

# Authentic Leadership: Its Uniqueness and Impacts on Personal Development and Organizational Performance

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## Abstract

This study explores and analyzes the uniqueness of authentic leadership (AL) through a systematic reading of scholarly findings and its impact on personal development and organizational performance. Authentic leadership is a new topic in leadership literature. AL is a form of leadership done in direct connection to a leader's authenticity. Scholars have viewed AL as a response to unethical leadership, and at the same time, a positive leadership to adapt in organizations and nations. For this study, the uniqueness of AL is analyzed through a critical survey of its strengths and weaknesses, both in the life of the leader and the followers, through Christian and cultural lenses. Its application is extended to the leadership of Congo Initiative-Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (CI-UCBC), where I mentioned the different leadership styles being used and provided practical recommendations on how to increase AL at CI-UCBC.

**Keywords:** Authentic leadership, authenticity, personal development, and organizational performance.

## Introduction

Authentic Leadership is one of the leadership styles that has attracted my attention the most because I usually prefer being authentic in my life. After attending a Cross-Cultural Leadership course where many leadership styles were exposed, discussed, and evaluated, I understood that good leaders should have multiple competencies as a response to their followers' needs. However, certainly, a person cannot incorporate all competencies since a human is by nature limited and has personal interests and personal orientation different from others. Unfortunately, whoever wants to be or become a leader should learn to make additional effort based on followers' needs and the defining vision of the group. That is why I found it very important to study authentic leadership to understand how practically a leader can increase personal effort toward followers' needs while at the same time, remaining authentic based on personal gender, faith, and ethics.

When reading different scholars, as demonstrated in this paper, I discovered that all other leadership styles should be based on authentic leadership. The reason is that a leader should learn to adopt all other styles of leadership with a sense of authenticity to avoid falling into compromising personal values, especially if the leader is a Christian. In this paper, I have demonstrated the uniqueness/importance of authentic leadership as a fundamental leadership style for personal development and organizational performance. The aim of this

paper is not to disqualify other leadership styles but to explain that if authentic leadership is considered fundamental, then any other leadership style will be strengthened through it.

In organizations, effective leadership facilitates higher-quality production with more efficient services; it provides a sense of cohesiveness, personal development, and higher levels of satisfaction among those conducting the work; and it provides an overarching sense of direction and vision, an alignment with the environment, a healthy mechanism for innovation and creativity, and a resource for invigorating the organizational culture (M. Tshiyoyo, 2015).

## **I. The Uniqueness of Authentic Leadership**

In presenting the uniqueness of AL, I will explain the basic foundations of AL and enumerate elements of its uniqueness. AL is unique as it relies on the Authenticity of the leader in the way the leadership is exercised. Authenticity is the core of happiness in life. Whoever is forced into what he/she does not like will never be happy because what he/she does, does not result from an inner passion or commitment but from external forces. Authenticity is what defines authentic leadership as “the ability to lead yourself and others according to creation motive”, after a careful evaluation of personal values and norms (Blekklingh, 2015, p. 149). I found this definition very interesting, as Blekklingh (2015) views authentic leadership both toward the leader and the followers. Most of the time, we tend to consider leaders only as people called to lead others. Though it is true, it is also evident that leaders should learn to lead themselves first before attending to others. The reason is that when we are not able to lead ourselves, we will fail to demonstrate self-control in our actions and words and also the ability to remain focused on pursuing the vision and accomplishing the appointed activities that we want the followers to do.

According to Maslow (1970, p. 22) cited by Gardner et al. (2011), authentic leadership is demonstrated when leaders are true to their nature in exercising their leadership based on their core values, beliefs, strengths, and weaknesses. Once again, this is a very powerful way to articulate or present an authentic leader. An authentic leader leads with his/her heart through a personal and sincere commitment, but with recognition of personal strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes, we tend to view leaders as perfect beings but this can never be the case. Even though, a leader is really competent in many domains, but every leader has personal limitations or weaknesses. And it is very important to acknowledge that in leadership as a leader, willing to admit personal limitations and incapacity. Once again, this becomes very important mostly in authentic leadership, where a leader is called to be true or natural in actions and words.

Though many kinds of literature on leadership have explored different leadership styles and theories in a general sense, “Authentic leadership is generally treated as a stable, fixed essence or quality”, because it allows leaders to remain open and true to themselves in their relationships, values, norms, beliefs, and limitations in the way they approach leadership (Alvesson & Einola, 2019). I have personally realized that when I am involved in doing something that matches my desires and competencies, I do it with much energy and commitment. Even if I am not receiving external motivation from people around me. External motivation is important, but when we are doing what results from our passion, we are to remain focused on pursuing our goal even in the face of opposition and discouragement. And I think many leaders can identify themselves with my experience.

According to Shamir and Eilam (2005) cited by Endrisant et al. (2007) “authentic leaders possess self-knowledge and a personal point of view, and they identify strongly with their leadership role and act according to their values and convictions”. This perspective is another aspect that justifies the foundation of authentic leadership. According to my analysis, other leadership styles focus more on what the leader should do toward the followers or only expose the leadership requirements with a little accent on the leader’s emotions, desires, competencies, and weaknesses. To sum up, AL gives space or particular attention to the leaders’ personalities, values, beliefs, and weaknesses in relation to their duties.

Effectiveness in authentic leadership requires a good balance between the leader and the followers because “the congruence between leader self-perceptions and follower perceptions of authentic leadership is beneficial and that both need to be present at high levels to produce the most beneficial results in terms of followers’ job satisfaction” (Černe et al., 2014). In authentic leadership, leaders should make sure that followers understand aspects that express their authenticity in how they exercise their leadership’s responsibilities to avoid being considered as proud people. Reinforcing the understanding of the AL, is to say that AL is based on Authenticity, which expresses something original, authentic, correct, reliable, real, based on fact or originality. An important remark about authenticity is that “authenticity does not mean satisfying others, helping people to get rewards or preventing” their punishment when it is needed. It is neither to comprise personal belief nor values in willing to please others (Okmen et al., 2018, p. 57,58). But authenticity, as I have mentioned, is the ability to know one's own identity and defend it. Therefore, AL gives leaders an opportunity to have time for self-discovery and build themselves correctly and properly.

Once again, it is very important to differentiate between being proud or egoistic and being authentic in the leader’s behavior. The difference lies in the motivation or intention of the leader. When the leader acts based on ego behavior, the leader acts by claiming or just pursuing a position regardless of the requirements, but when the leader is motivated by authentic behavior, the leader acts based on the mission to achieve, which connects to personal beliefs and values (Blekingh, 2015).

## **II. A Brief History of the Development of Authentic Leadership**

Scholars in Leadership Studies mentioned that “the concept of authentic leadership has been discussed and explored since the early 1990s” (Okmen et al., 2018, p. 57). According to Tineke Wulffers (2017, p. 3), Bill George (2003) is a “well-known author on authentic leadership, when he asserts that there is a need for leaders who lead with purpose, values, and integrity”. Bill George (2003) found out that “authentic leaders have a genuine desire to serve others, they know themselves, and they feel free to lead from their core values” (Northouse, 2018, p. 310). However, authentic leadership theory and practice received increased attention after the Gallup Leadership Institute (GLI) summit held in 2005, “after recognition of the inappropriate and unethical leadership at that time” which was not promoting personal development, organizational performance in an objective way (Wulffers, 2017, p. 13). At the summit, participants realized a great need for leadership based on integrity, transparency, and passion based on the authenticity of the leaders.

It is necessary to remind people that “authenticity is a term that is used in psychology, as well as in sociology and existential philosophy” though slightly different in their perceptions (Wulffers, 2017, p. 13). In this paper, I will add another aspect concerning the understanding of authenticity that it is also a biblical term, as many passages in the Bible reiterate the need for authenticity in following and serving God. In the context of

leadership, “authenticity is essentially the degree to which we are true to ourselves, despite external pressures, bearing in mind that we are in a material world where we encounter external forces and influences that might be very different from our own beliefs and values” (Wulffers, 2017, p. 13). Therefore, authentic leadership was developed to put an accent on or emphasize the authenticity of leaders and their leadership roles to avoid duplicity in the leadership and the leader’s life (Northouse, 2018).

Authentic leadership is developed through an intrapersonal process and an interpersonal process. The intrapersonal process recalls an inner and careful evaluation of personal desire, values, beliefs, calling, passion, and competencies (Wulffers, 2017), while the interpersonal process is when the leadership “results not from the leader’s efforts alone, but also the response of followers”. In other words, under the interpersonal process, “authenticity emerges from the interactions between leaders and followers” (Northouse, 2018, p. 309).

Apart from the intrapersonal and interpersonal process of AL, these three concepts are used by scholars in defining authenticity in developing AL: ‘(1) *consistency* between an entity’s internal values and its external expressions, (2) *conformity* of an entity to the norms of its social category, and (3) *connection* between an entity and a person, place, or time as claimed (Lehman et al., 2019).

### III. Critical Analysis of Authentic Leadership, Including Its Strengths and Weaknesses

It is obvious that all leadership styles have both the positive and the negative side based on how they are used and based on their results in people’s lives and the organizations. I have already affirmed that authentic leadership should be fundamental among other leadership styles because it relates to the inner selves of the leaders, their values, perspectives, beliefs, competencies, and weaknesses. To be able to do effective transformational leadership, for example, the leaders should first be authentic about themselves, because in many cases, it is possible to get involved in the development of the followers and never get transformed personally as a leader. The reason is that transformational leadership was not done based on the authenticity of the leader. In a very explicit way, I want to mention or demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of authentic leadership.

#### The Strengths of Authentic Leadership

In a general sense, authentic leadership has many qualities and is considered to be the best style of leadership because of the influence it produces in people’s lives and its input on organizational performance. Many leaders are well-known today because of their authenticity. Among them, we have Helen Suzman, “who was one of the first white South Africans who fought apartheid from within the parliament”, Nelson Mandela, and Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who “have always endeavored to be true to themselves and true to their leadership positions, with strong ethical underpinnings” (Wulffers, 2017, p. 10,11).

Authentic leadership respects the leader as a unique person with unique values, beliefs, competencies, and weaknesses to pay attention to. It allows the leader to lead based on their personal uniqueness. Every person is born with specific talents and abilities that are generally different from others. Therefore, allowing everyone to be natural matters and conditions the final result. AL also allows mutual satisfaction both for the leader and for the followers.

According to Tineke Wulffers (2017), authentic leadership promotes leaders as ‘beacons of hope’ through their being and by inspiring others to reach the highest level of themselves because authentic leaders “are

spiritually informed to consider the well-being of all those on whom they can have a positive effect” (p.2). That is why authentic leadership is considered the better quality and the appropriate leadership style to give an evident and appropriate response “in our current volatile world of uncertainty and complexity” (p. 12).

Another aspect of AL is that authentic leaders not only motivate their followers to pursue the vision of the group and fulfill the requirements of their mission, but they also inspire them, since, motivation is generally considered an external force influencing us to do something even when we are not fully convinced about it. But inspiration is the internal force convincing or influencing us to follow the vision or accomplish the tasks of the group because of whom the leader is based on his/her nature, values, and integrity. In AL, leaders influence by inspiring, not merely by motivating.

Authentic leadership opens doors for the leaders to have greater impact and influence beyond their sphere of influence since authentic leadership is “a leadership by presence that transcends position. This means that even the leaders of authentic leaders may become their followers”(p. 7). What a great revelation! An authentic leader in the lowest position can have a greater influence on the boss or other leaders in the highest positions. Research has proven that in organizations that are based on or formed on authentic characteristics in their leaders, employees experience more satisfaction and commitment in their duties (Darvish & Rezaei, 2011).

Another aspect to consider is that “authentic leadership is seen as a leadership behavior which increases the positive climate in the organizations”, where hypocrisy is avoided, people increase their personal development because of the positive climate in line with organizational purposes, they internalize the moral point of view, they act effectively in the balanced distribution of information, adopts transparency in the relationships with the subordinates in the work environment, which allow mutual trust and support (Ayça, 2019, p. 791). Authentic leadership “moderates the relationship between creative self-efficacy and individual creativity” for a holistic transformation of the members (Lei et al., 2021).

To sum up, the strengths of authentic leadership are that, it promotes (1) personal uniqueness, (2) personal growth, (3) leading with passion, (4) integrity, (5) organizational performance, (6) mutual trust and engagement, and (7) transparency and justice. Those are unchangeable qualities for effective leadership, no matter which style of leadership is adopted.

### **The Weaknesses of Authentic Leadership**

As I said, all leadership styles have their strengths and weaknesses, however, with different degrees of impact. Some leadership styles may have a high level of weakness with a lower level of strength. But AL has a higher level of strength and a lower level of weakness, which continue to prove its uniqueness and quality.

The negative side of authentic leadership is mostly connected to the sinful nature of humans. Since the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden, all human have inherited a sinful nature that keeps them on a permanent stage of evil. Apart from being separated from God because of sin, humans inherited the sinful nature, which is the permanent inner power leading to evil (Gen. 3). That is why all humans need the renewal offered by God through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross to get power over sin and all the consequences of sin (Jn. 3:16). Therefore, whoever wants to gain power over sinful nature needs the redemption given by Jesus Christ through the power of the Spirit of God. For that reason, authentic leadership is only appropriate for those renewed by the power of God to overcome their sinful nature, so that they reflect more closely on what God expects each one to be.



The inner renewal of the leaders becomes imperative in AL because, without redemption from sin, the authentic leaders will remain focused on their values, and beliefs, dominated by sin and evil desire, which will then become a poison to the followers and the organization. So, when leaders are not yet renewed by the redemption power of God, instead of being ‘beacons of hope’ will become ‘beacons of destruction’ in their leadership.

We may be tempted to know the difference between sinful nature, personality, values, and beliefs. The sinful nature is the inner nature leading into disobedience against the word and will of God (2Thes. 2: 10-12; Gal. 5: 19-21; 1Jn. 3: 4-6). When God recommends to love one another, sinful nature will lead to hate and harm others without pity. When someone is still under the power of sin, applying authentic leadership may be very dangerous because personal values and beliefs may be very harmful, even if the person has needed or qualified competencies. But personality is a quality that differentiates us from others based on our attitude, and character as a result of our biological, social, psychological, and cognitive functionality (Barratt, 1985).

Another aspect of the difference is between sinful nature and personal weaknesses. I have mentioned that authentic leaders acknowledge their competencies and weaknesses. Sinful nature, as I mentioned, is related to human will which stands against God’s law, while weaknesses, in my understanding, are more related to failure in doing something and failure in enduring something, incapacity in accomplishing something or enduring something.

After making those differences, in a very explicit way, I think the weaknesses of authentic leadership are: (1) over personal estimation if the leader is not yet renewed by the redemption power of God, (2) lack of tolerance toward others different from us, (3) resistance to change where needed because we want to remain the same, (4) lack of humility, (5) resistance to growth. For this particular weakness related to resistance to growth, I think it is revealed when a particular weakness opposes or stands against our personal growth. That is shown, firstly, when the leader fails to acknowledge or admit a weakness. Secondly, when the leader acknowledges a weakness but does not want to make any effort to change it when it is possible.

#### **IV. Evaluation of Authentic Leadership through the Lenses of Culture, and Faith**

Leadership style becomes meaningful when it is connected to the cultural norms and beliefs of a specific people. Bill George (2003) cited by Northouse (2018, p. 310) said that authentic leaders have five basic characteristics in common: (1) they have a strong sense of purpose, (2) they have strong values about the right thing to do, (3) they establish trusting relationships with others, (4) they demonstrate self-discipline and act on their values, (5) they are sensitive and empathetic to the plight of others.

Those five characteristics are put into use or applied based on each person’s culture and religion’s beliefs. For this paper, I will base my reflection on Congolese culture and Christian faith. Authentic leaders have a great sense of integrity, however, ‘it is important to understand that authentic leaders are not perfect human beings. We have, for example, Mandela, who despite the great impact he had on his leadership as an authentic leader, “acknowledged that he had made mistakes like all of us, but he always introspected and considered how not to repeat those mistakes” next time as much as possible (Wulffers, 2017, p. 10). So, authentic leaders do not harm willingly, but if that happens, they quickly try to learn a lesson from their mistake to avoid it next time and get back on the truck as quickly as possible.

#### **Understanding Authentic Leadership through the Congolese Culture**

The Congolese culture is dominated by the honor and shame culture. On a general basis, people act to preserve the honor of the family or personal honor. On some level, being authentic in Congolese culture is somehow viewed as being arrogant and proud. Most of the time, people do not act based on who they are but based on how people will interpret their actions and attitudes because their focus is to avoid shame on themselves.

In many Congolese tribes, there are rules or laws established to determine how young people should interact with old people, how the wife should interact with her husband, how children should interact with their parents with some practical actions. I personally think that rules or laws are very important in promoting harmony among people. However, all rules or laws have principles behind them that are communicated, such as respect, integrity, consideration, love, tolerance, and so on. Therefore, the most important thing about the rules, according to me, is the application of the principles behind them, not the form or actions in which the rules are applied. The form or actions can deceive, but the respect of the principles reveals the intention through different meaningful actions done with a free conscience and freedom. And this way of interpreting or analyzing things leads to authenticity.

So, the problem with authentic leadership in Congolese culture is the obligation attached to the forms or actions pre-established on how to respect the rules already made in the community not really the respect of the principles behind them. As a young lady, I must respect the old ladies, but not by remaining silent when an old lady is speaking, as is the case in some tribes. In doing so, I can remain silent when, deeply in my heart, there is no respect toward them. A wife can pretend to show respect to her husband by avoiding eating with him when, deep in her heart, she does not respect him in many other ways. This means the wife is not authentic in her respect for her husband. Another reality regarding that is that the wife can do things toward her husband to avoid shame on her couple, while from her inner intention, there is no respect for her husband. But if the accent is made on respect without imposing the forms on how that respect can be done, wives, in their freedom, will demonstrate their respect toward their husbands in an authentic way without compromising their inner feelings and values.

Empirical research on leadership styles and organizational performance done in two Congolese towns (Bakavu and Goma) dominated by very small family businesses reveals three fundamentals results (1) both leadership and performance are confirmed to be multidimensional, (2) autocratic leadership is widely adopted by both men and women, (3) only participative/democratic leadership styles have a positive impact on businesses' performance (Akonkwa et al., 2022). That shows that authentic leadership is greatly needed even in Congo to abolish autocratic leadership and reinforce participative/democratic leadership to boost businesses and even eradicate unethical leadership in politics, which can be more influenced by the autocratic leadership as both men and women in Congo tend to adopt it.

Congo is among the African countries that have endured many crises, political instability, war, and poverty. Therefore, "given the state's failure in Congo, among the priorities is to create a strong and restored nation. To reach that, the country needs to have leaders who are transformational or visionary in the way to improve the life stage of its population and put in use all the wealth of the country for its development". Research has proved that to enhance leadership development in the Congo, "the three pillars must be interconnected spirituality, intelligence and morality" (M. Tshiyoyo, 2015). And these pillars are nothing else but the need for authentic leadership in the Congo.

Bill George (2003) argued that “people today want to have access to their leaders and they want their leaders to be open with them” (Northouse, 2018, p. 312). Unfortunately, this attitude is lacking in many Congolese leaders. In a general way, Congolese leaders are used to ‘Patron Leadership’ where the leader is above everyone, he is the one who controls everyone and everything. There is a long protocol for attending to the leader. And Congolese leaders do not want to be corrected because they consider themselves more powerful than any other person. All that needs to be eradicated in Congolese leadership, because in good leadership, leaders are ready to receive criticism and even blame from their followers (Tshiyoyo, 2012) for harmony and mutual respect in the organization/group.

According to some scholars, the greatest challenge in Congo is the use of power and unethical leadership in politics and economics. That has made the Congo full of natural resources, which could make it the richest country in the world. Unfortunately, the lack of ethics and authentic leaders in the country has negatively affected how Congolese riches are used. The consequence of that is that the entire population is put in a hopeless situation (Mualaba, 2020).

### **Understanding authentic leadership through Christian belief**

I mentioned earlier that authenticity is also a biblical concept, not only a sociological, psychological or philosophical term. “Authentic leaders operate from a set of values that focus on what they perceive to be right for those whom they lead” and that make them to be values-centered persons (Wulffers, 2017, p. 17). The biblical passage below shows the importance of authenticity in the Bible:

Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father, who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’ Mathew 7: 21-23, NIV

Based on my understanding of this passage, God is ‘value-centered’ not ‘action-centered’. God does not give much credit to what we do, but mostly to how we do what we are called to do. With this analysis, I want to say that authentic leadership has its root more in Christianity than in sociology and psychology, as Bill George (2003) noticed. It is even strengthened by this summary, which says that authentic leadership is considered ‘as a logical extension of the authentic self, and can be considered as a foundation of positive leadership’ (Wulffers, 2017, p. 18).

God is against people who appear godly by appearance but are evil or dangerous from within. Authentic leadership is established when individuals incorporate or connect their true selves into their role as leaders. They remain true from within and outside. They are the same in private and in public (Laeroy et al., 2012). Therefore, AL is a foundation for all other leadership styles that lead to true transformation both for the leader and the followers (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Leaders willing to apply transformational leadership, or even servant leadership, must first be authentic, since authenticity should characterize the way they will do transformational or servant leadership toward their followers. If that is not the case, the leadership will be weak.

In Exodus 32: 1-4, we see the example of Aaron, who was unable to remain authentic and maintain a firm belief in God when the people asked him to make for them a god because Moses, their leader, disappeared in the presence of God and they could not interact with God directly. For fear of getting blamed by his people,



Aaron chose to compromise his personal beliefs to please them. This is an example of not being able to maintain one's authenticity in the midst of troubles, oppression, and problems.

AL is very demanding and can expose the leaders to difficult situations when the beliefs of the leaders do not match the expectations of the followers. Therefore, in contradictory situations, authentic leaders should learn to stand firm like Peter and John, who said in Acts 4: 19-20, 'which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you or him? You be the judges!' Peter and John did not give up on Jesus because of the oppression against their faith. This should be the standard for authentic leaders.

## V. Practical Application of Authentic Leadership at CI-UCBC

Congo Initiative-Université Chrétienne Bilingue du Congo (CI-UCBC) was created as an organization for a holistic and integrated development program with five other centers operating under the non-profit organization called Congo Initiative. Thus, the mission and values of these different centers are connected to the great vision of the Congo Initiative under which they operate. However, each center has a specific area of expertise and domain in pursuing the vision of the Congo Initiative.

The vision of CI-UCBC: is to train national executive Christians well-equipped to transform their respective communities and their nation, the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The mission of CI-UCBC: to create and develop an authentic, regenerated, and modeled community of Disciples of Christ with the mission of transforming societies in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Values of CI-UCBC:

- **Community life:** providing opportunities for sharing experiences and spiritual practices and promoting spiritual formation characterized by mentoring and discipleship.
- **Reflection:** mode and framework offered for dialogue, learning, and interaction aimed at reconciling knowledge and practice in everyday life.
- **Service:** promoted as a supervisory and training framework for men and women agents of the Kingdom of God, loving the fear of God but immersed in society.
- **Integration:** develop an integrated ministry on both a personal and collective level, harmoniously combining thoughts, emotion, and action, theology, politics, and business.

### CI-UCBC Leadership styles

At the beginning of the year 2007, according to my observation and analysis, CI-UCBC adopted a situational approach in the way the leadership of the management committee was structured to meet the community's expectations by not giving the highest leadership position at the university to a woman because, at that time, the local effective leader was considered to be men, not women. At the same time, many women did not have the qualifications needed for those positions. The situational approach focuses on leadership in situations or contexts because different situations or contexts require specific and adapted kind of leadership based on the needs of the followers. Therefore, 'to be an effective leader requires that a person adapt his or her style to the demands of different situations' (Northouse, 2018, p. 167). Based on the expectations of our local community, authenticity was hidden in the way the leadership of the Management Committee team of CI-UCBC was organized. But as the years pass, CI-UCBC is getting closer to the ideal, which is to give equal leadership both men and women. Some ladies are now responsible for some departments and services.

However, it is important to remember that even if women's leadership is needed, it is still challenged by old perspectives, cultures, and religious standards. This means that 'although the predicament of female leaders has improved significantly in recent decades, there is still a long way to go' (Northouse, 2018, p. 576). This challenge is also remarkable at CI-UCBC in the way the leadership management committee is formed with only men and a lady as the rector's assistance without an 'executive power'. She is more of a secretary than a 'decision-making person' in the organization.

Based on the CI-UCBC motto 'Being Transformed to Transform', CI-UCBC also promotes transformational leadership because, from its origin, CI-UCBC operates for the change and transformation of students and staff by taking into consideration people's 'emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals' even though additional effort needs to be made (Northouse, 2018, p. 263). Apart from transformational leadership, CI-UCBC's philosophy is based on servant leadership. CI-UCBC leaders have done their best to promote proximity between them and with other staff and between them and students, even if there is still a need for extra effort in the way servant leadership is applied to avoid a sense of discrimination among staff and students.

In a general sense, the transformational and servant leadership adopted at CI-UCBC is somehow combined with authentic leadership. That is a great accomplishment, and CI-UCBC leaders must be congratulated for that. That is what I revealed in previous paragraphs, saying that all other leadership styles should be combined with authentic leadership to strengthen leadership and promote personal development and organizational performance. However, the authenticity of CI-UCBC leadership is not yet profound. Tineke Wulffers (2017, p. 11) said there is still an opportunity for better if 'we too can reflect on what has not gone as well as we would have liked and strive to do better in the future'. However, striving for better is not enough, we need to purposefully 'understand both our purpose and our hierarchy of values' (p. 8) because what will inspire people is mostly who we are, not primarily 'what we ought to do as leaders' (p. 9).

### **Recommendations to increase Authentic Leadership style at CI-UCBC**

To what is authentic leadership as presented in this paper based on its uniqueness, my recommendations to increase authentic leadership at CI-UCBC are: (1) leaders should remain authentic in their actions and words beyond the simple way of pursuing the vision, mission, and values of CI-UCBC to the level of incarnating them in their personal lives, by making the idea behind the vision, mission, and values of CI-UCBC who they are true, (2) The annual objectives and target of CI-UCBC should continue to take into consideration particular issues without comprising to its vision and values, (3) the community life which is prone at CI-UCBC must be done without hypocrisy and discrimination, (4) there must be transparency, objectivity and coherency in the way people are hired or affected into different responsibilities and services.

### **Conclusion**

Leadership is a great attribute with a lot of responsibilities toward the followers and the organization we represent as leaders. However, the impact of leadership depends on the style adopted and the nature of the leaders in the way they exercise their influence on their followers in pursuing the vision of the organization/group. Among several leadership styles, in this paper, I demonstrated through many scholars' research that AL is the positive leadership and the foundation for exceptional leadership, which promotes personal development and organizational performance. After a deep analysis of the cultural and political context of the

Congo, I found that AL will be among the great tools in rebuilding the stability and development of the country. Through a Christian lens, I discovered that AL is biblically supported and that God is ‘value-centered’ rather than ‘action-centered’ because God encourages authenticity in the way we approach and serve Him. One particular truth about God that I found is that He does not only focus on the final result but, He also cares about the process leading toward it. The application of AL analysis focused on the leadership of CI-UCBC by suggesting practical recommendations on how AL may be increased at CI-UCBC to enhance the personal development of the employees and the performance of the organization.

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