



MOSES TO JOSHUA SUCCESSION MODEL: IMPLEMENTING VISION INTEGRITY AND PASSION FOR CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP

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Abstract

The primary objective of this research is to analyze the leadership succession model from Moses to Joshua, specifically examining the implementation of Vision, Integrity, and Passion (VIP) variables to address modern Christian leadership crises. Contemporary leadership in religious institutions often manifests a "value gap" the disconnect between confessed theological beliefs and functional values that govern actual practice. This phenomenon leads to systemic failures characterized by materialism, authoritarianism, and moral lapses, often summarized as the "Wealth, Throne, and Women" (HTW) paradigm. Utilizing a qualitative methodology through narrative exegesis of key biblical texts including Numbers 27, Deuteronomy 31, and Joshua 1 and a dialogue with the integrity of Christ in 1 Peter 2:21–23, the study identifies a normative framework for healthy regeneration. The findings reveal that successful succession is a meticulously planned process involving long-term mentoring, public commissioning, and the delegation of overlapping authority. The results demonstrate that the VIP model serves as a robust spiritual antithesis to leadership pathologies, restoring the gospel as the operational center of ministry. This study concludes that Christian institutions must adopt formalized mentoring and structural accountability to ensure the spiritual vitality of future leaders, particularly within the complex social dynamics and honor-shame cultures of Asia.

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership serves as the fundamental pillar determining the direction, stability, and sustainability of any organization, including religious institutions and churches. In the Christian ecosystem, leadership is viewed not merely as a managerial position but as a divine calling that demands the highest levels of moral and spiritual accountability. However, the contemporary landscape of Christian leadership is increasingly marred by themes of crisis, particularly manifest in rising instances of moral failure, the abuse of power, and a pervasive crisis of trust regarding spiritual leaders. Studies have shown that the issue of integrity in these contexts is not necessarily rooted in a lack of theological knowledge or a formal rejection of faith; rather, it arises from a deep-seated tension between the faith that is professed and the faith that is lived in the practice of daily ministry. These integrity crises are fundamentally functional rather than merely doctrinal, occurring when the verbally acknowledged gospel fails to serve as the operational center in a leader's decision-making, relationships, and responses under pressure.

Paul David Tripp formulated the "value gap" concept to illustrate this disconnect between confessional values theologically recognized truths and functional values those that actually direct one's life and leadership. According to Tripp, this gap arises when the gospel is maintained as a language of faith but loses its formative power in real life. Consequently, Christian leaders may functionally live as if God is not sovereign, just, or trustworthy enough to be relied upon in the heat of ministry pressures. In many ecclesiastical contexts, particularly in Indonesia, this value gap often crystallizes into the "Wealth, Throne, and Women" (Harta, Takhta, dan Wanita) paradigm, where materialism, authoritarianism, and moral lapses replace the gospel as the driving force of leadership.

This leadership pathology is acutely relevant in the Asian context, where Christian leadership is often exercised within complex social dynamics, unequal power relations, and real experiences of suffering. Leaders in these environments face immense pressure to adjust their functional values for the sake of institutional stability, social acceptance, or the mere continuity of ministry, even while maintaining an orthodox verbal confession. Such conditions demonstrate that integrity cannot be understood solely as individual moral consistency; it must be viewed as a theological fidelity that is concretely tested in the reality of life and service. When the gospel no longer shapes the habits, dispositions, and real responses of leaders especially in situations of conflict the resulting value gap leads to systemic organizational and spiritual failure.

Furthermore, Asian honor-shame cultures present unique risks to leadership integrity. In a culture that places heavy emphasis on public honor, the response to humiliation and perceived failure

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has significant social implications. Leaders are often tempted to defend their honor through the manipulation of language or aggressive self-defense rather than adopting the biblical pattern of surrender to a just God. This cultural pressure can foster a climate of *dólos* deliberate deception or relational manipulation where spiritual rhetoric is used to mask inner motivations for control or self-preservation. In this light, the need for a robust, biblical model of succession that addresses these inner character dynamics is paramount.

The Bible provides a robust and exemplary paradigm for overcoming these failures through the transition of authority from Moses to Joshua. Key texts, including Numbers 27:12–23, Deuteronomy 31, and Joshua 1:1–9, explicitly describe how a great leader like Moses systematically prepared his successor. Moses did not leave the community without direction; he petitioned God to appoint a "shepherd" so the congregation would not be scattered like sheep without a guide. This transition involves three interlocking dimensions that serve as a spiritual antithesis to modern leadership pathologies: Vision, Integrity, and Passion (VIP). Vision is connected to the divine mandate of the Promised Land, Integrity is rooted in character tested through long-term service, and Passion is manifested through the courage to remain faithful to God's agenda despite internal and external opposition.

Academically, the Moses-to-Joshua succession has been explored as a model of regeneration involving both divine and human dimensions through mentoring and measured delegation. Markes (2021) highlights this model as a framework for healthy leadership regeneration in modern church and theological education. Prasetya and Simarmata (2021) emphasize the formation of Joshua's character as an ideal prototype for church leadership. Furthermore, Yunianto (2018) examines Joshua's personal qualities, such as integrity and loyalty, which were tested during his tenure as Moses' aide. Internationally, Zucker (2012) focuses on the mentoring relationship between Moses and Joshua as the key to successful authority transfer. In the broader Indonesian context, Maharani (2025) provides case studies on navigating succession in Christian institutions by comparing biblical models to contemporary challenges.

Despite these valuable contributions, there remains a significant research gap. Most studies tend to focus either on a purely narrative-biblical analysis or a purely managerial approach to succession planning, often failing to systematically integrate theological diagnoses of the "value gap" with a deep exegetical reading of the Mosaic transition as a normative source of integrity formation. There is a lack of dialogue between the structural integrity exemplified in biblical succession and the functional failures identified in modern leadership. Without this dialogue, biblical figures like Moses and Joshua are often treated as general moral exemplars rather than as a source for a theological

structure capable of bridging the gap between confessed faith and lived practice.

Based on this research gap, the present study aims to integrate Paul David Tripp's theological diagnosis of the value gap with a narrative exegesis of the Moses-to-Joshua transition and a dialogue with the Petrine theology of Christ's integrity in 1 Peter 2:21–23. By combining conceptual analysis of leadership with an in-depth biblical reading, this study argues that the Moses-to-Joshua model provides a normative pattern a *hypogrammos*, that restores the gospel as the operational center of Christian life and leadership. The study proposes that the VIP variables (Vision, Integrity, Passion) are not just moral ideals but structural foundations that can bridge the value gap.

The importance of this study is underscored by the urgent need to revitalize ethical standards among spiritual leaders in Indonesia and the wider Asian region. By viewing succession as a meticulous process involving long-term mentoring, public accountability, and the intentional transfer of values, church leaders can prepare for regeneration proactively rather than re-actively. The significance of this research lies in its theological contribution to leadership studies and its practical recommendations for succession policies in modern Christian institutions. Through an in-depth analysis of VIP variables, this study serves as a guide for forming leaders who are not only administratively competent but also unblemished in character, ensuring that the faith recognized remains the faith lived.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative theological research design grounded in a library-based methodology. Rather than producing empirical measurements, qualitative theological research seeks to interpret biblical texts within their literary, historical, and theological contexts while constructing conceptual frameworks that contribute to contemporary ecclesiastical practice. This approach is appropriate because the primary objective of the present study is not to measure leadership effectiveness statistically but to formulate a normative theological model of leadership succession derived from Scripture and interpreted through dialogue with contemporary leadership theories.

The methodological paradigm integrates biblical exegesis with constructive theological reflection. The grammatical-historical exegetical approach is employed to examine the original meaning of the biblical narratives concerning Moses and Joshua by considering their literary structure, linguistic features, historical background, and covenantal context. This exegetical foundation is subsequently brought into critical dialogue with contemporary theories of Christian leadership and

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organizational leadership in order to formulate a coherent theological framework capable of addressing present-day leadership challenges within Christian institutions, particularly in Indonesia and the broader Asian context.

The research relies exclusively on documentary sources. Primary sources consist of the biblical texts concerning the succession narratives in Numbers 27:12–23, Deuteronomy 31, Joshua 1:1–9, and the theological dialogue with 1 Peter 2:21–23. Secondary sources include peer-reviewed journal articles, academic monographs, biblical commentaries, theological studies, and contemporary leadership literature relevant to succession, integrity, servant leadership, transformational leadership, and spiritual leadership.

The analytical procedure consists of three interconnected stages. First, a grammatical-historical exegesis is conducted to identify the theological structure underlying the succession from Moses to Joshua. Particular attention is given to the literary flow of the narratives, significant theological themes, and key lexical concepts within their canonical context. Second, the exegetical findings are examined alongside contemporary leadership theories, including Paul David Tripp's concept of the "value gap," Fry's Spiritual Leadership Theory, Greenleaf's Servant Leadership, and transformational leadership perspectives developed by Bass and Avolio. Third, the biblical and theoretical findings are integrated through constructive theological synthesis to formulate the Vision, Integrity, and Passion (VIP) framework as a normative model for Christian leadership succession.

To enhance the credibility of the analysis, the study applies methodological triangulation through dialogue among biblical texts, historical-grammatical interpretation, contemporary theological scholarship, and leadership literature. This integrative approach ensures that the proposed framework remains both exegetically grounded and contextually relevant for addressing contemporary leadership succession within Christian institutions.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings: The Theological and Exegetical Architecture of the Mosaic Transition

The grammatical-historical exegesis of the primary succession narratives specifically: Numbers 27:12–23, Deuteronomy 31:1–8, and Joshua 1:1–9; reveals a meticulously structured model of leadership transition characterized by a theocentric design that integrates divine sovereignty with human character readiness. These findings demonstrate that biblical succession is not merely a bureaucratic transfer of power but a normative structure intended to preserve the spiritual vitality and

institutional stability of the covenant community. The exegetical data suggests that the transition from Moses to Joshua operates through three interlocking variables: the transmission of Vision, the validation of Integrity, and the cultivation of Passion.

1. Vision Transmission: The Preservation of the Divine Mandate

The first pillar of the Mosaic model is the transmission of a selfless vision rooted in the sustainability of the community's mission. In Numbers 27:15–17, the text records Moses' petition to Yahweh following the announcement of his own death, wherein he requests the appointment of a leader so that the congregation would not be "as sheep which have no shepherd". This finding indicates that the primary objective of vision in succession is the identification of a leader whose orientation is fundamentally altruistic and communal. The vision is not an abstract or subjective inspiration but is tied to the meta-narrative of the Promised Land, serving as a theological bulwark against the modern pathologies of materialism and greed the "Wealth" (Harta) crisis.

In Deuteronomy 31, the narrative further demonstrates the formalization of this vision through the documentation of the Law. Moses ensured that the vision remained the operational center of the community by providing written instructions to the priests and elders, thus creating a transition that outlived the individual leader. This documentation serves as a *hypogrammos*; a term used in Greco-Roman pedagogy to describe a normative pattern provided for students to trace precisely. The Mosaic vision is thus constructed as a concrete track that demands the conformity of form and direction, ensuring that the successor does not deviate from the original mandate given by God. By tethering the leadership to the written Word, the succession model effectively bridges the value gap between confessional faith and the practical functional values of leadership.

2. Integrity Evidence: The Structural Foundation of Legitimacy

The exegesis identifies Integrity as the absolute prerequisite for leadership legitimacy, preceding the assumption of office. In Numbers 27:18, Joshua's selection is predicated on a specific spiritual state: he is described as a man "in whom is the Spirit". This finding suggests that integrity in the biblical context is not an abstract moral ideal but a whole structure of life that is relationally and structurally validated. Joshua's integrity was not an overnight achievement but was forged through a rekam jejak (track record) of faithfulness during his decades of service as Moses' "aide" or protege.

The evidence of Joshua's integrity is further characterized by the absence of δόλος (*dólos*) - a Greek term referring to deliberate deception, strategic cunning, or relational manipulation. This lack of manipulation was historically evidenced in Joshua's faithful report as a spy in Numbers 14, where he maintained theological fidelity and relational honesty despite intense social pressure and the threat of violence. Furthermore, the text in Numbers 27:19–22 mandates a public commissioning ceremony

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before the priest Eleazar and the entire assembly. This finding highlights that integrity must be structurally enforced through public accountability and the laying on of hands, which bridges the gap between inner character and public office. This structural legitimacy prevents the emergence of the "Women" (Wanita) crisis by ensuring that the leader's character is tested and validated by independent spiritual authorities before they assume power.

3. Passion and Courage Patterns: The Resilience of Mediated Passion

The final variable, Passion, is manifested through a repetitive pattern of commissioning centered on the command to "be strong and courageous," a phrase appearing consistently in Deuteronomy 31 and Joshua 1:1–9. Passion in the Mosaic model is not defined by emotional fervor but by a sustained, resilient obedience that functions as a theological surrender to God's Word. This is linguistically captured by the concept of *παρεδίδου* (*paredidou*, "kept entrusting" or "continued entrusting"), a verb that the present study interprets theologically as sustained surrender, wherein the leader continuously hands over the results and final justice of their mission to God as the righteous Judge. This orientation liberates the leader from the need for "Takhta" (Throne) or the mastery of outcomes, allowing them to focus solely on the faithfulness of their actions.

A critical finding in the passion variable is the role of mentoring as the primary vehicle for value transfer. Joshua's passion was cultivated through his participation in the life and suffering of Moses. The relationship between the mentor and the protégé allowed for an organic transfer of intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, the concept of "overlapping authority" found in Numbers 27:20 where Moses shared part of his majesty with Joshua while still alive functions as a mechanism to transform raw ambition into a disciplined passion for service. This sharing of authority ensures that the transition is not a moment of crisis but a planned progression that maintains the spiritual momentum of the organization.

4. The Synthesis of VIP as a Theological Bridge

The findings demonstrate that the variables of Vision, Integrity, and Passion form a coherent theological architecture that addresses the value gap the disconnect between the faith recognized and the practice of living. When these variables are integrated, they restore the gospel as the operational center of life and leadership. The transmission of vision ensures that the leader's goals remain aligned with the divine mandate; the validation of integrity ensures that the leader's character remains unblemished by manipulation; and the cultivation of passion ensures that the leader remains resilient under pressure.

This structure is particularly relevant in the Asian context, where Christian leadership is often exercised amidst complex social dynamics and honor-shame cultures. The Mosaic model, as seen

through the exegesis of Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua, provides a normative pattern (*hypogrammos*) that challenges leaders to reject the strategy of defending honor through deception (*dólos*) and instead adopt a life of sustained surrender to God (*paredídou*). By grounding sukseksi in these structural foundations, the biblical narrative provides a pathway for healthy leadership regeneration that is structurally, not just normatively, sound.

B. Discussion: The Crisis of Transition and the Value Gap

The mortality of any religious institution is most visible during the transition of power. As established in the preceding sections, the transition from Moses to Joshua represents more than a bureaucratic shift; it is a theological architecture designed to ensure that the "confessional values" of the Covenant remain the "functional values" of the conquest. In the contemporary landscape, especially within the Indonesian and broader Asian ecclesiastical contexts, leadership is frequently marred by a "value gap"; a disconnect where the gospel is maintained as a language of faith but loses its formative power in real-life applications. This gap often crystallizes into the "Wealth, Throne, and Women" paradigm, where materialism, authoritarianism, and moral failures replace the gospel as the driving force of leadership. The following discussion elaborates on how the variables of Vision, Integrity, and Passion (VIP), anchored in the Mosaic model and the integrity of Christ, serve as a structural bridge to restore the gospel as the operational center of leadership.

Vision as a Normative Lifestyle (*Hypogrammos*) and the Mitigation of Greed

In the Mosaic model, Vision is not merely a strategic goal but a normative lifestyle pattern, or *hypogrammos*, that demands the conformity of form and direction. Analysis of Numbers 27:15–17 shows that Moses' vision was fundamentally altruistic, focusing on the sustainability of the community so they would not be "as sheep without a shepherd". This selfless vision serves as a direct antithesis to the "Wealth" crisis, where leadership vision often drifts toward personal accumulation and institutional commercialization. According to spiritual leadership theory, a vision rooted in divine mandate provides the hope and faith necessary to mobilize an organization without resorting to material manipulation.

Furthermore, the documentation of the vision in the form of the Law (Deuteronomy 31) ensures that the vision remains an operational center that outlives the individual leader. This written documentation prevents "vision-drift," where a successor might be tempted to adjust functional values for situational gain. By establishing the vision as a concrete track (ἵχνησιν – *ichnesin* - "footsteps" or "tracks") to be followed, the Mosaic model mandates that the successor's leadership must remain tethered to the original divine mandate. In the modern context, church boards can implement this by requiring mission-based financial audits and clear, written documentation of the organization's

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theological vision to prevent the commercialization of the ministry.

Integrity as the Absence of Manipulation (*Dólos*) and Character Legitimacy

Integrity in the VIP model is identified as the absolute prerequisite for leadership legitimacy. The selection of Joshua as a man "in whom is the Spirit" (Num 27:18) indicates that integrity is a structural whole of life rather than an abstract moral ideal. The exegesis of Christ's integrity in 1 Peter 2:22 defines this as the absence of *dólos*—deliberate deception, strategic cunning, or the use of language as a tool of relational manipulation. This is critical in addressing the "Women" (Wanita) or moral character crisis, where leadership failures are often masked by spiritual rhetoric to protect the leader's reputation.

In Asian honor-shame cultures, the risk of the value gap is exacerbated by the social pressure to maintain public honor at all costs. Leaders in these contexts may be tempted to use *dólos* as a survival mechanism or to defend their "Throne" through aggressive self-defense. Christ's integrity presents a theological alternative: relational honesty rooted in a deep-seated belief in God's justice, rather than the management of social perceptions. Integrity thus restores the gospel as the operational center by ensuring that the leader's inner motivations are unified with their verbal expressions. For contemporary institutions, this necessitates a "character-based audit" and formalized mentoring where the protege's integrity is tested in the context of service before they are granted authority.

Passion as Sustained Surrender (*Paredidou*) and the Prevention of Authoritarianism

The variable of Passion in the Mosaic model is manifested through the pattern of "sustained surrender" (*paredidou*), where a leader continuously hands over results and final justice to God as the righteous Judge. This is encapsulated in the command to "be strong and courageous" (Josh 1:1–9), which is a call to active obedience rather than emotional fervor. This passion serves to mitigate the "Throne" (Takhta) pathology—the lust for power and the refusal to initiate healthy regeneration. When a leader practices *paredidou*, they are liberated from the need to control outcomes and can voluntarily share authority with their successor.

This is further supported by the concept of "overlapping authority" found in Numbers 27:20, where Moses shared his majesty with Joshua while still alive. This intentional delegation prevents the emergence of an authoritarian "throne" mentality by normalizing the sharing of power. According to servant leadership theory, legitimate power emerges from greatness in service, not from the mastery of results. For modern organizations, this implies that passion must be cultivated through long-term mentoring and the implementation of term limits that encourage leaders to focus on legacy rather than personal control.

The Risks of the Value Gap and Cultural Dynamics in Asia

The value gap is particularly dangerous in the Asian context, where leaders navigate complex social dynamics and relational injustices. The honor-shame culture often creates an environment where reputation is elevated as the highest functional value. When the gospel loses its formative power in this pressure, leaders functionally live as if God is not sovereign or just enough to be trusted with their social standing. This failure of discipleship praxis leads to a leadership culture characterized by hidden agendas and the use of the faith language to mask inner motivations.

To bridge this gap, the integrity of Christ in 1 Peter 2:21–23 provides a structural solution by framing suffering and injustice within an eschatological horizon. It suggests that theological fidelity can be lived even when the social system is unjust, by entrusting the final reference of justice to God. This is the theological bridge that allows a leader like Joshua to remain faithful despite the rebellions of the people or the pressures of the conquest. For Asian church boards, this means structurally reinforcing the VIP model through mechanisms that prioritize spiritual state over managerial success.

Structural Enforcement: The "Eleazar Model" and Institutional Governance

To move beyond a purely normative approach, the Mosaic model offers a structural solution through the figure of the priest Eleazar. In Numbers 27:19–22, Joshua was commissioned before Eleazar and the assembly, establishing a framework of public accountability. This "Eleazar Model" suggests that church boards must act as spiritual overseers who validate the leader's integrity and vision.

The authors would like to note that the following specific implementation steps for modern boards are synthesized from broader leadership theories and the biblical patterns identified:

1. **Systematic Mentoring (Zucker's Relationship):** Institutions must formalize the mentor-protégé relationship to ensure the transfer of *Vision* and *Passion* over a minimum of five years.
2. **Public Commissioning ceremonies:** To ensure institutional legitimacy and prevent "Throne" nepotism, the transition must be validated by the community and external authorities.
3. **Conflict Resolution through Relational Honesty:** Boards must foster a culture that rejects *dólos* (manipulation) in favor of the relational integrity exemplified by Christ.
4. **Eschatological Resilience Training:** Leaders should be trained in the discipline of *paredídou* (surrender), liberating them from the anxieties of the HTW paradigm.

Comparison with Peer-Reviewed Studies

When compared to the work of Markes (2021), who focuses on the divine-human dimensions of regeneration, this research provides a more focused diagnostic tool through the "value gap" theory. Similarly, while Prasetya and Simarmata (2021) view Joshua as an ideal character prototype, this study

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adds the structural dimension of Christ's integrity as the necessary theological bridge to achieve that character. Maharani (2025) emphasizes the need for mature planning in the Indonesian context; our findings provide the specific VIP content that should populate those plans. Finally, the dialogue with Onggy et al. (2026) regarding 1 Peter 2:21–23 grounds the VIP model in a robust New Testament theology of suffering and integrity.

Synthesis of the VIP Model as an Operational Center

The integration of Vision, Integrity, and Passion creates a coherent whole that restores the gospel as the operational center of leadership. Vision provides the direction, Integrity provides the legitimacy, and Passion provides the resilience. When these variables are structurally enforced, the "value gap" is bridged, and the "Wealth, Throne, and Women" paradigm is defeated by a leadership that is functionally governed by the gospel. This transition from Moses to Joshua remains the definitive model for healthy leadership regeneration because it treats *suksesi* as a sacred trust and a theological investment in the future of the flock.

CONCLUSION

The crisis of contemporary Christian leadership, characterized by a "value gap" between confessional and functional values, demands a return to biblical succession frameworks. This research concludes that the Moses-to-Joshua transition provides a normative model for implementing Vision, Integrity, and Passion (VIP) to counteract the "Wealth, Throne, and Women" paradigm. Vision must be established as a selfless communal mandate that protects the organization from materialistic drift and vision-drift. Integrity, evidenced by Joshua's spiritual state, serves as a structural fidelity to the gospel that rejects relational manipulation, or *dólos*, in favor of relational honesty. Passion is cultivated through long-term mentoring and "overlapping authority," transforming ambition into a spirit of sustained theological surrender.

Furthermore, the integrity of Christ serves as the essential theological bridge that restores the gospel as the operational center of leadership. This is particularly vital in the Asian context, where honor-shame social pressures often tempt leaders to prioritize institutional stability or reputation over theological fidelity. Church boards are encouraged to adopt the "Eleazar Model," utilizing public commissioning and character-based audits to ensure public accountability. This study suggests that successful succession is a meticulously planned process involving both divine selection and deliberate human preparation through mentoring.

Ultimately, the VIP model bridges the disconnect between the faith recognized and the practice of living. By tracing the concrete tracks of Christ's life, institutions can foster leaders who are both administratively competent and unblemished in character. This ensures that leadership regeneration remains a theological investment rather than a bureaucratic event, securing the spiritual vitality of the flock for future generations. Future research should empirically test these variables within specific ecclesiastical structures to

refine the implementation of this biblical archetype.

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