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## ENHANCING MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF CURRICULUM LEADERS AT COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN GHANA

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#### ABSTRACT

The study sought to examine management practices of curriculum leaders and determine the effect of the practices of curriculum leaders on quality education in colleges of education in Ghana. The Kouzes and Posner's model of leadership was used in ensuring quality education delivery. The study adopted the convergent parallel mixed method design to help in answering the research objectives. Data were simultaneously collected using a qualitative procedure (interview for the principals) and a quantitative procedure (questionnaire for principals), (QUAN +QUAL), after which the data were analysed independently and merged for convergence. Twenty-four (24) principals in all the colleges of education participated in the study. The study processed the data using SPSS v26 and Smart PLS. For the qualitative, the study found that principals in the various colleges highly practice model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, encourage the heart, and moderately practice enable others to act, as espoused by Kouzes and Posner. The quantitative results revealed a statistically insignificant effect of curriculum leaders' management practices on quality education. However, the qualitative results revealed otherwise. The study recommends that, since inspiring the vision was the strongest predictor of quality education, leadership training should prioritise vision-driven strategies to guide institutional development. Policymakers should integrate exemplary leadership practices into leadership development frameworks to strengthen governance and enhance teacher preparation.

**KEYWORDS**: Management practices, Curriculum leaders, Quality education, Colleges of Education, Leadership

#### INTRODUCTION

Ghana has a profound network of colleges of education committed to producing trained teachers for the country's educational system (Buabeng, Ntow & Otami, 2020; Alagbela & Bayuo, 2024). These educational institutions hold a crucial position in determining the direction of education in the nation. It is indisputable that colleges of education serve as the primary source of highly trained teaching professionals (Alagbela & Bayuo, 2024). These establishments have the duty of moulding the



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upcoming generation of instructors and providing them with the pedagogical information, abilities, and principles necessary for successful instruction. According to Zajda (2021), globalization, through technical developments and cultural shifts, has put education institutions throughout the world in uncharted territory. As a result, there is an urgent need for educators who not only understand their subject matter well but also have the skills necessary to successfully navigate a challenging and constantly changing educational environment. The future of education is largely in the hands of curriculum leaders at colleges of education. Pang and Ki (2024) assert that their management strategies significantly influence the quality of teacher preparation programs. The capacity to promote an innovative and ever-improving culture is a fundamental component of curriculum leadership. Principals' curriculum leadership role is crucial for overall school success and student accomplishment (Li, Zeng, Qi & Sun, 2023; Chan, Ridley & Morris, 2022). Curriculum leaders are important players in the teaching and learning processes at all educational levels. They oversee the daily operations of the school, which include developing, enhancing, and carrying out the institutional strategic goals. In Ghana, colleges of education are responsible for the development of highly qualified teaching professionals (Edmond & Felix, 2024; Annan, 2020; Taylor, 2023). Globally, there is increasing scrutiny of teacher education institutions, particularly concerning their methods of preparing educators for the challenges of the twenty-first century (Hill-Jackson & Lewis, 2023; Tilak & Bandyopadhyay, 2023; Mifsud, 2023). A significant number of individuals express concern regarding the concerning inconsistency in the quality of basic school teachers (Saihu, 2020; Ingersoll, 2020) and the deteriorating standards that education colleges are producing these days (Darling-Hammond, 2020; Tilak & Bandyopadhyay, 2023; Hill-Jackson & Lewis, 2023). This is due to the effect teacher education institutes have on the quality of teacher.

The future of education is largely in the hands of curriculum leaders at colleges of education. Pang and Ki (2024) assert that their management strategies significantly influence the quality of teacher preparation programs. The capacity to promote an innovative and ever-improving culture is a fundamental component of curriculum leadership. Principals' curriculum leadership role is crucial for overall school success and student accomplishment (Li, Zeng, Qi and Sun, 2023; Chan, Ridley and Morris, 2022). Curriculum leaders are important players in the teaching and learning processes at all educational levels. They oversee the daily operations of the school, which include developing, enhancing, and carrying out the institutional strategic goals.

So far, there have been two main reforms in the colleges of education in Ghana. The goal of the changes implemented in 2007 and 2012 was to guarantee that the nation would receive instructors of high caliber (Colleges of Education Act, 2012; Amoako-Gyampah, 2023; Boadu and Sekyi Acquah, 2013). However, since they were given a higher status, data shows that these institutions are facing a number of transitional problems. They are: financial strains, limited autonomy, inadequate oversight of education, problems with good leadership, and concerns about good governance (Mereku, 2019; Odoom, Opoku and Ayipah, 2017; Newman, 2013; UNESCO, 2014). Effective



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management and leadership practices are necessary to handle these issues and guarantee the CoE operates well.

Surprisingly, a systematic review of available literature showed little empirical study on management practices of curriculum leaders as determinant of quality education in the colleges of education in Ghana. Studies conducted on the colleges of education after the transition include: Leadership styles (Alagbela, 2024; Esia-Donkoh and Quansah, 2021; Agyeman-Nyarko, 2021; Esia-Donkoh, 2022); Teacher factors (Tetteh and Agyei, 2022; Amegbanu and Mpuangnan, 2023; Boadu and Acquah, 2013; Odoom, Opoku and Ayipah, 2017; Abotsi et al., 2020); Policy issues (Asare-Danso, 2014; Asare-Bediako and Nti, 2014; Abudu and Donkor, 2014); Transitional challenges (Aggrey-Fynn, 2020; Nyarko, 2016); and technology (Amaniampong and Hartmann, 2023; Duhoe and Otibua, 2020; Dawuda and Ibrahim, 2021). Again, several scientific researches have been conducted on colleges of education principals in Ghana, however, no work on the application of Kouzes and Posner's exemplary leadership model exists. Hence, this study investigated management and leadership practices of curriculum leaders using the Kouzes and Posner's model of leadership in ensuring quality education delivery.

This research article has two related objectives. First, it examines management practices of curriculum leaders in colleges of education in Ghana. Second, it determines the effect of the practices of curriculum leaders on quality education in colleges of education in Ghana. The examination of the management practices of curriculum leaders in the colleges of education will help strengthen the practices of the principals in the colleges. The findings can help shape successful policies and standards for curriculum leadership in the colleges of education. Additionally, understanding the relationship between curriculum leadership and educational quality can help improve the overall effectiveness of educational programmes for teachers.

The rest of the article is organised as follows: First, I conducted a literature study, with a particular emphasis on the theoretical and empirical analyses of the relationship between curriculum leadership and educational quality. Next, I discussed the data and the study's methodology. I then focused on reporting the data analysis, debate, and policy implications. The final section is the conclusion and suggestion for further studies.

#### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Kouzes and Posner's Five Practices of Leadership

This is a leadership model which was proposed by Kouzes and Posner in their work in 2007 which identified five practices of leadership. The model was adopted for the study due to its resemblance to the curriculum leadership practices. According to Kouzes and Posner (2007), leadership is a direct relationship that exists between leaders and their followers. The model explains that leadership is not just the holding of positions, but the exhibition of a collection of practices and behaviours (Çimen, Belenkuyu and Aksu, 2023). This relationship could be one-to-one or one-to-many. This means that



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a leader could have only one follower or subordinate or one leader having several followers. Irrespective of the number of followers of a leader, she/he will only be effective if the leader is able to control the dynamics of the leader-follower relationship.

According to Kouzes and Posner (2007), a leader must figure out how to inspire others in a bid to achieved shared visions. In the analyses of Kouzes and Posner, they discovered that leaders, irrespective of the level they lead, follow rather similar pattern as they direct others along achieving an aim. In their study they concluded that any leader who is effective and performs extraordinarily is identified with five common practices which they named the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership Practices (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership Practices are: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart.

**Model the way** means the practice of leading the way and setting good examples for others to follow. The most important personal quality every successful leader must possess while modeling the way is personal trustworthiness (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Kouzes and Posner (2007) further state that to be able to model the way the leader is required to be relentless in her/his efforts, steadfast, competent, and pay attention to details.

**Inspire a shared vision** means that the leader must dream of where and how she/he wants to see her/his organisation in the future. According to Kouzes and Posner (2007) leaders inspire a shared vision by envisioning the future and by bringing others into the vision. As a way of setting direction and articulating the vision, the curriculum leader must succinctly express her/his expectations for superior quality performance, the importance of the continuous development of the organisation, and the need to work with followers as a team (Brooker, Cumming and Logan, 2024, Murphy, 2012, Mulford and Silins, 2011). The leader must scan the environment to identify the various possible threats and opportunities that exist in the school environment.

Leaders who **challenge the process** are not afraid to take up risky ventures. Leaders are adventurous by nature (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Those that are leaders aspire for greatness and accept challenges. They believe that the higher the risk, the higher the return. Leaders are primary adopters and supporters of change. Leaders believe that innovation and challenge entail investigations and experimentations of risks, and failure (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Sometimes expectations from the experiments carried out are not met. People often make mistakes when they are innovating. Instead of apportioning blames, leaders learn from those mistakes and encourage others to do the same. Effective leaders are those that know they cannot succeed by doing everything alone therefore they enable others to act. A good leader is the one that delegates. Leaders **enable others to act** by promoting collaboration and building trust (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Effective leadership depends greatly on teamwork, trust, and empowerment and strengthens team members' capacity to deliver on promises and, even beyond the leader's expectations. It is said that climbing to the top is very difficult and frustrating sometimes and



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can lead to despair. Staff members may get frustrated, exhausted and disenchanted at a point (Deeb, 2023). As a result, they are often tempted to give up.

The curriculum leaders can **encourage the heart** by appreciating the little efforts of staff members and celebrating achievements and victories (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Another way the curriculum leader can encourage the heart is by providing constant feedback to the entire team on the progress they are making. This will help the followers to know the progress they are making. By focusing on how leaders' model desired behaviors, inspire shared educational goals, foster innovation, empower faculty, and recognize and appreciate contributions, this model provides a structured approach to understanding the impact of leadership on curriculum development and implementation.

#### Management and Leadership Practices of Curriculum Leaders and Quality Education

It is indisputable that curriculum leaders have shaped the educational landscape. The way they manage and lead has a big effect on the quality of education they provide (Pang and Ki, 2024; Li, et al, 2023). This literature review examines the relationship between management and leadership practices of curriculum leaders and quality education. Scholarly research studies persistently point out the essential role of curriculum leaders in propelling advancements in education. According to DeMatthews (2015), effective curriculum leadership requires integrating management techniques with three leadership theories: distributive, instructional, and social justice. This strategy emphasises how important it is for principals to be collaborative, visionary, and dedicated to equity. Similarly, Nurlaeli et al. (2024) highlight the importance of leadership, coordination, and decision-making in the principal's role in curriculum management. This study draws attention to the principal's function as curriculum leader, in charge of supervising the execution of the curriculum and ensuring that it adheres to educational standards.

Curriculum leaders with strong management and leadership skills may build good school cultures, facilitate collaboration, and drive instructional improvement. A study by Wahyuni, Nasir and Neliwati (2023) explore curriculum management's effects on student learning and achievement. Their findings emphasise the value of excellent planning, execution, and evaluation in enhancing educational outcomes. Also, Kilag et al. (2023) investigated principals' leadership viewpoints in developing a healthy school culture and enhancing student outcomes. The study emphasises relationship building, student learning, professional development, and teamwork.

Ayyildiz and Yilmaz (2023) have found out that effective schools share common qualities, and one such quality is good management practices of curriculum leaders. Educational researchers argue that the impact that curriculum leaders' management practices have on school performance are significant and great. It is against this backdrop that many researchers have conducted studies in this regard. Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2010) conducted a six-year research to explore the relationship between principals' leadership and students' achievement. They discovered that participatory decision



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making (curriculum leader allowing staff to actively participate in decision-making) yielded positive results for students' achievement.

Tatlah, Iqbal, Amin and Quraishi (2014) investigated the effect of leadership behaviour of secondary school leaders on the academic achievement of the 10th grade students from public and private sector schools in Punjab, Pakistan. The study found out that there were significant effects of leaderships behaviour of principals on students' academic achievement. Similarly, Chiedozie, Emmanuel and Chidi (2018) examined the extent of principals' application of management practices for teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools in Enugu State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. Proportionate Stratified sampling technique was used to draw 796 respondents made up of 29 principals and 767 teachers. The findings revealed that there was low extent of principals' application of motivational (encourage the heart) practice in secondary schools in Enugu State.

In Benaraw's study (2020), curriculum leadership actions taken by urban charter curriculum leaders were found to have the greatest impact on increased students' achievement results. The study revealed that for a curriculum leader to be successful, he/she should possess transformational leadership qualities. The curriculum leader should be willing to take risks and make changes. The study also found that the curriculum leader must have a clear vision that is grounded in equity and prioritise collaboration with stakeholders such as the tutors and students. These findings are consistent with the broader literature on management and leadership practices of curriculum leaders and its effects on quality education.

## METHODOLOGY

The study sought to examine management practices of curriculum leaders and determine the effect of the practices of curriculum leaders on quality education in colleges of education in Ghana. The study adopted the convergent parallel mixed method design to help in answering the research objectives. Data were simultaneously collected using qualitative procedure (interview for the principals) and quantitative procedure (questionnaire for principals), (QUAN +QUAL) after which the data were analysed independently and merged for convergence or divergence. A questionnaire, guided by Kouzes and Posner's leadership model, was used to assess the principals' leadership practices. The model identifies five major leadership practices: *model the way* ( $\alpha = .85$ ), *inspire a shared vision* ( $\alpha = .92$ ), *challenge the process* ( $\alpha = .86$ ), *encourage the heart* ( $\alpha = .92$ ), and *enable others to act* ( $\alpha = .86$ ). In total, 24 principals responded to the questionnaire, and only their students' academic performance (CGPA scores) was used to measure quality education. Additionally, six principals participated in interviews, which explored their leadership practices. The credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability of the qualitative data were ensured. Quantitative analysis involved frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, and multiple linear regression to examine leadership practices' influence on quality education. Qualitative data were inductively analysed into themes.



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Pseudonyms such as P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6 were given to the principals to hide their identity. Results were presented based on the data collected from both questionnaire and interview.

#### RESULTS

For the first objective, descriptive statistics (i.e., frequency, percentages, means, and standard deviations) were used to examine the management practices of curriculum leaders in the colleges of education in Ghana using SPSS v26. The study, subsequently, utilized thematic analysis for the qualitative aspect of the work. For the second objective, inferential statistics (Multiple Linear Regression) were used to examine the relationships among variables. The study used p value of 0.05 for establishing statistical significance for all the inferential statistical procedures in the study.

## **Research** Objective 1: To examine management practices of curriculum leaders in colleges of education in Ghana.

It has been established in literature that management practices of curriculum leaders influence quality education (Pang & Ki, 2024; Li, Zeng, Qi & Sun, 2023). In the quest to find what pertains in Colleges of Education in Ghana, this research question was posed to examine the management practices of curriculum leaders in colleges of education in Ghana. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Frequencies and percentages were used to analyse the data since the data was measured on an ordinal scale. The principals answered this research question. The principals were asked to indicate the extent to which they typically engage in five exemplary management practices by ticking the appropriate column (model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart) on a scale of 'Always' (5) to 'never' (1). In Table 1, the results from the principals are reported. For discussion purposes, the results from the management practices were categorised and the score ranges were interpreted as high, moderate and low. A high value meant that a greater number of the principal respondents adopt such exemplary leadership practices.

Management Practices	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Model the Way	14 - 21	2	8.3
	22 - 30	22	91.7
Inspire a Shared Vision	10 - 15	2	8.3
	16 - 21	22	91.7
Challenge the Process	10 - 15	2	8.3
	16 - 21	22	91.7
Enable Others to Act	19 - 25	24	100

#### Table 1: Management Practices of Curriculum Leaders.



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Encourage the Heart	12 - 18	13	54.1
	19 - 25	11	45.9

*N* = 24

*Model the Way = Low (6-13); Moderate (14-21); High (22-30)* 

Inspire a shared vision & challenge the process = Low (4-9); Moderate (10-15); High (16-21) Enable others to act & encourage the heart = Low (5-11); Moderate (12-18); High (19-25)

#### Source: Field survey (2024)

From Table 1, the majority of the principals indicated that they engage in the exemplary management practices of Kouzes and Posner. The score affirms the potential of the respondents to practice 'model the way' (n = 22, 91.7%). Specific responses from the questionnaire items lend credence to the above. For example, majority (n = 18, 75%) (See Appendix A) of the principals responded that in modeling the way, they 'always' set personal example. Also, majority (n = 18, 75%) of the principals indicated that one sure way they model the way is 'always' making certain workers adhere to principles and standards agreed on. They ensure that rules are not bent to favour any individual. These figures suggest that the principals are likely to lead by example. This practice will enable the principals to get the cooperation of staff since they are also involved in the discharge of routine activities in the school. Therefore, implementing decisions will not be difficult for these principals.

Again, on the exemplary practice, inspire a shared vision had a score (n = 22, 91.7%) that falls within the high range scale. This indicates that majority of the principals engage in inspire a shared vision leadership practice. Strong evidence of principals inspiring a shared vision in their colleges was found in their responses to the items (see Appendix A). For example, majority of the principals, (n = 13, 54.2%), indicated that they 'always' exemplify this management practice by appealing to others to share an exciting dream of the future. Also, a majority (n = 14, 58.3%) affirmed they show staff how their long-term interest may be realised by enlisting in a common vision. These results imply that the principals share and educate staff on their respective visions they have for the schools. Sharing and educating staff to understand your vision leads to effective management of any institution. Because, members will operate on the same wavelength with such leaders, thereby ensuring the achievement of institutional goals inherent in the vision. More importantly, the practice of sharing vision with staff leads to ownership of the vision by all and sundry. This makes management a shared responsibility for all.

The score on the leadership practice 'challenge the process' shows that the curriculum leaders practice it highly (n = 22, 91.7%). In order to challenge the process, the questionnaire responses showed that a majority (n = 16, 66.7%) of the principals experimented and took risks even when there was a chance of failure. Again, the principals search outside formal boundaries for innovative ways to improve what they do (n = 14, 58.3%). These results suggest that most of the principals are risk inclined. They are likely to accept challenges, and find alternative means of addressing the challenges



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identified. This practice brings out the innovative nature of leaders in the management of educational institutions.

Participatory decision- making is necessary in boosting staff morale and motivating them. Table 8 further shows that the management practice, enable others to act, had a 100% high rating, which means that all the principals suggested that they delegated all the time. This is not surprising because most of the principals (n = 16, 66.7%) indicated they 'always' give staff freedom and choice in deciding to do their work, while a few, (n = 8, 33.3%) also were of the view that they 'often' did that. Also, a greater number, (n = 13, 54.2%) of the principals showed that they develop cooperative relationship with their staff. In effect, staff may have the opportunity to use their discretions in matters that they have been delegated to work. Two implications are possible. First, leadership will not be overloaded with work since colleagues are also engaged in different areas of management. Second, delegated staff will also learn management practices as they aspire for leadership positions.

'Encouraging the heart' scored fell within the moderate score range (n = 13, 54.1%). This was exemplified in several ways. For instance, on praising of staff for a good job done, all (n = 24, 100%) responded that they 'often' and 'always' praise their staff. Majority (n = 15, 62.5%) of the principals also revealed that they 'always' find ways to celebrate their accomplishments and half (n = 12, 50%) of the principals indicated they give members of staff lots of appreciation and support for their contribution. Lastly, majority, (n = 13, 54.2%) of the principals intimated they 'often' recognise staff commitment publicly. The results provide a glimpse of how principals encourage staff. In particular, the results suggest that the principals understand the need to motivate staff as a critical leadership practice. Motivating staff has its relevance in any institution. First, there will be cooperation and hard work when staff are delegated to accomplish a task. Second, there will always be a healthy working environment for staff. This promotes a good institutional climate.

#### **Qualitative Results**

The major themes for the management and leadership practices were generated from Kouzes and Posner's (2007) exemplary leadership practices (model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart). The interview questions were generated in line with these five practices and they informed the analysis and presentation of the interview data. The descriptions were based on the recorded interviews from the participants and field notes. The narratives of the experiences of the curriculum leaders provided the answers to the first and subsequent research questions of the study. The narratives of the curriculum leaders' management and leadership practices influence quality education delivery in colleges of education in Ghana.

From the perspectives of the curriculum leaders they practice model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act and encourage the heart.



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#### Model the way

There were responses that suggested that the principals practiced model the way for others to emulate. They often mentioned that they led by doing, which is one of the main activities in modelling the way. For instance, one principal (P1) expressed that:

First, I feel that leading by doing should be the way to go, so what I normally do is I set the pace for whatever I want others to do, that is, I lead by setting examples for others to emulate.

Principal 2 had this to say: "I make sure that every member of this college adheres to the rules and regulations we have set in this school. No one is favoured above the other".

Based on the responses of the principals, it has been established that to ensure effective managerial practices through model the way, every leader must leader by example and ensure a strict adherence to the institutional policies and regulations so as to realise the vision and mission of that institution.

#### Inspire a shared vision

The participant expressed the need to share their vision to the other stakeholders in the colleges. Their responses suggested that they engage in 'inspire a shared vision' as one exemplary leadership practices. Three responses are illustrative: "*I make sure that I bring in all the teachers on board by articulating my vision to them. I explain everything to them of where I want the school to be before I leave the system*" (P3). This answer was in line with another interviewee's intimation: "I make sure that I sell my vision to my staff". Another participant expressed the importance of sharing one's vision to his or her stakeholders, as she stated:

I lay bare before them how I expect the school to be in the future, that is my vision of the college. I inform that I am here to work with everybody and that whatever ideas that they have that they feel will help the college to move forward they should bring it on board so that we inculcate into the vision (P4).

Participatory decision-making is key to inspiring a shared vision in organisations such as a college. Therefore, a curriculum leader who normally involve their staff in creating the school's vision is likely to achieve success. Again, every good leader must ensure that whatever vision they have is well articulated and bought into by their members.

#### Enable others to act

The participants embraced the practice; enable others to act as a one of the key managements and leadership practice, which helps to increase the commitment and morale of staff. One key issue that I gathered from the participant was committee, which talks more of delegation. The responses indicated that other staff members are tasked to act in various capacities. Sample quotes from respondents include:

I make sure I make use of the committees we have set. I ensure that all the tutors are involved in the management of the school. I believe that by so doing, they feel they are part of the



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decision-making process and would ensure that we achieve whatever we have set out to do. (P1)

"We work with committee to meet and discuss issues. These committees are mainly teachers who are empowered to take strategic decisions that will help realise the college vision. All departments are involved" (P5).

I mentioned that no decision is implemented in this college without the involvement of tutors and students. We conduct meetings on regular basis where we take the inputs of both tutors and students. For the students' involvement we do that through SRC because we feel that the SRC is the voice of the students. Tutors are placed in various committees. Some of the tutors are also appointed as heads of various department to take up various responsibilities.

No one person can take full responsibilities for the success or failure of any institution. It is therefore reasonable to work hand in hand with others in order to achieve the organisational goal. The responses indicate that the use of the committee in running the colleges of education is an effective to enhance decision-making. This is likely to boost the morale and increase the commitment of staff since they realise that the leader believes in their capabilities.

#### Challenge the process

To increase the level of commitment of staff, it was clear that the curriculum leaders purposefully adopt challenge the process. For example, P2 said,

one policy I have put in place in the college is zero tolerance for academic failure. This, I mean, we should not record any failure in this school. What I do is that we equip the tutors with all the necessary materials for teaching. I ensure that every tutor is always teaching. I also make sure that the students also make good use of their time in the classroom. To also ensure that we do not record any failure what we normally do is that we fish out students who are a little weak in the class and provide them with extra tuition.

The principals also expressed that they challenge the process by searching outside their formal boundaries. One principal (5) answered,

...Honestly, that is exactly what we do. Aaah, our work is full of collaboration since we are all affiliated to UCC. We also have our national association, the PRINCOF. At such meetings, we share ideas on how we can move teacher training in the country forward. (P3)

#### Another principal expressed that:

'...college principals have an association known as PRINCOF. We meet on regular basis to share ideas on how we can improve practice in the various colleges in Ghana. We are affiliated to a university so we normally take ideas from there as well (P6).

One of the hallmarks of an effective leader is to challenge the status quo by finding out innovative ways to enhance organisational performance. The responses are indications that the principals' quest



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to succeed is influenced by their action, that is, going the extra mile (fish out weak student) to improve the academic performance of students.

### Encourage the heart

Encouraging the heart also came up strongly in the responses. The principals indicated that as part of ensuring collaboration in the colleges, staff were motivated in different ways. For instance, one principal stated that, "...We have a policy on tutor professional development to help raise the standard of tutors which is a form of motivation to them. Incentive policies to help boost the morale of both tutors and students are also in place..." (P6).

Another principal also expressed that, "Yes, I reward the diligent staff. The reward is in the form of remuneration to motivate them to work hard. They include: physical cash, taking them to lunch and giving them some bonuses." Similarly, another principal echoed that: "I also make sure that I motivate my staff with both tangible and non-tangible rewards. I am somebody who value any little thing you do". These responses clearly show that colleges of education principals in Ghana believe that rewarding success is the way to go. They understand the efforts the staff members put into the school must be acknowledged and rewarded.

All these responses clearly show that principals of colleges of education in Ghana employ the various management practices espoused by Kouzes and Posner (2007). This suggests that no principal is obsessed with one style or approach of leadership. In effect, the shortfalls with one approach will be complimented with the strengths associated with the other approaches.

## DISCUSSION

It is insightful to note that the curriculum leaders employed all the five exemplary leadership practices espoused by Kouzes and Posner in the Colleges of Education as revealed in both the qualitative and quantitative results. It is therefore interesting to note that the benefits of such leadership or management practices will inure to the benefits of the administration of colleges in Ghana. For instance, it will help impacts students' academic performance significantly since a shared understanding of the school's vision, mission and goals energizes and motivates tutors in the school to perform very well. In effect, it will help direct students' learning.

The results confirm the study of Benaraw (2020) who revealed that for a curriculum leader to be successful, he/she should possess transformational leadership qualities. The curriculum leader should be willing to take risks and make changes (challenge the process). The study also found that the curriculum leader must have a clear vision (model the way) that is grounded in equity and prioritise collaboration with stakeholders (enable others to act) such as the tutors and students. The results are also well grounded in the literature (Brooker et al, 2024; Deeb, 2023; Kouzes and Posner, 2007). For instance, Brooker et al, 2024 suggest that as a way of setting direction and articulating the vision, the curriculum leader must succinctly express her/his expectations for superior quality performance, the



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importance of the continuous development of the organisation, and the need to work with followers as a team. Kouzes and Posner, 2007 also suggest that modeling the way is the crucial area where the curriculum leader can exert the greatest influence. They also believe that good curriculum leaders must have unique influence on the behaviour of their staff in the school organisation through the practice of model the way.

Again, the study established that the principals inspire a shared vision. This practice is very important as it sets the direction for staff to follow in terms of what is to be accomplished. This implies that the curriculum leaders in the Colleges of Education passionately believed they made a difference. The finding resonates with Murphy (2012) who noted, vision is crucial in aligning and inspiring the actions of individuals in any institution desiring to achieve targets. Similarly, Mulford and Silins (2011) argue that a college principal who is able to harmonise the values and beliefs underlying the college's vision is most likely to influence tutors to work and improve student performance.

This finding is validated by the position of Kouzes and Posner (2007) who point out that great leaders are seen to be constantly questioning existing practices without conforming to the norm. The authors explain that leaders take the initiative to identify opportunities that will create conducive environment for success. They are normally innovators of ideas and help to build the capacities and competencies of their staff.

It is also worthy to note that curriculum leaders in colleges of education Ghana enable others to act. This implies that they fostered collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust among individuals in the college. They also strengthened people's ability by delegating power, developing their competence and offering visible support. This also implies that curriculum leaders in the Colleges of Education disclosed what they believe and care about and, when necessary, show some vulnerability. The study confirms the argument of Somech (2010), Kouzes and Posner (2007) and Fullan (2003). Somech (2010) explains that allowing others to act has the potential to promote school effectiveness.

The study also established that curriculum leaders of colleges of education practice encourage the heart. Kouzes and Posner (2007) believe that effective curriculum leaders encourage the heart. Thus, they provide motivation to individuals in the college via recognition, praise and appreciation. This suggest that the curriculum leaders acknowledged the hard work and accomplishments of the individuals and teams within the college. They recognise individual contributions to the success of the college and celebrate and praise team accomplishments regularly. The finding corroborates Werang et al. (2024) finding that encouraging the heart serves as a catalyst in propelling good performance of teachers. Similarly, Nelson (2009) found that employees who are recognise for their effort teach better.

**Research** Objective 2: Determine the effect of the practices of curriculum leader on quality education in Colleges of Education in Ghana

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The second objective seeks to determine whether management practices of the principals predict student performance in the colleges of Education. Accordingly, a multiple regression analysis was performed to determines the effect of the practices of curriculum leader on quality education in Colleges of Education in Ghana. The study used the regression feature in SmartPLS v4 to analyse this objective (Ringle, Wende & Becker, 2024). The result for the multiple regression analyses is presented in Table 2. The regression model analysis was preceded by diagnostic tests (multicollinearity and autocorrelation). The multicollinearity assessment was performed utilising the VIF estimate. Multicollinearity occurs in a model when the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) estimate is 10 or higher, indicating that the independent variables exhibit high correlation, thereby obscuring their individual effects. The VIF estimates were observed to be below 10, with the maximum value recorded at 6.834, indicating the absence of multicollinearity in the model under examination. Myers (1990) and Bowerman and O'Connell (1990) provide assurance of non-violation of the principle of multicollinearity, as indicated by this 6.8 < 10. The autocorrelation assumption was evaluated using the Durbin-Watson D test. The D estimate should generally be approximately 2 (1.5 < d < 2.5) to satisfy the assumption. The D statistic was 1.746, indicating the absence of autocorrelation in the model. Therefore, the model that analyses the impact of management practices on educational quality warrants examination. Table 2 presents the results.

Variables	Unstandardized	Standardized	SE	Т	P VIF
	coefficients	coefficients		value	value
(Intercept)	3.592**	0.000	0.699	5.136	0.000
IASV	0.016	0.176	0.043	0.377	0.710 4.758
СТР	-0.027	-0.269	0.040	0.679	0.505 3.405
EOTA	0.038	0.478	0.037	1.012	0.324 4.846
ETH	-0.024	-0.277	0.049	0.493	0.627 6.834
MTW	-0.048	-0.495	0.045	1.057	0.304 4.771
Durbin Watson	1.746				
test					
R square	0.172				

## Table 2: Multiple Regression for the Influence of Management Practices on Quality Education (CGPA)

Note: MTW (Model the Way); IASV (Inspired a Shared Vision); CTP (Challenge the Process); EOTA (Enable Others to Act); ETH (Encourage the Heart)



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## \*\* is significant at 5%Source: Field survey (2024)

In the Model, MTW, IASV, CTP, EOTA, and ETH influence quality education (QE). It was observed that the IASV and EOTA have a positive influence on QE. This means that an increase in any of these independent variables would result in an increase in QE, thus a 1% increase in each of the two mentioned independent variables would influence QE by the value of the coefficients (0.016 and 0.038) respectively. However, EOTA had the highest positive impact on QE. None of these coefficients was statistically significant (p > .05). Again, independent variables such as MTW, CTP and ETH influence QE negatively. This means that a 1% increase in these independent variables would decrease QE by their coefficients (-0.048, -0.027 and -0.024) respectively. The variable that has the highest negative influence on QE is MTW and this is followed by CTP and ETH. Also, none of these coefficients was statistically significant (p > .05). Only the Model's intercept (3.592) was statistically significant (p=0.000). This means that QE will positively increase by 359.2% when the influences of the independent variables (management practices) are disregarded. In sum, the  $R^2$  of the Model suggests that the independent variables explain 17.2% of the variation in the dependent variable (QE). This implies that there are other variables that can account for the 82.8% of the variation in QE. It was therefore necessary to further test whether there is any statistically significant influence of other characteristics on quality of education in colleges of education in Ghana, hence research question 7.

#### **Qualitative Results**

The principals were also interviewed on how their management practices influence quality education (academic performance). All the principals agreed that their practices indeed help to improve academic performance. The issue of the Kouzes and Posner's leadership practices emerged in the interview results.

#### Enable others to act

The following are notable quotations from the interviews:

"Yes, I believe strongly that my practices influence students' academic performance. As the saying goes, fish spoil from the head, so I think if I do not lead or manage the school effectively, it can affect every aspect of the college including students' performance. I feel that the way I involve my tutors in the school decision-making process makes it a lot easier for me in the sense that, the tutors feel accepted and I think this has boosted their morale in a way that they put in their best when it comes to teaching and learning (P5).

"This college has been recording higher percentages in passes for the past 5 years and I will say it boils down to how I involve the tutors in the decision-making process". (P2). The above statements suggest that the curriculum leaders practice enable others to act, which they believe is enough motivation that can boost the morale of the tutors to deliver well which can increase students' performance.



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#### Challenge the process

Other comments from the participants also illustrate that the continuous professional development agenda of the curriculum leaders in their college help improve the performance of tutors, which subsequently reflects in the performance of the students. This is an example of the leader challenging the process. The interviewee commented by saying: "… our continuous professional development policies here help the tutors to improve upon their performance and I believe this goes a long way in helping to improve performance in our school". (P5). P4 also intimated that:

"Here we have zero tolerance for failure. I encourage hard work. We should make good use of contact hours. I also encourage the tutors to do a lot of research in their area of specialisation. I also like to visit other colleges from time to time to learn about their best practices that I can adopt to improve our college."

P1 stated. "... *I feel emmm that I don't deny the tutors the opportunities to better themselves*". P2 also said this:

I personally believe in the professional development of my staff. ...I ensure that all my staff develop themselves very well. I believe this can help the staff the get abreast of modern issues in their field of specialisation and this I think will go a long to help them to deliver well in the classroom.

#### Encourage the heart

Consequently, there is enough evidence to suggest that curriculum leaders encourage the heart. The common expressions shared by the participants from this study affirmed how curriculum leaders at the colleges of education motivate tutors for their hard work. P2 stated:

I have also instituted a reward policy in this college for both teachers and students. Awards schemes have been designed to award tutors and students during our graduation. ...I also personally mention names of tutors who are doing exceptionally well during our staff meeting. I also mention their names to the governing board of the school.

#### P1 also had this to say:

I think my tutors are satisfied per the performance we record in this college. ... I feel they need recognition for their effort and I don't deny them. Tutors are rewarded very often in this college... We are planning that when we are able to raise some funds structures will be put in place to serve as offices for the tutors. This is a motivation in itself. I feel we have been raised to a tertiary institution and we must treat our tutors as lecturers who teach in the universities where each lecturer has his or her own office. I don't really feel comfortable when I all my tutors are put in one big staff common room like a JHS.

Clearly, these expressions put across by the curriculum leaders indicate and confirm that tutors are well motivated by raise their level of commitment to give of their best. The qualitative results show



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that the management practices of the curriculum leaders promote positive school culture that results in quality education. The implication drawn from the results is that mechanisms and structure put in place to encourage tutors to teach well. It can also be concluded from the results that school management practices of curriculum leaders develop a shared understanding of the vision of the school which directs students' learning.

#### DISCUSSION

The qualitative results contradict the quantitative results that quality education (academic performance) is not statistically influence by management practices of curriculum leaders. Based on the qualitative results, the study concludes that management practices such as model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process as well as encourage the heart predict quality education. Literature has firmly established the important role of management practices of curriculum leaders in quality education and there is enough evidence (Ginting, 2023; Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010; OECD, 2009; Mulford, 2013) to show that a link exists between effective management practices of curriculum leaders and quality education (student academic performance). Ginting (2023) found that the dimensions of curriculum management influence the Improvement of education quality. Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2010) discovered that management practices (enable others to act) yielded positive results for students' achievement. OECD (2009) also points out that effective school management practice helps in the creation of high-performance expectations for both students and staff. Mulford (2013) on his part found that effective school management practices result in effective communication networks, which also promotes learning of students.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTION

The study sought to examine management practices of curriculum leaders and determine the effect of the practices of curriculum leaders on quality education in colleges of education in Ghana. The Kouzes and Posner's model of leadership was used in ensuring quality education delivery. The study adopted the convergent parallel mixed method design to help answer the research objectives. Data were simultaneously collected using qualitative procedure (interview for the principals) and quantitative procedure (questionnaire for principals), (QUAN +QUAL) after which the data were analysed independently and merged for convergence or divergence. 24 principals in all the colleges of education participated in the study. For the first objective, descriptive statistics (i.e., frequency, percentages, means, and standard deviations) were used to examine the management practices of curriculum leaders in the colleges of education in Ghana. The data was processed using SPSS v26 and SmartPLS v4. The study, subsequently, utilised thematic analysis for the qualitative aspect of the work. For the second objective, inferential statistics (multiple linear regression) were used to examine the relationships among variables. The study used a p value of 0.05 for establishing statistical significance for all the inferential statistical procedures in the study.



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In relation to the qualitative aspect, the study found that principals in the various colleges highly practice model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, encourage the heart, and moderately practice enable others to act as espoused by Kouzes and Posner. It is therefore interesting to note that the benefits of such leadership or management practices will extend to the administration of colleges in Ghana. The curriculum leaders are better placed to provide the necessary oversight responsibilities to influence the behaviours of tutors, administrators, and students to ensure quality education delivery. Based on the qualitative results, the study can conclude that management practices such as model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process as well as encourage the heart predict quality education. Again, the quantitative results of the study revealed a statistically insignificant effect of curriculum leaders' management practices on quality education.

#### Recommendations

The findings have important implications for leadership in Colleges of Education in Ghana. Since inspire the vision was the strongest predictor of quality education, leadership training should prioritise vision-driven strategies to guide institutional development. The prominence of enable the heart among curriculum leaders highlights the need to sustain supportive leadership approaches that foster trust and motivation. However, as enable others to act did not significantly influence quality education, efforts should focus on refining how leaders delegate responsibilities and empower faculty in ways that directly contribute to educational outcomes. Policymakers should integrate these insights into leadership development frameworks to strengthen governance and enhance teacher preparation.

Future research should consider these. The management practices of university authorities should be investigated given that the current study focused on only colleges of education in Ghana. This will help improve the management practices of authorities of higher education. Also, other models, such as the Fiedler contingency model pertaining to management practices, could be adopted for subsequent studies other than the one used in this current study.

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