



A Rhetorical Study of Song of Songs 3:1-5 as a Church Model in Cultivating Resilience of the Strawberry Generation

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Abstract: Technological advances and the conveniences of modern life have given rise to the strawberry generation, a young group that appears promising and creative on the surface but is fragile and easily gives up under pressure. This fragility stems from overprotective parenting, the dominance of digital validation, and minimal exposure to failure, resulting in this generation lacking resilience and having difficulty interpreting failure positively. This study aims to analyze Song of Solomon 3:1–5 as a theological-pastoral resource for building the resilience of the strawberry generation in church ministry. The method used is qualitative with the Yehoshua Gitay rhetorical criticism approach, which examines the text through three main pillars, namely inventio (rhetorical ideas with Aristotelian persuasion mode), dispositio (chiasmus structure), and elocutio (style of language). The results show that this passage builds a pattern of repeated failures that lead to transformative discoveries, with five elements of resilience born from the structure of the text, namely honesty about failure, courage to act beyond the comfort zone, autonomy when external help is unavailable, welcoming recovery that comes beyond human control, and patience in respecting time. These findings have implications for the three pastoral roles of the church, namely being a space for reframing failure as part of the journey of faith, forming a steadfastness born from an intrinsic longing for Christ, and being a community of authentic presence that counters the virtual validation of the digital generation.

Keywords: Strawberry Generation, Church, Song of Solomon, Pastoral, Resilience

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Introduction

Modern civilization has given rise to a disturbing contradiction: the more advanced technology and the more convenient the facilities available, the more vulnerable the character of the generation formed within it. This phenomenon finds its most apt representation in the term *Strawberry Generation*, a sociological metaphor that has now spread widely in educational and social discourse in Asia, including Indonesia. Just as strawberries *appear* fresh and attractive from the outside, but are easily bruised by even the slightest pressure, this generation is described as individuals full of potential and a strong self-image, but are actually unable to withstand the clashes of reality, failure, and life's difficulties. Rhenald Kasali calls them a generation that is truly rich in ideas and creativity, but easily gives up and is fragile when faced with pressure ¹.

The root of this fragility is not simply a matter of personal character, but rather the result of the accumulation of various structural and cultural pressures acting simultaneously. The emergence of the *strawberry generation* is significantly influenced by parental parenting patterns, particularly *overprotective parenting*, authoritarian parenting, and excessive praise and appreciation without being balanced by the development of a strong mentality ². Unlike their predecessors (*Baby Boomers* or Generation X), who were forged by physical and economic limitations that forced them to survive, the *strawberry generation* was born in an era of abundant information and technological convenience. This sociological transformation triggered a shift from physical suffering to psychological suffering ³. As a result, when the reality of adult life arrives with all its complexity, they lack the internal capacity to absorb and process these pressures. On the other hand, Lythcott-Haims points out that overly dominant parental intervention actually robs children of the opportunity to build true competence and self-confidence ⁴. An equally significant factor is the dominance of the digital ecosystem in shaping the identity of this generation. Sherry Turkle, in her research on the impact of technology on human communication and relationships, shows that social media culture has shifted the basis of self-formation from real experiences to digital validation such as *likes*, *comments*, and virtual images that are temporary and unstable ⁵.

Song of Solomon 3:1–5 offers a rich and often overlooked theological resource for answering this question. However, the reading of Song of Songs has never been free from hermeneutical debate. It has been one of the most contested texts in the Old Testament canon,

¹ Rhenald Kasali, *Strawberry Generation: Anak-anak kita berhak keluar dari perangkap yang bisa membuat mereka rapuh* (Jakarta Selatan: Mizan, 2017), 235–38.

² Syifa Aulia, Tati Meilani, dan Zachrah Nabillah, "Strawberry Generation: Dilematis Keterampilan Mendidik Generasi Masa Kini," *Jurnal Pendidikan* 31, no. 2 (Agustus 2022): 237–44, <https://doi.org/10.32585/jp.v31i2.2485>.

³ Suryana, "Dekonstruksi Label 'Generasi Stroberi' pada Generasi Z; Studi Komprehensif tentang Persepsi Sosial dan Realitas Daya Juang di Era Teknologi," 291–92.

⁴ Julie Lythcott-Haims, *How to raise an adult: break free of the overparenting trap and prepare you kid for success* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2015), 91.

⁵ Sherry Turkle, *Reclaiming Conversation: The Power of Talk in a Digital Age* (New York: Penguin Press, 2015), 65, 112.

torn between allegorical readings that understand it as a depiction of God's relationship with His people, and literal readings that view it as a praise of human love ⁶. It is precisely in this hermeneutical tension that the uniqueness of Song of Songs lies. As *wisdom literature*, it celebrates the full dimensions of humanity, including longing, searching, darkness, and perseverance, thus having the capacity to speak directly to human existential experience without losing its theological dimension ⁷. The Song of Songs (*Shir hashshirim*), literally meaning "song of songs," is one of the five *Megiloth Scrolls* in the Old Testament and is read at Passover. Its reading at Passover is not without reason, but rather because the celebration marks spring and commemorates the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt, an event theologically seen as a "betrothal" between YHWH and His people. Based on the Jewish oral law tradition, the book's writing is attributed to King Solomon ⁸. The book is believed to have been completed in the post-exilic period or around the Persian period (350-300 BC), as evidenced by the use of Persian loanwords and the reflection of the agricultural and commercial opulence of the time ⁹. At first, this book sparked fierce canonical debate due to its overtones of erotic language, until finally in 90 AD, Rabbi Akiba firmly confirmed it as the "holiest" book in the Jewish canon, which was later interpreted by the church as an allegory of God's unwavering love for His people.

The study of the strawberry generation in the Indonesian academic context has been answered by Salsabila, Aprilia, and Wahyuningtyas (2024) through the article "Academic Procrastination in the Strawberry Generation: A Solution Approach Through Self-Regulated Learning." ¹⁰This study identified low mental resilience, dependence on comfort, and a tendency to avoid challenges as characteristics of the strawberry generation that encourage procrastination as a self-protection mechanism, while also proving a significant correlation between *Self-Regulated Learning* (SRL) and low academic procrastination. Protective parenting, social media dominance, and academic environmental pressure were also identified as structural factors that exacerbate this condition. However, the solutions offered are entirely based on a psychological-educational approach and do not touch on the theological dimension at all even though the *strawberry generation* also lives in a faith community that has formative responsibility for the formation of their resilience. From the perspective of the study of the Song of Songs, Enjel Sinaga, et al (2025) in "Model of Church Membership Development (MPWG) of the Song of Songs in Cultivating Pure Love for Youth/I" successfully demonstrated that the Song of Songs has ethical-spiritual values that

⁶ Roland E. Murphy dan Elizabeth Huwiler, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs (Understanding the Bible Commentary Series)*, Understanding the Bible Commentary Ser (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 11–14.

⁷ Tremper Longman, *Song of Songs* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), 34.

⁸ W. S. Lasor, D. A. Hubbard, dan F. W. Bush, *Pengantar Perjanjian Lama 2: Sastra dan Nubuat*. (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1994), 167.

⁹ J. Blommendal, *Pengantar Kepada Perjanjian Lama* (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2019), 157.

¹⁰ Nur Nafisa Salsabila, Anggun Aprilia, dan Titik Angereni Wahyuningtyas, "Prokrastinasi Akademik Pada Generasi Strawberry: Pendekatan Solutif Melalui Self Regulated Learning," *EDUCOUNS GUIDANCE: Journal of Educational and Counseling Guidance* 1, no. 2 (Desember 2024): 21–28, <https://doi.org/10.70079/egjceg.v1i2.58>.

can be operationalized in the development of church members, especially instilling pure love, loyalty, and devotion through the Model of Church Membership Development (MPWG) that he developed¹¹. This contribution paves the way for the use of the Song of Songs as a productive pastoral text. However, the development offered is still general and has not yet bridged the values of the Song of Songs with specific contemporary issues, namely how this text can foster the capacity to survive, rise from failure, and persevere in the face of pressure so that it becomes an urgent need for the strawberry generation.

Although both studies have contributed significantly, they have never been brought together in an integrative research framework. Thus, the church is faced with a crucial challenge regarding the fragility of the mentality of the younger generation often identified as the *strawberry generation*. This solid reflection bridge is found through an in-depth exploration of Song of Songs 3:1–5, a passage often overlooked in contemporary pastoral theology discourse because it is often reduced to themes of romance or universal marriage. In fact, this text extraordinarily contains a very rich existential archetype of persistent search, the courage of faith to penetrate the darkness of the night, and psychological perseverance that culminates in a transformative encounter. Ultimately, this text actively offers a paradigm reconstruction by changing their perspective on suffering. Therefore, the novelty of this article lies precisely at the intersection of these three gaps, namely applying rhetorical criticism to Song of Songs 3:1–5 to produce a structured and applicable theological-pastoral argument for a church model in an effort to cultivate the resilience of the *strawberry generation*.

Methods

This research uses a qualitative method with a rhetorical criticism approach developed by Yehoshua Gitay. Qualitative research methods are research approaches that aim to understand social phenomena in depth by exploring the meaning behind individual actions, statements, and experiences¹². The choice of qualitative methods is very appropriate because the biblical text and the phenomenon of the psychological crisis of the young generation cannot be reduced only to numbers or statistical calculations. Descriptive-analytical interpretations are needed that are able to uncover the layers of emotion and spirituality hidden behind the phenomenon. Rhetorical criticism does not view texts merely as passive arrangements of words, but rather as dynamic persuasive acts that aim to influence the audience. This approach is supported by three main pillars, namely discovery (*inventio*) which focuses on conveying messages as rhetorical acts, organization (*dispositio*) which structures discourse such as the use of the ABB'-A' chiasmus structure, and style (*elocutio*) which utilizes metaphors and repetition to compel readers to feel the emotions of the text

¹¹ Enjel Sinaga dkk., *MODEL PEMBINAAN WARGA GEREJA (MPWG) KITAB KIDUNG AGUNG DALAM PENANAMAN KASIH YANG MURNI BAGI PEMUDA/I*, 4 (2025).

¹² Adhi Kumastuti dan Ahmad M. Khoiron, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. (Semarang: Lembaga Pendidikan Sukarno Pressindo, 2019), 2.

¹³. Through Aristotle's modes of persuasion, namely *logos* (rational reasoning), *pathos* (emotional appeal), and *ethos* (character credibility), the analysis focuses on exploring how language strategies in Song of Solomon 3:1-5 shape theological meaning ¹⁴.

Results and Discussion

This study examines the church's role in fostering resilience among the *strawberry generation* through the rhetorical strategies of Song of Songs 3:1–5. By examining the characters in Song of Songs who go through a profound spiritual search, from despair to discovery, the church is encouraged to reframe adolescent struggles as a valid process of spiritual transformation, not a failure. Through rhetorical analysis, this study demonstrates how the text's structure frames a narrative of longing and perseverance. This approach helps the audience recognize that their search is a meaningful journey of faith. By adopting this rhetorical strategy, the church can convince the strawberry generation that resilience in the face of spiritual uncertainty is evidence of authentic faith, not weakness.

Rhetorical Critique of Song of Songs 3: 1-5

The rhetorical idea in Song of Songs 3:1–5 moves from crisis to discovery, deeply rooted in the experience of repeated failure. Verse 1 presents the irony that even the most private spaces (bed, night) do not guarantee the presence of the desired one, and the plural "nights" indicates that this failure is not a single event but a recurring pattern. This is a textual illustration of a search that must persist even though results have not yet arrived. This failure in the private space does not end in despair, but rather becomes the basis for the next idea in verse 2, which raises active action as a response to this failure. Where "I will arise" is a rejection of self-absorption, and the expansion of the search into the risky public space emphasizes that steadfastness requires a willingness to go beyond the comfort zone. However, this expansion of effort does not immediately produce results, and it is at this point that verse 3 introduces the important idea of the limits of external assistance: the watchmen are encountered but do not provide answers, thus implicitly stating that the text's deep inner struggle must ultimately be resolved through personal perseverance, not the intervention of others. It is precisely after this most desolate point that the reversal occurs and verse 4 becomes the culminating idea (*peripeteia*), because the discovery occurs precisely after the character has passed from the guards, with the verb "discover" being exactly the same as the word "failure" in the previous verses, now without the negative particle indicating that the steadfastness that persists through repeated failures finally bears fruit in a moment of complete recovery. This great achievement is not then left to stand without direction, but verse 5 closes the unit with the idea of self-control, where the vow not to "awaken love"

¹³ Yehoshua Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40-48* (Germany: Bonn Linguistica Biblica, 1981), 36.

¹⁴ Duane F. Watson dan Alan J. Hauser, *Rhetorical Criticism of The Bible: A Comprehensive Bibliography with Notes on History and Method* (New York: Brill, 1994).

before the time confirms that the achievement of verse 4 should not be forced to repeat itself against the will and the right time and this is a principle that balances perseverance with the patience of waiting for the process.

If *inventio* indicates the idea that moves from failure to recovery, then the structural arrangement of the text (*dispositio*) shows how the movement of the idea is architecturally framed through a consistent chiasmic pattern in each verse. Dispositio The consistent chiasmic structure in each verse (A–B–B'–A', developing into A–B–C–B'–A' in verse 4) builds a narrative architecture that dramatizes the journey from passivity to fruitful steadfastness. In verse 1, the outer frame of the private space (A and A') flanks the central axis of the act of searching and the identity of the lovers (B and B'), emphasizing that what is at stake is not merely physical presence but a deep inner relationship. This private frame then breaks into a broader movement in verse 2, which shows a shift from physical movement (rising from passivity) to inner movement, with the paradox at the end of the structure that expansion of effort does not immediately result in discovery, but a pattern that emphasizes that true perseverance is tested precisely when hard work has not yet yielded results. This structural tension continues in verse 3, which reverses the subject's position from that of the found (A) to that of the questioner (A'), a structure that indicates that the initiative is never completely surrendered to an outsider even when public authority is involved. This structural complexity culminates in verse 4, the most complex structure in the unit, which places the pivot (C) of the lover's identity exactly halfway between the act of leaving (A) and the act of grasping (B'), and ends with the spatial resolution of the safe space (A') that shows that the steadfastness tested by the long search leads to a complete and legitimate recovery, not just a momentary relief. This intense sequence of structures is finally tempered by verse 5, which closes the entire unit as a *peroratio frame* : the appeal to the audience (A), the oath formula with symbols of the wilderness (B and B'), and the precise timing (A') structures that altogether recast the experience of the intense search as a lesson in respecting processes and rhythms that cannot be accelerated.

The language in these five verses works progressively to build an emotional experience for the reader that parallels the experience of enduring hardship. Verse 1 places the reader in a lonely and vulnerable inner space through affective descriptions of place and time, while the repeated refrain of failure in verses 1 and 2 (“I searched... but I did not find”) creates a rising and falling rhythm that forces the reader to feel the rise and then fall of hope repeatedly, a stylistic technique that presents the experience of perseverance itself, rather than simply recounting it. This collapsing rhythm is then continued by the rising urgency in verse 2, which uses a sense of *immediacy* (“I will get up now”) and a progressive repetition of intention, creating a “camera shift” effect that emphasizes the unstoppable inner urge to keep moving despite the great risk. However, this energetic movement is abruptly halted by the silence in verse 3, which utilizes silence as a stylistic device that is most meaningful, with the absence of answers from the guards creating a tension that teaches that answers do not always come from outside. It is from this quietest point that verse 4 emerges as a narrative surprise, presenting a sudden transition without lengthy narrative preparation, so that the

discovery seems to come beyond the character's full control, while simultaneously emphasizing that the results of long perseverance often appear at unexpected times and must be grasped wholeheartedly once they arrive. The joy of this discovery is then not allowed to overflow without limits, but verse 5 closes with a shift in the mode of speech from "I" to "you all"—a figuration that teaches, rather than through lengthy explanations, that true perseverance also includes a willingness to respect time and not force an immature process.

The Strawberry Generation Phenomenon and the Resilience Crisis

In contrast to the tenacity of the characters in the Song of Solomon, today's youth are experiencing a resilience crisis, termed the "*Strawberry Generation*." This term, which first became popular in Taiwan, conceptualizes young people (especially Generation Z) as strawberries *that* look stunning, exotic, creative, and brilliant on the outside, but have a very soft texture, bruise easily, and break instantly when receiving the slightest pressure¹⁵. This generation was born and raised in a climate of massive technological progress, making them accustomed to getting everything instantly without having to go through a long process¹⁶.

The main characteristics of the *strawberry generation* are their tendency to be risk - *averse*, have a low tolerance for frustration, are highly reactive to criticism, and are prone to burnout (¹⁷). The roots of this mental fragility are complex. From a microsystem perspective, it is often caused by helicopter parenting or "*strawberry teaching*," a tendency for parents or educators to overprotect their children, solve their every problem, and avoid exposing them to failure¹⁸. As a result, they grow up without strong psychological antibodies. From a macrosystem perspective, this generation is trapped in a digital lifestyle controlled by social media algorithms. Their search for identity is reduced to merely commodifying their existence for likes and virtual validation, ultimately triggering toxic social comparison and acute existential loneliness.

The fundamental problem faced by the *strawberry generation* is a deficit in *grit*. In modern psychology literature, *grit* is defined as the passion *and* perseverance *to* consistently achieve long-term goals, despite the many obstacles or failures that lie ahead. Unlike cognitive talent, *grit* is the mental muscle that determines whether someone will rise again after being knocked down. The *strawberry generation* is severely lacking in this; when they are faced with rejection, relationship crises, or academic failure, they tend to view these

¹⁵ Efi Nurwindayani, "Sinergi Teori Growth Mindset dan Pneumatologi dalam Pendidikan Karakter untuk Menjawab Tantangan Generasi Strobei," *DUNAMIS: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 10, no. 1 (September 2025): 280–94, <https://doi.org/10.30648/dun.v10i1.1916>.

¹⁶ Muhamad Fadli, "Pendidikan Karakter Generasi Strawberry: Mengambil Ibrah dari Kisah Ibrahim dan Ismail," *EDUKATIF: JURNAL ILMU PENDIDIKAN* 5, no. 6 (Desember 2023): 2300–2309, <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v5i6.5594>.

¹⁷ Dina Amalia dan Varinia Pura Damaiyanti, "Fenomena Generasi Strawberry Pada Mahasiswa di FISIP," *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial, Humaniora dan Seni* 3, no. 2 (November 2024): 817–25, <https://doi.org/10.62379/jishs.v3i2.2254>.

¹⁸ Tety Jayanti dan Sekar Purbarini Kawuryan, "Strawberry Generation: When Strawberry Parenting and Teaching Weaken Students' Mathematical Resilience," *Jurnal Pendidikan Progresif* 15, no. 1 (Mei 2025): 139–48, <https://doi.org/10.23960/jpp.v15i1.pp139-148>.

failures as permanent wounds that define their entire life path, rather than as stepping stones to maturity¹⁹. This lack of grit makes them vulnerable to anxiety disorders and depression, thus requiring radical pastoral and spiritual intervention to revitalize their grit.

The text of Song of Solomon 3:1-5 as the Church's effort to cultivate the resilience of the Strawberry Generation

The Church as a Space for Reframing Failure

One of the most damaging characteristics of the strawberry generation is their tendency to interpret failure as a permanent, identity-defining wound. When a young person experiences relational rejection, academic failure, or the collapse of a life plan, their interpretive mechanism shifts from simply "I failed at this," to "I am the failure." This semantic shift from *doing* to *being* is one of the most destructive impacts of helicopter parenting, which for years has isolated children from the natural experience of failure. As a result, when the reality of failure finally presents itself without the protective filter of parents or educators, they lack a strong enough interpretative framework to make constructive sense of it.

It is here that Song of Songs 3:1–5 offers a radical and urgent pastoral paradigm. Rhetorically, this passage is built on an architecture of repeated and deliberate failure. The phrase “I have sought but have not found” (*wālō' māsā'tīw*) does not occur only once but is repeated rhythmically and structurally in verses 1 and 2, creating what in *inventio analysis* calls a *persuasive refrain*. This repetition is not a narrative flaw, but rather a deliberate rhetorical strategy to force the reader to dwell within the experience of not finding, to experience it fully, before resolution arrives. The first failure in the private space (the bed) is followed by a second failure in the public space (the streets and fields), and even the attempt to involve a third party (the watchmen) ends in a painful silence. Structurally, the text rejects shortcuts to resolution; it forces the reader to go through the process, not skip it.

This is what the church needs to adopt as a pastoral paradigm: a theological *reframing* of failure as an integral part of the journey of faith, not as a sign of God's rejection. The church has often been trapped in a narrative of testimony that always culminates in spectacular success, such as someone being tested and then immediately blessed, someone praying and then being instantly answered. This narrative, while intended to inspire, unconsciously builds unrealistic expectations in a *strawberry generation* accustomed to instant gratification. When their life experiences don't fit the "test-succeed" pattern offered from the pulpit, they lack a theological framework to make sense of the "not finding" phase they're experiencing.

¹⁹ Fajar Mustika Violeta, Akhmad Shaleh, dan Muh Wasith Achadi, *Resiliensi Mahasiswa Pada Fenomena Generasi Stroberi Dalam Menghadapi Tantangan Akademik*, 2025.

The Church Forms a Firmness Born of Longing

Inventive analysis of Song of Songs 3:1–5 reveals that the motivation for the character's quest is never extrinsic. All the energy of his journey from the midnight bed to the perilous exploration of the city streets is rooted in a deeply personal and internal source: "he who loved my soul" (*šə'āhābāh nāpšî*). This phrase is not merely a romantic expression; linguistically-Hebrew, the word *nāpšî* refers to the center of human longing, passion, and vitality. This means that what drives the character is not rules, social obligations, or community expectations, but rather a longing that originates from the deepest part of his being. This is what modern terminology calls *passion* , the first component of grit.

The urgent pastoral implication for the church is the need to shift the orientation of spiritual formation from extrinsic motivation to the formation of intrinsic longing. The strawberry generation is not short of information about faith, but rather overloaded with information and lacking the encounters that produce genuine *passion* . The church needs to design formation programs that aim not simply to fill heads with sound doctrine, but rather to create spaces for personal encounters that ignite a deep longing for Christ. Contemplation retreats, intimate prayer groups, and one-on-one faith mentoring are some formats that enable encounters that produce spiritual *passion* . When a young person has truly found their "heart" in Christ, when the motivation of faith is no longer "have to" but "want," they will naturally develop a perseverance that is not easily swayed by the pressures of an instant culture. The church also needs to instill a realistic theology of eschatological hope: that the journey of faith is a marathon, not a sprint, and that steadfastness over the long distance is what forms the character of Christ in a believer.

The Church as a Community that Counters Virtual Validation with Presence

The Strawberry Generation faces a stark existential paradox: they are the most digitally connected generation in human history, yet they simultaneously experience the highest levels of existential loneliness. Social media and algorithm-driven digital ecosystems have reduced their search for identity to a project of commodifying one's existence, measured by the number of *likes*, *followers* , and virtual validation received. As a result, their identities have become extremely fragile and dependent on external judgments that constantly shift according to algorithmic trends. When that virtual validation fails or is suddenly lost, the foundations of their identities crumble.

An analysis of Song of Songs 3:3 provides a particularly relevant and surprising insight. Here, the protagonist encounters the “watchers” (*šōmerîm*), figures who rhetorically represent authority and social order. The protagonist asks the most personal and fundamental question: “You have seen him who loved my soul?” Yet the text’s deliberate omission of the watchers’ response constitutes a weighty rhetorical silence. In an *inventio analysis* , this silence is not a narrative void; it is a bold theological statement that the deepest emotional and spiritual needs cannot be met by the validation of public authority or a formal,

impersonal social community. The watchers are present; they have authority; they represent an organized social structure, but they are unable to provide what the protagonist needs most.

The church is called to fill the void that these digital patrols cannot. However, this role cannot be fulfilled if the church itself operates only at the level of institutional formality. Ministers who are busy monitoring attendance, admonishing dress codes, and maintaining outward order without being emotionally present for young congregants are merely "city patrols" in the guise of service. Physical presence is more valuable than digital presence, where face-to-face conversations are prioritized over virtual commentary, and where community acceptance depends not on the performance of a constructed identity, but on the authenticity of one's presence before God and others.

Conclusion

This study answers how Song of Songs 3:1–5 becomes a pastoral resource for the resilience of the *strawberry generation* through a rhetorical critique of *inventio*, *dispositio*, and *elocutio*, which finds five elements of resilience that are born directly from the structure of the text, namely honesty in admitting repeated failures, courage to act beyond the comfort zone, autonomy when external help is not available, willingness to welcome recovery that comes beyond human control, and patience to respect time. These findings direct the church to three concrete pastoral roles, namely becoming a space for reframing failure by shifting the narrative of "do and immediately succeed" to a recognition that the phase of "not finding" is a legitimate part of the journey of faith, forming steadfastness from longing through personal encounter spaces such as retreats, intimate prayer, and mentoring, so that spiritual perseverance grows from *passion* for Christ rather than mere obedience and becoming a community of authentic presence that fills the void of digital validation. The contribution of this research lies in the meeting of three fields that previously ran separately, namely the psychology of the strawberry generation, pastoral studies of the Song of Songs, and biblical rhetorical criticism, resulting in a pastoral model that is both normative and applicable, with the implication that the church does not need to design a new program from scratch, but can instead re-explore marginalized biblical texts as a resource for resilience that has long been available but has not been pastorally optimized for the character formation of today's young generation.

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Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Statement

During the development of this manuscript, AI-assisted tools were employed only for language translation and for locating potentially relevant scholarly references. The authors did not rely on AI to formulate the study's core arguments, analyze or interpret research data, or determine the scientific conclusions. The authors independently evaluated, verified, and

refined all AI-assisted outputs and remain fully accountable for the content, scholarly validity, and integrity of the published work.

Author Contributions

Antonio Felipe Ralendesang: Contributed to the conceptualization of the study, formulation of the research objectives, development of the analytical framework, and preparation and revision of the manuscript.

Helen Gratia Masambe: Contributed to the literature review, collection and organization of relevant scholarly materials, interpretation of the findings, and substantive revision of the manuscript.

Finarsi Lumentut: Contributed to the research methodology, critical evaluation of the manuscript, refinement of the discussion, and final review and approval of the submitted version.

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