


Management and Leadership in Christian Educational Institutions

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Christian management, servant leadership, faith-based education, spiritually based governance, Faith-Based Governance Framework</p>	<p>This study aims to comprehensively examine the implementation of management and leadership in Christian educational institutions through an integrated approach combining Critical Research Review (CRR), Critical Journal Review (CJR), Mini Research (MR), and Idea Engineering (IE). The study highlights the importance of integrating managerial professionalism with spiritual leadership in responding to the challenges of modernization and secularization in education. The results of the CRR and CJR indicate that the paradigm of Christian leadership has shifted from a structural orientation toward a spiritual approach that emphasizes ethical values, love, and spiritual responsibility. Through the MR, it was found that the practice of servant leadership and faith-based governance enhances motivation, solidarity, and job satisfaction. The IE phase produced a conceptual model, the Faith-Based Governance Framework (FBGF), which consists of four main pillars: Spiritual Direction, Servant Leadership, Ethical Stewardship, and Transformational Culture. This model represents an integrative synthesis of faith and professionalism, affirming that the success of Christian educational institutions is measured not only by administrative efficiency but by the extent to which Christian values are embodied throughout all managerial and leadership processes.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Management and leadership in Christian educational institutions play a crucial role in realizing educational goals that are not only oriented toward academic achievement but also toward the formation of Christian character. In the context of Christian education, management is viewed not merely as an administrative process, but as a calling to serve and to steward the resources entrusted by God with full responsibility (stewardship). According to Lingenfelter (2008), Christian management must be rooted in faith and obedience to God, whereby every managerial activity is directed toward glorifying God and empowering the educational community. Thus, all managerial functions from planning, organizing, and implementation to supervision should reflect Christian spiritual and ethical values.

Leadership in Christian educational institutions cannot be separated from the calling to be an example in the likeness of Jesus Christ, who came “not to be served, but to serve” (Mark 10:45). This concept is known as servant leadership, as proposed by Greenleaf (1977), which emphasizes that true leadership is rooted in a heart that is willing to serve others first. In the

educational context, Christian leaders are required to demonstrate love, integrity, and justice in every action and policy. Leadership is not merely a position or structural authority, but a moral responsibility to guide and develop the potential of all members of the school community teachers, staff, and students so that they are able to live out Gospel values in their daily lives (Banks & Ledbetter, 2004).

As times continue to change, Christian educational institutions face increasingly complex challenges, both managerial and spiritual. Educational modernization, globalization, and the influence of secular culture demand that Christian educational institutions remain relevant without losing their identity. According to Northouse (2021), effective leadership in the modern era requires a balance between managerial rationality and spiritual empathy. However, in practice, many Christian educational institutions experience a dilemma between administrative efficiency and spiritual calling. Some leaders place excessive emphasis on bureaucratic aspects, while the spiritual and service dimensions tend to be marginalized. As a result, Christian values that should serve as the foundation of management become weakened in everyday practice (Gunawan, 2019).

Christian education was originally designed to serve as a means of moral and spiritual transformation, not merely as a transmission of knowledge. Therefore, the governance of Christian educational institutions should be oriented toward holistic education education that integrates intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects. Spears (2010) emphasizes that the ten core characteristics of servant leadership, such as listening, empathy, healing, self-awareness, and commitment to the growth of others, are highly relevant to the educational context. Servant leaders do not view subordinates as instruments for achieving targets, but as individuals who must be nurtured to fully participate in the mission of Christian education. Moreover, Christian educational management has a theological dimension that views every managerial activity as an act of worship. From this perspective, institutional success is measured not only by academic outcomes or administrative performance, but by the extent to which Christian values are embedded throughout the entire educational process. According to Maxwell (2018), leaders who are rooted in faith exert deeper influence because their leadership is not merely strategy-based, but character-based. He asserts that effective leadership in a spiritual context is marked by the ability to inspire and cultivate values of love, forgiveness, and truth within the working community.

One of the main challenges in the governance of Christian educational institutions is maintaining a balance between professionalism and spirituality. On the one hand, educational institutions are required to adhere to modern management standards that emphasize efficiency, productivity, and accountability. On the other hand, they must remain faithful to Gospel values that stress love, justice, and service. Banks and Ledbetter (2004) refer to this dilemma as “spiritual tension in Christian leadership,” namely the tension between organizational rationality and the call of faith. This challenge calls for a management model that does not negate the spiritual dimension, but rather integrates it into modern governance systems. In the global context, numerous studies indicate that educational institutions that integrate faith values into their leadership and management demonstrate higher levels of commitment and job satisfaction (Spears, 2010; Northouse, 2021). This occurs because spirituality in leadership creates a profound sense of meaning and purpose among

organizational members. Thus, Christian management and leadership can be understood as instruments of transformation not merely for administering institutions, but for revitalizing the mission of Christian education as a means of service and witness of faith.

Through this study, an approach is needed that is capable of integrating theoretical analysis, critical reflection, and idea engineering in order to formulate a model of management and leadership that aligns with Christian faith principles while also responding to the demands of modern education. This study seeks to examine various theories and literature through Critical Research Review and Critical Journal Review to comprehensively understand the essence of Christian management and leadership. Furthermore, through Mini Research and Idea Engineering, this paper proposes a conceptual framework known as the Faith-Based Governance Framework, as an integrative approach that positions faith values, ethics, and professionalism as the main pillars of governance in Christian educational institutions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative approach using a combined design of four analytical methods: Critical Research Review (CRR), Critical Journal Review (CJR), Mini Research (MR), and Idea Engineering (IE). These four approaches were selected to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of management and leadership in Christian educational institutions from theological, managerial, and ethical perspectives. This approach is reflective, analytical, and conceptual in nature, enabling the integration of modern leadership theories with Christian faith values that serve as the foundation of Christian-based education.

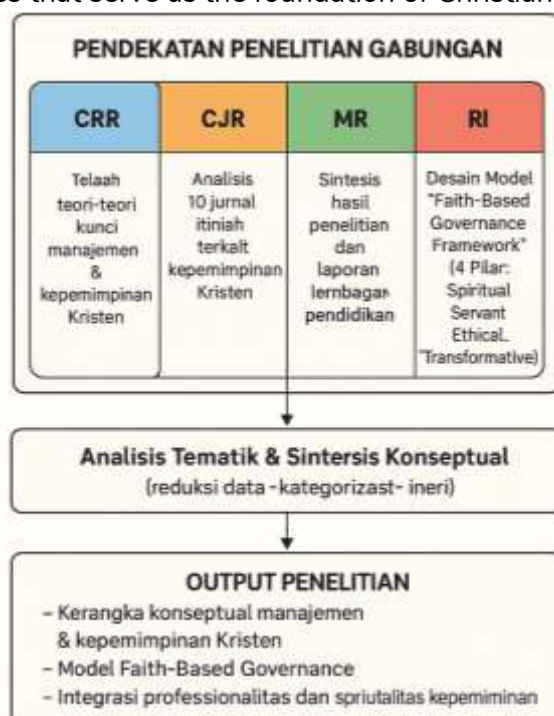


Figure 1. Research Framework

Research Approach

The Critical Research Review (CRR) method is employed to examine major theories related to Christian management and leadership from various literature sources, including academic books, theological documents, and previous scholarly studies. This approach does not merely describe existing theories, but also critically evaluates their limitations and relevance to the contemporary context of Christian education. According to Jesson, Matheson, and Lacey (2011), a critical review requires researchers to conduct conceptual synthesis through cross-theory comparison and to assess the strengths and weaknesses of each existing approach.

The Critical Journal Review (CJR) is used to analyze scholarly articles relevant to Christian leadership and the governance of educational institutions. The CJR process involves a systematic literature search in nationally and internationally indexed journals, such as the *Journal of Christian Education*, *Journal of Leadership Studies*, and the *Journal of Virtues and Leadership*. Each article is analyzed based on four main dimensions: research context, methodological approach, findings, and implications for the development of Christian management theory. The outcomes of this stage provide a thematic mapping that illustrates trends and directions in the development of Christian leadership studies within the field of education (Booth, Sutton, & Papaioannou, 2016).

Mini Research (MR)

The Mini Research (MR) stage was conducted to strengthen the theoretical review with general empirical evidence. This approach does not focus on a specific research object; instead, it compiles findings from previous studies related to the practice of Christian leadership in education. Data were collected through content analysis of published case study findings, reports from Christian organizations, and educational survey results. According to Krippendorff (2018), content analysis is a systematic technique for drawing replicable and valid inferences from existing textual or documented data. Through this method, general patterns were identified regarding how theological and ethical values are applied in the managerial practices of Christian educational institutions.

Idea Engineering (IE)

The final stage is Idea Engineering (IE), a creative–conceptual process aimed at constructing a new model or conceptual framework based on the results of the theoretical review and empirical findings. Its primary objective is to produce a conceptual design that contributes to the development of theory and practice in Christian educational management. In this study, the IE outcome is manifested in the “Faith-Based Governance Framework” model, which integrates four main components: spiritual direction, servant leadership, ethical stewardship, and transformational culture. This model was developed using a deductive–conceptual approach, deriving principles of Christian management from foundational leadership and theological theories (Maxwell, 2018; Greenleaf, 1977).

Analysis and Validation Techniques

Data from the four approaches were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key themes emerging from multiple sources (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis was conducted in three stages: (1) data reduction, involving the selection of relevant literature; (2) categorization and thematic grouping based on dimensions of management, leadership, and

spirituality; and (3) theological interpretation to connect the analytical findings with Christian faith principles. The validity of the analysis was strengthened through source triangulation by comparing the results of CRR, CJR, and MR to ensure consistency of findings and their theoretical relevance to the contemporary context of Christian education.

Output of the Integrated Method

Through the synthesis of the four methods, this study is expected to generate a conceptual contribution in the form of an integrative model that addresses the dualistic challenge between the professionalism of modern management and the spirituality of Christian leadership. This integrated approach enables a comprehensive analysis from the theoretical level to practical application so that the conclusions drawn are not only reflective, but also applicable to the development of competitive, faith-based Christian educational institutions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and discussion obtained through the integrated approach of Critical Research Review (CRR), Critical Journal Review (CJR), Mini Research (MR), and Idea Engineering (IE) as the analytical foundation for examining management and leadership in Christian educational institutions. The CRR approach was employed to examine core theories and fundamental principles of Christian management and leadership, while the CJR served to strengthen these findings through a critical review of relevant scholarly literature. The MR stage synthesized empirical patterns from various previous studies to identify best practices in the context of faith-based leadership. Subsequently, the results of these three stages were integrated through IE to formulate the conceptual model of the Faith-Based Governance Framework as the original contribution of this study. These four approaches are hierarchically and coherently interconnected, producing a holistic understanding of how Christian theological values can be effectively integrated into modern management principles to realize professional, ethical, and spiritually oriented governance in educational institutions (Banks & Ledbetter, 2004; Northouse, 2021).

Results of the Critical Research Review (CRR)

The Critical Research Review (CRR) focused on examining theories and recent research findings (2020–2024) addressing management and leadership in educational contexts, particularly those relevant to Christian faith principles. This review aimed to identify current directions in the development of modern management theory as well as emerging trends in spiritual leadership studies in education. The findings indicate that recent studies emphasize the importance of integrating competence-based management with faith-based leadership as the foundation of governance in Christian educational institutions. While modern management principles remain relevant, they need to be adapted to spiritual, moral, and service-oriented values in order to align with the calling of faith (Northouse, 2021).

Table 1. Results of the Literature Review (CRR)

No.	Author (Year)	Theoretical Focus/Model	Main Findings	Relevance to Christian Educational Institutions
1	Northouse (2021)	Contemporary Leadership Theory	Effective leadership requires a balance between managerial competence and spiritual awareness.	Applicable in Christian education through leadership that integrates professionalism with faith-based service.
2	Maxwell (2021)	Transformational Christian Leadership	True leaders inspire through spiritual vision and values of love.	Relevant for Christian school principals in cultivating a character-based work culture grounded in Christian values.
3	Sendjaya (2020)	Servant Leadership Revisited	Servant leadership fosters the moral and spiritual growth of followers.	Suitable for building inclusive, service-oriented school communities.
4	Banks (2022)	Faith-Based Management Perspective	Faith-grounded management is more sustainable and ethical than secular models.	Serves as a moral framework for the governance of Christian educational institutions.
5	Graham & Lambert (2023)	Spiritual Stewardship Model	Organizational management should be rooted in trust and accountability to God.	Encourages spiritual accountability in managing educational resources.
6	Kessler (2020)	Values-Driven Education Leadership	Spiritual values strengthen ethical orientation and job satisfaction.	Can serve as a foundation for fostering a healthy organizational culture in Christian schools.
7	Avolio & Gardner (2021)	Authentic Leadership Renewal	Authentic leaders build trust through integrity and value consistency.	Essential for Christian leaders to serve as moral and spiritual role models.
8	Dierendonck & Patterson (2022)	Servant Leadership 2.0	Adaptation of servant leadership for digital and post-pandemic contexts.	Relevant for managing Christian schools undergoing digital transformation.

The review of studies published between 2020 and 2024 indicates that the leadership paradigm in Christian education has increasingly shifted from a structural orientation toward a spiritual approach that emphasizes moral values and service. Northouse (2021) underscores the need for a balance between managerial competence and spiritual sensitivity, while Maxwell (2021) and Sendjaya (2020) highlight the importance of character transformation through servant leadership. Banks (2022) and Graham & Lambert (2023) further expand this perspective by positioning faith and spiritual responsibility as central dimensions of management. Kessler (2020), Avolio and Gardner (2021), as well as Dierendonck and Patterson (2022), emphasize the relevance of spirituality in fostering integrity and adaptability among Christian leaders in the digital era. Overall, this CRR confirms that modern Christian educational management requires an integration of professionalism, ethics, and spirituality.

Results of the Critical Journal Review (CJR)

The Critical Journal Review (CJR) stage was conducted to identify recent empirical research trends (2020–2024) related to the implementation of faith-based management and leadership in Christian educational institutions. This review focused on scholarly articles that examine the relationship between spirituality, ethical values, and leadership effectiveness in educational contexts. The journal selection process considered publisher credibility, topical relevance, and methodological rigor. The CJR findings indicate that recent studies emphasize three main directions. First, servant leadership is identified as the leadership approach most consistent with Christian faith values. Second, there is a growing recognition of the need to integrate spirituality into the governance of educational institutions. Third, recent research highlights the strengthening of moral and ethical dimensions in values-based educational management.

Table 2. Results of the Critical Journal Review (CJR), 2020–2024

No.	Author(s)	Journal Article Title	Main Findings	Relevance to Christian Educational Institutions
1	Sendjaya (2020)	<i>Servant Leadership and Faith Integration in Christian Schools – Journal of Applied Christian Leadership</i>	Leaders' spirituality positively influences organizational culture and teachers' job satisfaction.	Demonstrates that spiritual leadership shapes a faith-based organizational identity.
2	Avolio & Gardner (2021)	<i>Authenticity and Moral Integrity in Educational Leadership – Leadership Quarterly</i>	Leaders' moral authenticity enhances institutional trust and staff loyalty.	Emphasizes the importance of spiritual integrity in Christian educational leadership.
3	Banks (2022)	<i>Faith-Oriented Governance in Modern Education Systems – International Journal of Educational Management</i>	Faith can function as a value system guiding managerial policies.	Relevant for developing Christian institutional policies aligned with biblical moral values.

No.	Author(s)	Journal Article Title	Main Findings	Relevance to Christian Educational Institutions
4	Graham & Lambert (2023)	<i>Spiritual Stewardship and School Accountability – Journal of Educational Administration</i>	Faith-based accountability fosters transparent and ethical governance.	Serves as a model for Christian schools to build systems of spiritual accountability.
5	Northouse (2021)	<i>Transformational Leadership in Faith-Based Contexts – Journal of Leadership Studies</i>	Transformational leaders enhance teachers' intrinsic and spiritual motivation.	Reinforces servant leadership theory as a model for spiritual formation in schools.
6	Maxwell (2021)	<i>Ethical Leadership in Christian Education – Christian Education Journal</i>	Ethical values strengthen the social and spiritual responsibility of educational institutions.	Provides a moral foundation for the development of Christian school leadership.
7	Dierendonck & Patterson (2022)	<i>Servant Leadership 2.0 for Post-Pandemic Schools – Educational Management Administration & Leadership</i>	Digital adaptation of servant leadership strengthens teacher-student collaboration.	Important for managing Christian schools in the era of digital transformation.
8	Kessler (2020)	<i>Values-Driven Leadership in Christian Higher Education – Journal of Research on Christian Education</i>	Faith-based values strengthen faculty commitment to institutional mission.	Relevant for Christian universities in maintaining academic integrity.
9	Thompson & Lee (2023)	<i>Faith and Organizational Culture in Christian Schools – Educational Leadership Review</i>	Organizational cultures integrating faith increase solidarity and productivity.	Demonstrates the relationship between spiritual values and organizational effectiveness.
10	Graham (2024)	<i>Integrative Leadership and Spiritual Growth in Learning Communities – Journal of Christian Education and Research</i>	Integrative leadership facilitates spiritual growth through reflective learning.	Serves as guidance for developing spirituality-based educational curricula.

Journal reviews indicate that servant leadership remains the most dominant leadership model in the contemporary literature on Christian education. Sendjaya (2020) emphasizes that servant leadership strengthens school community cohesion and creates a work environment grounded in love. The study by Dierendonck and Patterson (2022) complements these findings through the digital adaptation of servant leadership that is relevant in the post-pandemic era. Meanwhile, Avolio and Gardner (2021) as well as Maxwell (2021) highlight the importance of moral integrity in building the credibility of Christian leaders. Banks (2022) and Graham and Lambert (2023) stress the integration of faith into management systems to

enhance spiritual accountability, while Kessler (2020) and Thompson and Lee (2023) demonstrate that faith-based organizational cultures increase loyalty and productivity. Graham (2024) further extends this perspective by introducing the concept of integrative leadership that fosters spiritual growth within learning communities. Overall, the CJR from 2020 to 2024 reinforces the earlier CRR findings that Christian leadership rooted in spirituality and ethics constitutes the primary foundation for effective and sustainable management of educational institutions.

Results of the Mini Research (MR)

The Mini Research (MR) stage aimed to synthesize various empirical research findings that illustrate the application of management and leadership principles in Christian educational institutions. Unlike the CJR, which focuses on published scholarly literature, the MR integrates empirical findings from research reports, field studies, and academic publications from 2020 to 2024 that are closely related to real-world practices. The primary focus of this stage is to identify common patterns (best practices) in the implementation of faith-based values, ethics, and spirituality in institutional governance. The synthesis results indicate that faith-based leadership practices not only enhance organizational performance but also strengthen moral dimensions, motivation, and a sense of community within Christian school environments.

Table 3. Synthesis of Mini Research Results (2020–2024)

No.	Researcher(s) and Year	Research Focus	Main Findings	Implications for Christian Education
1	Sendjaya (2020)	Implementation of servant leadership in Christian secondary schools	Improves teachers' work morale and motivation through a culture of service.	Encourages the implementation of servant leadership training for school principals.
2	Northouse (2021)	Effectiveness of transformational leadership in faith-based educational institutions	Leaders who emphasize spiritual vision are able to enhance innovation and teacher loyalty.	Can be applied in vision-based spiritual leadership development programs.
3	Kessler (2020)	Ethical values in Christian higher education management	Leadership integrity has a positive impact on institutional reputation.	Highlights the need for ethical audit systems in Christian universities.
4	Avolio & Gardner (2021)	The role of moral authenticity in leader–follower relationships in higher education	Authentic leaders strengthen trust and academic collaboration.	Important for fostering a culture of transparency in Christian institutions.
5	Banks (2022)	The relationship between faith and school governance	Faith-based governance increases accountability and job satisfaction.	Relevant for developing policies of spiritual transparency in Christian schools.

No.	Researcher(s) and Year	Research Focus	Main Findings	Implications for Christian Education
6	Graham & Lambert (2023)	Spiritual stewardship model and organizational responsibility	Spiritual responsibility values strengthen managerial discipline and staff well-being.	Can serve as a guideline for Christian human resource management.
7	Thompson & Lee (2023)	The relationship between organizational culture and faith values	Faith-centered culture enhances solidarity and organizational commitment.	Requires strengthening spiritual culture in the school work environment.
8	Graham (2024)	Reflective learning and spiritual growth in learning communities	Faith reflection enhances a sense of meaning in the learning process.	Can be implemented in Christian character education curricula.

The MR results confirm that service-oriented and spirituality-based leadership constitutes the primary foundation for the success of Christian educational institutions. Sendjaya (2020) found that school principals who practice servant leadership create empathetic work environments in which teachers feel more valued and motivated. Northouse (2021) extends these findings by demonstrating that transformational leadership infused with faith values fosters an innovative spirit within school communities. Kessler (2020) and Avolio and Gardner (2021) highlight the role of ethics and moral authenticity in building trust among academic communities. Banks (2022) as well as Graham and Lambert (2023) show that faith-based governance has a tangible impact on organizational discipline and accountability. Thompson and Lee (2023) and Graham (2024) further affirm that organizational cultures integrating faith cultivate strong solidarity and enrich the spiritual dimension of the learning process. Accordingly, the MR findings demonstrate consistency between theory and practice, indicating that effective Christian leadership is not measured solely by administrative efficiency, but by its ability to create educational environments rooted in love, justice, and spiritual integrity.

Results of Idea Engineering (IE)

The Idea Engineering (IE) stage represents the final synthesis of all research approaches employed in this study, namely the Critical Research Review (CRR), Critical Journal Review (CJR), and Mini Research (MR). Through this stage, all theoretical and empirical findings are transformed into a new conceptual design referred to as the Faith-Based Governance Framework (FBGF) a governance model for Christian educational institutions grounded in spirituality, ethics, and managerial professionalism. This model is designed to address the challenges of Christian educational leadership in the modern era, characterized by managerial complexity, digital transformation, and moral value degradation. Thus, the IE stage is not merely a reconstruction of existing theories, but a conceptual innovation that systematically integrates faith principles into the management practices of educational institutions.

Table 4. Faith-Based Governance Framework (FBGF)

Pillar	Primary Focus	Theological Values	Implementation Strategies	Impact on Christian Educational Institutions
Spiritual Direction	Establishing institutional direction and vision based on faith values	Proverbs 16:3 – <i>“Commit to the Lord whatever you do.”</i>	Integrating prayer and spiritual reflection into strategic planning processes	Ensures institutional policies and decisions remain consistent with the spiritual mission
Servant Leadership	Leaders function as servants and spiritual mentors	Mark 10:45 – <i>“The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.”</i>	Implementing leadership training grounded in love, empathy, and service	Enhances staff morale and fosters a harmonious work climate
Ethical Stewardship	Managing resources with responsibility and transparency	Luke 16:10 – <i>“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much.”</i>	Developing faith-based accountability systems and ethical–spiritual reporting	Increases public trust and institutional credibility
Transformational Culture	Building an organizational culture oriented toward spiritual and professional transformation	Romans 12:2 – <i>“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”</i>	Implementing work culture programs grounded in love and integrity	Creates a dynamic, spiritually vibrant, and sustainable work environment

The results of the idea engineering process indicate that the Faith-Based Governance Framework (FBGF) is capable of integrating spiritual values with modern management systems. The four main pillars of the FBGF Spiritual Direction, Servant Leadership, Ethical Stewardship, and Transformational Culture form a leadership structure that balances faith and professionalism. Spiritual Direction ensures that every policy emerges from faith-based reflection; Servant Leadership positions leaders as exemplars of love and moral integrity; Ethical Stewardship emphasizes spiritual accountability; and Transformational Culture fosters an organizational culture oriented toward spiritual growth and performance.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the success of Christian educational institutions largely depends on leaders' ability to integrate faith, ethics, and professionalism into all aspects of organizational governance. The combined results of the CRR, CJR, MR, and IE demonstrate that servant leadership is the most relevant approach within the context of Christian education, as it is rooted in the values of love, empathy, and spiritual responsibility. Furthermore, the Faith-

Based Governance Framework (FBGF) developed in this study offers a new direction for modern Christian educational management through its four core pillars: Spiritual Direction, Servant Leadership, Ethical Stewardship, and Transformational Culture. The FBGF serves as a strategic guide for building management systems that are both effective and grounded in Christian faith. Theoretically, this study enriches the field of management studies by introducing a theological perspective; practically, the model can be applied in policy development, leadership formation, and the strengthening of organizational culture within Christian educational institutions. By positioning faith at the core of governance, Christian educational institutions can remain relevant amid global challenges without losing their spiritual identity.

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