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Pentecostal Christian Leadership in Technical Higher Education: A Reflective Case Study of the Cameroon Institute of Renewable Energy (CIRE), Limbe, Cameroon

Le Leadership Chrétien Pentecôtiste Dans L'enseignement Supérieur Technique : Une Étude De Cas Réflexive Sur l'Institut Camerounais Des Énergies Renouvelables (CIRE) De Limbe, Au Cameroun

Choh Clovis Zamundi[1]

Abstract

This article examines how Pentecostal Christian leadership can inform academic administration in a technically oriented, professionally regulated higher-education institution while maintaining professional competence, ethical accountability, and academic freedom. Using a qualitative reflective theological case-study design built on Osmer's (2008) four tasks of practical theology, it interprets the administrative experience of the founder-president of the Cameroon Institute of Renewable Energy (CIRE), Limbe, Cameroon, in dialogue with Exodus 18, Acts 6 and 15, Philippians 2, 1 Peter 5 and scholarship on leadership, ethical decision-making and higher-education governance. It proposes a five-filter decision framework integrating Scripture, professional expertise, institutional policy, evidence and consultation, presented as an analytical and normative proposal, not a validated model. The case identifies founder-centered authority as a governance risk and stresses delegation, documented decisions and independent oversight, although the evidence does not establish that these safeguards are consistently implemented at CIRE. Given the single-case design, the author's dual role and limited documentary evidence, the findings are analytically transferable rather than empirically generalizable.

Keywords: Pentecostal, Christian Leadership, Technical Higher Education, CIRE, Cameroon

Résumé

Cet article examine comment le leadership chrétien pentecôtiste peut inspirer la gestion universitaire dans un établissement d'enseignement supérieur à vocation technique et soumis à une réglementation professionnelle, tout en préservant la compétence professionnelle, la responsabilité éthique et la liberté académique. S'appuyant sur une étude de cas théologique qualitative et réflexive fondée sur les quatre tâches de la théologie pratique d'Osmer (2008), il interprète l'expérience de gestion du fondateur-président de l'Institut camerounais des énergies renouvelables (CIRE), à Limbe, au Cameroun, en dialogue avec Exode 18, Actes 6 et 15, Philippiens 2, 1 Pierre 5 et la recherche sur le leadership, la décision éthique et la gouvernance universitaire. Il propose un cadre décisionnel à cinq filtres intégrant les Écritures, l'expertise professionnelle, la politique institutionnelle, les données factuelles et la consultation, présenté comme une proposition analytique et normative et non comme un modèle validé. L'étude identifie l'autorité centrée sur le fondateur comme un risque de

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gouvernance et souligne la délégation, la documentation des décisions et le contrôle indépendant, sans que les données établissent leur mise en œuvre systématique au CIRE. Vu le recours à une seule institution, le double rôle de l'auteur et la faiblesse des pièces justificatives, les résultats sont transférables sur le plan analytique plutôt que généralisables sur le plan empirique.

Mots-clés: Leadership Chrétien, Pentecôtiste, L'enseignement Supérieur Technique, Camerounais Énergies Renouvelables, (CIRE)Limbe, Cameroun

Introduction

Academic administration is usually described in the language of governance, strategic planning, quality assurance, curriculum management and regulatory compliance (Birnbaum, 1988). These functions do not exhaust the moral and vocational questions facing leaders in Christian educational settings, who must ask what institutional culture is being cultivated, what conception of human flourishing underlies educational decisions, and how authority is exercised for the good of students, staff and community. Christian leadership therefore concerns the ethical and theological orientation of institutional action, not merely religious language added to management.

This article takes the *Cameroon Institute of Renewable Energy* (CIRE) in Limbe, a technically oriented private institution, as its case. CIRE operates within a pluralist, state-regulated environment while its leadership brings Pentecostal convictions to institutional reflection. Cameroon's regulatory environment, including the orientation law of 16 April 2001 (Republic of Cameroon, 2001) and Law No. 2023/007 of 25 July 2023 (Republic of Cameroon, 2023; University World News, 2023), requires private institutions to balance their founding convictions with state supervision and professional and academic standards, amid concerns about oversight and quality in the private sector (Tanyu et al., 2026). Limbe also lies in the Anglophone South West Region, shaped since 2016 by the Anglophone crisis (International Crisis Group, 2017). CIRE is a useful setting because renewable-energy education combines engineering, environmental responsibility, entrepreneurship, professional ethics and national development.

The problem addressed is the conceptual separation that can arise between Pentecostal spirituality and professional academic administration. Weber's (1978) account of charismatic authority, Schein's (1983) analysis of institutional culture, and Block and Rosenberg's (2002) discussion of "founder's syndrome," alongside African Pentecostal scholarship (Anderson, 2014; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2005), highlight the need for a framework in which spiritual discernment informs leadership without substituting for institutional governance. Although Christian leadership scholarship addresses service, character, mission and ethics (Banks et al., 2016; Greenleaf, 1977), Pentecostal scholarship explores the Holy Spirit in formation and theological education (Anderson, 2014; Kärkkäinen, 2002; Kgatle, 2018, 2022), African scholarship stresses contextualized leadership (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2005; White, 2015), Cameroonian higher-education scholarship examines reform, access, funding and quality (Njeuma et al., 1999; Tanyu et al., 2026), and research documents the growth of Christian universities in Africa (Carpenter, 2017), these conversations are rarely brought into sustained dialogue with the day-to-day administration of a technically oriented private institution in

Cameroon. This article addresses that gap through a reflective case of CIRE, with the claim limited to the literature reviewed.

The main research question is: how can Pentecostal Christian leadership inform academic administration in a technically oriented higher-education institution in Cameroon while remaining accountable to professional standards, regulation, and evidence? The study examines the biblical-theological principles grounding accountable Pentecostal leadership, their expression in governance, curriculum formation, student formation and community engagement at CIRE, and the safeguards needed to prevent personal conviction from becoming unchecked authority while respecting pluralism and academic freedom. Its purpose is to develop a critically responsible account of Christian academic leadership in Cameroon by examining how spiritual discernment, servant authority, ethical accountability and missional purpose can be integrated with professional administration. The study focuses on the administrative experience associated with CIRE, is explicitly framed in evangelical Pentecostal theology, and offers a contextual, interpretive contribution.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

This literature review examines key perspectives on Christian leadership, Pentecostal spirituality, ethical accountability, and missional leadership to establish a conceptual framework for evaluating leadership practices in Christian higher-education institutions.

Christian Leadership as Stewardship and Service

Christian leadership is commonly understood in terms of stewardship, service, character and responsibility rather than domination. Banks et al. (2016) link integrity, service and responsible governance, while Greenleaf's (1977) *Servant Leadership* holds that leadership begins with service and is evaluated by the growth of those served. Christian leadership derives servanthood from the example of Christ and accountability to God, whereas Greenleaf presents it primarily as an ethical and organizational principle. Northouse (2021) situates servant leadership alongside transformational and authentic leadership, showing the need to engage general leadership theories.

In higher education, this understanding transform authority from a privilege into a responsibility. Birnbaum (1988) observes that academic institutions operate through collaborative governance and professional authority, which limits independent administrative power. Stewardship complements shared governance by presenting leaders as custodians of resources, relationships and educational purposes, accountable because the institution's mission extends beyond individual officeholders' preferences.

The Holy Spirit, Pentecostal Leadership and Spiritual Discernment

Pentecostal leadership emphasizes the Holy Spirit's activity in Christian life, leadership and communal discernment. Kärkkäinen (2002) examines the doctrine of the Spirit across ecumenical and contextual perspectives, Anderson (2014) the global diversity of Pentecostalism, Yong (2005) its public and interfaith engagement, and Asamoah-Gyadu (2005) Spirit-empowered leadership in African charismatic Christianity. In Paul's letters the Spirit distributes gifts that contribute to the administration of the community (Rom. 12:6–8; 1 Cor. 12:28) and forms Christlike character (Fee, 1994), so spiritual empowerment must be understood in relation to character, service and the common good.

Emphasis on discernment does not imply that every administrative decision is direct divine revelation. Discernment involves prayer, scriptural reflection, communal consultation and

practical judgment. Pentecostal hermeneutics stresses communal engagement with Scripture and attentiveness to the Spirit (Archer, 2009; Johns & Johns, 1992), and the New Testament requires spiritual claims to be tested (1 Thess. 5:19–21; 1 Cor. 14:29; 1 John 4:1; Acts 15:28). Discernment should therefore operate through processes that permit communal evaluation, within the diversity of African Pentecostalism. Kgatle (2018, 2022) calls for attention to African Pentecostal perspectives in theological education while resisting the assumption that one approach should dominate; his studies concern South African theological education, not Cameroonian technical leadership, but show that Pentecostal leadership must be critically contextualised.

Ethical and Accountable Leadership

Ethical leadership comprises personal integrity, transparent decision-making, institutional oversight, responsible disagreement and protection against arbitrary power. Shields (2018), writing on transformative educational leadership, underscores equity, social justice, inclusion and the ethical exercise of authority. Her approach meets Christian leadership in its concern for vulnerable people and criticism of unexamined power; although she draws on critical theory and Christian leadership on Scripture, the difference offers a basis for examining hierarchical and founder-centered structures in Christian institutions. Weber's (1978) charismatic authority highlights the risks of leadership grounded in perceived extraordinary gifts: it may resist ordinary scrutiny and become unstable when the leader is absent. Studies of founder-led organizations identify related concerns (Block & Rosenberg, 2002; Schein, 1983), explaining why spiritual authority alone cannot guarantee responsible administration. Institutional and theological accountability should strengthen each other: leaders must answer to regulations, policies, governing structures, professional standards, staff and students, while remaining subject to the example of Christ and the biblical rejection of domineering leadership (Mark 10:42–45; 1 Pet. 5:3).

Missional Leadership in African Higher-Education Contexts

While servant leadership explains how authority should be exercised and ethical leadership constrains it, missional leadership clarifies the purposes authority should serve. Grounded in the *missio Dei*, the understanding that mission originates in God's purposes and sending, it situates Christian institutions within God's wider engagement with the world (Bosch, 1991; Wright, 2006). White (2015) connects leadership formation in Ghanaian Pentecostal churches with mentoring, theological education and the *missio Dei*. Carpenter (2017) notes the contribution of church-founded universities to youth education and nation-building, alongside questions about religious identity and the admission of students from other faiths. Together with Cameroonian concerns about quality and oversight in the private sector (Njeuma et al., 1999; Tanyu et al., 2026), these studies suggest that Christian institutions must remain faithful to their identity while responding responsibly to public expectations. In technical higher education, missional leadership does not mean replacing professional training with church ministry but integrating technical competence with ethical responsibility and social contribution. Christian leadership thus combines stewardship governing authority, Pentecostal spirituality informing discernment, ethical accountability constraining power, and missional purpose directing activity towards the common good; their differing bases require critical integration.

Organizational Discernment, Ethical Decision-Making and the Proposed Five-Filter Framework

The five-filter framework requires engagement not only with biblical theology but also with scholarship on organizational discernment and ethical decision-making. Organizational decisions involve competing values, incomplete information and multiple stakeholders; Kouchaki and Smith (2025), reviewing moral decision-making in organizations, show the importance of both individual judgement and institutional conditions.

Research on organizational discernment is also relevant: "Discernment in Management and Organizations" (2020) shows that discernment can be studied as an organizational activity of processes, practices and meetings and not only an individual spiritual experience, and Berry (2007) discusses stakeholder analysis as a way of integrating ethics into decision-making. An administrator's conviction may be sincere yet insufficiently informed by procedures, professional advice or the perspectives of those affected.

This article brings these insights into dialogue with the New Testament's emphasis on testing, weighing and communal discernment (1 Thess. 5:19–21; 1 Cor. 14:29; Acts 15:1–29). The biblical texts warrant discernment and accountability; organizational literature explains how these commitments may be translated into practice. The texts do not explicitly prescribe the five filters, and the organizational literature does not establish their theological validity: the framework emerges from bringing the two into a critically argued relationship.

The contribution claimed is not the invention of biblical testing, ethical decision-making or stakeholder consultation, but their integration into a single framework for reflecting on Pentecostal leadership in technical higher education. Its novelty is conceptual; it has not been empirically validated or shown to produce superior outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

The literature supports four interconnected dimensions: spiritual discernment, servant authority, ethical accountability and missional purpose, operating within professional competence and institutional responsibility. Pentecostal Christian leadership informs academic administration when spiritual discernment is integrated with professional expertise, authority is exercised through service and participation, ethical commitments are embedded in accountable processes, and mission is connected to the public purposes of education. In the framework (Figure 1), the four dimensions are the pillars, professional competence and institutional responsibility are the base, and the fivefold test (section 3.6) is the gate through which proposed decisions pass.

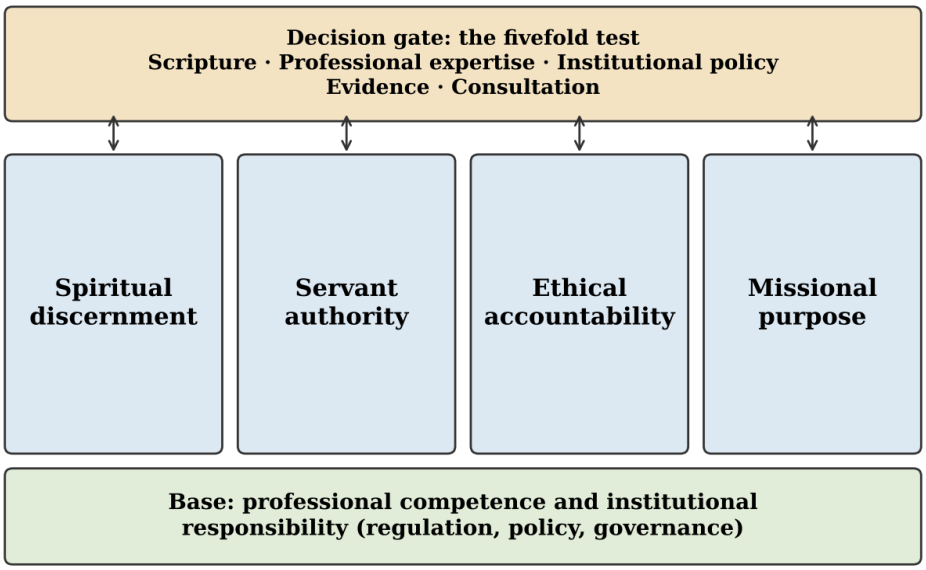


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework: four dimensions resting on professional competence, with the fivefold test as the decision gate.

The framework is deliberately dialogical: it places theology neither above nor below professional knowledge but proposes mutual testing in which a decision is examined biblically, ethically, academically, institutionally and contextually. "Framework" refers to this whole structure and "fivefold test" to the decision gate within it.

Biblical-Theological Framework

This section establishes the biblical-theological framework for evaluating leadership in Christian higher education by examining scriptural principles of delegated responsibility, Spirit-qualified service, Christlike authority, and non-dominating oversight.

Hermeneutical Approach

The passages were selected because together they address four matters recurring in academic administration: delegation of responsibility, qualification for administrative service, the manner in which authority is exercised, and communal discernment of the Spirit's guidance. Each is read through grammatical–historical exegesis with the canonical and communal sensibility of Pentecostal hermeneutics (Archer, 2009; Johns & Johns, 1992), with reference to a scholarly commentary for each principal passage. The step from Israel in the wilderness, the Jerusalem church, Philippi or the Petrine communities to a modern private institution is one of analogy, not direct application: the texts do not legislate for universities but disclose theological patterns about authority, service and discernment that can be tested for fit.

Delegated Leadership: Exodus 18:13–27

Exodus 18 presents leadership in which responsibility is distributed rather than concentrated. When Moses tries to handle every judicial matter alone, Jethro advises him to appoint capable leaders to share the burden (Durham, 1987). The counsel comes from Jethro, a Midianite priest and outsider (Exod. 18:1), showing the value of consultation beyond one's community, and the leaders must be capable, God-fearing, trustworthy and opposed to dishonest gain (Exod. 18:21), integrating professional competence, spiritual character and financial integrity. Applied by analogy to Christian higher education, this challenges the concentration of authority in a

single administrator or founder: officers should exercise clearly defined responsibilities within transparent structures of accountability. This integration of competence and character is developed further in Acts 6:1–7.

Spirit-Qualified Service: Acts 6:1–7

Acts 6:1–7 shows how spiritual discernment, practical wisdom and community participation can address an administrative problem. Greek-speaking widows were overlooked in the daily distribution of food (Acts 6:1); rather than deciding by unilateral decree, the apostles invite the community to select seven individuals full of the Spirit and wisdom (Acts 6:3), and the proposal receives the group's approval (Acts 6:5). Three principles emerge: spiritual maturity and practical competence are complementary qualifications; participatory decision-making can address grievances and promote fairness across social and cultural differences; and effective administration supports the community's wider mission (Acts 6:7). For Christian higher education, this reject both the assumption that spiritual commitment makes professional expertise unnecessary and the assumption that technical competence can replace ethical and spiritual character. How authority should be exercised is the subject of Philippians 2:5–11.

Servant Authority: Philippians 2:5–11

Whereas Exodus 18 emphasises the distribution of responsibility and Acts 6 the integration of spiritual character with competence, Philippians 2:5–11 addresses the manner in which authority and status are exercised. The passage is part of Paul's appeal for humility and mutual regard (Phil. 2:1–4), not a direct instruction on institutional administration (Fee, 1995), so its application is analogical. Jesus refuses to exploit His status and takes the form of a servant (Phil. 2:6–7). This pattern does not abolish authority but reorients it towards the good of others: in academic administration, servant authority means using office to promote learning, staff development, student welfare, institutional integrity and public service. This Christological reading complements the article's pneumatological focus: Paul's appeal begins with the community's participation in the Spirit (Phil. 2:1), and his theology associates the Spirit with the formation of Christlike character (Fee, 1994). Spirit-led leadership can therefore be understood as leadership shaped by the character of Christ. This is particularly relevant to founder-led institutions, where authority may become personalized: founders and senior administrators should build structures that let the institution function responsibly beyond their individual preferences.

Non-Dominating Oversight: 1 Peter 5:1–4

The emphasis on Christlike service finds a practical equivalent in 1 Peter 5:1–4, where elders are to lead willingly, eagerly and without pursuing dishonest gain (1 Pet. 5:2), avoiding “lording it over” those entrusted to them and becoming examples to the flock (1 Pet. 5:3). The passage does not directly regulate academic administration, but its principles of exemplary conduct, accountability and service can be applied by analogy (Jobes, 2005). This instruction reinforces the integrity of Exodus 18:21 and the servant authority of Philippians 2:5–11: legitimate authority should not depend on coercion, personal enrichment or unchecked control. In Christian higher education, non-dominating oversight is reflected in transparent procedures, fair treatment, documented decisions, room for responsible disagreement and safeguards against unilateral power; spiritual authority does not exempt administrators from accountability but strengthens their responsibility to exercise power ethically. Communal discernment in the New Testament provides the basis for the fivefold test developed next.

Communal Discernment and the Derivation of the Fivefold Test

Applying these principles requires a process for evaluating specific decisions. In Acts 13:1–3 the Antioch leaders worship and fast as they discern the Spirit's direction concerning Barnabas and Saul (Peterson, 2009). Paul instructs the Thessalonians to test what is presented and retain what is good (1 Thess. 5:19–21), 1 Corinthians 14:29 calls for prophecy to be weighed, and John commands believers to test the spirits (1 John 4:1).

The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) is a particularly significant model. Its decision emerges through discussion (Acts 15:7), testimony about God's work among the Gentiles (Acts 15:7–12) and scriptural interpretation (Acts 15:13–18). The declaration, "it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us" (Acts 15:28), shows that spiritual discernment and collective deliberation need not be opposed. This is consistent with Proverbs 11:14, which commends multiple advisers (Waltke, 2004), and with Jesus' illustration of estimating the cost before building (Luke 14:28). These passages establish that claims require testing, spiritual contributions are subject to communal evaluation, and decisions benefit from deliberation, but they present no single five-stage administrative procedure. The framework developed here is therefore a constructive theological synthesis, not a reproduction of a biblical formula.

First, Scripture is a theological and ethical filter: 1 Thessalonians 5:19–21 and 1 John 4:1 call for testing, and Acts 15:13–18 illustrates scriptural interpretation within communal deliberation, although their contexts differ from contemporary institutions. Second, professional expertise is included because Exodus 18:21 requires capable leaders and Acts 6:3 combines spiritual qualification with wisdom; the relevance is analogical, and the texts do not establish modern accreditation standards. Third, institutional policy is included as a governance requirement: Exodus 18:22–26 depicts differentiated responsibilities and 1 Corinthians 14:40 commends orderly practice, but formal policies derive their authority from the institution's lawful governance arrangements and regulations.

Fourth, evidence is included because Acts 15:7–12 records testimony and Luke 14:28 stresses estimating cost; these suggest attentiveness to experience and consequences but are not an empirical protocol, so evidence must be obtained through professional, financial and operational procedures. Fifth, consultation is included because Acts 15 portrays collective deliberation and Proverbs 11:14 commends multiple advisers; it must include those whose expertise or interests are relevant and does not remove the responsibility of an authorized body to reach and document a decision. Together these yield five proposed filters: Scripture, professional expertise, institutional policy, evidence and consultation. The sequence is an analytical arrangement developed by the author, not an order prescribed by the texts. The next section explains how this pre-existing framework was used in the case analysis and distinguished from themes identified inductively.

Methodology and Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative reflective theological case-study design to examine leadership and administrative practices at CIRE, following Yin (2018) and Stake (1995). CIRE serves as a bounded, instrumental case, with leadership and administrative practice as the unit of analysis. The theological approach follows Osmer's (2008) four tasks of practical theology: descriptive–empirical, interpretive, normative and pragmatic, while insider-research methodology addresses the researcher's positionality as the institution's founder-president (Unluer, 2012). Reflective inquiry interprets lived Christian practice rather than statistically

measuring variables, treating practitioner experience as situated material requiring critical scrutiny and distinguishing observations from normative arguments. The study combines deductive reasoning, using a pre-established biblical-theological framework and five filters, with inductive identification of recurring concerns. It is interpretive, not grounded theory, and makes no causal claims about Pentecostal leadership and institutional outcomes.

Literature Search and Selection

The literature review covered Christian and servant leadership, organizational governance, Pentecostal pneumatology, spiritual discernment, ethical decision-making, stakeholder consultation, and African and Cameroonian higher-education governance and mission. Relevant sources were identified using appropriate search terms, including "Pentecostal leadership," "spiritual discernment," "Christian higher education," "ethical decision-making," "founder-led organizations" and "higher education in Cameroon." Reference lists were also examined for additional sources. Selection prioritized scholarly credibility, contextual relevance and applicability, particularly peer-reviewed articles, monographs, legislation and official documents. The review was interpretive rather than systematic, with sources compared thematically to identify convergences, differences and unresolved questions. It involved no registered protocol, meta-analysis or quantitative quality appraisal; therefore, the article's claims are limited to the literature reviewed.

The CIRE case and Sources of Evidence

The Cameroon Institute of Renewable Energy (CIRE), located in Bobende Quarter 3, Limbe, is treated as a bounded, instrumental case. It was selected because it combines a technical educational mission, a founder-led leadership structure and the author's own administrative experience. This purposive selection allows critical reflection but does not make CIRE representative of private higher-education institutions in Cameroon. The analysis draws on three categories of material: (1) biblical texts and scholarly commentaries; (2) published literature on leadership, discernment, governance and higher education; and (3) institutional material, including public CIRE webpages and internal documents identified in the manuscript. The third category is distinguished by provenance: official records establish regulatory information; institutional publications establish what CIRE publicly reports; internal documents are used only where the author can substantiate them; and personal recollections are labelled as the author's reflective account. A statement on a webpage is not independent confirmation that a practice has occurred or achieved its intended outcome.

Table 1. Case profile of CIRE.

Feature	Profile
Location	Limbe 2 Subdivision, Bobende Quarter 3, South West Region, Cameroon.
Founding	CIRE's establishment date is reported by the institution as 2023. The MINESUP listing records special authorization for creation and opening dated 19 August 2024. (See appendix) The writer's founding motive was his service in localities without electricity.

Feature	Profile
Legal and accreditation status	see appendix
Programmes and levels	The MINESUP listing identifies HND-level training in Thermal and Energy Engineering, specializing in Sustainability and Renewable Energy. (See appendix)
Students and staff	The CIRE website reports 500+ students and 30 staff (CIRE, n.d.-c).
Governance organs	The CIRE website publishes a leadership team: Chancellor/President, Vice Chancellor, Registrar, Dean of Studies and four directors (CIRE, n.d.-e). Its "Board of Trustees" lists four people, all CIRE officers (CIRE, n.d.-a). An Academic Board is named only in a draft standard (CIRE, n.d.-i).
Church and denominational links	Hope Restoration Chapel is affiliated with Global Frontiers Church Cameroon.
Author's role and dates of service	Dr. Choh Clovis Zamundi, 2024 to date; Chancellor/President, described on the CIRE website as co-founder (CIRE, n.d.-e)
Period covered by what is discussed in this paper	2025-2026

Researcher positionality and bias controls

The writer is the founder and president of CIRE. This positionality gives direct access to the administrative experience under examination but creates a significant interpretive risk: he has an interest in the institution's mission, and a founder judging the governance of his own institution has an evident conflict of interest. The study responds with specified controls: (i) triangulation of reflective claims with institutional documents wherever they exist, with undocumented claims labelled as the author's account; (ii) review by independent critical readers outside CIRE's management; (iii) peer debriefing; (iv) an audit trail of how themes were derived; and (v) deliberate attention to disconfirming interpretations, particularly the weaknesses of founder-led governance (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Unluer, 2012). The Declarations state which controls were applied and the institutional permission obtained.

Because the author writes from an evangelical Pentecostal perspective, the article does not claim theological neutrality. It states its perspective openly and seeks credibility through transparent reasoning, engagement with alternative concerns and clear separation of theological interpretation from empirical assertion.

Sources and the status of evidence

The study draws on biblical passages, with commentaries; scholarship on Christian, educational and missional leadership, Pentecostalism, and higher education in Cameroon and Africa; and material arising from CIRE's administration: the author's reflective notes and institutional documents (CIRE website pages, the 2026/2027 Orientation Guide, the BSc syllabus, a draft Research and Innovation Standard, the 2025 postgraduate plan and a

registration form; see References). No minutes or accreditation correspondence were among them. Every claim about CIRE in section 5 is therefore labelled *documented* (a named document is cited) or *reported* (the author's account, not independently verified).

Analytical Procedure

The analysis combined theory-informed interpretation with thematic coding. The five-filter framework was developed from the biblical-theological analysis and leadership literature before the case material was interpreted, so it served as a sensitizing framework rather than a set of findings presumed present in the case. Seven initial codes (stewardship, discernment, authority, accountability, curriculum, student formation and community engagement) organized recurring issues.

The analysis proceeded in five stages. First, the author familiarized himself with the documents and reflective material, recording the source and evidential status of each claim. Second, recurring concerns were coded using the seven codes. Third, related codes were grouped into four conceptual dimensions: stewardship and authority informed servant authority; discernment informed spiritual discernment; accountability informed ethical accountability; and curriculum, student formation and community engagement informed missional purpose. Fourth, the material was examined in dialogue with the biblical-theological framework, the five filters and the organizational literature. Fifth, claims were reviewed for contradictions, missing evidence and alternative interpretations, particularly where the author's position as founder-president could encourage favorable readings. The framework's base (professional competence and institutional responsibility) was a cross-cutting condition, and the filters were criteria for examining decisions, not discovered themes or proof that CIRE already follows the proposed procedure. The analysis was conducted by the author; no independent coding or external validation is claimed, and, as no participant interviews were conducted, saturation is not claimed. Trustworthiness rests on transparent source material, a consistent procedure, consideration of alternative interpretations and explicit recognition of evidential limitations.

Ethical Considerations and Limitations

The study discloses no confidential personal information about staff or students and presents no individual institutional disputes as evidence. No human participants were interviewed; institutional permission and disclosure of the author's dual role to the governing body are stated in the Declarations. Because the writer is a senior leader, care is needed to avoid presenting subordinate agreement as independent validation. The principal limitations are the single-case design, researcher positionality, dependence on reflective interpretation, the limited documentary base and the absence of a comparative sample. These restrict generalization but do not eliminate the value of contextual theological reflection, provided its claims are read as analytically transferable propositions. The study should be judged by credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), not statistical representativeness.

Christian Leadership Praxis at CIRE

This section describes the praxis at CIRE in four areas. Each claim is labelled by evidence status, and Table 2 sets out what is claimed and how it is supported. Where the status is “reported”, the claim is the author's account, offered as material for interpretation, not as a demonstrated outcome.

Table 2. Evidence supporting claims about leadership praxis at CIRE

Area	Evidence currently identified	Permissible claim
Faith-informed governance	Author's reflective account; no minutes or governance records identified.	The founder reports that prayer and Christian convictions inform his administrative reflection; this is not a documented institutional procedure.
Curriculum formation	CIRE syllabus and Orientation Guide cited in the manuscript.	The cited documents include ethics and sustainability content.
Student formation	Orientation Guide and postgraduate plan.	The documents describe support structures and proposed activities; effectiveness requires outcome evidence.
Community engagement	CIRE website descriptions of projects and activities.	The website reports projects and activities; implementation, reach and outcomes are unverified.
Governance and accountability	Published leadership page; draft research standard; no minutes or independent board records.	A leadership structure is published, but independent oversight and implementation of accountability procedures are not established.

Faith-Informed Governance

At CIRE, leadership meetings and strategic reflection are reported to be informed by Scripture, prayer, collaborative consultation and ethical accountability. These practices are not proof that a decision was divinely mandated; they are interpreted as an environment in which Christian conviction frames institutional reasoning. CIRE's documented values are innovation, sustainability, inclusivity, integrity and collaboration; none refers to a Christian foundation (CIRE, 2026, sec. 3), so the Christian framing here is the writer's account. The practical question is how prayer relates to procedure. The reflective model places prayer and spiritual attentiveness alongside, not in place of, administrative processes: prayer does not remove the need for budgets, policies, expertise, documentation, consultation or regulatory compliance.

The Founder-President and Counterweights to Authority

The author's dual position as founder-president raises a central governance question: whether decisions are subject to review by bodies sufficiently independent of the president. The CIRE website publishes a leadership structure, but a list of officers does not establish the allocation of decision-making powers, the independence of oversight or procedures for reviewing presidential decisions. The material examined included no approved governance instrument, board minutes or delegation document establishing the relationship between the president, the Board of Trustees and the Academic Council. The article therefore does not conclude that independent oversight is absent, only that the evidence is insufficient to establish its nature and effectiveness. The author recommends that CIRE document its governance arrangements, delegated powers, conflict-of-interest procedures and mechanisms for independent review; these are normative proposals, not a description of existing practice.

Curriculum Formation

The curriculum documents cited indicate an interest in connecting renewable-energy training with professional ethics, environmental sustainability and practical experience. Curriculum content and programme authorization are, however, separate matters. The MINESUP listing identifies HND-level training in Thermal and Energy Engineering, specializing in Sustainability and Renewable Energy; the author reports additional degree pathways and affiliations, but the record does not establish the approval status of every pathway, which must be verified against authorization instruments and affiliation agreements. The analysis therefore evaluates the ethical and missional orientation reflected in the documents, not regulatory approval or effectiveness.

Student Formation: Intended Orientation and Evaluation Indicators

CIRE's institutional intention is to move beyond technical competence toward vocational and ethical formation, including mentorship, collaborative learning and community engagement. The Orientation Guide documents orientation, academic advising, career support, clubs, counselling and welfare referrals, a code of conduct and a complaints route (CIRE, 2026, secs. 17–19); the postgraduate plan proposes mentorship and leadership training (Darko, 2025). No document reviewed establishes a quantified effect or substantiates chapel, formal leadership programmes or service-learning, so this section describes intended orientation. The logic is particularly relevant to renewable energy: students are prepared not only to install technologies but to consider how energy systems affect households, communities and development priorities. Theologically, this may be interpreted as vocation, professional knowledge as service. The Reformation doctrine of vocation, which regards ordinary work as a calling (Wingren, 1957), receives a pneumatological development in Volf's (1991) theology of work as cooperation with the Spirit's activity. Future research should evaluate student formation through observable practices such as documented mentoring, internships, community projects and graduate follow-up.

Community Engagement

Community engagement is assessed at three levels: institutional intention, reported activity and demonstrated outcome. A description of a proposed solar-electrification or cookstove project shows that the institution publicly presents the initiative; a dated activity report would be stronger evidence of implementation; and evidence of beneficiaries, completed installations, costs and sustained access would be needed to assess outcomes. The available material does not treat these levels as equivalent, so claims about measurable community impact remain provisional.

Discussion

The discussion critically examines the study’s findings in relation to biblical principles of leadership, professional competence, institutional accountability, Christian mission, and academic freedom, highlighting their implications for faith-informed governance in Christian higher education.

Spiritual Discernment, Professional Competence and the Fivefold Test

The CIRE reflection suggests that the central issue is not whether prayer and professional administration can coexist but how they are related. Spiritual discernment becomes academically defensible when it functions as a source of reflection, moral attentiveness and

vocational orientation while professional procedures remain intact, avoiding both spiritual and managerial reductionism. Established leadership theory (Northouse, 2021) remains important, and Christian leadership should engage it and not treat theological vocabulary as a substitute. One of the most important implications is that spiritual discernment should be subject to testing. A leader may sincerely believe that a particular course, partnership, appointment or expansion is consistent with God's purposes, but sincerity does not establish correctness. The fivefold test puts this into practice; Table 3 gives its operational form.

Table 3. The Proposed Five-Filter Framework for Administrative Decision-Making

Filter	Guiding question	Evidence or record required	Responsible process	Biblical and conceptual basis
1. Scripture	Is the proposal consistent with a careful, contextual theological and ethical reading of relevant Scripture?	A written rationale identifying texts, contexts and ethical principles applied.	The authorized body considers the rationale; a designated adviser may assist.	1 Thess. 5:19–21; 1 John 4:1; Acts 15:13–18
2. Professional expertise	Does the proposal meet academic, technical, safety and professional requirements?	Qualified professional advice, academic and technical review, applicable standards.	Relevant academic or technical personnel advise within their competence.	Exod. 18:21; Acts 6:3; professional and organizational competence literature
3. Institutional policy	Is the proposal consistent with approved policy, delegated authority and regulation?	Policy provisions, approval requirements, delegation instruments, regulatory records.	The officer or governing body authorized to approve the decision.	Exod. 18:22–26; 1 Cor. 14:40; governance literature
4. Evidence	What do the facts indicate about feasibility, costs, risks and likely consequences?	Data, financial estimates, feasibility and risk analyses, evaluation criteria.	Competent personnel assess the evidence; the decision-maker records how it was weighed.	Acts 15:7–12; Luke 14:28; ethical decision-making literature
5. Consultation	Have relevant stakeholders had an appropriate opportunity to contribute?	Consultation records, substantive concerns, responses, unresolved dissent.	The authorized body arranges and documents consultation appropriate to the decision.	Acts 15:1–29; 1 Cor. 14:29; Prov. 11:14; stakeholder-analysis literature

The table specifies the proposed framework, not an existing CIRE procedure. The filters do not guarantee a correct outcome; they make the grounds of a decision transparent and open to

review. Legal and regulatory requirements must be satisfied. Where a proposal raises a serious theological, ethical or evidential concern, the authorized body should record it, decide whether further review is needed and explain its decision. The president's personal conviction does not substitute for the institution's approved governance arrangements.

The framework limits claims of spiritual certainty and is applied in a single sequence: frame the question in prayer; test the proposal through the five filters; decide through the authorised governance process; document the rationale; review the outcome. The body holding delegated authority applies it; the president participates in, but is not the sole judge of, whether the filters are satisfied, and where the governing board concludes that they are not, it may decline or return the proposal and record its reasons. Several bodies the test needs exist as published offices: The Registrar (regulatory compliance), the Dean of Studies (curriculum) and the Director of Research and Innovation and Student Affairs (conflict resolution) (CIRE, n.d.-e, 2026, sec. 5); no body for the Scripture filter is documented. The filters can conflict, and the framework offers four rules. First, compliance with law and regulation is a floor that spiritual conviction cannot override within the decision process. Second, an ethical objection raised by the Scripture filter against a policy or regulation is referred to the governing board and recorded, not settled by the president alone. Third, where evidence contradicts a strongly felt leading, the default is delay, a pilot or further inquiry (Prov. 11:14; Luke 14:28). Fourth, unresolved dissent is recorded and reviewed, not suppressed. The following hypothetical illustrates the framework; it is not evidence that CIRE operates this procedure.

This illustrative example is constructed for this article; not a record of a CIRE decision. Suppose the president becomes convinced that the institution should launch a short certificate in solar-system installation within a year. (1) Scripture: the proposal is consistent with stewardship and service. (2) Expertise: engineering staff advise that equipment and instructors are not yet in place. (3) Policy: the programme needs academic-council approval. (4) Evidence: a labour-market and cost study suggests demand, but not at the proposed scale. (5) Consultation: staff, students and employers are consulted, and some doubt the timetable. Conviction does not override evidence and expertise, so the board approves a smaller pilot and records the staff's dissent for review.

Servant Authority, Founder Risk and Institutional Accountability

Servant leadership is not informality or the absence of authority: institutions require decisions, role differentiation, standards and enforcement. The distinctive Christian contribution is the purpose and manner of authority, exercised for institutional flourishing and not personal status. Founder leadership brings both mission continuity and a risk of concentrated authority (Block & Rosenberg, 2002; Schein, 1983). The biblical framework supports a transition from founder-centred toward mission-centred governance, bounded by institutional structures; in Weber's (1978) terms, a deliberate routinisation of charisma. Table 4 lists the safeguards required. The relationship between institutional and academic governance requires documentary clarification. The Board of Trustees may exercise institutional oversight and an Academic Council may be responsible for academic standards, but authority cannot be inferred from the titles of these bodies.

Table 4. Safeguards against unchecked founder authority.

Safeguard	Status Supported by the Manuscript	Revision Required
Independent governing Oversight	Not established by the documents identified.	Verify the governance instrument, membership, independence and review powers.
Written delegation of authority	Not established by the documents identified.	Cite the approved delegation instrument, if any; otherwise recommend its adoption.
Documented decisions and dissent	Not established by the documents identified.	Check minutes and decision records before claiming implementation.
Conflict-of-interest and financial-integrity policy	A draft research standard is mentioned; an approved institution-wide policy is not established.	Identify its approval status, scope, responsible officer and application to the president.
External review and succession	Proposals are mentioned; implementation is not established.	Distinguish planned arrangements from approved, operational safeguards.

These classifications refer to the documentary material examined for the article. “Not established” means that the available evidence does not permit a conclusion; it does not prove that the arrangement is absent.

Christian Mission and Technical Education

Technical education is sometimes treated as unrelated to Christian mission because its objects are technologies, systems and employment. The CIRE case suggests otherwise: renewable-energy decisions affect sustainability, economic opportunity, energy access, safety and community well-being, so mission can be expressed through the ethical formation of technical professionals without costing the curriculum its disciplinary integrity, consistent with African Pentecostal calls for contextual, integrated education (Kgatle, 2018; White, 2015).

Christian Identity, Pluralism and Academic Freedom

A Christian administrator also leads people who may not share his beliefs. Carpenter (2017) notes that African Christian universities typically admit students of other faiths and that officials question whether hiring, curricula and student rules should differ from other institutions. Faith-informed leadership therefore requires distinguishing institutional identity from coercive religious conformity: a Christian institution may articulate its values while treating students and staff with dignity, fairness and respect, consistent with the Spirit's activity beyond the church that Yong (2005) emphasizes. Academic freedom requires room for inquiry, disagreement and responsible criticism, and is affirmed as a condition of the profession by the

1997 UNESCO Recommendation on higher-education teaching personnel (UNESCO, 1997). Christian identity should not close legitimate academic questions prematurely: in a renewable-energy institution, climate and energy science are taught on the strength of the evidence, not adjusted to theological preference.

In the Cameroonian setting, institutional policy should answer and record: whether chapel or devotional attendance is voluntary; whether recruitment criteria rest on competence, confessional commitment or both; what conduct and dress codes apply; how dissent and grievances are handled; and how contested academic topics are treated. CIRE's documents answer some of these: they state inclusivity as a value, prohibit harassment and discrimination, require dress "appropriate to a professional higher-education environment" and provide complaint and appeal routes (CIRE, 2026, secs. 3, 17, 18). No chapel or devotional rule, confessional recruitment criterion or statement of Christian identity appears in any document reviewed; those answers remain the writer's account. The academic-freedom provisions of the 2001 and 2023 orientation laws have not been analysed clause by clause, an item for the research agenda. For a technically oriented institution in a religiously diverse society, institutional identity must be distinguished from the religious conformity of individual staff and students. Policies on religious activities, recruitment, assessment, discipline and academic inquiry require explicit justification and consistent application; confessional requirements should be disclosed, devotional activities clarified as voluntary or compulsory, and procedures for grievances and responsible disagreement provided, evaluated against CIRE's actual policies and Cameroonian law, not assumed because the article endorses them.

Implications and Research Agenda

The implications may be tested beyond CIRE. First, Christian higher-education leaders need governance structures that distinguish mission from personality. Second, Pentecostal institutions should treat professional competence as a partner to spirituality, not its competitor. Third, academic leaders should document spiritual and administrative decision-making sufficiently to permit later evaluation. Fourth, Christian identity should be expressed through ethical institutional practices, not symbolic language alone.

As earlier noted, the State exercises an approval and supervisory role over private higher education (Republic of Cameroon, 2001, 2023), so faith-informed institutions have a dual accountability: to institutional mission and to legitimate academic and regulatory requirements. The research agenda includes comparative studies of Christian institutions in Cameroon; interviews on how staff and students experience faith-informed governance; document analysis of decision-making and the legal treatment of academic freedom; and outcome studies of whether the proposed integration is associated with measurable changes in institutional culture or student development.

Conclusion

This article has argued that Pentecostal Christian leadership can inform academic administration in technically oriented higher education when spiritual discernment, servant authority, ethical accountability and missional purpose are integrated with professional competence and regulatory responsibility. The CIRE case provides a contextual setting in which these relationships can be examined and not merely assumed. The principal conceptual

contribution is a proposed five-filter framework that brings biblical discernment into dialogue with professional expertise, institutional policy, evidence and consultation. Its contribution lies in this integration within a Pentecostal–missional approach to technical higher-education administration, not in a claim that the filters are prescribed in the New Testament or empirically validated. The CIRE case illustrates the relevance of these questions but does not establish that the framework is implemented or yields superior outcomes. The founder-president's dual role, the limited documentary evidence and unresolved questions about governance and programme approval restrict the conclusions. The article recommends that CIRE document its decision-making procedures, clarify the powers of its governing bodies, verify programme status and establish independent review. Pentecostal Christian leadership in technical higher education is most defensible when spiritual conviction is neither excluded from reflection nor treated as an exemption from scrutiny, and when theological purpose, professional competence, institutional accountability and openness to evidence are responsibly integrated. The framework offers a starting point; its practical effectiveness remains a question for further investigation. Christian academic administration in Cameroon therefore calls for leaders who can hold together conviction and critique, spirituality and scholarship, mission and regulation, authority and accountability: not the replacement of professional administration by spirituality, but institutions in which professional excellence is directed toward responsible service, human dignity and the common good.

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Appendix: Authorization of the Creation of CIRE by the Cameroon Ministry of Higher Education

RÉPUBLIQUE DU CAMEROUN
Paix – Travail – Patrie
****
MINISTÈRE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR
****
SECRÉTARIAT GÉNÉRAL
****
DIRECTION DU DEVELOPEMENT DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR
****
SOUS-DIRECTION DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPERIEUR PRIVE
****

N° _____/MINESUP/SG/DDES/ESUP/SDA/Dol

24-06340

Ref ; V/L du 05 mars 2024

REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON
Peace - Work – Fatherland
****
MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION
****
SECRÉTARIAT GÉNÉRAL
****
DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
****
SUB-DEPARTMENT OF PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION
****

Yaoundé, le 19 AOUT 2024

LE MINISTRE D'ETAT
A

Monsieur CHOH Clovis ZAMUNDI
Promoteur Cameroon Institute of Renewable Energy (CIRE)
Tel : 670929350
LIMBE

Objet *: Autorisation spéciale de création et d'ouverture d'une IPES.*

Monsieur le Promoteur,

Suite à la mission d'évaluation effectuée par une équipe de mon département ministériel dans votre institution le vendredi 10 mai 2024,

J'ai l'honneur de vous faire connaître que je marque **mon accord**, pour la **création** et **l'ouverture** de la **Cameroon Institute of Renewable Energy (CIRE)**, située dans la ville de Limbe, quartier Bobende, en face de l'hôtel Fini, pour le cycle, la filière et la spécialité suivante :

Pour le HND :
Field of study 1 (Thermal and Energy Engineering) : Specialty : Sustenability and Renewable Energy.

La présente autorisation provisoire sera régularisée par un arrêté, au terme des travaux de la Commission Nationale de l'Enseignement Supérieur Privé (CNESP), et après paiement des frais exigibles, conformément à la décision conjointe N°2705/MINFI/MINSUP du 17 novembre 2015 fixant les taux de participation financière des IPES à l'étude et au traitement de leurs demandes d'accréditation devant ladite CNESP.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Promoteur, l'assurance de ma parfaite considération.

Jacques Fame Ndongo