Leadership Styles and Competencies in Faith Based Academic Institutions: The Bases of Total Quality Management in Education (TQME)

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Abstract
Leadership styles and competencies play crucial roles not only in influencing the quality of institutional leadership but majorly in determining the total quality management and improvement of education in public and faith-based educational settings. The overall success of educational institutions heavily depend on leadership approaches and competencies of their leaders, their knowledge base, and how the leaders relate with organizational employees. Leadership approaches that engage workers in the process of decision-making, team-building and inspirational programs that enhance their optimal performance lead to profound successes in educational and institutional performances. This article examines the different leadership styles, such as people-oriented, task-oriented, knowledge-oriented and learning-oriented approaches of leaders and how they impact on the quality of education. The article further examines leadership competencies such as visionary and strategic thinking, adaptability and change, collaborative relationships and leadership agility in relation to institutional quality assurance standards. Good institutional governance and quality management practices are leadership qualities that are critical in enhancing quality assurance standards of faith-based academic institutions. Total Quality Education (TQE) and Total Quality Improvement (TQI) hinge around Total Quality Management of Education (TQME) and are aligned to leadership styles and competencies of leaders in institutions of learning. Quality education and compliances to educational quality standards are dependent on the institutional philosophy of education, mission and vision statements, and the core values and beliefs. The qualification of employees are crucial determinants of their job satisfactions, leadership competences and quality performances of their faith-based institutions. Workplace spiritual emphasis and leaders' value-based moral principles provide firm foundations upon which institutional leaders make sound and informed decisions for their institutional growth and development. Institutional stakeholders which include parents, teachers, learners, community, alumni, creditors and suppliers play important roles in promoting the quality of education. Work education, student work program and learner involvement in community services are significant determining factors of learners' and teachers' professional growth, dignity of labor and work ethics in academic institutions. Workplace spirituality is essential in promoting good institutional working and learning environments. Sound financial management and proper motivation of employees are inevitable in improving the quality of education, refining leadership efficacy and enhancing customer/stakeholder satisfaction. The bottom-line of this article is to examine the relationship between faith-based institutional leadership styles and competencies and the total quality management and improvement of educational services and practices.
Keywords: *Leadership Styles, Leadership Competencies, Faith-based institutions, Total Quality Management, Total Quality Education, Total Quality Improvement*

I.   Introduction

The education and training sectors of the 21st Century are rapidly and consistently evolving and revolving. In such a dynamic educational environment, institutions of learning ought to be up and ahead in their game of providing quality education and services. Leadership in academic institutions is becoming increasingly complex and challenging. Some research studies have shown that the relationships between leadership styles and quality assurance standards have significant impacts on the quality of education (Nadeem, 2023; Lawrence, 2025). Successful institutional compliance to Quality Assurance (QA) standards is determined by the decision-making abilities and the leadership styles of the institutional leaders (Ahmad & Ahmed, 2022; Sihotang & Nadeak, 2017). In addition, demographic features of leaders have been cited as some of the factors that influence the leadership styles and competencies of a leader. Hence, the maintenance and sustainability of Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) requires that institutions identify and recruit leaders who are competent and forward looking. Leaders in

institutions of learning are continuously striving to comply with QA standards and to fulfill the accreditation requirements and regulations in a bid to be recognized, not only locally, but regionally and globally. By implementing the QA standards and procedures, leaders in educational institutions are placing themselves in better positions to improve the quality of the programs they offer, increase students' enrolment and satisfaction, and enhance their reputations in the education sector. Failure to secure accreditation status or comply with the QA standards is so detrimental to the progress of the institution and that would lead to poor performances of the schools.

Basic and higher education in Kenya are facing leadership complications emanating from financial, managerial, governance, political and social intricacies (Atibuni & Olema, 2021), and these have threatened to compromise the quality of education offered in the Kenyan education system. In Kenya, concerns are raised on the deteriorating quality of education. The main factors associated with such degradation of quality education is the leadership styles and the quality of leaders themselves. The role of QA in educational leadership of academic institution is to ensure that the institution provide high quality teaching and learning experiences, enhancing continuous improvement of quality education and services, and fulfilling the statutory and regulatory QA requirements (Agapiti and Kitula, 2022). The role of QA in faith-based academic institutions is to develop spiritually well trained educational and instructional leaders (Meesri, Amornkitpinyo and Na-soontorn, 2022). Spiritual leaders are more of transformative and are effective change agents of faith-based educational institutions

The Ministry of Education Science and Technology, MOEST (2015), was established as a government agent for effectively reviewing, developing and implementing curriculums for TQE and TQI in educational institutions. The government of Kenya has promulgated a program for Free Primary Education (FPE) and Free Secondary Schools (FSE) coupled with the proliferations of private colleges, and this have necessitated the need for the Directorate of Quality Assurance and Standards (DQAS) and MOEST to be revitalized and strengthened to ensure effective management of schools' QA standards in private and public sectors. QASOs require job-specific skills to perform their roles effectively. Education system in Kenya has not developed and offered any programs for training QASOs (Vundi 2023; Sululu et al. 2023) and these officers are simply selected upon the advice and recommendations of Teachers Advisory Center (TAC) and Teachers Service Commission (TSC). Occasionally, the Government of Kenya (GoK) through MOEST offers some training to QASOs on an In-Service Education and Training (INSET) arrangement (Republic of Kenya, 2000).

Total Quality Management (TQM) Theory

Total Quality Management (TQM) theory provides a very robust framework for inspecting, controlling, and upholding quality standards compliances while ensuring effective TQM in an organizational management (Rahmatika et al. 2024; Garira, 2024). TQM theory is based on principles or pillars that focus much on ensuring that customers are satisfied, that leaders are committed to offering quality services and products. It involves quality inspection, quality control and quality standards that provide continuous development and improvement of all workers and learners in the organization through educational programs like seminars, upgrading and training, and that leaders and support staff should be highly motivated and work as a unit. TQM theory provides a well-structured framework for TQE that is useful for measuring, evaluating, monitoring, inspecting and supervising institutions of learning. The focus is to involve and empower all employees in the system to actively participate in the continuous improvement of quality education, to develop an organizational culture in which the vision is realized and employees derive job satisfaction. Satisfaction of customers is considered as one of those indicators of quality services. Knowledge management, TQM and innovations are measured using the Global Competition Index (GCI) that includes a tool used to measure competitiveness of the service industry (Charteris, Smardon and Kemmis, 2022; Honarpour et al. 2018). Other measures can be obtained from measurements of external customer satisfactions index (CSI) and internal customer satisfaction indices like employee satisfaction index (ESI) and student satisfaction index (SSI) all of which are in line with Adventist Accrediting Association (AAA) and DQAS Quality Assurance (QA) standards.

TQM theory provides a platform for measuring and analyzing transactional and transformational leadership styles and also provides instruments for psychometric tests of technical, human and conceptual skills inherent in institutional leaders (Northouse, 2021; Singh et al. 2014). Further, appropriate measurement scales for cognitive, functional and social leadership competencies were availed. Theoretical frameworks and systems in TQM are designed to empower members of the organization to be actively engaged in decision-making, identify and solve problems, and provide leadership in the quality control processes and management. The focus of employees was on assessing and improving quality on core values like excellence, integrity, teamwork, shared beliefs, values, and attitudes.

TQM theory as a tool of organizational management whose implementation is intended to enable the organization to attain its set goals and enhance customer satisfaction (Gabriela-Livia, 2021; Belkasseh, 2019). Initially, the idea of TQM was to introduce checks and balances of quality controls in processes of producing goods/commodities in a firm or an industry. TQM theory was originated in 1930s by Edward Deming who was

an influential expert in statistical theory and management of production processes in USA. Much of Deming's discoveries in improving industrial processes was greatly advanced and improved in the 1950s when there were further influences, promotions and improvements in the concepts of quality controls, quality standards and quality movements. Makri and Neely (2021) points out that TQM theory was built from grounded theory which evolved from scanning the complicated business environments, the rising stiffening competition in the business world and the rapidly increasing technological innovations in the business market that are very challenging to TQM. Deming's TQM theory was influenced by the works of Walter Shewhart a statistician who invented statistical control technology to improve production processes and services, reduce or eliminate inefficiencies, wastages, delays or errors in the processes of production, and enhance predictability, controllability and productivity of industrial processes and technologies. This involves a process of planning, doing, checking and acting (PDCA) on the processes and systems of production leading to quality control methods known as Statistical Process Control (SPC). Therefore, the theoretical underpinnings of TQM were PDCA and SPC. TQM theory is an excellent business strategic approach for continuous improvements of QA standards and operations in an organization that focuses much on customer care and satisfactions (Yu, Park and Hong, 2020). This further involves empowering workers and effecting team building in an organization. Empowering people through teamwork and giving them opportunities to improve their processes encourages all employees to take pride in their organization. Effectiveness of TQM theory requires that employees are fully involved in the organizational management practices and process (Cavallone and Palumbo, 2021). The management ensures that there is total involvement of all employees in the organization, ensuring that all the customers get the exact quality of goods and services required, and that the senior management executives are fully committed to customer satisfaction. TQM focuses on continual improvement and participation of the customers and workers who in turn begin to have a sense of belonging, owning every decision and activities and thus becoming more productive and dependable. TQM theory provides a very robust framework for inspecting quality, controlling quality, upholding QA standards, and ensuring effective TQM in an organizational management (Rahmatika et al. 2024). The stifling competition and ever increasing complexity of the business and service industry are part of the challenges of TQM. Rapidly changing market conditions and institutional environments necessitates a corresponding increase in TQM technology and practices (Ahmed et al. 2022). Scanning the business and institutional environment facilitates the choice of appropriate strategic approaches for the organizations. These approaches for strategic plan development include active involvement of workers, empowering them, and effectively communicating to them. TQM theory is based on principles or pillars that focus much on ensuring that customers are satisfied, and that leaders are committed to offering quality services and products. There is continuous development and improvement of all workers in the organization through educational programs to motivate the leaders to work synergistically

TQM theory was originally innovated for use in improving industrial processes, but later in 1990s it was found to be incredibly useful in improving efficiencies and performances in academic processes and education systems of higher learning institutions (Yusuf, 2023). The concept of TQM has permeated deeply in to the spheres and sectors of productions, businesses, academics, and services. Application of TQM in education sector has become incredibly instrumental in transforming the performances and qualities of services and processes involved in educating learners (Mulyadi et al., 2022). This has also tremendously transformed the quality of management styles and competencies of educational leaders, improved the working relationships and collaboration among education stakeholders, and enhanced the efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization in the education sectors and learning institutions. TQM in colleges and universities require careful and definite change management, effective communication, assessment and evaluation of leadership needs and attitudes of leaders in the education systems (Grossu-Leibovica and Kalkis, 2021). Institutional leaders and instructors need a lot of sensitization, concerted efforts in awareness campaign on the importance of changing and improving quality in all aspects of education, moving against maintenances of status-quo mentality and resistance to change in some educational administrators and challenging educators to embrace new technology. The major modules of TQM in education include the abilities of leaders to uphold ethical practices and integrity, effectively communicate changes and new technology, and build teamwork and trust among education stakeholders.

TQM theory provides a well-structured framework for evaluating TQE and measuring, evaluating, monitoring, inspecting and supervising institutions of learning (Barile et al. 2023). Effective application of TQM in schools' learning processes and instructional technology require total involvement of the school stakeholders in the processes of making decisions, improving standards, providing services, and implementing development activities of the school. Quality management processes in education sector is a continuous process of incremental changes in adapting new techniques, improving existing methods of delivering services, and making changes in management procedures. Changes in education can be effected by creating an environment that encourages people to embrace a spirit of wanting to change for the better, providing room, space, means and mechanisms to empower people for change. Effective management of change for better quality services involves enhancing positive behaviors, attitudes, and impetus for change in all the employees of the organization (Garira, 2024). Improvements

in TQM involve effective communication verbally or through media text messaging among teachers, learners and administrators in an educational setting

TQM in education is the level of satisfaction a stakeholders derive from the services offered by institution (Utkirov, 2024). The stakeholders in education demand to be given quality services and are willing to pay higher amounts of money for the quality services and may not be willing to pay if the quality is compromised. TQM is the commitment to treat the customer like a king who demands and dictates to be given quality service provisions. Customers in the education sector are the students, parents, workers, investors and creditors of the institution. Therefore, TQM processes dictate that customers must be satisfied at all cost, and must be listened to without assuming that they are pleased or satisfied because the school is providing them with good education. The parents need to know how to contact the teachers and deans if they want to and that there are always available when the students need them. The Principal's responsibility is that of ensuring conformity and compliance to academic standards and procedural rules in school, and overseeing the development of quality education and quality improvements systems that outline plans, goals, policies, checks, balances, controls points and deliberate intervention measures for improvements. Satisfaction of customers is considered as one of those indicators of quality services (Saragih et al. 2020), and that can be obtained from measurements of external customer satisfactions index (CSI) and internal customer satisfaction indices like employee satisfaction (ESI) and student satisfaction (SSI). Faith-based Institutions with the right motives for starting and implementing TQM become successful in transforming the organizational initial operational efforts, that were founded on certain norms and effort, into a strategic level. Furthermore, there are always some resistance to change in every organization because of the fear of the unknown. Educational institutions for this matter need to do a lot of sensitization.

Transforming people and processes in organization requires rapid translation of TQM to make it operational in a business plan at all levels of the organization (Ciasullo et al. 2022). This is because it is a holistic management tool that has a competitive and comparative advantage in a complex organizational environment. TQM must have time dimensions because of the systems dynamics of organizations. Educational institutions for example are rapidly changing because of research, innovations and new technologies. TQM must be applicable to structures, operations, processes, and change initiatives of the organizations. Anderson (2020) emphasized that TQM is the strategic driver of an organization. It is part of the process that is used to formulate strategic plan for the organization. It drives the organization to excellence in performance, businesses and compliance with QA standards especially when the process uses top-down approach for making strategic choices. Organizations succeed if they successively and concurrently introduce a number of strategic TQM to counter the changing dynamics of service provisions, operations and processes in a competitive environment. These sequential processes also help built the organizational confidence in using TQM to manage change and ensure quality products and services. Strategically adopting TQM and its techniques and tools ultimately leads to organizational maturity and effectiveness. Murenga and Njuguna (2020) say that introducing TQM in a rapidly changing markets and environments because of market pressure and changing perceptions of customers on what is regarded as quality requires that response must be driven by in-depth understanding of how services are to be delivered and in what way should the process of change be effected. TQM is instrumental in reforming and reshaping business and institutional environments and that requires a strategic competitor analysis and benchmarking as the management keep focusing on the customers and the workers.

Leadership Styles
Leadership styles are various approaches that leaders often use in guiding, motivating, and managing people groups and teams (Bwalya, 2023). These approaches are leaders' sets of experiences, values and personality traits that inform the leaders' processes often used in making decisions, strategic thinking and behavior patterns Styles of leadership focus exclusively on what a leader does and how the leaders act. Leadership styles are composed of two general kinds of behavior namely task behavior (task-oriented leadership style) and relationship behavior (people-oriented leadership style). The task behavior of a leader simplifies the efforts of workers to accomplish organizational goals and helps them to achieve their objectives. On the other hand, relationship behavior helps subordinates in the organization to feel comfortable with themselves, to relate amicably with one another and to enjoy the environment in which they are working. The central point of an organization is the ability of management to balance task and people orientations of organizational prevailing leadership styles to attain maximum influence on the workers' efforts to attain the desired organizational goals

Ashraf et al. (2025) explain how the Principal's style of leadership in school can positively or negatively influence students' motivation to learn and the workers commitment to work. School principals must endeavor to utilize different leadership styles because the success of a school is determined by the leader's ability to apply and balance the varied leadership competencies and styles. A very flexible and quickly adjusting school leader can quickly scan the school environment and add value through flexible leadership competence to build and improve quality of education. South African Higher Education (2010) stated that effective institutional leadership competencies, good governance and strategic management are significant in effecting change management of

educational institutions and, paradoxically, managing change in turn for implementation in those institutions. Effective strategic planning, deep and patiently understanding leadership, and prompt accurate decision-making on various strategic issues of the institution are very essential for creating a conducive environment for equality and success on the part of students and staff of a learning institution (Noreen, 2025). The role of leadership styles in educational institutions focus on those people-oriented and task-oriented that contribute to improving QA compliance and implementation in higher education and enhances job satisfaction among the faculty and staff

People-Oriented Leadership

Mbivya (2023) describes a people-oriented, a person-oriented, or a human-oriented leadership style as that leadership that builds good working and interpersonal relationship, collaboration and inter-dependency among organizational workers. Hence, a person-oriented leader is one that practices principles that are friendly to people, facilitating positivity in working relationship among employees in the organization. This involves giving priority to people than to task. This leadership recognizes that employees who feel valued and recognized attain a high level of job satisfaction, improve interpersonal working relationship and become more efficient and productive at work place. People-oriented leadership style have a positive correlation with the efficiency and productivity of employees. Leadership orientation that is people friendly often builds and maintains excellent working relationship. Mbivya (2023) emphasizes that leaders who bond strongly with employees are often excellent goal achievers in their organizations. Bonding can be attained by cultivating empathy and understanding, building trust and relationships, prioritizing employee well-being, empowering and delegating, fostering a positive work culture, leading by example, and regularly measuring, monitoring and evaluating employee outcome.

Human-oriented leadership on one hand and leadership commitment to organizational goals on the other hand provide the best working environment and enhance the productivity of individual worker and the performance of the organization at large (Liqiu, 2022). In this regard, people-oriented leaders concentrate on building relationships and making employees to feel included and valued. Staff must be valued and trusted. People-oriented leaders give first priority to people and their well-being, closely monitoring if they are facing any challenges and investing more resources and energy to win their respect and trust. When people are treated this way they tend to be more productive, motivated, creative and positive. The quality of services and products in the organization will soar high with time. In an educational setting the performance of teachers and learners will greatly improve. Strategic leaders who visualize platform of people networking are likely to intrinsically and extrinsically motivate workers to perform excellently by developing interests and new abilities that drive organizations to greater heights (Bennet, 2022).

Leadership styles that are more oriented to people's needs and well-being, and are friendly to people, often create free working environment where people are free to express themselves, dialogue and exchange ideas without fear (Ho, Tran and Ho, 2023). In such a working environment grievances of employees are highly valued and the processes of decision-making are democratized within the organization. With such leadership style organizations thrive and grow because employees put in their best. Leaderships that are pro-people are cognizant of the fact that a system that recognizes and rewards employees for their achievements encourage employees to work harder and perform better because they know their hardworking will be recognized and rewarded (Besley et al. 2022). Formal awards or increased compensations are often used to motivate workers to perform better.

Organizations that employ leaders with principles that are more oriented to the people's needs and well-being are likely to enhance satisfaction of employees on their jobs (Moti, 2022). When leadership principles and policies are focused toward balancing individual's work-life, improving employee working conditions, creating positivity in employee relationships, and improving worker conditions, employees will attain a high level of job satisfaction and productivity. Organizations whose major concerns are the well-being and satisfaction of employees at workplace and who value the time and energy that the employees have given to the organization will in turn commit the organizational time and resources to further enhance customer satisfaction and employee productivity

Leaders who employ people-oriented leadership style often facilitate positive relationships among all of the company employees (Ceri-Booms, 2020). They do not only prioritize employee well-being over the completion of organizational tasks or over meeting target, but they also uphold human dignity of labor. These leaders recognize that an individual employee in the organization is more important than the organization itself, and that employees are more productive, satisfied, willing to work without coercion, and are not willing to leave the organization when their well-beings are taken care of by people-oriented organizational leadership.

Task-Oriented Leadership

When a style of leadership is more inclined to the performance of tasks in the organization then the leadership is said to be oriented to tasks (Jacob, Olowanefu and Ayoko, 2023). When more emphasis at workplace is to achieve the goals set by the organization by all means and when the focus of the leader is to make people work harder to meet certain set standards of work performances, then the leader has an orientation to task performances. When the organization is more concerned with performances at workplace and is less concerned

with the employee needs and welfare, then the organization has a bias leadership orientation towards performances of tasks. Task-orientations in an organization gives priority to organizational activities, policies, procedures and rules at the expense of employee welfare and freedoms. Task-oriented leadership approach embraces the notion that workers must be coerced to do whatever it takes at whatever cost to get the job done in time. Task-oriented leadership approach is often contrasted against relations-oriented leadership because it tends to be autocratic and coercively emphasizing the completion of required organizational goals at the expense of the wellbeing and working conditions of the workers (Chenjur, 2024). Task-oriented leadership, project managers are required to master the projects requirements and processes, and to accomplish the tasks well within the budgeted timelines and schedules (Awu et al., 2022). Additionally, project managers are required to have clear knowledge of job requirements, their behavioral leadership styles and competencies, and be team players in accomplishing the organizational tasks and projects. In task orientation leadership no task should be left unaccomplished during the day and tasks should be performed with precision and timely.

A task-oriented leader is one that strives to attain organizational QA standards and helps in leading the organization to greater achievements and progress (Alvi and Rana, 2019). The leader helps in setting the short term and long term goals for the institution and mobilizes workers to strictly follow action plans to achieve the goals. An effective task-oriented leader is characterized with high social and emotional intelligence. Kadri et al. (2021) emphasize that task-oriented leaders must provide essential leadership needed to ensure that projects are successful and meet the threshold of QA standards that satisfy customers in the local and global markets.

Task-oriented leadership practices are based on theory X assumption that people naturally dislike job and therefore they need to be coerced, forced or pushed to work (Bokoula and Galanakis, 2022). It is assumed that people need close supervision and monitoring not only for them to work but to do the right thing. The focus is mainly on the results, performance, and productivity of every individual worker. Very close monitoring, assessment and evaluation of the work done and individual performances are done regularly and rewards or punishment may be administered to the workers. This approach of task-oriented leadership ranges from moderate motivational incentives and rewards for work well done to some form of coercion or even severe punishment for work not done. The end results justifies the means and therefore it doesn't matter whether you are in good working conditions or not, workers welfare is not a priority but work is more important. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020) coercive approach of task-oriented leaders often causes stress to the workers, have negative impacts on team building and stifling the capacity of employees to be creative and independent thinkers. This approach compromises the quality of work and product because workers may be demotivated by stringent rules and regulations. Workers need to be motivated and their welfare to be taken care of in order for them to perform optimally. When workers are taken care of they work better and take care of the organization as well. Institutional leaders need to know how to balance between task-oriented and people-oriented approaches in order to have organizational-oriented results.

Grissom et al. (2021) defined task-oriented leadership in an educational institution as one that is goal-inclined and where institutional leaders focus on ensuring the completion of school objectives within a timeframe, and defining the roles of the all the teaching and non-teaching staff. Task-oriented leaders in schools provide teaching resources and instructional materials for the teachers in time to enable them carry out their teaching assignments without fail and improve performances. Schools use task-oriented leadership as a leadership model in which leaders prioritize getting tasks done through goal setting, curriculum planning and implementation. Task-oriented school leaders are more focused on creating step-by-step plans to achieve the school's objectives, are very organized, creating structures, establishing systems for their teachers to excel in the school tasks, and creating clearly defined roles for each teacher and administrative staffs. Tasks-oriented leaders in schools make sure that teachers are on track with their school work, employ performance review methods to assess the teachers' productivity, but they care less about the teachers' emotional feeling at work. Teachers are appointed to various offices that require specific competencies of teachers that can accomplish tasks with the limited timelines like school calendar of events, school closing and opening date, mid and end term examination table, student registration timelines and utilizing the limited resources in school efficiently. This task-oriented leadership model in schools enables the school administration and management to achieve results more successfully than any other kind of leadership style. According to Wanyoko and Muchanje (2021), task-oriented leadership style in a school setting has several advantages and disadvantages. The advantages include; 1) Achievement of setting and implementing school goals by using Simple, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) strategies. 2) Meeting the schools' deadlines by setting school deadlines ahead and giving teachers chance to work ahead on school-specific projects and tasks. 3) Attaining a straightforward leadership in school by clearly describing teachers' goals, job duties, and expectations and helping teachers to be on the same page regarding school activities. 4) Helping teachers to succeed by setting up clear paths for teachers to succeed and focusing helping teachers to upgrade and be more professional. 5) Finding out better strategies and systems that enable teachers to carry out their school tasks efficiently, perform better, cut costs and improve service delivery. The disadvantages on the other hand include; 1) Reducing teacher morale and productivity by overworking and

continuously engaging teachers in school work without giving them time for some enjoyment, entertainment and relaxation at work. 2) Causing high pressure for the teaching and non-teaching staff by making them always conscious of deadlines, progress, and productivity. 3) Leading to unhealthy competition and lack of bonding among teachers, leaders and support staff in the school. 4) Increasing burnouts, stress and apathy among teachers and support staff at workplace because of too much focusing on the task performance and overlooking the well-being of the worker. 5) Exacerbating poor teacher development by focusing on tasks and ignoring individual worker's personal growth and professional development

Knowledge-Oriented Leadership

Knowledge-oriented leadership is emerging as a managerial and administrative style of leadership in schools and faith-based academic institutions of higher learning. This is an instructional leadership approach that is more efficient in creating, providing and adding value to educational processes through effective information communication, knowledge dissemination, and innovative leadership (Mansoor and Hussain, 2024; Manzoor, Zhang & Ma 2023). Knowledge is shared through supportive behaviors, consultative approaches and delegated responsibilities among workers and learners in an organization. Leadership is therefore significant in enhancing organizational levels of innovation, learning abilities and visionary thinking levels. Leadership and knowledge are related positively in promoting and orienting employees toward achieving the organizational goals and managing interpersonal relationships. Leaders obtain knowledge and learning from within and outside the organization and from the influence of other knowledgeable leaders. Fulfilling the needs of colleague workers and comrade learners is paramount in creating excellent working environment, providing conducive learning spaces, and cultivating positive attitudes for sustainable developments of the institution (Aziz and Abiddin, 2024). Knowledge management involves institutional management in terms of effective resource mobilization, time management, and investing time and effort in training, sharing of knowledge and experience on a regular basis. Knowledge-oriented leaders are role models in promoting and encouraging employees' intellectual abilities, institutionalizing learning through motivational courses and work experience, inspiring learners and employees to develop a culture of intellectual inquisitiveness and alertness, and promoting the spirit of resilience in acquiring and integrating knowledge in their work life and workplaces (Cisneros, Reyna and Perlines, 2023).

Knowledge-oriented leaders are upbeat in creating, sharing, applying and promoting knowledge behaviors that meet the expectation and interests of individuals and organizational goals. This is achieved through improvements of communication and motivation of employees in pursuit of excellence in educational services and customer satisfactions (Alzghoul et. al. 2023). Knowledge managements entails striking a balance between the needs of the organization individuals' need of knowledge management. Knowledge management competencies are the abilities of organizations in acquiring, sharing and applying external and internal knowledge. Sharing of knowledge means that the members in the organization are willing to engage in the process of acquiring, reproducing knowledge and transferring it to places and people who need it (Chughtai and Khan, 2024; Al-Husseini, El-Beltagi and Moizer, 2019). The act of applying knowledge is performed in a manner that the end result is a progressive development of organizational and professional skills in each department of the organization. A leadership style is at the center stage in creating space and conditions in which acquired knowledge is shared and applied appropriately.

Knowledge leadership is rapidly evolving in this technological age, institutional leaders are striving to tailor and align their leadership styles to those swiftly revolving intensive needs of institutional and instructional knowledge intensities. Knowledge oriented leaders are role models to their employees who are keenly observant to their leaders' knowledge behavior and are ready to emulate and change appropriately (Gurlek and Cemberci, 2020). The roles of a faith-based institution are to lead by example, to demonstrate morally ethical competent leadership, to create a spiritual atmosphere in which learning is promoted and knowledge is disseminated, and to ensure that proper application of appropriate knowledge is facilitated and rewarded. Knowledge leaders play significant roles of bringing harmony in knowledge behaviors of their organizations and individuals, and inculcating the spirit of self-drive in each employee to perform optimally and produce excellent outcomes (Le PT and Le PB, 2025). Acquired knowledge refers to institutional and individuals' abilities to acquire new appropriate information or techniques that are uniquely tailored toward providing solutions for frequently emerging institutional challenges and introducing new efficient ways of running the institutions. Knowledge leaders are instrumental in driving the organizations to being more competitive and innovative in the market and thus continue thriving in the competitive markets (Rehman and Iqbal, 2020). Knowledge management is more useful in the decision-making process, leadership practices and management styles of the organization. Higher institutions of learning are repositories and sources of knowledge and are acutely involved in utilizing that knowledge asset in order to sustain their growth and relevance in the uncertain educational market. Knowledge-oriented Leadership style has a weighty influence on the effectiveness and quality of faith-based education. As it has been observed by some writers, there is no particular leadership style that is said to be better or superior to the other (Donate et.

al., 2022). Educational leaders who are able to tailor their leadership styles to the needs and wants of the institutional stakeholders are said to be the most successful and efficient

Learning-Oriented Leadership

Learning institutions are under immense pressure to achieve long-term total quality improvement and management of educational services and leaderships. To improve the quality of education in both public and faith-based institutions of learning, learning-oriented leaders play crucial roles of transforming institutional teaching and learning environments, programs and technology to greater heights (Lundqvist, 2023; Wallo, Lundqvist and Coetzer, 2024). Learning is the process of acquiring new knowledge, skills and competencies in an academic setting or a working environment that lead to permanent or semi-permanent, full or partial changes on individuals' ways of thinking and acting. The process, progress and level of learning by institutional workers or learners is fundamental to the growth and development of the institution (Bellibas and Gumus, 2021). In the 21st Century, there has been drastic changes in the manner and pace of learning in workplaces and learning institution. With the rapid changes in globalization and technological advancements, traditional methods and styles of leadership are no longer relevant or tenable. The focus of faith-based academic institution is shifting from traditional to transformational leadership styles that add value, quality and success to the organization. Modern leaders need to adopt modern management approaches by embracing modern learning strategies and conceptualizations and at the same time becoming more open and flexible to changes in the organization (Poquet and Laat, 2021; Yaw and Venessa, 2024). Learned leaders are able to apply modern leadership styles and are more of results oriented as they take action plans that are in line with the goals of the organization, and that bring a paradigm shift from the organizational status-quo inertia to dynamic organizational vibrancy. Learning-oriented leadership approaches lead to more effective and cohesive teams, increased creative mindsets and enhanced innovative skills of workers and learners in a learning environment (Ali, Wang and Johnson, 2020). Learning from the perspectives of workplaces are initiated by institutional formal and informal training programs like in-service courses, continuing education, on-line modules, or may be instigated by individual worker's self-directed, self-drive, and self-motivation for learning while working at workplaces or in everyday life experiences (Sollander and Engstrom, 2022). Learning at individuals' levels are considered to be necessary but not sufficient learning conditions for the organization. Group or organizational level learning is sufficient because it is based on ideas and experiences that have been discussed, shared and widely accepted as mental models of how best to achieve the organizational goals, make informed decisions and solve organizational problems (Mutonyi, Slatten and Lien, 2020).

Learning-oriented principals and managers are adept and keen at achieving unity and peace among the teachers, supporting staff and learners, creating new ideas and modern teaching methods, providing pedagogical leadership, supporting modern teaching-learning developments, and supporting improvements in the quality of learning for the learners (Atasoy, 2020; Kalkan, et al., 2020; Oco, 2022). Additionally, learning-oriented leaders are keen at providing leaderships that are learner-centered, oriented to research and evaluation, geared toward efficient and strategic learning resource mobilizations, promoting shared visions and expectations, and creating positive and conducive learning environments within the learning institutions (Komariah, 2023; Saleem, et al., 2020)

Leadership Competencies

A leadership competency is a combination of relevant attributes and characteristics of a leader exemplified in three aspects of a leader's acquired or innate competencies in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning outcomes or experiences (Chow and Singh, 2022). The cognitive aspect of leadership competency requires a leader to be knowledgeable of all the requirements needed to perform a specific job, the conceptual understanding of how to lead or perform a task, and a clear understanding and appreciation of policies, articles and constitutions of the organization. The affective domain of leadership competency are the leader's behavioral capabilities that include attitudes, affections, and passion for work. The affective capabilities of a leader enable the leader to interact well with employees in a robust collaborative interrelationship to create a lively working environment. The psychomotor aspect of leadership competency is the ability of the leader to effectively apply the acquired knowledge with a positive attitude toward performing organizational task or leadership roles. Leadership competency is associated with superior performance and competitive advantage of an organization.

Kassai (2022) identifies four leadership competencies that constitute a competency model in an organization. A competency model is defined as a structured framework that specifies the domain and the scope of what a professional possesses in terms of knowhow, expertise, competencies and attributes that distinguish an efficient and competent leader. A competency model is a major course outline and a curriculum of instruction and training in leadership competencies. The competency model has four measurable domains of leadership; 1) visioning and strategic thinking, 2) leadership agility, 3) adaptability and change, and 4) relationship and collaboration.

Visioning and Strategic Thinking

Sibeko and Bernad (2020) defined visioning as the ability of a leader to see a future state that is better than the present and to communicate that future state in a way that inspires and motivates others. It involves setting a clear direction and creating a compelling picture of what the future can be and should be. Visionary thinking provides purpose and meaning for the organization, guiding the actions and decisions of both the leaders and their followers. Visioning is a complex, multidimensional concept that helps leaders to visualize with clarity about the future organizational events and bearing. Visioning is visualizing and navigating the future of an organization using a visual compass with a pointer to the organizational goals for the future. According to Sibeko and Bernad (2020) strategic thinking is the ability to plan and execute actions that move an organization or a group toward its vision. Strategic thinking is all the leader's ability to understand the current context, anticipate the future trends, and to make informed decisions that align with organizational long-term goals. Hence, strategic thinking requires analytical skills, foresight, and flexibility to changing circumstances. Thinking strategically requires a leader to navigate complex environments, identify opportunities and threats, and develop effective plans to achieve their vision

A leader with visions sees possibilities that others might not see, and can articulate these possibilities in a way that resonates with their followers (Folarin, 2021). Therefore, the ability to envision the future is fundamental for driving change and achieving long-term goals. Visioning abilities of a leader involves a leaders' imagination of a futuristic looking, developing a strategic plan with a clear goal for the future of the organization and inducing or pointing people to look and move in the direction of that future goal. "A vision is compared to a sign post which point to the future". Organizations, individuals or businesses perish if they don't have visions. Visioning inspires and motivates both leaders and followers. Visioning involves established mission statement, core values, and strategic plans for the organization.

Leaders who think strategically are characterized with competencies for formulating a strategy and an action plan that aims at improving organizational performance (Siswanti et al. 2021). Further, strategic thinking is described as the abilities of a leader to comprehend evolving environmental trends, the prevailing market conditions, the state of competitiveness in the market, and the organizational environment in-depth. These strategic thinking abilities of a leader helps the leader to find a strategic ways of obtaining results and providing better leadership patterns in times of turbulences.

Competency in leadership involves a leader's effort to learn how to strategize, develop abilities to think strategically, have visions for futuristic planning (Ungor, 2021; Kadri et al., 2021). Strategic thinking abilities can be spurred through various learning exercises and practical steps to enhance foresight of planning for the future. Cultivating and practicing systems thinking in learning organizations leads to an understanding of one's visionary orientations and strategic plan implementation for the institution. Hence, envisioning a broader perspective of the organization involves having a picture of how vision and strategy are interconnected. Cultivating and developing visioning and strategic thinking competencies involve new broad-based, critical and inspirational thinking of the future of an organization.

Strategic thinking is the ability and willingness of a leader to actively think and make informed judgement without depending on others (Khatri, Dutta & Raina, 2022). It is the ability of a leader to make rational and intentional thought processes for critically analyzing the factors and variables influencing the long term successes of businesses, teams or individuals. Further to that, strategic thinking in leadership is a thought process that involves carefully and deliberately scanning business environments to guard against threats and vulnerabilities of opportunities that the organization is pursuing. Strategic thinking involve clear sets of new ideas, goals, and strategic plans and actions required for a leader to survive and thrive in stiff, competitive and ever-changing business environments. Visioning and strategic thinking are leader's abilities to apply analytical thinking, decisiveness, problem-solving skills, team building, innovation, inspiration, and effective communication in research (Clause, 2021). In addition, visioning and strategic thinking are leaders' abilities to demonstrate leadership traits of empathy, emotional intelligence and ability to give credit to those who merit it. Visionary and strategic thinking in faith-based institutions of learning require strategic processes that can provide better institutional survival, sustainability and longevity through organizational internal elements of management styles, the goals, the values, the visions, and the structures (Adenuga & Oderinde, 2021). Further leadership visioning and strategic thinking are influenced by extrinsic factors like government policies, competitors, partners, investors, suppliers, and the customers that influence quality service provision and sustainability of any institution of higher learning. Thus, leadership and management of learning institutions are defined by their respective institutional leadership skills, competencies and abilities of visionary and strategic thinking to manipulate the aforementioned prevailing internal and external factors.

Competent leaders in an organization are strategic thinkers and planners well known by their strategic leadership skills and are better defined by their abilities to give visionary leadership and direction for future of their organizations (Kadhum *et al.* 2023; Asobee, 2021). Visionary thinking is the ability of a leader to see the big picture of an organization and to see the potential for what it could be. It is the ability of the leader to see the

world as it ought to be and not as it is at the particular time or what it had always been in the past. A faith-based organizational culture is changed through visionary thinking, spiritual leadership and research-technology management (Farhan, 2024). Thus, the future of the organization should not be left to be determined by leaders alone but the organization stakeholders should be involved with their leaders in strategizing the course and action plans as well as in carrying out the implementation of the organizational goals. Visionary thinking of a leader involves forward thinking, consistently having pictures of new possibilities and focusing on creating a better future for the organization (Bauer et al., 2023; Karwan et al. 2021). The competencies, skills and personal abilities of a leader in the organization is a very crucial factor to be considered for the future growth of any organizational setting. The main challenge of faith-based educational institutions is having leaders who are visionary thinkers and who are able to think beyond the present and shape the future for the institution by sparking innovation, fostering resilience and propelling the institution forward. Huma et al. (2022) pointed out that in educational institutions, leaders should not leave learners on their own without providing visionary direction and helping them to be visionary thinkers in determining their own future. However, it is totally at the discretion of the learners and not so much of leaders to visualize their own future needs and go get it. Jaqua and Jaqua (2021) say that visionary leaders in an organization can create a highly motivated and empowered workforce by instilling high moral values/standards and strategically providing visionary directions. That can enhance the quality of organizational management, level of productivity, levels of commitment to work by workers and levels of performance standards. Syamsira (2025) say that the greatest want of organizations in the contemporary world of business competitions and uncertainties is the want of visionary leaders whose visionary thinking provide clear directions, purpose for working together among employees, and a sense of urgency and inspiration for workers to pursue their long term visions. Further, the writer stated that there is need for visionary leadership that is able to break down long standing norms and traditions that have always objected to embrace new and progressive ideas, innovations and changes

Relationships and Collaborations

Relationship and collaboration are aspects of associations in leaderships of businesses and organizations where people work together to achieve a shared goal (Yin & Jamali, 2021). Thus collaborative relationship processes support continuous communication, collaboration, and coordination, provide mutual respect, trust and recognition, and improve solving problem capacities of participants. Collaborative relationship competencies and experiences are the leader's attributes of self-awareness and social-awareness, being able to lead oneself and lead others by empowering them to reach their potentials. It is the ability of the leader to create an enabling environment for people to grow professionally and to feel that they own and belong to the organization.

Relational leadership competencies are all about building successful collaborative relationships among workers in the organization and building an educational environment that provide space for innovations (Charteris, Smardon & Kemmis, 2022; Richardson, Ashby & Alshammari, 2019). A collaborative relationship leader possesses the abilities of understanding and knowing people very well especially in terms of their emotions, feelings, needs, well-being, strengths, weakness, and providing them with opportunities for personal development, professional growth and work ethos. Relational leadership involves building of trust in oneself and in others with the aim of creating psychological safety and satisfaction among workers at workplace. Building collaborative relationships involves developing leadership competencies of effective communication, self-advocacy, and active listening. A relational leader has the capacity for building healthy working relationships, enhancing trust among people, and creating and strengthening respectful friendships (Hsieh, 2021). A collaborative relationship leader demonstrates gratitude, capacity for developing friendships, and abilities for constructing working alliances with other people. Collaborative relationship is that powerful ability of a leader to understand a person's moods, behaviors and motives so that the leader can be able to empathize with the person and help the person build better relations with others (Scott & Manning, 2024). Collaborative relationship competency of apathy as a social radar that requires that a leader must have the ability to read another person's emotions (Dewey, 2020). At a higher level, it entails a leader's ability to sense and respond to a person's unspoken concerns or feelings. At the highest levels, empathy is understanding the issues or concerns that lie behind another's feelings. This is because social competency is the key to building healthy workplace relationships and job satisfactions

Collaborative relationship competency is the capacity of a leader to influence others to behave and change in a given direction in agreement with a mutually agreed perspective (Hargreaves & Elhawary, 2020). The impact or change in collaborative relationship have value for both or more people in the relationship, and the relationship expands, grows, and becomes more mutually empowering and contributing to the movement and growth of others. In collaborative relationship leadership competency, leaders touch their own hearts first, then touch the hearts of others, and the others will then touch the leader's heart and they then all grow and develop together. In a state of collaboration a leader is more concerned on relationships among people while the relational aspect of leadership refers to concept of relationship itself, but all are focusing at people (Kinder et al., 2021; Ang'ana, & Ongeti, 2023). A new emerging leadership paradigm of collaborative relationship has been described using such key words as; "shared, collective, collaboration, participatory, democratic, cooperation, and inclusive".

In addition, collaborative relationship is a purposeful leadership competency in relation to adaptation, strategy and plans

Institutional collaborative and relational leadership approaches are used to make participants engaged constructively in faith-based organizational activities. In collaboration, issues are raised by both sets of leaders and collaborators that are cooperating to solve problems amicably without compromising the quality of decision-making (Adenuga et al., 2021). This process leads to having a consensus among the individuals or groups involved in the disputed or conflicting issues. Collaborative leaders' role is to facilitate a coalition, a partnership, or an alliance among the stakeholders of the organization that lead to total involvements in shared leadership. Hence, leaders can develop collaborative relational leadership competencies like listening which is the most cherished leadership competency in an organization and is critical for success. Relationship and collaboration are instrumental features of excellence in the management of faith-based educational institutions (Klinkosz, Iskra & Artymiak, 2021; Ertem, 2021). Collaborative relationships provide a basis for influencing and enhancing relationships among the administrators and staff in school, give room for developing the school, establishing excellence in academics, and improving the processes of making decisions. School principal who has collaborative relationship experiences and has developed interpersonal relationship competencies positively impacts on curriculum reforms and implementations. Some of the principal's human relations competencies are the abilities to provide working environments and conditions that enhance unity, love and harmony among instructors and learners in an educational institution. According to ACSI (ACSI 2023) the relationships between the school administration and teachers highly depend on the expertise of the educational and instructional leadership, human and capital resources, and well-being of the organization.

II.   Conclusion

Faith-based institutions of learning utilize various leadership styles and competencies in order to attain total quality management and improvement in education. These leadership approaches are tailored towards providing excellent instructional designs, improving teaching and learning techniques, inspiring teachers and learners to excel in their academic work, and encouraging interpersonal collaborative relationships and team building. Despite employing varied, technical and flexible leadership approaches and having qualified institutional leaders, many of the academic institutions are facing challenges in implementing and complying with the quality assurance standards. A closer look at the quality of education in both public and private learning institutions reveals that they are still facing a myriad of challenges in trying to implement and comply with standards. Inability to overcome all these challenges become a concern for leaders as to whether they are appropriately applying the right leadership approaches or competencies and whether they will ever be able to attain the quality of education they needed. The quality of education vary from institution to institution and every institution has been left to decide on their own leadership approaches according to their level and intensity of challenges. In doing this every institution is known to strive for the best and appropriate leadership style that provide solutions to their own unique challenges.

To improve the quality of education through effective teaching and learning in schools, the school administration and management need leaders who have competencies in leadership and are able to provide effective and appropriate leadership styles in accordance to the institutional setting. Hiring competent leaders can improve teaching and learning by utilizing effective leadership styles and practices. Improvements can only be realized if the principals, the boards of management, and the schools' stakeholders are privy to needs and challenges of their respective institutions. The leaders need to be first aware of their leadership abilities, and secondly, statutory and institutional quality assurance requirements. Competent leaders have deep understanding of how to improve the quality of education through effective teacher and learner engagement, are ready and willing to effect changes, and are flexible and adaptive to new ideas and new environments. Effective leaders are responsible, accountable and alert always, looking for opportunities to improve and continuously strategizing for growth and development

Successful academic institutional leadership depends on the choice of leadership styles and leadership competencies which focus on the improvement of instruction responsibility, encouragement of socialization, cohesiveness and participatory leadership, and provision of work tools and equipment for better teaching and learning. The school context is instrumental in determining the success of school leadership and quality education. The main challenge of quality improvement in education is when the teachers and learners resist and oppose leadership and change management initiated by leaders. This constitute critical impediments and hindrances to educational growth and progresses. Challenges ensue when there are preferential selection of inappropriate leadership styles and when the surrounding community fail to support the leadership.

Knowledge and learning-oriented school leaders are instrumental in academic institutional policy-making and decision-making. The focus of these leaders is to conduct educational workshops and seminars, organize trainings, and initiating supportive learning programs for empowering schools' leadership expertise, abilities and understandings particularly in those schools that are not doing well in the market.

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