

# Review of Ethical leadership as an intrinsic motivation factor for spirituality in Ethiopian Kale Heywet Church

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**Abstract-** The church today is facing numerous challenges globally, regionally, and nationally. There are cultural transformations, lack of faith, rejection of absolute truth, growth of unorthodoxies, and all kinds of unethical practices in contemporary churches. Ethical leadership is the remedy for this crisis of spiritual decline of church members. Five measurable elements of ethical leadership such as respecting others, serving others, justice, honesty, and building community can play a major role to bring spiritual formation of church members. The aim of this study is to review the effect of ethical leadership on the spiritual formation of church members at global, regional, and local levels and to contribute knowledge of understanding to readers. In addition, the review provides suggestions for further research.

**Index Terms-** Ethical leadership, Spiritual formation, church members, intrinsic motivation factor

## I. INTRODUCTION

In general, Spiritual formation is the most urgent need of Evangelical churches today at the global level. According to Teo (2017), in the last two decades, the spiritual formation has gained much interest among Christians and its demand led to establishing of spiritual formation institutions. Besides, Willard (2002) stated that spiritual formation can take place in every individual Christian base on their experience of faith. Therefore, spiritual formation is a demand of all church members in the world today.

In addition to the global context, the current challenges of Africa are not evangelization, not infrastructural development, not building social services but the problem is leadership and spirituality (Okocha, 2017).

Similarly, in the context of Ethiopia, the churches are facing the same challenges of self-imposed leadership and superficial Christianity. The churches in Ethiopia are growing in number but there is a spiritual decline. In this regard, this study seeks to review

the effect of ethical leadership on the spiritual formation of Kale Heywet church members in Ethiopia.

## II. ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

In general, Ethical leadership is a form of leadership in which individuals demonstrate conduct for the common good that is acceptable and appropriate in every area of their life. Ethical leaders can help to boost performance, and cultivate and maintain high morale, self-satisfaction, safe legal practices, and create positive organizational culture, a healthier work environment, improve all aspects of organizational life, build good habits, improve emotional wellbeing, and prevent scandalous situations (CMOE Team, 2020; Kuligowski, 2020). According to Nass and Kreuer (2018), ethical leadership is a biblical concept that leaders have to practice according to the Bible. The Bible is the highest standard of Christian ethics which has a genuine message of God for all people of every age and in every culture (Fee & Stuart, 2014). The elements of ethical leadership those enhance spiritual formation are respecting others, serving others, showing justice, being honest and building community (Northouse, 2019). The concepts of each element of ethical leadership are described as follows:

- 1) **Respecting others:** According to Northouse (2019), respecting others includes accepting others' ideas and considering them as human beings. Leaders need to understand the interest, values, and purposes of their followers to assist them in the way they face difficulties in their lives.
- 2) **Serving others:** According to Robert Greenleaf (1970, as cited in Correll, 2021), servant-leadership is the one who has a natural feeling to serve others first. As Correll (2021) pointed out, there are ten characteristics of servant leadership. They are "listening, empathy, healing, self-awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight,

stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building community."

- 3) **Doing justice:** Johnson (2009) defined justice as "even-handed treatment of employees; impartiality in assigning rewards and punishments". There are many kinds or categories of members in the organization or church such as male and female, rich and poor, educated and uneducated, old and young, etc. therefore; ethical leaders are responsible to do fair and just to serve equally.
- 4) **Being honest:** is the main characteristic of an ethical leader. "To be good means we must be truthful. For leaders, the lesson is the same: To be a good leader, one must be honest" (Northouse, 2019). Therefore, to be a

### III. SPIRITUAL FORMATION

According to Coker (2021), spiritual formation is a lifelong process to grow into Christ's likeness, pursue holiness, and living in a practical life that expresses spiritual health. On the other hand, Thomason (2012) described that spiritual formation is "spiritual growth, discipleship, or spirituality and generally, it is an inner journey of transformation. That is because, we are what we do, or we do what we are?". In addition, Morse (2018) defined spiritual formation as a lifelong holistic process of the spiritual transformation of growth that embraces the right thinking (orthodoxy), right behavior (orthopraxy), and right feelings (orthopathy) of the people.

Regarding spiritual formation, Tang (2014b) pointed out the five elements of spiritual formation such as "growing into Christ-likeness, building relationships, being missional, enhancing spiritual learning, and developing community". These are what each church members to practice and ethical leaders to motivate.

### IV. ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AS INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

In general, motivation in the organization results when leaders create a situation that brings out the best in members as they achieve and receive individual, group, and system-wide prizes. It refers to those desires that, coupled with the expectation of reward contingent on performance, because the individual to exert effort above minimum levels be spontaneous, and exhibit accommodating behaviors.

There are two basic types of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation consists of behaviors that are motivated by factors external to the individual. Extrinsic rewards are given by others and may be individual, group-based, or system-wide.

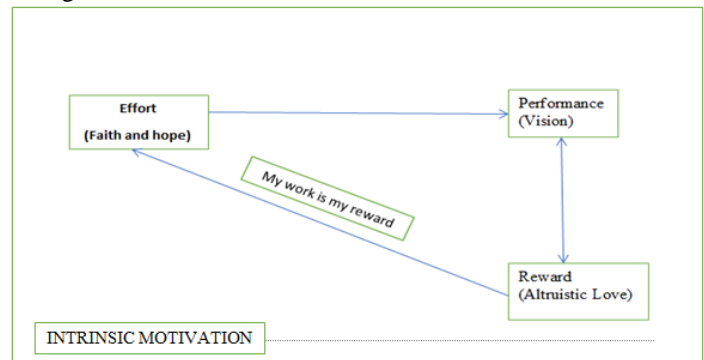
Intrinsic motivation is based on interest and enjoyment of responsibility for its own sake and is associated with active engagement in tasks that people find interesting and that, in turn, promote growth and satisfy higher-order needs. Intrinsic motivation has been presented to be associated with better learning, performance, and well-being.

Intrinsic motivation in the organization requires some degree of autonomy or self-management. Intrinsically motivated members feel competence and relatedness through working in empowered teams that are directing their activities toward a meaningful

good leader, being honest is a must. If a leader is dishonest with his words or works, he will lose the trust of his followers.

- 5) **Building community:** According to Northouse, (2019), to build community is "to provide a place where people can feel safe and connected with others, but are still allowed to express their own individuality". A peaceful and united community is convenient for individuals to grow in their spiritual life. One of the key roles that an ethical leader will play is building a community of church members.

purpose and doing something they regard as significant and meaningful. Members in empowered teams have a sense of ownership of the duty and are completely engaged in its tasks, which require their best thinking and creativity. They take pride in their work and are excited in having a sense of progress and seeing the results of their efforts.



Ethical leadership implicates intrinsically motivating and inspiring members through hope/faith in a vision of service to key stakeholders and a corporate culture based on the values of altruistic affection to produce a highly motivated, committed and productive workforce.

### V. ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUAL FORMATION

In general, five measurable elements of ethical leadership such as respecting others, serving others, justice, honesty, and building community can play a major role to bring the spiritual formation of church members. The reviews on the effect of ethical leadership on spiritual formation based on the concepts of each element of ethical leadership are described as follows:

- A. **Effect of Respecting Others on the Spiritual Formation of Church Members:** According to Sawada, et al (2021), the effect of civility, respect, and engagement in the workplace has generated and fostered human relations, interactions, and communications. Based on this study, the effect of civility, respecting others, and engagement contributed to developing

healthy relationships and communications among team members. In addition, based on the study conducted in Indonesia focuses on providing training on improving parental skills about respect and responsibility to foster parents. The study used the method of discussion, practices, and instruction. The result shows that training builds respect and responsibility toward children through foster parents Wangi, et al (2022). Therefore, respect builds both parents and children's relationships. Hence, the effect of respecting others can build a relationship and contribute to developing spiritual formation among church members.

According to Abera (2021), in the study conducted on Ethiopian ethics, respecting others practically builds relationships and fosters life. On the other hand, the study done at Lakeland in the United States discusses that spiritual formation is an individual experience that strives to grow and become Christ-likeness in their internal life (Ferreira, 2021).

In the context of the church, respecting each other, interaction and good communication that edifies church members and bring impact on spiritual life. The Bible confirms this truth: "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (NIV, Proverbs, 27:17). Besides, according to Baurain (2007), the study conducted in the United States at Lincoln shows that respecting others is a key moral dimension, especially in the religious sector. As the writer discussed, in the Bible, respect is imperative and bears witness to one's true faith. Finally, the study summarizes and recommends that Christian witness and respect for others must come from the humble perspectives of fellow brothers and sisters or travelers. In addition, Baurain (2007) suggested that Christian teachers should respect all people because it is valuable for spiritual practice.

**B. Effect of Serving Others on Spiritual Formation of Church Members:** Serving others influences followers or beneficiaries at a global level both in the church context as well as in other sectors. According to Kauppila et al. (2022), the result of the study indicates that both perspectives of serving to help and helping to serve are a high performance of servant leaders, and these practices reinforce the indirect effects on organization members. Based on the result of the study by Alexander (2022), willingness to serve others restores others' life and produces other members who are volunteering to serve others as well. This is an effect that how serving others can bring a great impact on the spiritual formation of church members.

According to the Bible, the effect of serving others results in transformed lives ( NIV, John 4: 7-30). In this regard,

servicing others includes providing both spiritual and physical needs for people it contributes church members to grow into Christ's likeness.

**C. Effect of justice on Spiritual Formation of Church Members:** Doing justice by leaders influences the lives of church members on a global level. According to Dunaetz (2020), the research done at Azusa Pacific University in California discusses that organizational justice conducted by church leaders can influence church members to be committed and it helped their spiritual well-being. The result of the study by (Cropanzano & Ambrose, 2015, as cited in Dunaetz,2020), shows that injustice damages the relationship of church members. On the contrary, doing justice builds spiritual well-being and brings spiritual formation to the lives of church members.

Doing justice influences not only American church members, it also impacts African church members. The study conducted in South Africa indicates that when an ethical leader makes the right decisions and pursues social justice, spiritual maturity and moral excellence become advanced (Kretzschmar, 2020). The process of spiritual formation includes confrontation, exploration, and internal struggle which results in spiritual maturity (Leech, 1980, as cited in Kretzschmar, 2020). Doing justice is related to moral formation. According to Bansikiza (2001, as cited in Kretzschmar, 2020), moral formation is defined as "helping people to grow in goodness by avoiding what dehumanizes oneself and others" (p.3). The results of spiritual formation can be displayed in "the person's growth in self-awareness, self-maturity (self-control), the proper use of freedom, being willing to take moral responsibility for one's action and generous self-giving" (Banksikiza, 2001, as cited in Kretzschmar, 2020). Thus, doing justice is not only biblical instruction but also a moral obligation that ethical leadership should perform. Boubaker (2021) noted, "God has placed a clear call on His Church to engage in social justice" (p.41). In this regard, doing justice builds relationships and brings spiritual formation.

**D. Effect of honesty on the Spiritual Formation of Church Members:** Being honest is one of the major characteristics of ethical leadership (Northouse, 2019). Honesty is an important personal moral character in the context of the church as well as in the secular world. According to Wilson (2018, as cited in Czajkowska-Bialkoska, 2022), honesty is a widely recognized moral virtue. However, low levels of honesty make people manipulative or cheaters (Czajkowska-Bialkoska, 2022). Besides, honesty and integrity build trust and make church members grow into Christ-likeness.

**E. Effect of Building Community on Spiritual Formation of Church Members:** Building community is one of the elements of ethical leadership that can influence church members to grow in their spiritual life. The study conducted by Kariuki (2018) indicates that building a community contributes to the spiritual well-being of church members. In addition, Lowe (2010) states, that building a community facilitates spiritual formation. Therefore, building community is building a relationship that enhances spiritual health or spiritual formation.

Besides, the study conducted in Nigeria discusses inter-religious dialogue to build the communities relations of both Christians and Muslims (Ibe, 2022). The social analysis of the study shows that inter-religious dialogue and respecting others' beliefs build the communities relationship. Negotiation with each other and forgiveness are the solutions to healing relationships and bringing spiritual formation (NIV, Mathew 18:16). As Dickie (2020) states, there is hope to promote unity and incorporation by establishing healthier communities. The Bible tells us that all born-again Christians are one in Jesus Christ (NIV, Galatians 3:28). This biblical perspective builds and forms a true church community. An ethical leader works for the communities' common goal and purpose. Addressing the social needs of church members motivates people for spiritual formation. Jesus spent many hours teaching and finally, he fed more than five thousand people to address their physical needs (NIV, Mark 6:34-44).

## VI. CONCLUSION

Spiritual formation is a lifelong process of individual believers which is highly needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Ethical leadership should play a crucial role to enhance the spiritual growth of church members. Spiritual growth and development can take place where there is a high commitment of both ethical leaders and church members. This review suggests that the effect of ethical leadership on spiritual formation is open for further research.

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