefore, this music is regarded as a collective expression of spiritual balance among Mahayana Buddhists in contemplative spiritual reflection.

Contemplative refers to deep reflection, including contemplation of the Dharma's Law of Reality. Musical elements are also referred to as *the "study of music" (in terms of the music itself)*, while extra-musical elements encompass matters not directly related to the musical elements themselves but which have a very strong influence on the practical performance of the music. Extramusical elements are also referred to as *the study surrounding music (in terms of its socio-cultural context)*. Sound is the primary component of music; musical structure, culture, and the desire for expression all form part of the aesthetics of *Fa'qi's* musical works. Every musical work has a foundation upon which everything is built. Singing relates to vocal elements specifically vocal technique, which is the method for producing sound correctly and beautifully. Typically, one must understand vocal technique so that the resulting sound is melodious, the articulation of words is clear, and a sense of religiosity is fostered during ceremonies.

The combination of vocal sounds and percussion instruments is called "sound particles." Their role as both signifiers and signified sounds, both in practical performance and philosophically, integrates Buddhist teachings through the use of *Fa'qi* percussion techniques applied in the Puja Bakti ritual. Sound particles are related to pitch, namely: (i) "voice" refers to the element of sound, while (ii) "sound" refers to a specific concept, usually applied to objects and certain qualities of sound, and (iii) "tune" is used in relation to the frequency of human (*vocal*) and instrumental sounds. The vocal elements of Puja Bakti chants consist of interwoven prayers; their musicality is characterized by a distinctive harmony of rhythmic tempo the song's structure. In the Han Mahayana Buddhist tradition, the notation system uses both hands to indicate tempo; for example, the symbol (O) is tapped with the right hand, and the symbol (II) is tapped with the left hand, a very simple technique.

Analysis of the Function of Fa'qi Music

The existence of tradition-based sacred music, such as *Fa'qi* music that accompanies the Puja Bakti chants, holds an important place in the lives of Mahayana Buddhists. According to Sedyawati, Indonesia is rich in traditional music, including the *Fan Bai* devotional chants accompanied by *Fa'qi* instrumental music. *Fa'qi* instrumental music has distinctive characteristics that serve as a religious cultural identity for Mahayana Buddhists. Banoe (2003) states that music is a branch of art that organizes and structures various sounds into patterns that are comprehensible to humans (11). The existence of Puja Bakti chants accompanied by *Fa'qi* music, according to Parsons' theory, fulfills four functions of action (AGIL), namely: (a) *adaptation*: a system must cope with critical external situations. A system must adapt to its environment and adjust that environment to its needs. Puja Bakti chanting, in addition to serving as a medium for religion and

communication, also functions as a medium for spiritual therapy; (b) *goal attainment*: a system must define and achieve its primary goals. Puja Bakti chants have become a religious cultural art form that facilitates the goals of Mahayana Buddhists in performing their ritual processions; (c) *integration*: a system must regulate the interrelationships among its constituent parts.

The system must manage the relationships among the other three key functions (A, G, I, L). In this context, the existence of the Puja Bakti chant, directly or indirectly, fosters a sense of community and unity among the Mahayana Buddhists who support it; (d) *latency* (or pattern maintenance): a system must equip, maintain, and refine both individual motivations and the cultural patterns that create and sustain those motivations. As a form of religious art, the function of *Fa'qi* music as an accompaniment to the Puja Bakti chants is able to provide energy, motivation, and enthusiasm for Mahayana Buddhists to carry out Dharma activities. Another fundamental function of *Fa'qi* music, aside from serving as a medium of reverence toward the Buddha through the recitation of *paritta*, is to strengthen the devotees' concentration. Concentration on the prostration movements while the congregation recites the *paritta*, as well as concentration while chanting the Puja Bakti chants.

Analysis of the Structure of the Puja Bakti Chant

Students learning music must understand the theory regarding the structure of the Puja Bakti chant, which is performed in the following stages: *wensin*, *namaskara*, the *incense-offering gatha*, *vandana*, and the praise *gatha*, with the chant's structure consisting of songs themed around praise, repentance, exhortation, and hope, accompanied by *Fa'qi* music. As ritual music, the texts of the Puja Bakti chants consist of sutras—Buddhist teachings written in the form of poetry and prose in Han script and the Chinese language. The Songs of Devotional Worship are accompanied by *Fa'qi* music—namely, *zànsòng*, *sòngjīng*, and *niànzhòu*—for Mahayana Buddhists at monasteries.

Table 2. Structure of the Puja Bakti Chant

Bentuk Nyanyian	Deskripsi	Orientasi Nyanyian Puja Bakti
<i>Zànsòng</i>	Nyanyian berupa puji-pujian melantunkan teks syair atau <i>gatha</i> dari kitab suci yang didaraskan dengan musik vokal bercirikan <i>fānbài</i> .	• Penghormatan <i>namaskara</i>. • Memuliakan <i>Tri Ratna</i>. • Melakukan tekad <i>adhistana</i>. • Melakukan observasi diri.
<i>Sòngjīng</i>	Resitasi naratif teks, berupa; <i>sutram</i> , <i>dharani</i> dan <i>mantra</i> , serta syair (<i>gatha</i>), yang didaraskan terdapat unsur keindahan; irama, bunyi dan nada.	• Meditasi <i>samantha bhavana</i> <i>Vipasyana bhavana</i>. • Pelimpahan jasa doa
<i>Niànzhòu</i>	Nyanyian puja bakti berupa pembacaan <i>mantra</i> .	

The following is a *description* of the percussion instruments and *Fǎqì* striking signals used as accompaniment:

(^) a wooden mallet is struck against the surface of the *dàqìng*

(.) *yǐnqìng* (引磬)

(+) *dìzhōng* (吊钟) (O) *gǔ* (鼓)

(@) *dàqìng* (大磬)

(0+) The *gǔ* and *dìzhōng* are struck simultaneously.

Devotional chants containing sacred texts are based on the Mahā Tripitaka, such as *sutras*, *gayams*, *gathas*, *nidanams*, and *mantras*, which express prayers for protection from the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. These devotional chants are accompanied by percussion instruments known as *Fa'qi* music.

The Meaning and Values of *Fa'qi* Music

Semiotics is the study of signs and symbols, as well as how these signs are used and interpreted. Semiotics encompasses the analysis of various sign systems in diverse communication contexts, both verbal and nonverbal. Music can symbolize something when viewed from aspects inherent to the music itself, such as tempo. Clifford Geertz (1973) explains that symbols in religious rituals reflect a community's worldview and religious ethos. *Fa'qi* music, with its distinctive melodies and repetitive rhythms, is not merely an aesthetic element but also creates an inner atmosphere that supports meditation and spiritual reflection. This demonstrates that music in Puja

Bakti is not merely an accompaniment to prayer but also part of a broader construction of religious meaning within the Mahayana tradition.

Using a semiotic theoretical framework, *Fa'qi* music as an accompaniment to the Puja Bakti chant can be examined more deeply to understand how signs and symbols function in various forms of communication, as well as how these components influence the public's perception and understanding of *Fa'qi* music in relation to the Puja Bakti chant. The sounds and notation in the Puja Bakti chants are rich with signs, each of which carries meaning. For semiotics, which addresses the nature of symbols, the significance of musical art is essential.

The notation of the Puja Bakti chants, written in the form of a symbolic system, plays a role in the musicalization of Dharma narratives to weave together melody, rhythm, vocals, timbre, and the rhythm of religious beauty. The composition of the Puja Bakti chants can foster a sense of balance between the physical and the spiritual.

The Puja Bakti hymns, which consist of Han-language texts, are written in the form of musical notation symbols—such as 'O,' 'I I,' and 'C'—which represent tempo marks to indicate the speed of the song being sung. These devotional hymns, written in this notational form, are musical symbols set to melody, allowing the ceremony leader to guide the collective performance of the hymns so that the process of spiritual reflection can achieve a meditative atmosphere.

Furthermore, the burning of incense and the sound of *Fa'qi* music in the Puja Bakti worship of Mahayana Buddhists can be understood through the theory of religious symbols, which highlights that ritual elements hold symbolic meaning for religious communities.

According to Mircea Eliade (1957), symbols in religion are not merely signs but also serve to connect the profane world with the sacred. In this context, incense smoke symbolizes purification, reverence, and prayers ascending to the transcendent realm, while *Fa'qi* music acts as a spiritual expression that strengthens the faithful's connection with the Buddha and *the Bodhisattvas*. According to Victor Turner (1969), symbols in rituals are dynamic and serve to shape a profound collective experience. In devotional worship, *Fa'qi* music and incense burning not only enhance individual experiences but also foster a sense of community. Thus, from the perspective of religious symbol theory, *Fa'qi* music and incense burning can be understood as part of the mechanisms that help Mahayana Buddhists cultivate and experience their spirituality.

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Focus group discussions are necessary to assess the limitations of the research; therefore, a focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted, in which several informants were invited to participate in a group discussion facilitated by the researcher. In leading the discussion, the facilitator used discussion guidelines and posed probing questions to elicit the most informative responses. The participants in the focus group discussion were individuals who shared a common interest in the issue under study, including a diverse range of stakeholders: students, art educators, monks, nuns, temple leaders, musicians, active worshippers, and singers of devotional hymns.

The findings of this study indicate that *the direct instruction* model encompasses both theoretical and practical implementation, musical structure, types of *Fa'qi* percussion instruments, *Fa'qi* musical composition, and the integration of instruments—enabling students to master the musical instruments used to accompany the Puja Bakti chants for Mahayana Buddhists, particularly at the temple when devotees recite prayers and perform acts of worship. Through the process of learning *Fa'qi* music, students develop cognitive skills focused on their ability to think and understand basic musical knowledge, both in theory and practice. This cognitive domain is closely related to brain function, logic, and the process of mastering knowledge through the study of *Fa'qi* music. Students' dedication to learning determines their mastery of the *Fa'qi* musical instrument.

Through direct instruction and diligent practice, students can develop their psychomotor skills to become proficient in playing or performing *Fa'qi* musical instruments as accompaniment to the devotional hymns (Puja Bakti chants) in the temple with solemnity. Learning *Fa'qi* music requires continuous practice; it demands patience and perseverance, which can foster an attitude of obedience and respect, as well as an appreciation for the noble values of Mahayana Buddhist tradition and religion that must be preserved. This process shapes the character and awareness needed to serve the community through *Fa'qi* music. Ultimately, through this learning process, musicians—in this case, students—are able to communicate with the public and the congregation, both verbally and non-verbally, through the musical works they perform, namely *Fa'qi* music. Non-verbal communication is used by *Fa'qi* musicians to connect with the congregation through devotional hymns. Nonverbal communication is a method of communicating with others without

using words, but rather through the sounds of music. The beauty sought in the art of music is supported by the fundamental elements of music and its supporting elements, such as the lyrics and the medium through which they are expressed.

Students are able to understand the concept of Buddha Ghosa, which refers to the structural framework of a religious devotional song composition that can be identified as having *Fan Bai* elements. Buddha Ghosa is associated with faith (*sraddha*), which evokes a profound sense of reverence capable of fostering a sacred experience. *Fa'qi* music, as the accompaniment to the Puja Bakti chant, represents the sound of instruments blending with the congregation's vocals; this harmony can be both felt and understood through the ritual process. Through music theory, students can understand that the composition of the Puja Bakti chant must be deeply infused with spiritual, aesthetic, and religious elements. These distinctive devotional hymns serve as a medium for expressing devotion and honoring the Buddha, and must support the practice of meditation.

Students understand the functions of music, including as an expression of emotion, self-reflection and self-expression, a means of communication, entertainment, a motivator and source of inspiration, and as a distinctive feature of a culture. Essentially, intuition is the process of analyzing a work of art through an emotional rather than rational approach, then utilizing inner awareness centered on the heart, so that music played spontaneously can touch the emotions of Mahayana Buddhists. The interaction between music and the congregation through the Puja Bakti is a process where reason blends with emotion to produce a profound experience; similarly, a harmonious union is formed between the congregation and the music, serving as a conduit for prayer. Music, as a tool of communication, functions as a medium for conveying language through melody. The melody is played at a slower tempo in sync with the congregation's voices as they chant the Puja Bakti hymns dedicated to the Buddha.

Through *Fa'qi* music, devotees can express feelings of gratitude, hope, and supplication to the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas. The melodies in the Puja Bakti are arranged simply yet profoundly; in practice, notes are repeated to make it easy for listeners to follow and absorb them as a spiritual experience.

Through a direct interaction learning model, students can directly practice playing *Fa'qi* percussion instruments—from performance style, expression, rhythm, melody, and beat to the instruments themselves—which brings the song to life as if it were real. The rhythm is kept slow and calm to help create an atmosphere of meditation and reflection. *Fa'qi* music can help focus the attention and presence of mind of the congregation during worship. The Puja Bakti hymns, sung in unison and accompanied by *Fa'qi* music, can foster a sense of solidarity among the congregation.

CONCLUSION

The research findings indicate that: (1) the Hymn of Devotional Praise is chanted every morning, afternoon, evening, and on other significant days in the form of a vocal-instrumental composition accompanied by percussion music, following these stages: wensin, namaskara, incense-offering gatha, vandana, and praise gatha, with a song structure centered on themes of praise, repentance, exhortation, and hope; (2) to this day, Mahayana Buddhists at Ekayana Arama Temple in Jakarta continue to sing the Puja Bakti Hymn because it serves as a medium connecting the congregation with the Buddha, as a medium for aesthetic expression, as a means of strengthening social bonds, and as an expression of the identity of Mahayana Buddhists at Ekayana Arama Temple in Jakarta; (3) the “Puja Bakti chants” continues to evolve sustainably, as it embodies religious, social, and cultural identity meanings. The novelty of this study lies in its examination of the “Buddha Ghosa,” which encompasses: the concept of performance, structure, types of songs, and the musical composition accompanying the “Puja Bakti chants” for Mahayana Buddhists at Ekayana Arama Temple in Jakarta. The uniqueness and novelty of *Fa'qi* music performance lie in the power of its aesthetic concepts, which generate new meanings and contribute to the understanding of art and artistic expression.

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