




## Chapter 5

# Spirituality and leadership development: A critical analysis of the role of spirituality in leadership development

*Mcebisi Pinyana*

Department of Religion and Theology,  
University of the Western Cape   
Cape Town, South Africa

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### 1. Introduction

This chapter explores the role of spirituality in leadership development. A spiritual leadership approach fosters a sense of belonging and meaning in the workplace, fulfilling the need for spiritual well-being. However, challenges in many institutions and communities are prompting leaders to consider alternative approaches to achieving desired outcomes. The growing interest in spiritual leadership and development has led to studies highlighting its benefits at the institutional and individual levels.

Our contemporary era is characterised by rapid social, political, religious, and economic change (Jahan et al., 2014). Globalisation has given set to diversity and differences; exclusivism has been supplanted by inclusivity; essentialism has been challenged by particularity; and outdated modes of personhood, such as gender complementarity and gender binaries, are increasingly rejected. Moral issues, including corruption, greed, and exploitation, have become destabilising factors in transforming societies like South Africa. These and other emerging discourses have posed challenges to leadership as a phenomenon of transformation and change. Moral and ethical leadership, grounded in clear moral principles, faces challenges from

relative realities, contextualities, and diversities. Institutions and structures - such as societies, cultures, religious communities, and civil societies - are confronted with the universal frameworks perpetuated by neoliberal worldviews and the aftermath of modernity.

The field of leadership has been subject to renewed scrutiny and research since the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, Judge et al. (2002) found that building upon the traditional “great man theory” plays a vital role in determining leader effectiveness. To be effective, leaders must adapt their behaviour to different situations. Effective leadership is not solely about possessing comprehensive managerial skills or a commanding personal presence, nor is it about the exercise of power and control. It also encompasses strong virtues and values. In this regard, effective leaders are those who model and embody the principles of their societies and practice the values and goals that they wish others to adopt.

Nonetheless, after observing ongoing dysfunction and ineffectiveness in many church communities in our dioceses and based on the findings of a study (on church communities and moral formation) conducted by the researcher, which revealed leadership malaise in fulfilling church expectations (Pinyana, 2021), this chapter critically studies the role of spirituality in leadership development. The presence - or absence - of a connection between leadership and spirituality remains a crucial issue within church communities.

## 2. Spirituality explained

Spirituality has long been a neglected dimension in leadership discourse. In the Old Testament tradition, ‘spirit’ signifies the power and presence of the living God. In Pauline writings, ‘spirit’ refers to the presence and action of the loving God manifest in the Christ event, which summons Christians to be ‘spiritual’ persons or to ‘walk’ in the spirit (Lescher & Liebert, 2006). In the International Institute for Spiritual Leadership, Allen and Fry (2002) define *spiritual leadership* as a model that fosters an intrinsically motivated learning organisation, optimising the focus on social and environmental issues in line with financial issues. However, the human spirit is the vital principle or animating force traditionally seen as an intangible yet

life-affirming force within all individuals. It is characterised by a deep connection to one's inner self, guided by higher values and morality, as well as a recognition of the intrinsic truth and nature of others.

In terms of spirituality, Gardner (2011) argues that there is a strong desire amongst people to express aspects of their spiritual or religious selves at work or in education. Gardner (2011) maintains that one of the challenges faced by those working with spirituality is exploring or explaining their understanding of what spirituality is. Spirituality is that which gives life meaning, encompassing a sense of something beyond or greater than the self. A broad definition of spirituality encourages an inclusive approach; even those who reject a religious view of life can affirm what gives their lives meaning. Cupitt (1994), commenting on Gardner, attests that critical spirituality affirms the importance of recognising the influence of history and social context and their impact on individuals and communities. Therefore, this suggests that critical spirituality does not accept attitudes or behaviours that are harmful to others or those who seek to impose one form of spirituality or religion on others. It is equally important to emphasise spiritual practices that are life-affirming, emphasising wholeness and constructive mutual relationships in communities and embracing diversity (Gardner, 2011).

Spirituality exists in the world of borderlands between theory and practice, theory and other disciplines, the sacred and the secular, interiority and exteriority. It is a reflection on 'felt experience' and 'lived practice', and, by its nature, ventures into the ambivalent because of its fundamental orientation towards otherness and transcendence (Lescher & Liebert, 2006). In this way, spirituality calls theology of its task of crossing thresholds and challenging human absolutes. Furthermore, Lescher and Liebert (2006) assert that it begins in prayer and ends in prayer. Contemplative prayer, in its flexibility and complete freedom, is a limitless language - a language that knows no barriers, a language that goes, at least inchoately, well beyond what is explicitly expressed and into the inexpressible. In essence, theology stems from prayer.

In postmodern times, spirituality suggests a revival of interest in a traditional approach. Part of the value of the postmodern position is that it allows for difference, and those who find meaning in traditional religion can continue

searching for meaning in other ways and can also be valued. In our own age, the spirituality of Scripture, ecumenism, and liturgy - or the spirituality of the church - could be studied from the perspectives of various groups: the laity, the clergy, the religious, urban society, and others (Cary-Elwes, 1986).

Furthermore, the spirituality of an age, a group, or an individual is intimately connected with prayer. Thus, different kinds of prayer will provide a clear indication of the depth of the Spirit: liturgical prayer, the sacraments, the Divine Office, private prayer, devotion to the Eucharist, and the place of Christ and his Passion (Cary-Elwes, 1986).

A broad view of spirituality also raises the issue of how people assess their experiences to determine what is authentically spiritual. An important question might be: what are the principles by which one is being guided? Additionally, this can explicitly include principles of being inclusive and non-violent; that people will express spirituality in a way that allows others to express theirs (Gardner, 2011). Consequently, one advocates for a grounded or integrated view of spirituality, seeing the spiritual as a fundamental aspect of how people live out their lives. Most people are afraid - and rightly so - of exhibitionistic spirituality that longs to be noticed and praised. Suspicion of spirituality also stems from disgust with those individuals who use it to escape responsibility. Those who practice escapist spirituality find a way to bend the rules, blame others, or twist an interpretation of a situation so that they are exempt from responsible behaviour (Johnson & Dreitzer, 2001).

Tacey (2009) views spirituality as encompassing a broad range of forms, focused on connectedness and relatedness to various realities and existences, including individuals, society, the world, the stars, the universe, and the sacred. This inward journey often involves exploring the so-called inner or true self, where diversity is believed to reside. However, the connection between the outer and inner worlds is often integral to the spiritual experience and provides meaning. This connection unites what is commonly referred to in religious language as the *transcendent* - that which lies beyond us - and the *immanent*, which relates to the divine or the spirit within ourselves. There is a consensus that spirituality can be conceptualised as a broad umbrella, with religion representing one of the various expressions of spirituality (Lindsay, 2002). However, significant features of Christian

life, such as devotion to the Passion and apostolic zeal, remain central. Spirituality varies across cultures, and therefore, it involves the application of doctrinal, moral, and especially ascetic principles to ways of Christian living. Consequently, a religious tradition may still serve as the primary means of expressing spirituality, with religious practice remaining the usual path to experience it.

Anderson (2000) describes spirituality as the vital, animating force traditionally believed to be an intangible, life-affirming force within oneself and all human beings. It is characterised by a deep connection to one's inner self, guided by higher values and morality, as well as an awareness of the intrinsic truth and nature of others (Fairholm, 1998).

The expanding body of literature indicates that spirituality can make a positive and meaningful contribution to individuals' lives and organisational well-being (Dantley, 2005; West, 1982). Spirituality may have been overlooked in the past, partly because of what some scholars describe as the prevalence of academic hegemony in higher education institutions (Denton, 1996; Meyers, 2004). Additionally, Noebel (2001), supported by Coleson and Pearcey (1999), argues that the dominance of the atheistic naturalism ideology has contributed to the exclusion of much research on spirituality and leadership.

Spirituality is primarily the domain of meaning and inspiration, with a long, rich history. Despite this, theories and models of spirituality have sometimes become overshadowed by the dominance of secular models, as Van Saane (2018) observes. Spirituality is defined as the ongoing search for meaning, characterised by an open attitude focused on sustainability and credibility, rooted in self-knowledge and a desire for growth and development (Van Saane, 2018). Therefore, spirituality involves the pursuit of meaning and is closely tied to morality, with norms and values that balance the fulfilment of personal needs with broader public interest.

What a strange and wonderful God we worship, who allows the very foundations of our culture and our lives to be shaken - so deeply shaken that we find ourselves with nowhere to turn but to him. It is not in the triumph of victory, nor in the sweet satisfaction of success, nor in the joy of others that we seek God. Instead, it is in the emptiness of Earthly fulfilment, the

dryness of parched souls, and the relentless yearning for something beyond our understanding that we search for the path that leads us to our ultimate love. The shaking, quaking, and longing have become so pervasive that they touch almost everyone's life. With spirituality now more commonly found on the street than in the church, a simple walk through a secular bookstore reveals numerous volumes on Christian spirituality, as Johnson and Dreitcer (2001) note. Christians are searching for 'an authentic piety' - a term that has fallen out of favour and is often regarded with suspicion in recent years - pointing to what we have referred to as 'spirituality'. For Christians, true piety and true spirituality refer to lived intimacy with God in Christ. Piety means devotion to the attitudes and practices that shape and flow from a life with God. Spirituality encompasses not only the attitudes of the heart and the practice of spiritual disciplines but also the various ways in which we live our lives before God (Johnson & Dreitcer, 2001).

In many traditions, spirituality is conceptualised as a journey, often with a mystical variant serving as an exemplary highlight. Within spirituality, individuals can cultivate greater attention and awareness. Consequently, increased openness can facilitate growth and continuous transformation, as Van Saane (2018) maintains. The history of Christian spirituality includes an exploration of the phenomena of Christian spirituality interpreted through the invisible signs of God's self-giving grace, which has been present in the hearts of men and women throughout the ages (Perrin, 2007). Historical narratives not only reveal past events but also illustrate how individuals interpreted or perceived the active Christian Spirit in their lives. They strive to live purposeful and meaningful lives based on their discernment of God's active Spirit in the world (Perrin, 2007).

It is prudent to understand that we do not operate in a vacuum, least of all when facing moral problems. It is the nature of the world and the way that people are that often gives rise to these very moral inconsistencies. The background to leadership and spirituality can have a significant effect on the decisions that we make. It may also shape the form and content of those decisions. Our task, therefore, is to grasp the nature of spiritualities, the decisions that we make, and the context in which we make them. To do this effectively, we need to know as much as we can about the contexts

of our lives. Consequently, examining the world in which we live and the values that surround us are essential aspects of our modern world and our way of life.

There is a need to review leadership praxis from the perspectives of broader spiritualities and to link the spiritual search with contemporary managerial practices, while surveying the breadth of and commonalities within varied philosophical positions regarding the spiritual search.

### **3. The role of spirituality in subjective well-being**

A person's spirit is traditionally understood as the vital, intangible, and life-affirming force within an individual. This state represents a deep connection with the inner self, encompassing higher values, morality, and an understanding of the inherent truth within others. As many leaders undergo significant personal and professional transformation, there is an increasing trend to integrate spirituality into their work, reflecting this profound shift in their lives.

However, as Swanson (2021) argues, a crisis in spiritual leadership has persisted for the past 2,000 years. A spiritual leader is primarily someone who has first been led before they can lead others. Following precedes leading, and Jesus redefined leadership through the roles of servanthood and shepherding (Mk 10:45; Jn 10). Leadership that does not involve servanthood, Swanson (2021) asserts, is not spiritual. The primary duty of a shepherd is to lead, feed, and meet the needs of the flock. When we cease to care for the needs of God's people, we relinquish the right to lead. People do not care how much we know until they understand how much we care. Spiritual leadership is a combination of acquired traits that, when blended, form the foundation of effective leadership. The purpose of spiritual leadership is to address the fundamental needs of leaders and those being led for spiritual well-being through a sense of calling and belonging; it aims to create vision and value congruence across individuals, institutions, and communities.

Spirituality in the workplace involves leaders and followers who recognise themselves as spiritual beings with a sense of calling, which provides meaning and purpose in their lives. The Dalai Lama (2010:n.p.) explores

issues of spirituality and religion in *Ethics for the New Millennium*, where he states:

Religion I take to be concerned with faith in the claims of one faith tradition or another an aspect of which is the acceptance of some form of heaven or nirvana. Connected with this are religious teachings or dogma, ritual prayer, and so on. Spirituality I take to be concerned with those qualities of the human spirit - such as love, and compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, contentment, a sense of responsibility, a sense of harmony - which brings happiness to both self and other.

Consequently, spirituality, as manifested through these qualities, forms the foundation for most of the world's spiritual and religious traditions. Christian spirituality, according to Perrin (2007), implies more than simply acknowledging historical events as recorded in the chronicles of Christian life. It also encompasses the deeper question of why these events occurred - the interior dimension of faith. The examples of martyrs illustrate how a relationship with God is reflected in the selfless acts of men and women who lived out their profound personal love relationship with Jesus. Ultimately, this love relationship, one that is characterised by faith and modelled on the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, represents the truth of embodied Christian life (Perrin, 2007).

The history of Christian spirituality encompasses traditions that include beliefs, attitudes, rituals, prayers, and practices, all of which bear witness to the ways in which the relationship with God and each other has been understood and lived out throughout history. At the same time, these traditions anchor enduring truths for the lives of present and future members of Christian communities, as Perrin (2007) asserts. These traditions evolve over time, gradually taking shape in the consciousness and practises of faith communities.

Christians, however, place their trust in the presence of the Holy Spirit to guide and renew the community through its grace-filled presence. Based on these beliefs, persuasions, and convictions, Christians live today in continuity with the past, while always interpreting the received traditions within the context of the present. Spirituality, therefore, assists tradition by recognising the dynamic exchange between interpreting the past as it has

been received and interpreting the present as it is lived. Christians rely on the presence and influence of the Holy Spirit to renew traditions as they are lived, so that Christian spiritualities are shaped in fresh ways to meet the needs of the world today and tomorrow.

#### **4. Leadership well-defined**

Kouzes and Pozner (2002) define leadership as the art of mobilising others to willingly work towards shared aspirations. From their perspective, effective leadership entails inspiring and motivating individuals by articulating a vision of a long-term, challenging, desirable, compelling, and better future. When combined with a clear sense of mission - defining who we are and what we do - this vision shapes an institution's culture, establishing its fundamental ethical framework and core values.

According to Van Saane (2018), the concept of 'leadership' is encapsulated within the paradox of leadership theories. She argues that the leadership paradigm shifts from focusing on the personality of the leader to interactive and reciprocal influencing processes between the leader and followers. However, this apparent contradiction can be addressed when the paradigms of spirituality are considered within the realm of leadership (Van Saane, 2018).

Gardner (1990) describes leadership as a process of persuasion or example through which an individual, including a leadership team, guides a group towards objectives either personally held or shared by their followers. He emphasises that within an established group, individuals assume different roles, one of which is leadership. Thus, leaders cannot be considered apart from their historical context, operational setting, or the system they oversee.

Theories on servant leadership (Greenleaf, 1977), spiritual leadership (Fry, 2003), and transformational leadership (Bass, 1996) have become integral to the canon of leadership theories. Leadership can, therefore, be inspired by fundamental concepts from religious and spiritual traditions (Van Saane, 2018).

Previous studies have primarily focused on various aspects such as leader traits, aptitude, behaviours, task functions, and styles (Southworth, 2002; Leithwood et al., 1999). These studies explore the significant role that

leaders play in instructional leadership, cultural transformation, and the development of effective leadership. Additionally, many of these studies acknowledge the importance of church leaders as role models who promote values of care and social justice, and foster collaboration. However, it is important to note that most of these studies do not incorporate the concept of spirituality in their analyses (Southworth, 2002).

The primary objectives of leadership theories are to provide knowledge regarding the roles and responsibilities of leaders. These theories focus on the essential personality traits that leaders should possess. They emphasise the behaviour and conduct of leaders, not only encouraging appropriate behaviour amongst their subordinates but also ensuring that leaders themselves act in a manner that reflects these standards. Furthermore, these theories guide and motivate leaders to help their subordinates to achieve the desired goals. They also highlight the importance of analysing deficiencies and limitations to identify the leadership style deemed most significant for effective leadership. Finally, they ensure that leaders remain attentive to the developmental needs of those they serve.

McNeal (2006) argues that obscurity does not equate to humility, nor does fame preclude it. He asserts that humility and celebrity can coexist. Humility arises from a leader's awareness of their source of strength. The aspiration to become a significant spiritual leader liberates the spirit from the idolatry of self-centredness, as true greatness in the spiritual realm cannot be pursued without nurturing a consciousness of God. The reluctance of some spiritual leaders to openly acknowledge their ambition for greatness reveals their underlying motivations. Consequently, they often seek greatness associated with position and power (McNeal, 2006). Despite the spiritual yearning that many individuals experience today and the extensive search for a life in the Spirit, considerable misconceptions about the essence of spirituality persist, amongst the baptised and those outside a formal confession of faith. Church leaders themselves often encounter hesitancy stemming from such misconceptions in their congregants' reactions to the term 'spirituality' (Johnson & Dreitcer, 2001). These reactions likely reflect the attitudes of many outside formal religion as well.

Jesus addressed this distorted form of ambition in two key encounters with his disciples (Mk 9:33-35; 10:35-45). In his response, he neither criticises

the desire for greatness nor suggest that his followers should refrain from aspiring to it. He seizes the moment to contrast the prevailing notion of greatness with its true meaning, urging them to understand greatness in spiritual terms. Jesus' disciples often failed to grasp the true pursuit of greatness. Similarly, most leaders who present themselves as spiritual figures crave the worldly trappings of greatness - position, power, and privilege. Many leaders in the church display the same ambitions as business executives or politicians. Referring to this as ambition does not diminish what it truly is (McNeal, 2006).

Greatness is not only about character; it is also about effectiveness. In fact, all great leaders in the Bible are marked not only by their character but also by their ability to lead effectively. However, servant leadership is an attitude, not a genre of narrowly defined actions. Service is about desired outcomes and not just the type of action that a leader takes on behalf of others. McNeal (2006) asserts that great leaders bless people, inspiring and encouraging them. These leaders also help individuals to become more than they have been, and sometimes even more than they thought that they could be. Therefore, great leaders enable people to be part of something bigger than themselves.

It could also be argued that these leaders are generally capable of meeting the leadership demands placed upon them and effectively achieving things. Great leaders organise people to accomplish tasks while guiding and supporting them throughout the process. In a postmodern society, spiritual leaders are indispensable. Unlike recent centuries that sought to strip away the mystery of life and the universe, today's world is increasingly spiritual. Postmodernists recognise that life is more than physical, technological, financial, and functional. They are more determined in their search for meaning and significance, and there is a widespread yearning for spiritual leadership (McNeil, 2006). They do not link their search for spirituality to the church, nor do they limit their options in spirituality to organised religions. People bring their life issues and needs to their leaders, not only to the counsellor's office, seeking guidance and support. This reality emphasises the need for spiritual leaders in all areas of life (McNeil, 2006).

Our understanding of the sphere of spiritual leadership must include the busy street as well as the quiet abbey. Leaders who possess an appropriate

view of self, combined with the capacity to help others, do not just appear in the nick of time but are rather shaped over time. According to McNeil (2006), extraordinary character and exceptional competence develop over time, and leaders must make countless good choices and right calls to cultivate greatness. Practicing greatness in leadership requires that spiritual leaders develop key disciplines to shape their lives and character. These include self-awareness, self-management, self-development, decision-making, belonging, mission, and solitude. Great spiritual leaders should be committed consciously and intentionally to all these disciplines in order to be effective leaders.

Gardner (1990) cautions against conflating leadership with power. While leaders inherently possess some degree of power because of their ability to persuade, many individuals who hold power lack genuine leadership qualities. Their power often derives from wealth, coercion, institutional control, or media influence. This confusion between leadership and official authority has harmful consequences for many institutions (Gardner, 1990).

Leaders emerge in many forms, adopting different styles and possessing a wide range of qualities, reflecting a diversity that is virtually limitless. Gardner (1990) contends that young people should be exposed to multiple leadership models, made aware of different approaches, and encouraged to develop styles that align with their strengths. In a postmodern society, he argues, leadership must be institutionalised to address increasingly technical challenges, as rapid change outpaces any single leader's ability to personally resolve all major issues. No individual, no matter how gifted, possesses the time or expertise to single-handedly manage the complexities of contemporary leadership.

Leadership and its interactions with constituents operate not only on a rational level but also on deeper, non-rational, and unconscious dimensions of human functioning. Gardner (1990), drawing on Max Weber, asserts that leadership is granted by followers, emphasising that good constituents tend to cultivate good leaders, while executives are assigned subordinates but must earn true followers. Additionally, based on Sigmund Freud's insights into human behaviour, Gardner suggests that many individuals carry subconscious memories of the powerful, almost godlike figures who cared for them in infancy, leading them to seek out similar sources of comfort and

guidance later in life. Gardner argues that social groups establish norms that regulate the behaviour of their members, forming the foundation of social order. Within this framework, leaders emerge, shaped by the expectations and values of their communities. The social context not only influences the type of leaders who arise but also defines the standards by which their leadership is measured. A loyal constituency is won when people, consciously or unconsciously, judge the leader to be capable of solving their problems and meeting their needs, when the leader is seen as symbolising their norms, and when their image of the leader is congruent with their inner environment of myth or legend.

Conger (1994) argues that, since there has been little research regarding spirituality or spiritual leadership, it is difficult to specify precisely what the benefits of spirituality in leadership will be. However, while traditionally rooted in religion, there are new forms of spirituality that organisational actors and institutions draw upon. Additionally, there is a growing body of literature on spirituality and leadership.

Spirituality in church leadership is not solely a form of leadership; rather, it is a phenomenon observed in church leaders who incorporate their personal interpretations of spirituality into their preferred leadership practices. This integration is conducted in ways that promote their own well-being and the well-being of church communities.

However, there has been a significant assumption that leadership can be produced like any other service. In this context, leadership is often reduced to mere image and technique. It is essential to exercise caution regarding leadership development, as effective leadership is crucial for the growth and sustainability of vibrant and evolving communities, including church communities. Without competent leadership, communities tend to stagnate, disintegrate, and struggle for a sense of direction or motivation, easily becoming distracted by trivial concerns and trends. For intentional communities such as the church to thrive, there is a critical need for effective leadership. Fry (2003) argues that spiritual leadership develops within an intrinsic motivation model that incorporates vision, hope, and altruistic love. He further asserts that its purpose is to establish vision and value congruence across strategic, empowered teams and individual levels, ultimately enhancing organisational commitment and productivity.

Spiritual leadership also empowers individuals by fostering committed leaders at the strategic, team, and personal levels, who act as coaches within a learning organisation that constantly strives to listen, experiment, improve, innovate, and cultivate new leaders (Ancona et al., 1999; Bass, 2000; McGill et al., 1992). Building on this, Fry (2003) asserts that spiritual leadership is necessary for the transformation and sustained success of a learning institution. He adds that effective leaders tap into the fundamental need for spiritual fulfilment in themselves and those whom they lead, fostering greater commitment and productivity (Fry 2003).

## **5. Leadership development as a concept**

Leadership development cannot be fully understood without looking at leadership first. Leadership comes from authenticity and requires unwavering self-assessment and deep self-knowledge (Hesselbein & Shrader, 2008). According to Hesselbein and Shrader (2008), effective leaders have followers but treat them as allies rather than subordinates. They are forward-thinking yet committed to learning from the past. They hold themselves and their teams accountable for results and actively engage in listening.

Leadership, at its core, is an enabling art - one that empowers all other arts and professions to function effectively. Within the church, leadership is a shared responsibility under the ultimate head, Jesus. This concept aligns with polycentric leadership, which requires leaders to possess the wisdom to lead and the humility to follow (Woodward & White, 2016). We say that all good leaders know how to follow, but when individuals are in roles where they rarely need to follow, they lose their follower instinct. Therefore, we need to create leadership structures that model the kind of mutual community that we seek to form (Woodward & White, 2016). Over the years, there has been a tendency to overemphasise leadership while neglecting the importance of management. In an institution, one cannot lead inventories, cash flow, costs, etc. One cannot lead information, structures, processes, facilities, and tools; instead, one must manage them. Thus, one leads people and manages and controls things. According to Hesselbein and Shrader (2008), the fundamental reality is that human beings are not things needing to be motivated and controlled; they are four-dimensional - body, mind, heart, and spirit. They also represent the

four basic needs and motivations of all people: to live, to love, to learn, and to leave a legacy (Hesselbein & Shrader, 2008). This should be taken into account by leaders as they lead people in institutions.

Leadership development can be defined as the process that helps to expand the capacity of individuals to perform leadership roles within organisations. However, it also refers to activities that enhance the skills, abilities, and confidence of leaders (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). According to Baldwin and Ford (1988), these programmes vary significantly in complexity, cost, and style of instruction. Church members and even leaders often feel like cogs in a wheel or workers on an assembly line, each performing a particular part to keep the machine running (Woodward & White, 2016). With everyone playing their role well and the ministry experiencing success, something still seems to be missing. When someone steps back from the machine for a season, the church community realises that the sense of community and authenticity that was initially present has vanished. It appears that leaders have gained the world of ministry success but have lost their souls in the process. If everything meaningful about the church seems to disappear with one key person, leadership should be different (Woodward & White, 2016). In times past, congregations have seen and experienced how power can transform a godly leader into a control freak, stifling any creativity and innovation within the community. When news breaks that they have experienced a moral fall, most are not surprised. In this case, leadership should be different.

The success of leadership development is, therefore, heavily influenced by the quality of the programme, the level of support and acceptance from superiors, and the characteristics or attributes of the individual being developed (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Some scholars differentiate between leadership development and leader development; the former refers to development programmes focusing on collective leadership within an organisation, while the latter pertains to individual development (Van Saane, 2018).

Furthermore, scholars such as Wheatley (1992), Wilber (2001), Senge (2004), and others recognise the connection between leadership, change, and spirituality. This is evidenced by common themes in their works, including ethics, values, the common good, organisational and individual

integrity, courage, and leadership character. Therefore, these themes can be applied to the modern face of leadership as a means of encouraging individuals, groups, and society to thrive together.

The conceptualisation of leadership as a dynamic process fits into the scientific paradigm of social construction (Van Saane, 2018). In this paradigm, Van Saane argues that meaning is not only an attribute of an object, but also something that is created in the perception of the subject. Thus, it is subjective and occurs in the interaction between the subject and his or her environment (Van Saane, 2018).

Leadership development, as a social construction, is less about the leader's personality and more about how followers and key factors perceive and receive the leader (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). The way in which we approach leadership profoundly shapes the ethos of the church community and its surrounding neighbourhood. Different leadership styles cultivate different kinds of people (Woodward & White, 2016). Following the paradigm of social construction, leadership emerges through these discernment processes. The effectiveness or failure of leadership cannot be judged objectively; rather, it depends on the perception of those affected. This formulation suggests that within the paradigm of social construction, the predictability of effective and successful leadership is significantly lower than in the paradigm of the effective leader (Eliastam, 2018). Many leaders achieve success through active engagement in a complex web of carefully cultivated relationships, often in contracting contexts (Hesselbein & Shrader, 2008). However, those who intentionally cultivate these relationships and navigate diverse contexts are able to guide their institutions towards a clearly defined higher purpose. These are leaders who fully commit themselves, aware that their dedication can lead to their undoing. This, indeed, is the price and prize of leadership.

Effective leaders are willing to reveal their authentic selves, understanding that there are no universal formulas or guaranteed ways to ensure leadership success. Therefore, being attuned to context and able to sense the direction of change is as essential for leaders as it is for high-wire walkers. Leaders who successfully transform organisations challenge the norms. They read the organisational culture and adjust enough to be accepted as insiders (Hesselbein & Shrader, 2008). Leadership is a dynamic relationship

between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow. Leadership matters, especially in times of uncertainty, when it holds even greater significance than in stable periods. Given its importance in times of uncertainty, leadership development becomes even more crucial (Hesselbein & Shrader, 2008).

The behaviour and attributes of a leader depend on the situation. When attempting to achieve something substantial in the world, one will inevitably face large, resistant bureaucracies that seem immovable. Leaders accustomed to seeking out hidden constituencies remain undeterred (Gardner, 1990). Gardner (1990) argues that leadership is rarely discussed as a set of functions, and even more rarely as functions that can be diffused across a group. Most discussions and writings about leadership tend to focus on “the leader” as an individual, standing alone. However, a closer look at real-world leadership reveals that it is often a collective effort, with a small group of individuals working together in a team dynamic (Gardner, 1990).

Leaders have always been generalists. Tomorrow’s leaders will likely begin their careers as trained specialists, but to mature as leaders, they must, sooner or later, climb out of the trenches of specialisation and rise above the boundaries that separate the various segments of society. Leaders can accomplish a great deal when they understand the needs of their institutions and the basic needs of the people they work with (Gardner, 1990). Research suggests that workers are more effective when they take pride in their production, the quality of the service rendered, or the integrity of their institution. Since leadership requires working with shared values and goals, the task becomes increasingly difficult - eventually impossible - when shared values disintegrate. Intrinsic leaders always seek to foster group action, which can only occur when individual members are willing to commit to a common purpose. Thus, descriptions of effective leadership rarely mention the extent to which group attitudes make leadership possible. In any functioning society, everything - leadership included - occurs within a set of shared beliefs concerning the standard of acceptable behaviour that must govern individual members. Therefore, the task of leadership is to revitalise those shared beliefs and values and to draw on them as sources of motivation for everyone.

Leadership has been an area of interest for many centuries. According to Kouzes and Pozner (2002), leadership is the art of mobilising others to strive for shared aspirations. Judge et al. (2002) explain the importance of the situation in determining the effectiveness of leadership. Consequently, a good leader must evaluate the situation and act accordingly. Meng (2016) notes that an extrapolation of contingency theory is the path-goal theory, which considers motivation a crucial determinant of effective leadership. The components of this leadership theory, which are also interlinked, involve effort, performance, and reward in an advancing order.

Kerr and Jermier (1978) argue for substitutes for leadership theories by shifting the focus to circumstances that tend to neutralise the temperaments of leadership. The emphasis, however, is on modifying leadership qualities to suit the demands of a given situation to nurture a better outcome. Modern leadership theories, such as strategic leadership theory, emerged as early as the beginning of the 1980s as a result of behavioural contingency theories being questioned. During this time, there was a shift in focus. Thus, modern theories hypothesised the importance of vision, motivation, and value-based control of culture and in-group dynamics.

According to Conger and Kanungo (1998) and Muddock and Fulton (1998), the key elements of modern leadership involve consideration, fairness, agreement, social equality, and co-operation. The culture of adaptability requires that the leader be autonomous, take initiative, and be creative, learning from the fluid situation in order to develop new strategies and objectives to improve the institution. The distinction between management and leadership should highlight a direction for an institution by defining its aims and objectives. Leadership is about having a vision for a desirable and compelling future for the institution. Consequently, when a vision is stated clearly and complemented with a sense of mission by defining roles with motivation in execution, the foundation of the institution becomes strong and entrenched. Thus, the fundamental ethics upon which an institution is based should serve as guidelines for determining proper and improper behaviour (Kerr & Jermier, 1978). Building on this, Woodward and White (2016) advocate for polycentric leadership, emphasising that it shapes the individuals and the missional community they serve. However, embracing this approach requires considerable wisdom and a good sense of timing.

Throughout history, whenever God's work has advanced, there has always been a leader at the helm - a singular person called by God to guide His people in fulfilling his objectives. This is the mystery and privilege of being called by God. Spiritual leadership is the integration of natural and spiritual qualities used to influence God's people in achieving His purpose (Swanson, 2021). Swanson (2021) argues that these natural qualities are not self-produced but God-given, and they reach their highest effectiveness when used in service to God and for His glory. From this, it can be concluded that ministry is best accomplished by spiritual individuals who employ spiritual methods to fulfil God's purposes.

For spiritual leaders, 'the call' frames the central storyline in their life drama. Sometimes the call is dramatic, while for others it is progressive. Spiritual leaders cannot be understood apart from their call, as it informs them of what game they are playing and keeps them engaged, even when they feel discharged. Even more significantly, the leader's relationship with God is inextricably linked to the call. Great spiritual leaders believe that they are called not despite who they are, but because of who they are. Citing Bonhoeffer, Kelly and Nelson (2003) argue that spirituality leads to an acknowledgment of the ways in which God's Holy Spirit opens our minds and hearts to the paths of life along which we are led. They further endorse the importance of a life and spirituality guided by the Holy Spirit, which fosters strong convictions about what constitutes the proper way of living one's faith and exercising moral leadership. This understanding is not a boast; rather, it is based on an honest assessment of their abilities (McNeal, 2006). Unlike many who are naïve, great leaders know what they can contribute. This awareness permits them to be intentional with their energies and time, always playing towards their talents. They do not engage in wishful thinking regarding their abilities. They are aware of their depth and take on assignments that they can genuinely address with their skills and gifts (McNeal, 2006). Being self-aware about their talents does not mean that leaders do not have to be humble, which is also a central component of greatness. In fact, leaders who truly understand their strengths recognise the Giver of their abilities. Thus, without this clear grasp, leaders dishonour their design and may end up working outside their strengths, whether because of ignorance or an inflated ego that craves talents

that did not come from God. These leaders can even become a liability by underperforming and preventing others from operating from their God-given strengths (McNeal, 2006).

Reviewing and reflecting on key events in life can help leaders to understand, recognising God's providence over the years. They can also realise how they have been shaped by crisis and by the routine rhythms of life. This awareness can inspire confidence and provide comfort, especially to embattled leaders who need reminding that God has not abandoned them. Great spiritual leaders have catalogued their positive and negative personal markers and gleaned the heart-shaping work of God in them. This understanding, therefore, inspires humility and confidence (McNeal, 2006).

It can be understood that leaders also have a dark side, as every human being struggles with dysfunction to some degree. McNeal (2006) argues that the dark side of leaders is particularly noticeable because of the public scrutiny that they receive and the amplification of their implications through their followers. Conversely, McIntosh and Rima (1997) identify five types of dark-side leaders: compulsive, narcissistic, paranoid, co-dependent, and passive-aggressive leaders. These types of leaders take more forms than just those mentioned by McIntosh and Rima (1997). Dotlich and Cairo (2003), on the other hand, identify specific derailing behaviours of leaders that stem from the dark side. They argue that these leaders often act, speak, and think in ways that ultimately lead to their downfall, frequently without even realising that they are sabotaging their own success. McNeal (2006) asserts that these types of leadership are inevitably exposed to those whom they lead and are hard to miss. However, leaders who are captive to such darkness may not fully recognise it, making it difficult for them to manage it. Great spiritual leaders understand that confronting and becoming acquainted with the darkness is the only path to the light (McNeal, 2006).

Great spiritual leaders bless others. They are not solely focused on grand issues; they are devoted to people. Their spiritual enterprise is about enhancing lives. Leaders who achieve greatness are not only a blessing; they feel blessed. They are characterised by gratitude and consider leadership a privilege. Even though the cost of their greatness may, and often does,

include emotional, physical, and spiritual stress, they count themselves fortunate to have the opportunity to partner with God in his redemptive mission in the world.

## **6. Developments within religious leadership and spirituality**

Traditionally, many people believed that the primary purpose of leadership was to acquire power and privilege (Nair, 1994). This form of leadership encouraged many leaders to manipulate and control others in pursuit of their goals (Freire, 1970). However, with the understanding that this paradigm cannot resolve many issues, several scholars on leadership emphasise the importance of values such as collaboration, the common good, and global concern as vital components of leadership (Rost, 1991).

Theron (2008) argues that development planning has been poorly conceived, inadequately maintained, and ultimately unsuccessful. He questions why development planning continues to falter despite the enthusiasm with which it was initially pursued - an issue that still lingers in institutions of authority and development. Addressing the historical contexts of development planning requires an examination of planning theory and the characteristics of the planning process. Additionally, the role of change agents as facilitators of development planning must be clearly defined (Theron, 2008). According to Theron (2008), this approach should be people-centred. Development failures often stem from change agents' inability to bridge the gap between their own realities and those of the people whom they serve, as well as their reliance on research rooted in a fragmented, reductionist ontology.

Development cannot simply be imposed on communities from outside, as donors in the development field sometimes assume. It is not a one-time event but an ongoing process that requires boldness, confidence, and conviction from individuals and communities (Theron, 2008). True development emerges from within - it is the realisation of creative energy awaiting the opportunity to bring something new into being.

Spirituality has been linked to secular forms of leadership, establishing a broader connection between the two. This raises the question of whether religious leadership can offer valuable insights into the relationship between

spirituality and leadership. Traditionally, the primary role of a leader within a religious context was to guide the community, ensuring alignment with theological convictions and social organisation (Barentsen, 2011). This concept of religious leadership has been reinforced by theological perspectives that link a leader's authority to a divine calling and official confirmation by religious institutions (Barentsen, 2011).

Furthermore, many of the theoretical frameworks used in social care recognise the centrality of meaning and the human drive towards wholeness (Gardner, 2011). Viewing spirituality critically, according to Gardner (2011), involves seeing people holistically - seeking to understand their backgrounds and what fundamentally matters to them. Spirituality exists as an integral part of everyday life while also transcending it. Therefore, it is essential to combine a postmodern appreciation of individual experience, with all its diversity, with a critical perspective that emphasises living harmoniously and respectfully at individual and community levels. This perspective on spirituality moves beyond religiously specific frameworks while also embracing those who identify with particular traditions.

Critical spirituality calls for lives rooted in openness, acceptance of pluralism, and the ability to coexist with contradictions and uncertainty without resorting to coercion. It recognises that spirituality, including religious expression, is rarely static, as it influences cultural change and, in turn, is shaped by it through a complexity of exchanges and connections. As a result, change is intricate, requiring strategies that operate at the broader socio-cultural level and the individual level.

Furthermore, critical spirituality fosters acceptance of uncertainty, a trait shared by professional and spiritual maturity. The capacity or discipline of sitting with what is not known can be beneficial. When dying, or perhaps most clearly during the process of dying, people often accept that there are no answers and simply want someone to be present with them, as Gardner (2011) maintains. This is also true for those wishing to explore their spirituality. However, Vernon (2007) suggests that the problem with religion currently is that it is perceived as a means of achieving certainty rather than living with uncertainty. Therefore, it is equally important to acknowledge that some people do possess a sense of certainty. For some,

this derives from their religious tradition, which provides clear and definite answers. Additionally, it is important to reflect on what matters; this is a more specific reflection, focused on articulating what is and what could be in a person's life.

## **7. Towards a theology of leadership**

Research has revealed numerous contemporary examples of dysfunctional communities, institutions, individuals, and leaders within local contexts. Leaders are called upon to promote a legacy of existential, moral, and spiritual change in society (Dames, 2017). However, servant leadership may provide a solution to the self-imposed notion of superiority. According to Dames (2017), the absence of servant leadership and the subsequent misfortunes of leaders in Africa leave much to be desired. This is attributed to the inability of many leaders to maintain sustainable solutions to issues such as hunger, poverty, unemployment, resource mismanagement, and systemic flaws that encourage favouritism, nepotism, tribalism, political differences, ideological and religious discrimination, a lack of capacity to manage society, poor leadership, inadequate planning, greed, and the worship of materialism, as well as the failure to uphold professional ethics (Adhiambo, 2012).

Dames (2017) emphasises the importance of enhancing servant leadership to address widespread poor living conditions by providing essential services that improve the quality of life in many communities. Spears (2010), as cited in Adhiambo (2012), argues that servant leadership represents a revitalised model of leadership, reflecting the socio-economic and political realities of numerous communities. The focus, however, should be on increasing service to others through a holistic approach that fosters a sense of community and power-sharing in decision-making. This kind of leadership aligns with a vision for a reconstructed society. Furthermore, success in these leadership traits depends on strong leadership and decisive actions to address the global issues of inadequate leadership and institutions, which are at the root of societal decline. Rwiza (2008) contends that the prevailing culture of lethargy, oppression, suffering, consumerism, and ideological conflict in the developing nations and globally must be

dismantled and replaced with a culture of commitment to the service of the whole human person. These pervasive social challenges in Africa and beyond demand leaders who will respond to the call for a culture of commitment to humanity.

Servant leadership values, develops, and builds community and individuals towards the practice of authenticity, providing leadership for the benefit of those being led and sharing power for the common good. Therefore, the caring, sharing, developing, and serving approach of the leader is fundamental to the servant leadership model. The application and re-emphasis of the serving dimension within the church, aimed at enhancing the well-being of broader society through a renewed service ethic, should be pursued.

In South Africa and across the globe, inadequate service delivery by leadership has obstructed the socio-economic empowerment of ordinary citizens (Manala, 2014). The unbalanced shift from human-focused programmes to natural sciences, technology, and engineering during the early 1990s has proven to be one of the most detrimental policies in South Africa (Dames, 2017). This situation demands redress to reshape the moral fabric and spiritual landscape of humanity (Koopman & Vosloo, 2002).

According to Bam (1985), the image of the Church of Jesus Christ in this world is that of a servant, characterised by servant leadership. The church serves to make Jesus Christ a reality in the hearts of all humanity, facilitating the realisation of the Kingdom of God in the world. Consequently, Jesus is the embodiment of God's royal rule in the form of a servant (Osmer, 2008). Servanthood is fundamental to the mission of the community of disciples and the leadership within that community, as Christ has redefined the nature of power and authority by taking the form of a servant.

Huizing (2011) argues that Christianity has largely overlooked the development of a theology of leadership. Stone and Duke (2006) emphasise that applying revealed truth to all aspects of human existence is essential. The development of traits, transactional, behavioural, and transformational leadership theories offers a framework within which Christians can integrate and apply a theology of leadership (Berne, 1963; Bass, 1985). Research has shown that there are parallels to Christian thought as revealed in servant

and spiritual theories (Greenleaf, 1977; Fry, 2003). From this, R.C. Clark (2008) warns of the danger of simply incorporating these theories into the theology of leadership. He further maintains that an exegesis of scripture concerning the theology of leadership might lead to a reassessment or rejection of popular theory. Frank (2006), on the other hand, insists that it is important to balance the membership of congregations for them to have an impact on local communities. He also mentions the importance of balancing culturally driven rather than biblically driven leadership practices.

Cohn (1993) discusses the potential integration between leadership theories and Christian leadership, referencing Michel's social leadership theory. According to Michel, even in democratically structured organisations, power ultimately rests in the hands of one or a few leaders. This concentration of power is often seen as unacceptable by the organisation, yet most communities tend to gravitate toward this outcome. Cohn suggests that this understanding has been useful in understanding ecclesiastical leadership, particularly when the congregation views the church leader as indispensable, holding significant influence with no competent leader available to replace them. In such cases, Michel's social leadership theory becomes evident in church dynamics. Thus, Christian leadership scholars recognise that general leadership theories offer valuable insights and truths that can be effectively applied within a Christian context (Huizing, 2011).

The purity of scripture is essential in developing a theology of leadership. Beeley (2009) maintains that the starting point of any research in this area must be a theology that defines leadership, rather than a leadership theory that defines theology. Without this distinction, a bifurcation may arise in which church financial issues are treated as practical matters, thereby undermining the character of God as supreme in theological matters. By developing a leadership theory that emerges from theology, a dichotomy in theology may ensue. Beeley (2009) argues that all practical matters will be subsumed under the theological, which is a necessary and prerequisite outcome for all who submit themselves to the authority of Christ. In this context, Gortner (2009) contends that the similarities between the study of general leadership and Christian leadership are neither coincidental nor minimal. Rather, general leadership offers significant insights for the Christian leader. According to Huizing (2011), a Christian leader

developing a theology of leadership benefits from being deeply informed by general leadership research. Frank (2006) argues that today's church leaders often consider leadership in terms of preaching, teaching, and pastoral care.

.....the work of managing churches and church institutions races on, expanding into areas as diverse as procedures for legal incorporation of church-sponsored activities, prevention of sexual harassment and abuse, public relations and legal liabilities in leasing church facilities to community organizations (Frank, 2006:18).

Frank (2006) expands on this idea, asserting that Christian leaders must identify the critical leadership challenges facing the church today. They should integrate these issues into a biblical framework informed by general leadership theory, understand how these challenges fit within the broader historical context of the church, and examine how past leaders have addressed similar difficulties. Moreover, Christian leaders must consider the implications for leadership development - not only within individual churches and their communities but also for the global church and those outside the faith.

C. Clark (2008) contends that context is critical in the development of a theology of leadership because it shapes the way in which a leader interprets scripture and its application to the situation at hand. This necessitates involvement in hermeneutics. Thus, leaders must interpret theology or church history within its constantly fluctuating context without losing sight of other elements. It is therefore important not to overlook the significant role and influence of contexts. Allowing scripture to define the context within which the community interprets its circumstances places the weight of leadership development on the revelation of God and his empowerment and guidance. Nonetheless, it is necessary to recognise that any particular leadership context is likely to develop, evolve, and change, especially when attempting to apply it to other contexts. Suffice it to say that the development of a theology of leadership must constantly balance the biblical narrative and its contextual application.

## 8. Leadership competencies

Christian leadership is primarily concerned with the life and ministry of the church in various contexts. Its broader meaning necessitates investigating leadership in secular organisations, such as business institutions. Areas of interest, such as business ethics, are becoming increasingly important. Consequently, Christian ethics has emerged as a natural meeting point between economic science and theology (Kessler & Kretzschmar, 2015).

D'Souza (1999) confirms that leadership focuses on purpose. Therefore, for Christian leaders, the purpose should be to pursue the same goal that Jesus pursued - helping people to become all that they can when with God. However, the major difference between general leadership and Christian leadership is that the latter is centred on God and seeks to glorify him in all its arrangements. While general leadership may be concerned with doing the right things, Christian leadership strives to promote godly values within communities.

The spirituality of ministry and the spirituality of leaders depend on vision. Vision transcends measurement; it cannot be neatly defined or confined by statements. However, in just a brief conversation with church leaders, it becomes clear whether they are merely performing a task or truly leading with the power of a vision (Johnson & Dreitcer, 2001). The core elements of a healthy spirituality are intricately woven into the fabric of a vision. A vision arises from an encounter with the Sacred, an encounter with God, and is received as a gift from beyond. This vision captures the spirit in a way that is in a convincing and compelling manner, merging with the spirit and engaging the mind and will (Johnson & Dreitcer, 2001).

The relationship between spirituality and vision in leadership should be clear and unmistakable. A vision requires personal communion with God, an engagement initiated by the Lord. The importance of a vision for a minister or church leader is equally significant for lay leaders, in their ministry within the church and in their broader vocation in the world. Spiritual leadership requires the mutual efforts of pastors and lay leaders. In this shared quest, through God's mysterious ways, the Spirit moves over the chaotic waters churning within the human spirit, bringing order, perspective, and direction. From this encounter with God, spiritual leaders step into

their ministry with focus, certainty, and empowerment. Leaders not only perceive the vision but also take active steps to implement it (Johnson & Dreitcer, 2001).

Leadership begins when a vision emerges (Haggai, 2009). Thus, vision ranks high as one of the marks of authentic Christian leadership in the workplace. A good leader must know where the institution is heading. According to Stiles (2004), vision inspires hope and obedience and awakens courage. The Christian leader must possess foresight and insight. An important aspect of strategic leadership is the focus on solutions. Life is inherently full of challenges, and people view their true leaders as agents of change who should improve their lives, whether in politics, business, the church, or in families (Flanagan & Finger, 2003). Effective church leaders should not necessarily solve problems for their constituencies but rather prepare them with the skills to confront their life challenges.

Integrity, self-discipline, and commitment are important competencies that a leader should strive for. However, honesty is a crucial aspect of the integrity of Christian leadership. Hybels (1978) contends that integrity is not the same as reputation, which merely reflects what others perceive of us. Integrity entails living a life that is consistent in belief and behaviour, in words and deeds (Stiles, 2004). In any workplace context, personal integrity will earn respect and followership for any leader. Consequently, Scazzero (2015) describes integrity as something that enables people to lead honest and transparent lives in their relationships with those with whom they are in conflict. All leaders are expected to possess self-discipline, which is the ability to manage oneself.

A leader is a person who has learned to obey a discipline imposed from without, and has taken on a more rigorous discipline from within...Many who aspire leadership fail because they have never learned to follow (Saunders, 2015:65).

Where a leader oversees people from different backgrounds, including those who know nothing about God or Christianity, only self-discipline will help the leader to lead effectively. Self-discipline, or mastering oneself before taking charge of others, is crucial in workplace spirituality. Leadership through a competent and ethical example is an essential dimension of authentic leadership in any workplace.

## 9. Leadership development in context

Throughout the years, various theories on leaders and leadership have been developed. The question of leadership has been the focus of considerable literature produced from a historical and theoretical perspective. Leadership is not something that is fixed; rather, it is something that can grow and expand (Roupnel et al., 2019). Leadership development programmes have mostly focused on collaborative learning and power sharing, aiming to challenge the ways of doing, thinking, and acting that hinder change (Baron, 2007). Although institutions have been increasingly using such programmes, leadership development nevertheless remains one of the least explored areas within the field of leadership research (Avolio et al., 2010).

During the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the focus of research shifted to analysing the behaviours associated with leadership. This shift involved investigating the compatibility of a leader's style with the organisational context in which the leader operates. This development coincided with the emergence of situational and contingency theories, which postulate that a leader is only effective in various situations if they are flexible enough to adopt a leadership style suitable for each context (Burns, 1978). Luc (2004), on the other hand, argues that leadership today is viewed as an asset akin to physical strength that can be improved. Leadership also derives its legitimacy in relation to the needs of a group, thus becoming a moral responsibility (Baron, 2007).

In the public domain, leadership has been associated with multiple competencies that foster specific behaviours and directions to bring out the best in people and promote self-improvement (Orazi et al., 2013; Van Wart, 2003). According to Cloet and Bournois (2011), leadership is future-oriented, emphasising the ability to drive change, motivate, inspire enthusiasm, and encourage adherence and commitment. Thus, it emerges through the creation and sharing of meaning in terms of sense-making and added value. Everyone can be considered a leader, provided their capacities are further developed.

Marquardt (2000) argues that we find ourselves in a new century that calls for a different type of leader, one equipped with a broader range of skills and competencies. Bass (2000) maintains that as organisations and institutions,

along with their working environments, become increasingly complex and interconnected, the role of a leader at any level also becomes more complex. This complexity compels the development of a leadership style that is more attuned to the issues facing institutions. Therefore, leadership styles must address organisational challenges through the development of the relationships established between leaders and their co-workers. Deschamps et al. (2016) argue that to develop and exercise leadership, managers must cultivate emotional intelligence.

De Beer (2016) asserts that the need for leadership development has evolved in response to internal and external pressures facing institutions and organisations. Internal pressures arise from institutional structures that challenge traditional leadership roles, while external pressures stem from rapid changes that create uncertainty, unpredictability, and complex problems that cannot be solved by a few leaders alone (De Beer, 2016). As a result, leadership development is increasingly recognised as a critical competitive advantage.

Developing a leader without considering the relationships and interactions within a social context overlooks the fact that leadership is inherently a dynamic exchange between an individual and their social or institutional environment. Likewise, attempting to establish a system of shared meaning and mutual commitments without investing in individual development risks placing people in situations that exceed their capacity to navigate effectively (Day, 2000). However, Dalakoura (2010) offers another explanation for the challenges in distinguishing between leader and leadership development. She argues that researchers have often treated leadership as an individual phenomenon, emphasising the behaviours and skills of leaders. Like leadership itself, the learning process requires time and demands the participants' full attention (Henein & Morissette, 2007; Parent, 2013).

Leadership revolves around building relationships and establishing clear expectations between individuals. Leaders must demonstrate trustworthiness, integrity, and fairness - not only in their interactions with subordinates but also regarding their work responsibilities. They should work diligently and conscientiously to refine their strategies and approaches, ensuring the effective functioning of the organisation. Because of variations in the skills required, roles played, and tasks and job duties performed,

leaders must utilise their skills efficiently. Another aspect to consider in this theory is the range of skills that leaders must possess. These include time management, technical, communication, analytical ability, problem-solving, critical thinking, conflict resolution, decision-making, work ethics, and presentation skills. Leaders need to employ these skills on a regular basis. When changes occur, the effective implementation of these skills will enable leaders to carry out their work duties successfully.

Human resources are a crucial aspect of leadership effectiveness. The generation of information regarding management and the development of human resources are essential for achieving organisational goals and enhancing the overall structure of the organisation. Important factors to consider within the organisation include developing a learning climate, designing training programmes, transmitting necessary information and experience, evaluating results, providing career counselling, enriching organisational culture, promoting organisational change, implementing modern and innovative teaching-learning methods, and formulating rules and regulations.

According to the contingency model of leadership, anyone who implements strategies and approaches appropriately can be a good leader. Leadership emphasises the importance of forming sociable relationships with others and performing job duties effectively. Leaders must demonstrate consistency, integrity, sincerity, and principles when interacting with subordinates and customers, as well as during the execution of job duties and in fostering improvements to the organisational structure. They should work diligently and attentively to transform their procedures and methodologies, particularly to ensure the effective functioning of the organisation. Given the competencies required and the activities performed, leaders must be genuine and unpretentious.

Another important aspect to consider within this theory is the enhancement of relationships, which should be built on mutual understanding amongst individuals. Leaders need to possess skills in time management, the use of technology, resource management, communication, investigation, analysis, problem-solving, logical thinking, conflict resolution, decision-making, and maintaining work ethics. These factors should be taken into account by leaders throughout their roles. When transformations occur, the effective

implementation of these skills will enable leaders to perform their duties well and achieve the desired outcomes.

Research studies have examined leadership styles that enhance leaders' ability to fulfil their responsibilities and improve their efficiency. Possessing a thoughtful nature, demonstrating appropriate actions, and addressing problems and challenges are not easily manageable tasks. The critical question that requires further investigation by researchers is: what factors must leaders consider to enhance their performance and conduct? Leadership generally encompasses several meanings specific to the operationalisation of organisational structure. In all forms of communication - whether verbal or written, formal or informal - leaders must ensure that they promote positivity and constructivism amongst their subordinates. When leaders are approachable and possess a friendly attitude, they create enjoyable and harmonious relationships with their team. In this way, employees feel comfortable approaching their leaders without fear or apprehension. When subordinates perceive that leaders treat them as a cohesive unit, they are more likely to be motivated to engage with tasks and activities.

## 10. Conclusion

This chapter reviewed existing literature on the research topic and explored philosophical issues in scholarly writings on it. The researcher conducted an in-depth study of books, articles, and publications on spirituality and leadership development, emphasising their interconnectedness.

In conclusion, spirituality and leadership development build the collective capacity of individuals by engaging them effectively in leadership roles and responsibilities (Day, 2000). Moreover, leadership is not merely the result of traditional training but also a series of activities designed to develop communities by enabling them to learn through experience (Dalakoura, 2010). Intense Spirituality and leadership development programmes must prioritise access to diverse learning methodologies to cultivate effective leadership. Therefore, leadership development, coupled with spirituality, should not be treated as a once-off initiative, but as an institutional priority. Strengthening the personal and professional capacities of leaders will equip

them to respond more effectively to the demands of their social context, ultimately enhancing institutional mission and development performance.

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