THE MODERATING EFFECT OF LECTURERS' IMMEDIACY BEHAVIORS ON AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KINSHASA, DRC

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been submitted to any other institution or university other than the Pan Africa Christian University for academic credit.

Signed by …… Date……

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This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University Supervisors.

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DEDICATION

To educators who are committed to positively shaping the lives of their students. To my family and friends for their constant prayers, encouragement, and support throughout this journey. And to the students in the Leadership Department, whose passion for learning and leadership has been a source of inspiration.

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ABSTRACT

Students' academic performance remains a major concern in higher education institutions globally and in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Despite numerous interventions aimed at improving academic outcomes, many university students continue to experience low academic achievement, poor grade point averages, delayed completion rates, and underperformance. At the University of Kinshasa, factors such as corruption, poor student well-being, inadequate leadership practices, and lecturers' behaviors have been identified as contributors to students' academic challenges. Although leadership has been recognized as an important determinant of educational outcomes, limited research has examined how lecturers' authentic leadership influences students' academic performance, particularly when reinforced by lecturers' immediacy behaviors. This study, therefore, investigated the moderating effect of lecturers' immediacy behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. The study was grounded in Ethical Leadership Theory, Behavioral leadership Theory, and Theory of Academic Performance. A mixed-methods explanatory design was adopted involving 213 students and 23 lecturers. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 27 through Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and moderation analysis, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis with MAXQDA. The results showed that authentic leadership, supported by lecturers' immediate behaviors, had a favorable effect on students' grades. This study contributes to leadership scholarship in higher education by demonstrating that authentic leadership, particularly self-awareness and relational transparency significantly enhances students' academic performance when reinforced by lecturers' immediacy behaviors. It introduces a relational framework that links authentic

leadership with classroom engagement, showing how immediacy practices such as praise, questioning, and teaching clarity transform leadership influence into improved learning outcomes. The findings highlight that effective educational leadership extends beyond administrative roles to everyday lecturer–student interactions that promote fairness, motivation, and trust. The study benefits multiple stakeholders: lecturers gain insight into how immediacy behaviors strengthen authentic leadership; students experience more supportive and engaging learning environments; administrators can design leadership development initiatives that foster authentic, student-centered teaching; and policymakers can draw on the results to inform leadership and quality assurance frameworks. Overall, the study concludes that authentic leadership, reinforced by immediacy behaviors, provides a transformative model for enhancing academic achievement and nurturing ethical and relational learning environments. Future studies should evaluate digital immediacy behaviors, repeat the findings in different situations, and investigate the long-term benefits of authentic leadership on student outcomes.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AL: Authentic leadership

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

GPA: Grade Point Average

PAC: Pan Africa Christian University

UNIKIN: University of Kinshasa

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Authentic Leadership: Authentic Leadership refers to a leadership style characterized by transparency, ethical conduct, self-awareness, balanced processing, and relational openness, rather than simply being "real" in a subjective sense (Northouse, 2021). In this study, "real" is understood as observable and measurable leadership behaviors assessed through validated leadership indicators such as self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalized moral perspective**.** The present study defined authentic leadership as a collection of interrelated behaviors that lead to an increased level of consciousness and independently controlled moral standards that indicate how leaders influence their followers, make decisions based on ethics, and use knowledge (Nikolić et al., 2020).

Self-awareness**:** According to Sutton (2016), self-awareness is the extent to which people are consciously aware of their internal states and their interactions or relationships with others**.** In this study, the concept was operationalized as a leader's ability to demonstrate a better understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the impact they have on others (Caldwell & Hayes, 2016).

Relational transparency: Refers to constructive connections between a leader and the follower that are based on transparency and trust (Sabol & Pianta, 2012)**.** This study defined relational transparency as "leaders' way of interacting with others that show the truth about their authentic convictions as well as their emotions to their subordinates, leading to a reciprocal sense of trust" (Wei et al., 2018).

Balanced processing: According to Leroy et al. (2012), "is about the leader considering, without any bias, all information" at his or her disposition before making any decision (Leroy et al., 2012). The concept was used in this study as the propensity

to take into account all pertinent data that is at hand and helpful for arriving at advantageous conclusions for the group.

Internalized moral perspective: This has been perceived as an independently regulated mechanism based on one's moral standards and beliefs that are used as a road map that directs one's conduct (Squires, 2018). It was defined in this study as a set of belief systems that have been internalized and have become part of one's life and lifestyle in such a way that it indirectly and directly directs one's behaviors.

Lecturers' immediacy behaviors: According to Christophel and Andersen (1995) as cited by Putera Jaya et al., (2022) these behaviors can be non-verbal immediacy acts and may include eye contact, smiles, body positions, gestures, and proximity; and immediacy verbal acts that may include addressing students by their name, praising the students, classroom questioning, teaching clarity, which reduce the psychological barrier between teacher and students. In regard to the following, lecturers' immediacy behaviors were, in this study, referred to those immediacy verbal acts that a lecturer performs within the classroom. The concept was used as such in the study because research has shown that a lecturer immediacy behavior can direct the discussion within the classroom, as well as, communicate lecture content accordingly, and mediate interactions properly leading to a better understanding among students (Al Ghamdi, 2015).

Academic performance: refers to the measurable academic outcomes of university students, including Grade Point Average (GPA), examination results, coursework assessments, class attendance, graduation rates, and final academic projects such as research papers or capstone projects (Paudel, 2021). In this study, academic performance was operationalized using students' GPA and class attendance

as primary indicators due to data accessibility and institutional measurement consistency

In this study, academic performance was defined as the process of carrying out academic activities that end in the measurement of students' class attendance and achievement across various academic subjects.

Student: According to Enokela (2023), a student is defined as any individual who is enrolled, acknowledged, and actively involved in learning at instructional institutions such as colleges and universities to gain expertise and abilities that will help them improve personally and better equip them for the job market. This was the view that this study upholded, and the term was used with exclusivity for students at the university.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive exposition of the background of the study. It outlines the statement of the problem, the objectives, and the hypothesis of the study. It furthermore discusses the assumptions, justification, significance, scope, limitations, and delimitations and it finally provides a summary of the chapter.

Background of the Study

Academic performance is perceived to be among the several components of students' future success (Masud et al., 2019). According to Alshammari et al. (2017), it plays a significant role in determining not only the student's future success and the nation's social and economic development but also the educational reputation and quality of a university. Though affected not only by students' effort, motivation, self-esteem, learning resources, study habits, peers, parental support, corruption or bribery, sexual harassment, lecturers' behaviors and their leadership practices and styles; it however remains one of the most significant indicators of a student's level of productivity and a university's educational quality (de Vries & Martínez, 2019). It is, in essence, one of the most important components that every stakeholder involved in the learning process of a student examines.

Leadership within the academic sector is hailed as an important component in the learning process that significantly affects students' outcomes (Sopiah & Sangadji, 2020). According to Agatha Ngozi (2021) educational practitioners have recognized it as a vital element for education and one of the most significant engines of survival for institutions. Moreover, Ratna et al. (2022) have argued that the success of students depends upon the behaviors of their lecturers. These authors have, furthermore, alluded that the leadership quality of a lecturer is an integral part of the success and

achievement of students. This is because lecturers do not only impart to their students the knowledge and experience, they have amassed in their respective fields of study, but they also offer academic and career counselling, moral support, direct and indirect guidance (Andy-Wali, 2018; Tsakpornu, 2019). Thus, from the aforementioned studies, the investigation of lecturer leadership has been intricately linked to academic leadership (Hendra & Sadiatmi, 2023). Research on lecturer leadership styles has demonstrated that lecturer leadership styles has the ability to affect students as learners in terms of their knowledge of the topic at hand and in molding their attitudes and behaviors (Nurlaela & Sugiyanto, 2019; Enoch, 2016; Suwandan et al. 2015; Weismann, 2013).

In the context of education, Asma (2017) states that leadership in the academic setting is primarily oriented towards enhancing the quality of learning over time, mobilizing students to achieve their maximum potential (Dedeyn, 2021), and cultivating intrinsic motivation for learning among students (Trigueros et al., 2020). From the following, it can be contended that leadership styles adopted by a lecturer can boost the general educational experiences and outcomes of students (Cao, 2022). This, therefore, suggests that lecturers are educational leaders and as such their behaviors and leadership styles affect the thinking and behavioral outcomes of students.

Throughout the years, leadership has been perceived as an indispensable component in the success of an organization (Sönmez Çakır & Adiguzel, 2020). According to Akparep et al. (2019), “It is one of the key driving forces for improving a firm’s performance. Based on Akparep et al.’s claim, researchers have concluded that an organisation's total success is influenced by the type of leadership that is used within (Nidadhavolu, 2018). Subsequently, universities require educational leaders

who will not only carry out their responsibilities with the utmost level of efficiency, integrity, and morality but who will also exhibit effective leadership behaviors. This is because research has shown that both lecturers' leadership styles and behaviors, among many other factors, have had a significant impact on students' motivation and engagement, which in turn has affected their students' academic performance (Razak et al., 2019). For example Sarinah (2022), argued that a lecturer's leadership style can positively or negatively affect students' performance. Bush et al. (2021), concurred adding that their leadership styles and behaviors encourage and motivate their students to achieve the common goal of effective learning outcomes. This consideration is crucial for examination because a nation's market performance is largely dependent on the quality of students' academic performance.

Nevertheless, while the fact about the importance and impact of leadership and lecturers' behaviors remains indisputable, various changes that our world has been going through have challenged not only the nature, purpose, and place of university education but have also revealed some immoral behaviors which can be in the form of corruption, fraud, sexual assault, poor teaching style, and so on, among educational leaders (Ishak et al., 2019). For instance, in a study conducted in America on the university scandal, the researcher discovered that "fifty affluent U.S. citizens were convicted for bribing university admission pathways originally designed for students' athletes to buy access to elite universities for their children" (Downes, 2017).

"A similar case against Harvard University revealed that quid-pro-quo donations by financially strong private donors played a significant role in providing elite university access in the U.S. for students who would not be admissible to these institutions by legal and moral standards in place" (Glendinning et al., 2019). In another study conducted by Heyneman et al., (2008), the researchers discovered that

"60% of students in European countries such as Bulgaria, Croatia, Moldova, and Serbia" reported having bribed their lecturers to pass exams.

In the Asian context, a study conducted by Ishak et al. (2019) in Malaysia's higher learning institutions revealed that there was a significant number of lecturers involved in bribery. Drawing from the "statistics given by the Malaysian Anti-corruption Commission in March 2018, the researchers discovered that there was a higher level of corruption among Malaysia's higher learning institutions, which led to the incarceration of three individuals who were producing fake degree certificates, inclusive of masters, degrees, and diplomas (The Star Online 2018). To make matters worse, the researchers furthermore argued that "an ex-lecturer was caught for presenting false PhD certificates and documents to be accepted as a lecturer, and the university has to pay a sum of RM 195,081.31 for his salary during the two-year service he offered at the university before resigning in 2010" (The Sun Daily, 2018).

In the African context, a study by Ibrahim (2022) on the Nigerian university system has revealed that corruption has sapped the nation's educational system and led to significant levels of exploitation of students and sexual harassment of female students. The researcher argued that it has created massive inequality among students, leading to poor academic performance. The aforementioned examples illustrate that higher education and universities in particular have not been protected from unmoral behaviors, which, in one way or another have affected the performances of students.

In their study on corruption and student achievement in tertiary institutions in Enugu state, Nigeria, Aniodoh et al. (2017) revealed that corruption has negatively contributed to the legal image of teaching as a profession in Nigeria. This, they added, has created a culture of dishonesty and a loss of trust in the national educational system. From this observation, one can argue that bribery, as well as corruption, do

not only compromise the principles of fairness, equity, and meritocracy but also compromise the quality of education provided to students (Graycar, 2015). Using the words of Sabic-El-Rayess and Heyneman (2020), it affects students' performance.

In a study conducted by Mwenzi et al. (2022) on the impact of university education on the creativity and performance of students at three private universities in the city of Kinshasa, in the Democratic Republic of Congo found that the development of creativity and performance among students was low within the educational sector. This, according to mediacongo.net (n.d.), was due to a high level of corruption, which not only made students look for an "easy" way but became gangrene which has demotivated some students, thus affecting their academic performance. Nevertheless, while corruption has appeared to be one of the major factors affecting students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, Bashonga (2008) added that political instabilities, sexual harassment, a lack of e-learning literacy, lack of value-based leadership, and mismanagement, among other factors, have largely affected the country educational sector, which has been seen in the underperformance of students.

The research demonstrates that factors affecting students' academic performance globally are also present in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Corruption being one of these issues, has been perceived as a universal phenomenon that has had a significant negative impact on social cohesiveness, the public's trust in higher learning institutions, and students' academic performance (Denisova-Schmidt, 2018). These immoral behaviors have led various stakeholders involved in the field of education to emphasize the importance of teacher leadership in the classroom and to rethink the most appropriate management and leadership style that should be employed in educational institutions (Kasalak et al., 2022), in particular to unravel the

link between teacher leadership and students' educational achievement (Warren, 2021). With the desire to solve this issue, educational leaders around the world have attempted to find the best leadership approach that could be of help.

Studies drawn from the humanistic leadership theories which place a premium on people' worth, dignity, and potential, emphasizing the necessity of empathy, ethical behavior, and relational involvement, have observed that leadership in higher education institutions has been subjected to various leadership styles such as collaborative and distributed leadership (Youngs, 2013); transformational leadership (Khan et al., 2020); leader-member exchange (Aggarwal et al., 2020); instructional leadership (Shaked, 2021); moral leadership (Mostafa & Abed El-Motalib, 2020); and servant leadership (Dahleez & Aboramadan, 2022). Although each of these leadership styles has been beneficial, it has not been easy to decide on a particular leadership style appropriate for use in dealing with issues affecting students' academic performance. Some researchers, such as Settles et al. (2019) have argued that it is difficult to specifically agree on a leadership style appropriate for use in a university setting, knowing that a university is managed by various structures and administrative bodies e.g., from the rector, vice-rectors, and deans to academic councils, department managers, administrative boards, and lecturers. Nevertheless, underlying the importance of leadership for the success of an organization, researchers have in the past decade opted for "authentic leadership, which has emerged as an important area of research in the field of organizational behaviors" (Farid et al., 2020).

From a contextual perspective, numerous studies (AlMazrouei, 2023; Ayca, 2023; Basaran & Kiral, 2020; Ribeiro et al., 2018; Towsen et al., 2020) have attempted to determine the role that authentic leadership plays on employee performance, affective commitment, and job performance, and concluded that

authentic leadership has a positive impact on employee performance. Nonetheless, despite significant research on leadership and employee performance, as well as studies on academic leadership in higher education, the particular function of lecturer leadership in affecting university results is largely unknown. Existing research has primarily focused on universities as environments that promote the development of leadership skills in the classroom, rather than investigating the direct impact of lecturers' leadership on academic and institutional performance (Berry and Hess, 2013; Whitney, 2013; Snoek et al., 2015; Sales et al., 2017). It was therefore this gap that this study addressed, as it examined the role of authentic leadership and lecturers' behaviors on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa (DRC).

Statement of the Problem

Students' academic performance remains a major challenge in higher education institutions worldwide, including those in Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Evidence from previous studies indicates that many students continue to experience low grade point averages, poor class attendance, delayed graduation, and failure to meet expected academic standards (Khuma & Utete, 2023). At the University of Kinshasa, studies have identified challenges such as student welfare concerns, corruption, and inadequate learning conditions that negatively affect academic outcomes. Despite these findings, students' academic performance remains a concern, suggesting that other influential factors may not have been sufficiently explored.

Influenced by a variety of factors such as a student's personal effort, level of self-worth, study habits, as well as learning resources, social pressure, the university infrastructure, parental support, large class sizes, bribery or corruption, classroom attendance, lecturers' behaviors and their teaching and leadership styles, the issue has

raised an alarm among the stakeholders involved in the learning and teaching industry in such a way that several recommendations have been made such as “providing support for student emotional and mental well-being, creating supportive campus environment, raising awareness of the importance of mental health through workshops, seminars and other educational programs, providing different facilities and employing various teaching methods to enhance students’ academic performance” (Abdullah & Mirza, 2019; Kassaw & Demareva, 2023; Khuma & Utete, 2023). In the context of the University of Kinshasa, Enguta et al., (2023) have argued that factors such as students’ well-being within the university has positively affected students’ academic performance; on the other hand, Kabasua and Kamango (2021) have reposted that corruption, points sexually transmissible have negatively affected the academic performance of some students.

Acknowledging the importance of leadership, educational leaders, on the other hand, have suggested “various leadership styles such as collaborative and distributed leadership (Younds, 2017); transactional leadership (Sims et al., 2021); responsible leadership (Akhtar et al., 2020); instructional leadership (Shaked, 2021); transformational leadership (Sathiyaseelan, 2021); moral leadership (Gok et al., 2017); and servant leadership (Dahleez and Aboramadan, 2022). While each one of these leadership styles can have a significant role in dealing with the matter at hand, this study has opted for authentic leadership.

In addition to the above, some methodological gaps were observed. Some of these gaps were drawn from studies such as those of Kleynhans et al. (2022) who in their study on authentic leadership, trust in the leader, and flourishing, used a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design; this study used a mixed methods design. In other studies, conducted by Sen et al. (2020) on authentic leadership and lecturers’

voice behaviors, and Wong and Laschinger (2013) on authentic leadership, performance, and job satisfaction, the researchers employed a time-lagged design approach, a non-experimental design, and predictive sampling methods. This study, in contrast, employed an explanatory mixed research design to bring out a comprehensive analysis of the role of authentic leadership and lecturers' behaviors on students' academic performance. In terms of the sampling method, this study used both the purposeful and stratified sampling methods that helped to determine the relationship between variables; and are appropriate for evaluating hypotheses (La et al., 2015).

Thus, the selection of authentic leadership style was driven by two factors. First, there are few studies if not none that have been done in the Democratic Republic of the Congo utilizing this leadership style concerning students' academic performance with lecturers' behaviors as the moderating variable, pointing out some conceptual, methodological, and contextual gaps (Ayca, 2023; Duarte et al., 2021a; Kleynhans et al., 2022; Sen et al., 2020; Towsen et al., 2020). Second, authentic leadership is the most successful type of leadership in handling poor behaviors (Rego et al., 2021).

Objectives of the study

General Objective

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the moderating effect of lecturers' immediacy behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study were:

i. To determine the effect of self-awareness on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

ii. To examine the effect of relational transparency on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

iii. To assess the effect of balanced processing on students 'academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

iv. To assess the effect of internalized moral standards on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

v. To analyze the moderating effect of lecturers' immediacy behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

Research Hypothesis

The study was guided by the following hypotheses:

H_1: Self-awareness has no significant effect on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

H_2: Relational transparency has no significant effect on students' academic Performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC

H_3: Balanced processing has no significant effect on students' academic Performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

H_4: Internal moral standards have no outstanding effect on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

H_5: Lecturers' immediacy behaviors have no moderating effect on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa, DRC.

Assumptions of the Study

One key assumption of this study was that authentic leaders will play a significant role in students' academic performance. The second assumption of the study was that lecturers' behaviors as the moderating variable will have a significant moderating role in the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance. The last assumption was that respondents will be willing to offer their time and knowledge to the investigation of this subject matter during the interviews and will complete the surveys truthfully with the understanding that their responses will be kept secret and that their identity will be safeguarded.

Justification of the Study

This study was motivated by the disturbing academic performance of students, and in particular students at the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As per Shahjahan et al. (2021), the issue of students' low academic performance has been one of the biggest challenges facing universities around the world in such a way that it has become a major concern among all the educational leaders who have not only attempted to find out the major reasons for this issue but have also given appropriate recommendations.

Thus, since few studies have been able to combine lecturers' teaching styles or behaviors with other variables to address students' low academic performance (Noori & Orfan, 2021; Shaari et al., 2014), and authentic leadership and individual performance or staff engagement (Duarte et al., 2021a; Samkari & David, 2019), authentic leadership and lecturer's participation in decision making or authentic leadership and classroom management (Kulophas et al., 2018; Saeed & Ali, 2019a); without looking at the role they may play simultaneously on students' academic performance, this study aimed to fill this conceptual gap by examining the role of

lecturers' behaviors and authentic leadership on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this work was multifaceted. This study enhanced the theoretical framework of leadership in higher education by synthesizing Authentic Leadership Theory (Avolio & Gardner, 2005), Ethical Leadership Theory, and Communication Accommodation Theory. By investigating the moderating influence of lecturers' immediacy behaviors, the study expanded on current concepts about the ways in which relational communication and leadership practices interact to influence student results. This contributes to the expanding literature on authentic leadership, especially within the African higher education context, where empirical research is still scarce (Muriithi, 2019; Alilyyani et al., 2022).

Secondly, the results offered useful suggestions for education and university administration. The findings indicated that self-awareness and relational transparency significantly predicted students' academic performance, with immediacy behaviors strengthening these relationships. This indicates that universities ought to allocate resources towards capacity-building initiatives that promote self-reflection, equity, and transparent communication among lecturers, alongside the implementation of interactive pedagogical methods such as praise, questioning, and group discussions. Lecturers may build educational environments that enhance both motivation and achievement in students (Derakhshan et al., 2020).

Third, the findings had policy implications for the administration of higher education. University of Kinshasa and similar institutions might incorporate these findings into their faculty evaluation processes to make sure that evaluations of lecturers' success take into account not just their academic production but also their

genuine leadership qualities and their behaviors that are immediate and impactful. This supports the necessity for comprehensive strategies to enhance the quality of higher education in Africa (UNESCO, 2019). Last but not least, the study was important for students and society as a whole since it emphasized how crucial regular attendance, involvement, and active participation are to determining academic achievement. With students attributing a large portion of their performance to instructor behaviors, the study highlighted the importance of relational and ethical aspects of teaching in achieving learning outcomes.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study, according to Hassan (2018), refers to the "range of topics, areas, and subjects that a research project intends to cover." This study focused on the role of authentic leadership, which is comprised of four components, self-awareness, balanced processing, relational transparency, and internalized moral standards, and lecturers' immediacy behaviors such as praising, classroom questioning, teaching clarity, classroom management (Agir, 2019), on students' academic performance at the university of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The investigation used a mixed method approach whereby the quantitative data was analyzed via the descriptive data analysis method and the qualitative via the content analysis.

Moreover, the study was anchored on three theories, namely, the moral leadership theory, the behavioural theory of leadership, and the theory of academic performance. Furthermore, the context of this research was the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The study used a pragmatic philosophy worldview. The target population of the study was 24,500 individuals of which 500 are senior lecturers, 1000 are assistant lecturers, and 23,000 are undergraduate

students at the University of Kinshasa that were taken across the university (Techno-Science, 2023).

Limitations of the Study

Although every effort was made to ensure the quality and rigor of this study, several limitations were encountered. The study was conducted exclusively at the University of Kinshasa, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other higher education institutions. In addition, some of the data were obtained through self-reported responses from students and lecturers, which may have been influenced by personal perceptions or social desirability bias. Students' academic performance is also affected by numerous factors, including socioeconomic background, personal motivation, family support, and institutional resources, which were beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, limitations related to time, financial resources, and accessibility of respondents may have affected the breadth of data collection.

Delimitations of the study

This study was delimited to examining the moderating effect of lecturers' immediacy behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The study focused specifically on the four dimensions of authentic leadership, namely self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalized moral standards, while lecturers' immediacy behaviors were represented by teaching clarity, classroom questioning, and verbal praise. The study was geographically confined to the University of Kinshasa and involved only lecturers and students because they are directly engaged in the teaching and learning process. Methodologically, the study adopted an explanatory mixed-methods design to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The study

was further guided by Ethical Leadership Theory, Communication Accommodation Theory, and Constructivist Learning Theory and was conducted within the period covered by the research.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has given a general overview of the study along with the objectives. It has also presented a statement that explained the problem investigated. The chapter has further discussed the study's assumptions, justification, significance, scope, limitations and delimitations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Literature review plays a very important role in a research project. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), “It not only shares the outcome of a related study from other studies but also relates a study to an ongoing conversation, thus extending previous studies as well as filling in gaps. This chapter reviewed the literature on the key variables of the study to identify existing contextual, conceptual, and methodological gaps. The chapter begun with a review of the empirical literature, which was followed by a section providing the theoretical framework, followed by the conceptual framework and the chapter summary.

Conceptual Literature Review

Authentic Leadership

The concept of authentic leadership is credited to scholars like Bruce Avolio, Walumbwa. F, Fred Luthans, and William L. Gardener who perceived authentic leadership as a multidimensional leadership style that is characterized by greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency (Walumbwa et al., 2008). According to them, authentic leadership (AL) is about the integrity of leaders and their leadership. It examines whether or not leadership is authentic and "real" (Northouse, 2021). It is a procedure that builds on a combination of beneficial psychological traits and an extremely structured institutional framework, resulting in leaders and associates having increased consciousness and positive self-regulated behaviors as well as successful self-development (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, as cited by Bakari et al., 2017). According to a study conducted by Zhang et al. (2022), there is a meta-analytical evidence that authentic leadership is positively related to follower well-being.

Moreover, Coxen et al. (2016), have argued that it is a leadership approach that has positively affected many organizational and employee behaviors. Additionally, Novićević et al. (2005, as cited by Bakari et al., (2017), argued that authentic leadership is indispensable in the leader's life. It helps the leader strengthen the necessary capacities in human resources, which in turn boosts their performance for further improvements. Consequently, authentic leaders are viewed as those who exhibit authenticity (Bamford et al., 2013). They behave according to what they believe because they are well aware of their influence on others (Wang & Hsieh, 2013).

Nevertheless, according to a research conducted by Hailegebreal (2020) on the effects of leadership style on students' performance, researchers revealed that although leadership is a personal commitment to make a difference in lives, it has been underutilized in many universities. The researchers observed that this is because most academics believe they have no role in fostering the development of human potential. In other words, when educational leaders, and lecturers in particular, neglect to be intentional about their leadership style, the results are that personnel, stakeholders, and students get discouraged and dissatisfied; and this discouragement and dissatisfaction lead to poor performance for staff, and poor academic performance for students. Elham et al. (2011) urged that university leaders should do their best to improve their leadership competencies, if they want to enable their institutions to survive and continuously develop. These competencies, they added, include leadership skills, communication skills, persuasive skills, professional skills, and character, which are the foundation of effective leadership (Josephson, 1999, as cited by Elham et al., 2011).

From a conceptual perspective, authentic leadership has been linked to different concepts such as employees performance, followers engagement, and so on, as "it has increasingly attracted the attention of many scholars" (Duarte et al., 2021a). In a study conducted in public and private universities in Pakistan by Saeed and Ali (2019), the concept was linked to classroom management, and it was found that the relationship between authentic leadership and classroom management was higher in private universities than in public. Duarte et al. (2021), study found that "authentic leadership was linked to individual performance." This study adopted an employee-centred approach, and the results revealed that there was a statistically significant positive relationship between authentic leadership and employees' workplace performance. Based on the results and gaps found in the above studies, authentic leadership was defined in this study as a set of related behaviors, that results in greater self-awareness and self-regulated moral principles that characterize the way leaders influence followers; make moral decisions, and use information" (Nikolić et al., 2020). The concept was used to evaluate its role as integrated into lecturers' behaviors on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Self-Awareness. Numerous academic fields have adopted the concept of self-awareness, indicating that self-awareness may be able to account for variation in a variety of areas. In their research on self-awareness, London et al., (2023) argued that most of the research on the concept of self-awareness development during the last five years has been based on educational interventions and personal practices. The result of their reviewed literature showed that there was a wide range of studies conducted on the concept of self-awareness that sought to increase the content and process, including reflective practices, mindfulness interventions, coaching, leadership

development, experiential learning, and feedback interventions. Most of these researches were qualitative and were based on an analysis of small groups. Nevertheless, despite the qualitative approach used in these studies most of them focused on interventions in educational sectors and revealed that self-awareness development is at the heart of personal and professional growth.

As such, Sutton (2016) defines self-awareness as the degree to which an individual is cognizant of their internal states as well as their interactions or relationships with other individuals. It is a crucial component of effective leadership, which has been identified as the cornerstone of servant, empowering, transformational, resonant, and authentic leadership, amongst others (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015; Sturm et al., 2014). According to Caldwell and Hayes (2016), to be considered self-conscious, leaders must be able to show that they are aware of their positive and negative characteristics while also considering how their actions affect other people. Squires (2018) opined that authentic leadership exhibits leaders' capacity to identify personal values that directly dictate the way they interact with others. Consequently, being aware and true to oneself is essential to the development of authentic leadership. Similarly, Banks et al. (2016) postulate that leaders who have an understanding of their own values and other people's perspectives about them are said to engage in authentic behaviors, which makes followers satisfied with them.

From a conceptual perspective, Caldwell and Hayes (2016) contend that " in today's unpredictable instances, leaders have a moral responsibility to cultivate self-efficacy and self-awareness" which, according to Goleman (2017), "are among the essential skill capacities needed for emotional intelligence and that without them success is impeded. In a research conducted by Fonseca et al. (2022) on the influence of self-awareness on effective leadership outcomes in South Africa, it was found that

employees' engagement and performance are negatively affected when leaders lack self-awareness. Consistent with Da Fonseca et al., Schyns and Schilling (2013) assert that their lack of self-awareness leads to destructive leadership behaviors in individual followers, which negatively affect their performance.

Based on the aforementioned, it can be inferred that self-awareness plays a crucial role in authentic leadership effectiveness as it may foster and preserve favorable support inside the organization. It entails leaders' ability to understand not only their personal values, behaviors and other people's perspectives about them but also motivate them to help their followers discover their true selves. In other words, leaders who demonstrate a higher level of self-awareness positively influence their subordinates. They exemplify a leadership model that followers are willing to imitate. They are perceived as transparent, credible, and trustworthy. Wulffers (2017) asserts that when leaders are authentic, they concentrate on fostering in people mental qualities like self-assurance, resolve, and adaptability. They exhibit knowledge of one's own emotions, mental capacity, faith, and intention. They can direct institutional processes in a way that makes it more comfortable for their followers to cooperate and communicate with them. They encourage those around them and are prepared to communicate with them. In contrast, when leaders have low self-awareness, they are ineffective and unable to demonstrate an exemplary leadership model worthy of being imitated. In this study, the concept was considered as a leader's ability to demonstrate an improved comprehension of one's own positive and negative characteristics and their effect on other people (Waida, 2021). And was used because it is important to our behavior, satisfaction, and performance (Carden et al., 2021).

Relational Transparency. Leadership exists in the context of relationships, which are the bonds that bind the members of a team together. However, unless it is

built on trust and transparency, the team will be unable to function successfully and perform as required. Relational transparency is therefore crucial for both the successful functionality and performance of the team. According to Idris and Suleiman (2021), it entails honesty, integrity, and refraining from having ulterior selfish intentions in interactions with others. It is, in other words, the outcome of the leader's life lived openly in such a way that it inspires loyalty and candor. Because leadership exists in the context of relationships, and these relationships have to be built on trust and transparency, leaders have to do their best to be transparent with their followers if they want their followers to be transparent. In other words, they have to exhibit behaviors that will encourage trustworthiness in their relationships with their followers.

Relational transparency in the leadership context should not be unidirectional but rather bidirectional, whereby the leader is transparent, respectful, and humble, and the follower on the other side is also transparent. According to Rego et al. (2021), leaders as well as followers are more responsive to a transparent relationship when each member of the team, starting with the leader, is open, courteous, and modest. This statement implies that when leaders and their followers are transparent with each other, they welcome and help each other. They complete each other without competing with one another. They cultivate and establish a supportive environment whereby the weaknesses of the followers are covered by the strengths of the leader, and vice versa. In a relational transparency environment, each member feels valued, respected, and honored. Such a relationship environment, whereby people are valued, respected, and honored, can promote and nurture trust among organizational members, thereby promoting their performance.

Acknowledging the necessity and importance of relational transparency, Akuffo and Kivipõld (2021) argued that it has a favorable and substantial impact on organizational effectiveness, job satisfaction, and perceived organizational performance. Similarly, a wealth of study results, which comprise assessments and systematic reviews of prior studies, have demonstrated that relational transparency, which according to these studies refers to constructive connections between lecturers and students, has advantageous impacts on a variety of factors, including students' motivation, social development, satisfaction, and performance in particular subject areas (Cornelius-White, 2007). Relational transparency, which places trust and openness at its core, has the power to create not just a dependable environment but also a safe space where individuals can express their concerns and perspectives. From a conceptual perspective, a study conducted by Masimane et al., (2022) on the effect of relational transparency on the performance of employees of commercial banks in Kenya, it has been revealed that relational transparency has a significant influence on the performance of employees.

From a contextual perspective, there have not been sufficient studies that have looked at the concept of relational transparency, however, the few that have been conducted looked at the concept of transparency in public finance (Cabri, n.d.), and showed that there was a positive developments over time with regard to transparency and participation. This study defined relational transparency as leaders' ways of interacting with others that show the truth about themselves, their convictions, as well as their emotions to their subordinates, leading to a reciprocal sense of trust (Wei et al., 2018). As an indicator of both authentic leadership and followership, relationship transparency was used in this study because it encourages a degree of genuineness and authenticity that motivates organizational members to voluntarily display pleasant

behaviors throughout their duties but also because without good relational transparency, the team as well as the individual's performance is at risk (Roncesvalles & Gaerlan, 2021a).

Balanced Processing. Decision-making in leadership affects not only followers' attitudes as well as behaviors, but also the attitudes and behaviors of the leader. Thus, "relevant information is crucial for decision-making." According to Crawford et al. (2020), "balanced processing is the predisposition to look at all appropriate information before making decisions." In agreement with this definition, Kernis and Goldman (2006) argue that the process of evaluating information is important for leaders because it allows them to process not only external information but also internal information without distorting both the internal and external information. According to Walumbwa et al. (2011), "balance processing is being able to avoid biases that protect the ego." It is therefore "worth noting that balanced processing is about the leader considering, without any bias, all information" at his or her disposition before making any decision (Leroy et al., 2012). According to Gardner et al. (2005), it helps leaders in the process of self-development.

From a conceptual perspective, studies in which the concept has been used, as it is in the study conducted by Gacheru et al., (2024) on the influence of leader's balanced processing on employee commitment in agencies implementing public financial management reforms in Kenya, balanced processing was conceptualized as the leader's ability to make objectives analysis of the available financial data and to take into consideration all available options from their subordinates before deciding on a way forward.

In the context of the democratic Republic of Congo where this study was conducted, there seems to be no research conducted using balanced processing.

Nevertheless, as a component of authentic leadership, which can stand alone as a variable, balanced processing is useful in this study because at its core lies a leader's ability to objectively acknowledge their own strengths and weaknesses and exhibit respect for others' opinions (Karada & Öztekin, 2018). The concept was defined and used in this study as the propensity to take into account all pertinent data that is at hand and helpful for arriving at advantageous conclusions for the group.

Internalized moral standards. Internalized moral standards, also known as moral perspective by some scholars, have gained noticeable attention in recent years and have become increasingly understood as one of the vital components of an individual belief system that direct not only the moral judgement but also the practical aspect of life (Suri, 2020). According to Northouse (2016), as cited by Squires (2018), internalized moral standards or perspective is an independently regulated mechanism based on one's moral standards and beliefs that are used as a road map that directs one's conduct.

From a conceptual perspective, internalized moral standards have been conceptualized as an essential component for effective leadership in many militaries and corporate leadership ideologies (Byre, 2020; Kemunto & Linge, 2023). It has been perceived to have an influence that is both favorable and significant on emotional, acceptable, and ongoing dedication at work (Tijani & Olajide, 2020). Despite the fact that there is not a study that has sought to contextualized this concept in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zheng et al. (2022) argued that when leaders internalize their moral standards and behave according to these standards, they become moral. In other words, they set an exemplary leadership model worthy of being emulated. In this respect, leaders who desire to positively and significantly impact their followers have to have a clear set of belief systems. They have to have a

clear awareness of who they are, what they believe in, and what they have been called to. This awareness is important to the idea and concept of authenticity. It is so fundamental in such a way that D et al. (2019) argued that it shapes employees' readiness to change.

While change is something that many people are not ready for, Kalshoven et al. (2011) revealed that when employees are led by leaders who exhibit moral standards, change becomes a desired thing. In other words, employees become ready for change when they see their leaders exhibiting internalized moral values worthy of imitating. Subsequently, it appears important to state that leaders within corporate entities and educational sectors should behave morally if they want to have a positive influence on their followers' identities. They should not only speak about ethics but at the same time, live and ethically. Because the behaviors of a person are the visible manifestation of that person's belief system, leaders should behave according to what they believe (Noori & Orfan, 2021). The concept was therefore defined in this study as a set of belief systems that have been internalized and have become part of one's life and lifestyle in such a way that it indirectly and directly guides one's behaviors. Yet, as a component of authentic leadership, the concept was used because internalized moral standards serves as a driving force that able leaders to make conscious choices that assure their actions remain consistent with ethical standards which determine the outcomes behaviors (Xie et al., 2025).

Lecturers' Immediacy behaviors

Countless studies conducted on the field of education have showed that lecturers' behaviors affect the overall development of students (Qawi Noori et al., 2020). According to Scheerens (2016) individuals can exhibit different behaviors and these can have different outcomes depending on the situation that they are confronted

with. Positive behaviors can provoke and lead people to change their low performance, while negative may cause them to not change their situation. In the context of higher education institutions Misbah et al., (2015) stipulate that lecturers' behaviors may influence students' motivation. When they exhibit positive behaviors, they affect students who may be motivated to learn; however, when they behave negatively, students may become demotivated and stop learning (Illahi & Khandai, 2015). Thus, since teaching and learning are core missions of the university and lecturers as leaders play a very crucial role in the implementation of this mission, it can be argued that some of their behaviors influence students' outcomes (Sugrue et al., 2019).

Defined as individuals who teach at the university or college level, lecturers are responsible for orienting their efforts towards the fulfilment of the general mission of university education as their behaviors and leadership provide direction to students (Sutphen et al., 2019). Lecturers are an important component of any educational system. They play a very important role in the development and success of students. They foster moral and moral principles as they develop their students' future careers (Nagoba & Mantri, 2015). As leaders in their own right, they design, model, and sharpen their students' skills, which may have a tremendous impact on their lives, academic performance, and the economic development of the country (Andy-Wali & Wali, 2018).

And because they influence the learning process of their students, researchers have stated that there is a demonstrated link between their behaviors and the academic success of their students" (Siperstein et al., 2011). According to Cooper and Scott (2017), they are also in charge of selecting and implementing effective instructional practices that will not only promote moral behaviors but at the same time motivate

students to do the same as they focus on their studies. This is to say that lecturers' behaviors should not be separated from the learning process; they positively affect the entire learning process (Agir, 2019). In this sense, one can argue that lecturers' behaviors determine students' academic performance within the classroom (Warren, 2021). These behaviors can include professional, physical, and communicational behaviors.

Professional behaviors are those behaviors that relate to the profession and workplace; while physical behaviors refers to the various actions that an individual performs in a given scenario (Qawi Noori et al., (2020). Coming to communicational behaviors Qawi Noori et al., (2020) argue that they refer to a psychological concept that influences a person's thinking and feelings through expression. In higher education setting, Singh (2023) argues that communicational behaviors are important for attaining the coordination among the various levels of education. It is, according to Ampadu, (2012) as cited by Qawi Noori et al., (2020) the way lecturers interconnect and communicate with their stakeholders, in this context students primarily. The concept of lecturers' communicational behaviors has also been called by academician as "Teacher Immediacy Behaviors." According to Christophel and Andersen (1995) as cited by Putera Jaya et al., (2022) these behaviors can be non-verbal immediacy acts and may include eye contact, smiles, body positions, gestures, and proximity; and immediacy verbal acts that may include addressing students by their name, praising the students, classroom questioning, teaching clarity, which reduce the psychological barrier between teacher and students.

In regard to the following, lecturers' immediacy behaviors were, in this study, referred to those immediacy verbal acts that a lecturer performs within the classroom. The concept was used as such in the study because research has shown that a lecturer

immediacy behavior can direct the discussion within the classroom, as well as, communicate lecture content accordingly, and mediate interactions properly (Al Ghamdi, 2015). Additionally, the concept only included staff who hold ranks with titles such as professor or assistant lecturer.

The immediacy verbal behaviors that formed the basis of lecturers' immediacy behaviors were:

Teaching Clarity. Educational psychologists have held countless discussions on the topic of teaching clarity and instructional communication (Benton & Li, 2021). According to Zheng (2021), "it refers to the approaches and procedures that lecturers use to guarantee that their students get a better understanding of the course content." Additionally, Blaich et al. (2016) argued that "teaching clarity has a positive relationship with the academic performance of students." According to these scholars, the clarity of a lecturer in the teaching process can positively engage students in learning activities. In another study, conducted by Titsworth et al. (2015) on the "relationship between lecturer clarity and student learning," the author stated that there is a greater likelihood of course material acquisition among learners who receive clear teaching. Essentially, they create a significant understanding of the course content. According to Beleche et al. (2012), lecturers should emphasise clarity in their instruction due to its significance in both the teaching and learning processes. These writers contend that when instructors clearly deliver their course information, students are more equipped to meet the desired learning objectives.

Classroom questioning. In the educational process, classroom questioning is one of the more prevalent ways that lecturers and students connect. According to Cotton (n.d.), for students, it offers an invaluable possibility and a repository for language input as well as outcomes. It encourages engagement and communication

between students and instructors as well as among students themselves. In other words, it makes learning not only interactive but also enjoyable, as opinions and ideas are shared. Considered to have a very “important role in the educational process” (Davoudi & Sadeghi, 2015), “classroom questioning is relevant for improving the quality of teaching and students’ academic performance” (Iksan & Daniel, 2015).

In a study conducted by Mahmud et al., (2021) on the possibility of using questioning for assessing students’ academic performance, it was found that effective questioning encourages interaction, which enables lecturers to get feedback from students and evaluate the effectiveness of their instruction. They went on to say that students’ academics are negatively impacted when lecturers do not ask questions in the classroom. Although the study did not explicitly show how students’ academic performance was influenced by lecturers’ lack of asking questions in the classroom, the conclusion still showed that appropriate questioning had a favorable impact on students’ educational process.

Additionally, Shakurnia et al. (2018) discovered that asking and answering questions encourages a high degree of critical thinking in students. It aids in formulating a process of speculating, predicting, thought-experimenting, and explaining, thereby resulting in an endless stream of creative activity and aiding in the construction of missing knowledge while dealing with gaps in one’s comprehension. Furthermore, according to Craig's (2013) research on the importance of questions in academic accomplishment, questions serve two guiding roles in the learning process. They assist students in focusing on processing what they have learned by giving them an activation to a wider knowledge network to serve as a cue to stimulate active processing of the content.

Verbal praise. Lecturers' verbal praise has been related to favorable effects on student motivation, self-esteem, engagement, and overall academic performance. According to Abbasi et al. (2015), praising promotes interpersonal feedback. It is a vital component in fostering students' academic performance and sustaining the desired classroom conduct. Since it has the same meaning as making learners feel reaffirmed and meaningful, Moffat (2011) argued that it is typically seen as positive feedback. According to Ratchel et al. (2014), it improves student-lecturer relationships by creating a good learning environment, lessening problems in the classroom, and rendering teaching interesting.

As a crucial and proven technique in classroom management, lecturers' verbal praise has to be used correctly and effectively to reinforce students' positive behaviors. According to Villeda et al. (2014), "when used effectively and consistently in the classroom, it can increase the social and academic performance of the students." According to a study by Moore Partin et al. (2010) on the 'use of lecturer praise and opportunities to respond, to promote appropriate student behaviors,' some students' behaviors can be solidified by lecturer praise; however, not all forms of compliment are always consolidating to all students and in all circumstances.

As a result, in educational contexts, statements of praise ought to be tied clearly to the actions or abilities that the instructor or lecturer wants to improve in his or her students. Lecturers must offer feedback that clearly identifies desired behaviors and offers commentary on whether a student's performance or conduct is appropriate. In other words, they have to give genuine feedback to their students if they want to help them improve their academic performance. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that while positive verbal praise can have a positive effect on the short and long-term lives of students and can be used as a motivational and encouragement tool

by lecturers in the classroom, it should never be overused or used improperly. Inappropriate usage, according to Huang (2013), “can have a detrimental impact on students’ development and academic performance.”

Classroom Management. As one of the key areas that is within the lecturer’s control, the goal of classroom management is to give students a higher likelihood of learning whatever the lecturer provides (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). While the choice of classrooms is not the primary task of lecturers, their management is. Yazdi et al. (2019) state that although instructors are not in charge of selecting their classrooms, they influence the environment they create with their students and the methods of education they employ. This is to say that everything that a lecturer does has implications not only for classroom management but also for student academic performance. As such, the concept in this study was used as a moderating variable and was conceptualized as those behaviors such as teaching clarity, classroom questioning, verbal praise, and classroom management that the lecturers exhibit within the classroom. According to Aldhafiri (2015), these behaviors are essential components of the quality of education and crucial factors for students’ academic success and performance.

Academic performance

Performance, as a concept, has been subjected to a wide variety of definitions in various contexts. For instance, in the context of organizations where the term is often used, Jonyo et al. (2018) defined it as the accurate comparison of results that an organization has achieved in relation to its previously intended goals. According to scholars such as Rono et al. (2014), Narad and Abdullah (2016), it is the key feature and one of the important goals of education that determines the knowledge that

students have gained, which is assessed by marks. It is, in essence, the key factor through which a student's level of productivity is measured.

From past studies, the concept has been given the highest priority by stakeholders as well as educators in such a way that students who exceed societal requirements and standards are primarily expected to make a difference in the expansion, improvement, and sustainability of a community (Farooq et al., 2011; Olaitan, 2018). Still in the educational sector, Steinberger (1993), as cited by Paudel (2021), contended that academic achievement pertains to actions and discussions about human interpersonal, cognitive, and physiological development. In other words, it is not only a matter of how well students perform in relation to the units taught but also how well they manage their emotional, social, and physical lives. In the words of Abubakar et al.,(2018), it can be argued that academic performance is concerned with students' academic accomplishment as well as their extracurricular activities such as academic ranking, graduation classes, and graduation rates as indicators of university performance evaluation. According to Achagwa et al. (2023), it matters a lot because it has the "ability to give students a sense of accomplishment." This sense of achievement can serve as a powerful motivation for students to continue putting in extra effort. Stated differently, academic performance (AP) plays a significant role in the learning process of students since it advances their individual and social development. At the individual level, it helps the student develop important life skills, a strong work ethic, and the desire to continue learning. At the social level, it helps the student to be known as a knowledgeable and skilled individual.

In contrast to the above and despite the importance of students' academic performance, Sulphey and Syama (2012) claimed that students' academic performance does not by itself produce or cause better job performance. The authors

added that it should not be considered as a predictor of job performance or one's competency. Although crucial in assessing one's level of knowledge and understanding, it should not, however, be given a higher priority when it comes to job performance. That is to say, it has to be checked in comparison to one's deliverable capacity at the workplace.

And because institutions of higher learning and universities, in general, are crucial in developing skilled labor that may be used to address socially pressing issues (Idris et al., 2012), performance measurement is crucial to all organizations, academia inclusive, where government and other stakeholders are given more concern to the performance of higher institutions across different countries (Abubakar, Hilman, et al., 2018). Research conducted on organizational performance, for instance, used financial measures in other to assess employee performance (Lebas & Euske, 2006) and other used nonfinancial indictors (Gronum et al., 2012), as cited by (Abubakar, Hilman, et al., 2018).

The few researches that were conducted in the area of higher institution performance measurement focused more on research and teaching indicators (Asif & Searcy, 2014; Lukman et al., 2010); others on the other hand looked at income generated from research project and consultancies (Asif et al, 2013; Asif & Searcy, 2014); and some investigated students and stakeholder satisfaction (Asif & Searcy, 2014), as cited by Abubakar, Hilman, et al., (2018), little attention has been given to academic indicators such grade point average or students' class attendance. It, thus, appears crucial to have a study that uses these academic metrics as component of students' academic performance. Academic performance refers to the measurable academic outcomes attained by students during their course of study. It encompasses indicators such as grade point average (GPA), class attendance, performance in

formative assessments, performance in summative assessments, coursework, examinations, class participation, graduation rates, and completion of academic projects. In this study, academic performance was operationalized using grade point average and class attendance because these indicators were readily available, standardized across faculties, and suitable for measuring students' academic achievement at the University of Kinshasa.

Grade point average. The average grade point is the most popular statistic for characterizing students' academic achievement. According to Kaycheng (2011), the grading method was first used by William Farish (1759–1837), "a British professor of chemistry and natural philosophy at the University of Cambridge." The method was later adopted by lecturers at colleges and secondary schools. According to Volwerk and Tindal (2012), it significantly influences how colleges, grants and loans, admittance into educational institutions, and the workforce evaluate a student's total previous educational performance and prospects. In the educational sector, it has been established as a criterion for admission either to a certificate, diploma, or bachelor's degree.

A grade point average is a result of a student's academic success and is inextricably linked to the caliber of education provided by an institution (Kaycheng, 2011). Researchers who have spent time evaluating the efficiency of an institutional education system have all maintained that if a specific curriculum was created to attain precisely specified objectives, then it would boost the performance of the students in their future assignments (Daka & Changwe, 2020). Data from scientific research on the importance of high-quality education showed that high-quality learning had an "impact on students' exceptional academic performance" (Claire et al., 2016).

Based on what has been said above, it can be deduced that the outcomes of students' academic performance, which is understood through their grade point average, do not only depend on their individual motivation and hard work but also on the curriculum of the institution. In other words, a student's grade point average apart from being a significant predictor of an institutional education system; is a major and direct predictor of a student's academic performance. It is through it that the student, as well as other stakeholders, can measure not only the educational quality of the institution and its authenticity but also the student's learning process and academic performance.

Class attendance. Class attendance is argued to be a crucial predictor of students' academic performance. "Many studies have revealed that students who attend classes consecutively are more likely to achieve higher grades than those who have poor attendance" (Ancheta et al., 2021). For instance, in a meta-analysis study conducted by Crede et al. (2010) on the relationship between student attendance and academic performance, the authors discovered that "those who had high performance were those whose attendance was very good, and those who did not have very good attendance performance had lower performance." In a research conducted by Charan et al. (2011) on factors associated with performance of second year student in pharmacology examinations, the researchers found that students who met the mandatory attendance rate of 75% performed well in comparison to those who did not. As such, it can be argued that it is only by attending class that students can directly participate in classroom teaching and learning, thus improving their academic performance and acquiring tacit knowledge from interacting with their lecturers and peers (Tetteh, 2018).

University of Kinshasa. Universities have always played a major role in fostering societal growth and transformation (Moscardini et al., 2022). Porancea-Răulea et al. (2016) found that higher education institutions continue to influence the intellectual and social trajectory of communities through their pedagogical and research responsibilities. Their contribution, however, goes beyond the cultivation of cognitive capacity and includes the development of skills, values, and moral character, reflecting universities' larger duty to promote holistic human growth and societal advancement.

The University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN) traces its origins to Lovanium University, which was established in the Belgian Congo during the mid-1950s through the collaboration of the colonial administration, the Catholic Church, and the Catholic University of Louvain in Belgium. Following higher education reforms in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lovanium evolved into the present-day University of Kinshasa (de Saint-Moulin, 2007). The status of this university was, from the outset, quite complex, even opaque, in terms of its public dimension. Lovanium was also very elitist in its credentials and aimed to form a multiracial elite of a few hundred units on the standards of Leuven. It emphasized academic freedom and explicitly referred to Catholic identity and projects, which are, moreover, very powerfully implanted in the colony. The clergy and the Catholic missionary congregations effectively controlled the essentials of primary and secondary education in a way almost exclusively until 1955 (Poncelet et al., 2010).

The University of Kinshasa was selected as the study site because it is the largest and oldest public university in the Democratic Republic of Congo and plays a critical role in the training of the country's human capital. Despite its strategic importance, limited empirical research has examined how lecturers' leadership

practices influence students' academic performance within this institution. Furthermore, existing studies at the University of Kinshasa have largely focused on factors such as student well-being, corruption, and institutional challenges, with little attention given to authentic leadership and lecturers' immediacy behaviors. This contextual gap justified the selection of the University of Kinshasa as the setting for this study.

Empirical Literature Review

Self-awareness and students' academic performance

Self-awareness is an essential aspect of the growth and understanding of authentic leadership as it relates to the leader's individual perceptions. According to Adeleke et al., (2022), "it bolsters self-esteem and strengthens the relationship among workforce." It entails taking an assessment of one's essential beliefs, self, feelings, motivations, and objectives, which when taken as a whole help a leader understand who he or she is at his or her most fundamental level or inner being. That is to say that a student is only authentic when he or she has a clear perspective and better understanding of his or her own values, identity, emotions, motives, and goals; and thus, behaves in accordance with his or her personal values, which in return help him or her to direct consciously his or her attention not only to some aspect of self but also to his or her relationship towards others (Hannah, 2011). Self-awareness can therefore be understood as being conscious of oneself in such a way that anything out of self cannot define nor influence the behaviors and belief system of the self. It is, in other words, being who one is supposed to be without trying to be something else.

In a study conducted in Israel by Flavian (2016) on "strengthening education by understanding students' self-awareness development" the author found that the more students are aware not only about themselves but also the development of self-

awareness and how they express it, the better they will be able to perform academically. In other words, a student who knows self and is true to self, far from being authentic, can perform very well. In another study conducted by Namaziandost et al. (2018) on the effects of self-awareness instruction on Iranian pre-university students' academic achievement with emotional intelligence as the independent variable, the authors found that students' self-awareness and self-awareness instruction had positively affected students' academic performance in such a way that their academic performance was improved. From their findings, the researchers concluded that students' self-awareness is critical in the process of their learning and performance. For this reason, one can argue that a student's self-awareness should not only be cultivated but also encouraged as it can help in improving one's level of performance. The study was conducted at an Iranian university, this study was conducted at the University of Kinshasa.

From the African context, a study by Payne (2022) on the impact of self-awareness on students with reading difficulties at Boise State University in Nigeria revealed that self-awareness was important in the learning process of students as it improved their reading skills. The study was based on the theory of change. It used the multi-component design and data were "evaluated using visual analysis, individual Tau-U and weighted Tau-U effect sizes." The study pointed out that lecturers needed to help their students discover their true selves so that they could improve themselves before serving others.

In the context of the University of Kinshasa, students are confronted with several academic and socio-economic challenges including classroom congestion and restricted access to educational assistance, which may impede their capacity for self-directed learning. In this context, the function of lecturers in exemplifying and

fostering self- awareness is significantly needed. Nonetheless, there is no empirical study investigated on the impact of lecturers' self-awareness, as a component of authentic leadership, on students' academic performance in this particular context. As such, this study aimed to address the contextual and empirical gap by investigating the relationship between authentic leadership- specifically the self- awareness of lecturers, and students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa. At the end of the study, the researcher enhanced the wider conversation on the concept of authentic leadership and lecturers' immediacy behaviors on students' academic performance in under explored African academic institutions.

Relational Transparency and students' academic performance

In their desire to find out how lecturers' transparency affects and motivates students' transparency and academic performance, Soares and Lopes (2017) assert that "lecturers with a high relational transparency display a clearer communication" which in one way or another affects students' understanding. According to these authors, lecturers who are transparent create a positive environment within and outside the classroom whereby together with their students can not only interact with each other but also challenge and learn from each other. Through this positive environment, they foster a culture of trust that helps them sustain their relationship with their students and thus positively influence them. In a study conducted in Australian higher education institutions about teacher-student relationships, Fan (2023) argued that "teacher-student relationships have a very significant impact on students' academic performance." The authors argued that a positive teacher-student relationship is beneficial in higher learning education because it helps both teachers and students. It helps lecturers in the sense that it gives them an open ground whereby they can get a better understanding of their students' struggles and ambitions. On the

other hand, it helps students because it allows them to see the practicability of what their lecturers communicate or teach (Saeed & Ali, 2019b).

From the African perspective, and in their study conducted in the higher learning educational sector in Nigeria societ, Onah et al., (2022) argued that "transparency in education is very important for a variety of reasons. It encourages lecturers to work together to unpack standards, plan instruction, assess learning, analyze data, revise instruction, reanalyze data and then evaluate the impact of individual teaching strategies." In another study by Winkelmes (2023) conducted by faculty at the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning at Havard University in the USA, where the researcher explored the importance of transparency in learning and teaching. The results of the study revealed that transparency in learning and teaching is crucial because it yields significant gains for both students and lecturers. It establishes educational equity as it helps instructors address several of the most daunting barriers to student success. However, in the context of the University of Kinshasa, there was no empirical study that has been conducted looking at the effect of relational transparency on students' academic performance, pointing out to a contextual gap that the current study aimed to fill by using the pragmatic philosophical worldview.

Balanced processing and students' academic performance

As one of the fundamental aspects of authentic leadership, balanced processing encompasses a leader's capability to solicitate feedback from others and examine information at his or her disposition with fairness before taking any decision (Walumbwa et al, 2008). In the educational context, it can be argued that lecturers who exhibit balanced processing are prone to request students' opinions, administer

impartial assessments and stimulate critical thinking practices that may positively affect students' academic performance.

Nevertheless, although empirical studies concentrating only on balanced processing in the context of education are uncommon, current research on authentic leadership have offered an indirect evidence of its impact. According to a study conducted by Jang (2022)

(2022) on the relationship between authentic leadership and task performance, it was found that individual psychological capital acted as a mediating factor in bettering their outcomes. Therefore, since balanced processing requires a leader involvement with others perspectives, the concept can be associated with the cultivation of psychological capital in students that could encompass hope, resilience, and self-efficacy resulting in their academic success.

Likewise, Duarte et al., (2021b) indicated that authentic leadership improves individual performance by fostering both inventiveness and emotional commitment. As such, lecturers who evaluate students' perspectives impartially have the tendency to cultivate a nurturing academic atmosphere that may promote students' creativity and dedication to study. These outcomes underscore the capacity of balanced processing to favorably influence students' academic performance. Despite these promising results, there is a paucity of studies (Alilyyani, Wong, & Cummings, 2018; Levesque-Côté, Fernet, Austin, & Morin, 2018) that have directly evaluated the influence of balanced processing on student academic achievement. This study aimed to fill this gap by investigating the interaction between balanced processing and lecturers' immediacy behaviors, as well as their collective impact on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa.

Internalized Moral Standards and students' academic performance

Even though previous studies have examined many facets of authentic leadership and its effects on employees, followers, and students; many scholars believe that internalized moral standards are the foundation of authentic leadership (Alavi, 2023). They claimed that genuine leadership will lack moral guidance in resolving complicated problems without this element. Described as a process through which people regulate their own behaviors by using their own internal moral principles and ideals as a guide rather than allowing external influences to do so (Northouse, 2016), internalized moral standards outlines how leaders respond to moral challenges. It serves as a bodyguard that not only protects the leader against anything illegal but also dictates what the leader must do.

Dzahir et al. (2020) conducted a study to examine the influence of managers' Internalized moral perspective towards lecturers in Malaysian higher learning institutions and revealed that the internalized moral standards dimension of authentic leadership significantly influenced teacher commitment, which in turn improved students' academic performance. The study used a quantitative survey with a standardized questionnaire to which 254 lecturers responded. Data processing was performed using SEM-PLS 3.0. This study used a mixed-method approach, and data was analyzed using SPSS Version 27.

Adeyemi (2010) conducted a study in the educational industry on principals' leadership styles and lecturers' job performance in senior high learning in Ondo state, Nigeria. The study sample consisted of 292 students and employed three types of questionnaires during physical education courses. The results of the study revealed that teacher's job performance was better in institutions "having principals using autocratic leadership style than in institutions having principals using democratic or

laissez-faire leadership styles" (Omeke & Onah, 2012). To improve work performance among lecturers and students alike, the study recommended that principals combine autocratic and democratic leadership styles in their administrative structures. One of the study's limitations was that it did not explicitly explain the research design used. "The current study used the explanatory sequential mixed design" (Arthur et al, 2012).

Katundano (2019) conducted a study reviewing the challenges that interfere with moral leadership practices and how to overcome them to achieve staff motivation and eventually academic excellence in universities in Africa. The result of the study acknowledged that moral principles and values are critical in higher learning institutions as they can help in promoting academic excellence. The study, however, showed several limitations. It did not have a methodological study approach, a study research design, or a theoretical worldview. The current study used the explanatory sequential mixed design; in terms of a theoretical worldview, the study employed a pragmatic philosophical worldview. Nevertheless, while the above findings appeared to be recommendable for higher learning institutions as they emphasize the importance of leadership; in the context of the Democratic Republic of Congo, specifically at the University of Kinshasa, no study was conducted yet to find out the relationship between internalized moral standard and students' academic performance, thus, was the need for this research.

Authentic leadership, Lecturers' immediacy behaviors and students' academic performance

Lecturers play a vital role in students' learning process. According to Johnson (2017), "Students' learning is not entirely dependent on their motivation" It requires the support of lecturers who are not only the exemplifiers of the lessons taught in the

classroom but also at the same time the creators of an environment that motivates students to learn. In this regard, studies on the influence of lecturers' support on "students' motivation and performance outcomes in physical education have revealed that teacher behaviors, such as providing positive feedback, strongly predicted students' expectations-related beliefs about their capacity to perform assignments competently" (Zhang et al., 2012, p.46). In addition to the following, Ferlazzo (2015) argued that providing feedback enables students to gain control over their learning and a sense of belief about their abilities (p.1). In other words, when lecturers believe in their students' abilities and behave in a way that demonstrates their belief in their students' abilities, the result is that their students are motivated to perform well.

Similarly, studies by Duarte et al., (2021b); and Kulophas et al., (2018) on authentic leadership have shown that authentic leadership has had a positive impact not only on the organizational level but also on higher learning institutions. Abu Al-ruz et al., (2020) in their study about authentic leadership practices in the Jordanian university setting found that "authentic leadership had a positive effect on employees and students as well." In their result, they argued that "two components (self-awareness and relational transparency) exhibited high levels of influence while Internalized moral standards and balanced processing exhibited moderate levels of influence" (p.238). In another study, Srivastava (2019) found that "leaders who are authentic supported the academic optimism among faculty members, which in turn affected students' academic success."

Another study conducted by (Roncesvalles & Gaerlan, 2021b) on the role of authentic leadership and lecturers' commitment and behaviors, revealed that "authentic leadership and lecturers' commitment as well as behaviors significantly influence organizational citizenship behaviors. The study also depicted that authentic

leadership significantly affects organizational commitment. Although there have been numerous studies looking at the impact of authentic leadership and lecturers' behaviors on students' academic performance, none of these studies included the three variables, necessitating the need to conduct the current study at the University of Kinshasa to generate new knowledge while also adding to the already existing knowledge.

Theoretical Framework

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), theories aid in illuminating the information that a study's researcher hopes to unearth. They are a methodological framework for comprehending a phenomenon under research (Meuser et al., 2016). Due to their importance in a research project and leadership, they emerged because of the necessity to comprehend the many procedures, behaviors, and beliefs or perspectives that various leaders employ when leading (Dinh et al., 2013). This study was anchored on the following theories: ethical leadership theory, behavioral theory of leadership, communication accommodation theory, constructivist learning theory, and the theory of academic performance as they helped in establishing the relationship between the effect of authentic leadership and lecturers' behaviors on students' academic performance.

Ethical Leadership Theory

The initial work that looked at the concept of ethical leadership was first conducted by Trevino and colleagues. In their endeavour, they sought to find out who an ethical leader was and which traits characterize him or her. Following their study, Brown and colleagues in 2005 conceptualized the concept for the first time with organization outcomes and employees' performance. They defined ethical leadership as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions

and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to the followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision making" (Ahmad et al., 2017). Over the years, the theory has gained significant attention from academics, educational practitioners, and researchers, with literature concluding that it has a favourable impact on the behaviour, satisfaction, and performance of employees (Shafique et al., 2018). Due to its positive impact on employees and organizations in particular, scholars such as Metwally et al. (2019) have argued that ethical leadership shapes the organization's culture. To this, they added, is made possible through the ethical conduct of the leaders. However, even though the theory has been helpful, it has been criticized a lot. A number of researchers have contended that ethical leadership conceptually intersects with other leadership paradigms, such as transformative, and authentic leadership, hence complicating their distinct differences (Ng & Feldman, 2015; Hoch et al.; 2018). Some have argued that ethical leadership is still too utopian, concentrating more on moral rules that on the real-world problems' leaders encounter when things are not clear (Den Hartog, 2015; Fehr et al., 2019). Moreover, Cultural scholars have also questioned the theory's universality, positing that perceptions of "ethical" behavior differ across social and cultural settings (Resick et al., 2019).

Nonetheless, despite these critics, ethical leadership still be a useful leadership theory as it helps in looking at the way leaders think and acts. Its principles are strongly aligned with authentic leadership. As such, this theory aligned to the independent variable which is authentic leadership.

Behavioral Theory of Leadership

The Behavioral theory of leadership was first conceptualized by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton in 1964. Since its introduction, the theory has greatly contributed to

the understanding of leadership and leader's effectiveness (Yukl, 2013). According to Benmira and Agboola (2020), the theory puts emphasis on the leader's actual behaviors rather than on his or her traits without paying attention to his or her situation or environment. In other words, the behavioral theory of leadership has to do with the leader's behaviors which can be learned by observing and copying other leaders.

According to Northouse (2019), the theory focuses on how leaders behave in relationship to their people and production. This implies that "formal and informal developmental processes and experiences contribute to leadership effectiveness" (Seibert et al., 2015). Therefore, since every lecturer is a leader (Fred Wali, 2018), it can be argued that lecturers' effective leadership behaviors significantly affect students' academic performance. According to Bhat and Khandari (2015), when lecturers behave professionally, students are likely to be motivated to learn. Similarly, when they do not behave professionally students may be demotivated and thus stop learning. In other words, lecturers' behaviors may have either a positive or a negative effect on students' academic performance.

Despite its profound insights, the Behavioral Theory of Leadership has received some criticism. Scholars believe that the theory oversimplifies leadership by concentrating primarily on visible behaviors and ignoring internal cognitive, emotional, and environmental aspects that influence leadership effectiveness (Antonakis and Day, 2018). It has also been chastised for believing that a single set of behaviors applies to all leadership circumstances while neglecting cultural and situational diversity (Derue et al., 2011; Ng, 2017). Recent research also suggests that behavioral approaches do not adequately address the dynamic and adaptive nature of modern leadership, particularly in complex environments like higher education, where

leaders must integrate emotional intelligence, ethics, and relational skills to remain effective (Iqbal et al., 2020; Newman et al., 2020). Nonetheless, the theory continues to provide a valuable framework for studying leadership growth through behavior change and observation. Within the context of this study, it laid the groundwork for investigating how lecturers' behaviors serving as immediacy and relational indicators influence students' academic motivation and performance at the University of Kinshasa.

The Theory of Academic Performance

The theory of academic performance (ToP) was developed by Elger (2007) as cited by (Balogun et al., 2020). According to the author, "performance" refers to the capacity to generate a valuable outcome, and "performer" refers to a person or group that collaborates, with a performance level denoting a certain point in a student's academic journey.

Building on this theory, a study conducted by Balogun et al. (2020) on university student’s academic performance in Nigeria has stated that the theory of academic performance is applicable in many learning contexts. They added that the theory plays a very crucial role in the learning process as it challenges educators to help their students learn effectively and grow. This type of learning, they continued, improved not only students’ academic performance but also fostered a quick success that led to an increase in academic quality.

Despite its utility, the Theory of Academic Performance has received critical critique. Some scholars contend that the model lacks empirical accuracy in understanding how environmental and psychological elements combine to impact performance, making it challenging to use in a variety of academic settings (Nawaz & Gomes, 2019; Owan et al., 2022). Others criticize it for prioritizing human effort

while ignoring systemic or institutional restrictions that might influence learning results (Akomolafe & Adesua, 2016; Adeyemo, 2020). Furthermore, the theory has been criticized for paying insufficient attention to cultural and contextual differences, which are critical in explaining student performance across educational systems (Abubakar et al., 2021). Nonetheless, this theory remains a useful paradigm for investigating how students' knowledge, mentality, and environment interact to impact academic performance. In this study, this theory spoke to the dependent variable of students' academic performance which was measured via the percentage of their class attendance and grade point average.

Summary of Empirical and Theoretical Literature

The current theoretical literature on authentic leadership encompassing constructs like self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalized moral perspective consistently highlights the beneficial impact of authentic leadership on employee and student outcomes (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Theories such as Communication Accommodation Theory emphasizes the essential influence of interpersonal actions on relationship climates in educational settings. This theory substantiates the assertion that lecturers' immediacy behaviors both verbal and non-verbal significantly enhance student engagement and performance by diminishing the psychological barrier between educators and learners (Giles, 1973; Richmond et al., 2008).

Empirical researches have validated the influence of authentic leadership on student motivation and academic performance (Azanza et al., 2015; Lyubovnikova and al., 2017) and emphasized that immediacy behaviors may enhance classroom dynamics and educational results (Witt et al., 2004; Gorham, 1988). Nonetheless, some significant key gaps remain. Initially, the majority of previous researches have

examined authentic leadership and teacher immediacy separately, with less investigation into their interaction. Secondly, the moderating influence of immediacy behaviors on the relationship between leadership and academic achievement is inadequately examined, particularly in Sub-Saharan African settings like the University of Kinshasa, where contextual and cultural factors may uniquely affect these interactions. Thirdly, a significant portion of the current literature employed cross-sectional designs, constraining causal conclusions, and provides minimal integration of student viewpoints with teacher input.

These deficiencies necessitate a contextualized, integrated approach that connects authentic leadership to academic success while also accounting for the relationship dynamics produced by lecturers' immediacy behaviors. This study's suggested conceptual framework rectifies these deficiencies by putting lecturers' immediacy behaviors as a moderating factor, so providing a more nuanced comprehension of the translation of leadership practices into student achievement in higher education. This approach was particularly relevant and essential for enhancing educational practices and outcomes in underdeveloped countries. Table 1 gives a summary of the three gaps found in the literature and proposed the focus area of this study.

Table 1 ***Summary of Research Gaps***

Researcher	**Study Focus**	**Methodology**	**Findings**	**Gaps**	**Proposed approach to deal with gaps**
Alemiga and Kamya (2018)	Authenticity in authentic leadership of higher education institutions in Uganda.	Data was collected from 30 respondents through interviews using the case of one of the private universities in Uganda	The study found that authentic leaders have best human resource practices which align with both the short-term and long-term strategic goals of an organization.	The study was based in Uganda and did not indicate who the respondents were.	This study was focused on the Democratic Republic of Congo and was conducted in a public university. Data was collected from lecturers and students.
AlMazrouei (2022)	The study focused on the role of	The study employed a review of	The study revealed that authentic	The study was done within the context of	The context of this study was

	authentic leadership in supporting employees' performance, creativity, involvement in decision making and outcomes.	literature as its methodology.	leadership enhances the cohesiveness of working relationships, improves both employee and organisational performance, and enhances the likelihood of improved outcomes by increasing employees' affective commitment.	an organization with the purpose "to assist managers to better understand the concept of authentic leadership" and how it enhances employees' performance.	the University of Kinshasa, an education institution in the Democratic Republic of Congo.
Ayca (2023)	The study was focused on the association between authentic leadership and	The study utilized a correlational study design and a quantitative	The findings of the study revealed that authentic leadership, trust, and	The study was done in an organization setting and focused on job	This study focused on the academic performanc e of

	job performance with trust as the moderating variable	methodology. The respondents were workers from five-related businesses in Turkey.	organisational trust all had a significant and favourable impact on employee work performance.	performance.	students contrary to the mentioned study which focused on employee job performance.
Basaran and Kiral (2020)	The study focused on the relationship between authentic leadership and work engagement.	The study used a relational survey model.	The study argued that there was a high level of perceptions about authentic leadership among teachers in such a way that it increased their role, behaviour,	The study did not examine how authentic leadership can affect students' academic performance.	This study sought to address this gap by establishing how students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa was affected by authentic

			work engagement, and performance.		leadership; and used a mixed method approach.
Duarte et al. (2021)	This study examined the relationship between authentic leadership and improved individual performance.	The study used a quantitative research design.	The study revealed that authentic leadership reinforces workers' emotional connection with their organization, thereby increasing their individual creativity, and, subsequently, promoting better job performance.	The study was done in the context of an organization. It was done in Jordan and only focused on faculty members' perceptions and did not look at the aspect of students' performance.	This study targeted students and faculty at the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and used a mixed methods approach.

Gaerlan (2019)	Authentic leadership and teacher morale: impact on organisational citizenship behaviour in higher education.	The study was a quantitative study aimed at examining the impact of authentic leadership and teacher morale. It used a multiple regression analysis to survey data that were collected from 150 college teacher-respondents from different universities.	The results of the study showed that the dean's authentic leadership positively promoted teacher morale and organisational citizenship behaviour in higher education.	The study did not show how teacher morale improvement impacted students' academic performance.	With authentic leadership as the independent variable and lecturers' behaviors as the mediating variable, the proposed study sought to find out the role that the two mentioned variables played in students' academic performanc

					e.
Kleynhans et al. (2022)	The study sought to explore the relationship between authentic leadership and flourishing by considering the indirect effect of trust in the leader as potentially moderated by job overload.	The study used a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design.	The findings showed that authentic leadership was a significant predictor of flourishing through trust in the leader.	The study was conducted in a prominent steel manufacturing organization in South Africa.	This study was conducted at the University of Kinshasa and sought to establish the role of authentic leadership and lecturers' behaviors on students' academic performanc e.
Ribeiro et al. (2018)	The study sought to examine the relationship between authentic	The study used a quantitative design.	The results of the study revealed that leaders' authenticity promoted	The contextual setting of the study was Portuguese employees.	This study was based at the University of Kinshasa in the

	leadership and performance with employees' affective commitment as the mediating role.		employees' affective commitment which, in return, increases their individual performance.		Democratic Republic.
Saeed and Ali (2019)	The study aimed to investigate authentic leadership and its relationship with classroom management.	The study used the mixed method approach to collect data from 967 university leaders and teachers. Data was analysed using STD.	The study found out that the relationship between authentic leadership and classroom management was higher in private universities than in public universities.	The study had only two variables, focused on a bigger sample size of 967 leaders and teachers, and left out students.	This study had a sample size of 395 respondents chosen through a purposive sampling method and had three variables.
Saleem	The study	The study	The results of	The study was	The given

(2021)	explored the role of authentic leadership in promoting organisational citizenship behaviors of teachers from public sector universities in Pakistan.	employed a survey questionnaire to collect data from 450 teachers. Data collected were analysed through the pilot testing.	the study showed that there was a strong association between authentic leadership and organisational citizenship behaviors of teachers.	conducted in Pakistan and focused on the role that authentic leadership play on teachers' citizenship behaviors.	study was conducted in the Democratic Republic of Congo and focused on the role of authentic leadership and lecturers' behaviors on students' academic performance.
Soares and Lopes (2020)	The role of lecturer's authentic leadership in the creation of psychologically safe environments	The study employed a questionnaire to collect data among undergraduate students.	The study found that there was a positive impact of lecturer authentic leadership	The study did not mention the setting in which the research was conducted nor did it specify the number of	This study was conducted at the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic

	and their impact on academic performance.		and psychological safety on academic performance.	students sampled.	Republic of Congo. Data was collected from 395 respondents.
Tijani and Okunbanjo (2020)	Authentic leadership and organisational commitment: Empirical evidence from the information technology industry in Nigeria.	This study used survey research and a simple random sampling.	The results of the study revealed that authentic leadership had a positive impact on the organization's commitment.	The study was not based on an educational setting but rather organization.	This study focused on an educational institution.
Towsen and Wilhelm stander (2020)	The study examined the relationship between authentic leadership, psychological	The study employed a cross-sectional research design.	The study in its findings revealed that authentic leadership, as a resource, initiated a	The study was conducted in the mining sector and used a cross-sectional design.	The focus of this study was on students' academic performanc e.

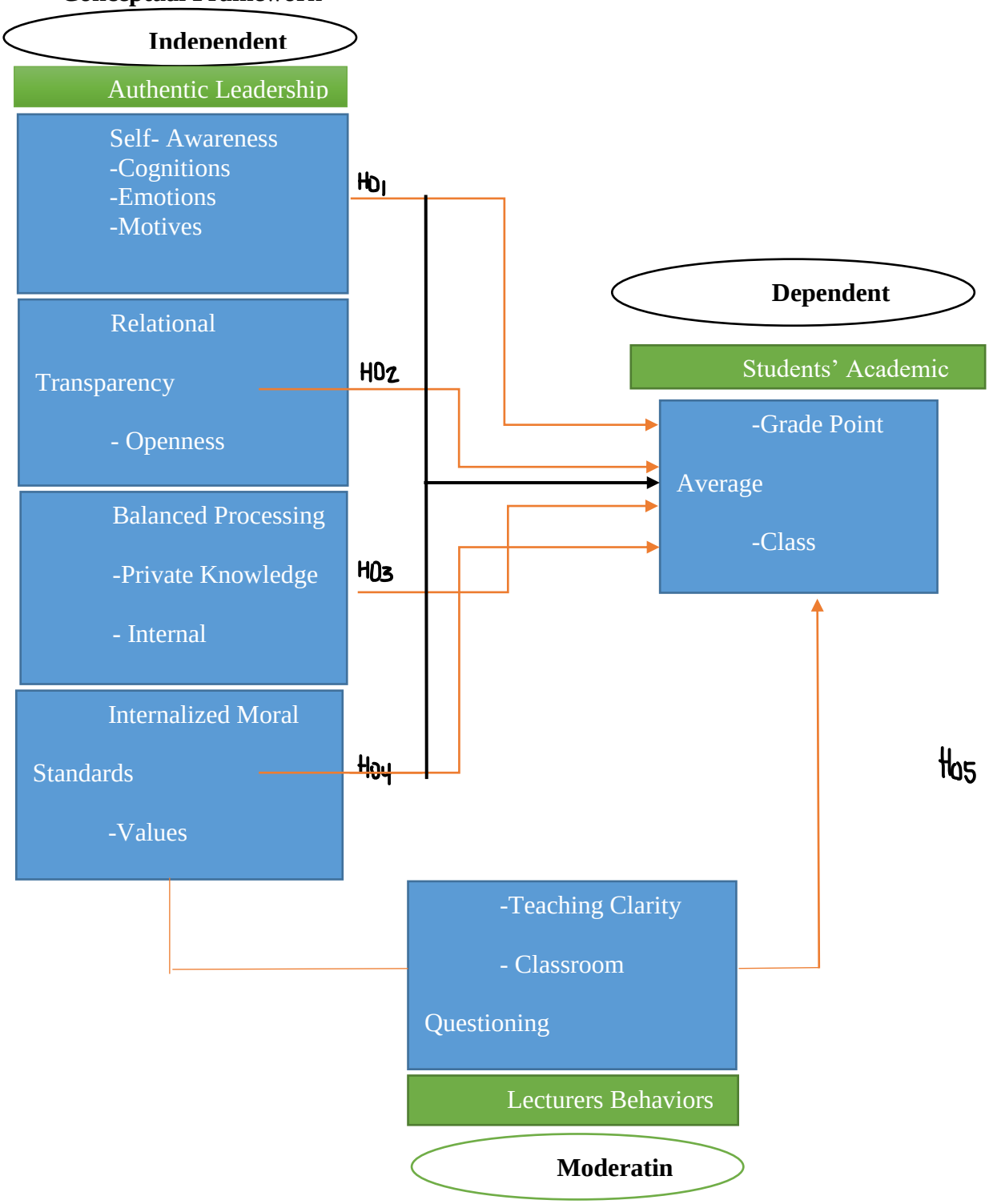
empowerment, role clarity, and work engagement.	motivational process among employees in the workplace.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework helps to present a summary of the "researcher's synthesis of the literature. It helps to map out the actions required and to explain the phenomenon being studied (Regoniel, 2015). As such, the conceptual framework for this study is presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1:

Conceptual Framework



Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a thorough analysis of the empirical literature from earlier research on authentic leadership, lecturers' behaviors, and students' academic performance. It additionally identified research gaps and classified them as contextual, conceptual, and methodological. The various theories that support the study were also discussed. Lastly, a conceptual framework that offered an overview of the components employed under each variable was also presented.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter discussed the research philosophy, the design that was utilized, the chosen sample size, and the sampling technique and data collection methods that was employed in this study. It provides details of the type of data analysis approach as well as measures for assuring the accuracy and dependability of the research tool. The moral considerations of the study are also discussed.

Research Philosophy

Research philosophy is perceived as a mental model that depicts the philosophical orientation of the researcher (Panya & Nyarwath, 2022). It offers explanations concerning the basis of the facts under study and how they are acquired and supported (Mauthner, 2020). Creswell and Creswell (2018) outline four philosophies commonly employed in research, namely: constructivism, post-positivism, transformative, and pragmatism. These philosophies are employed in research because they enable researchers to select the methodology, the method, and the research procedures necessary for a research investigation (Saunders et al., 2009). They allow the researcher to use all available techniques to comprehend the issue under investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Constructivists operate under the premise that people interact with one another to acquire knowledge of the surroundings within which they inhabit as well as work. This philosophical approach is usually regarded as a method for qualitative research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The predictable philosophical stance of the post-positivist paradigm maintains that causes most likely determine effects; and is more suitable for a quantitative research (Park et al., 2019). The transformative approach also known as the participatory viewpoint maintains that governmental objectives and

academic inquiries must be intertwined to bring change in the lives of the respondents, institutions or the most marginalized. It is an approach that is typically associated with qualitative research, but it can also be used as a foundation for quantitative research as well (Mertens, 2021). Positivism is a research philosophy that argues that reality is objective and can observed, measured, and quantified (Park et al., 2020). It aims to generate causal relationship that lead to prediction and control of the phenomena being studied. Interpretivism, on the other hand, argues that truth and knowledge are subjective; as it is based on people's experiences and their understanding of them (Gemma (2018).

Nevertheless, while these three research philosophies are crucial when conducting a research study, they however seem to be incompatible when conducting a mixed method study as they can only be used either in qualitative or quantitative research (Hall, 2013). This study used a pragmatic philosophical worldview which became apparent throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, following academic skepticism over the viability of attaining truth using positivist scientific methodology (Gobo, 2023). As a philosophical method, it concentrates on the application of social reality and contends that there are several approaches that can be used to get at knowledge, as opposed to just one technique; it thus employs both positivism and interpretivism in its search for solutions (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). This study adopted the pragmatic research philosophy because it sought to examine both the measurable relationships among authentic leadership, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and students' academic performance, and the perceptions and experiences of lecturers and students regarding these relationships. Pragmatism is considered appropriate for mixed-methods research because it enables researchers to integrate quantitative and qualitative approaches to address complex research problems from

multiple perspectives (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Saunders et al., 2019). Although the study was conducted as a case study at the University of Kinshasa, the case study served primarily to define the contextual and institutional boundaries of the research rather than to explore participants' subjective realities alone. While interpretivist or constructivist philosophy is commonly associated with case studies that seek to understand participants' lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018), the present study also tested hypotheses using Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and moderation analysis. Consequently, a purely interpretivist philosophical stance would not have adequately supported the quantitative component of the study. Pragmatism was therefore considered the most suitable philosophical foundation because it allows the researcher to employ methods that best address the research problem while integrating objective statistical evidence with qualitative insights (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

Research Design

Research design has been defined as the arrangement of parameters for gathering and analyzing information on methodological effectiveness and significance for the study goal (Kothari & Garg, 2016). According to Kumar (2011), this methodological style is employed in research to produce precise and objective answers to the investigation's questions. This research employed an explanatory sequential mixed design, which, according to Creswell and Plano Clark (2018), comprises the collection of quantitative data initially, and then qualitative data to corroborate the quantitative results. The strategy was justified by the fact that it helps in clarifying the overall image of data that has been collected (Toyon, 2021). This design thus allowed for an in-depth examination of the correlation between variables, which for this study were authentic leadership, Lectures' immediacy behaviors, and students' academic performance (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Target Population

A target population is the group of all objects or items that have similar characteristics of interest to the researcher (Kothari & Garg, 2016), and whose respondents have particular qualities that are pertinent to an investigation (Asiamah et al., 2017). Writing about the Présentation de l'Unikin, (2025), the university website, stipulated that students' enrollment decreased to about 23, 250 students by the 2004-2005 academic year, spread across ten faculties, including Agronomy, law, Economics and management, Letters and Humanities, Medicine, Pharmacy, Polytechnic, Sciences, Social, Administrative and Political Sciences, and Psychology and Educational Sciences. Out of these, the academic and scientific body consisted of 508 are senior lecturers or professors, with an approximate number of 1000 of assistant lecturers without counting the technical and administrative staff. As by this, the targeted population was of 24,758 individuals, in which we had 23,250 students across the ten faculties, 508 senior lecturers, and 1,000 assistant lecturers (See table 2).

Table 2 ***Target Population***

Category of Respondents	Number
Senior lecturers	508
Assistant lecturers	1,000
Students	23,250
Total	24,758

Source. Techno-Science. Net

Population Sample

The selection of the required sample size is one of the initial choices to be taken while designing a research project, as it enables suitable evaluation of

populations and guarantees the requisite degree of correctness (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Kaur, 2017). Creswell and Creswell (2018) contend that a bigger sample size is necessary. In line with this, the Yamane statistical formula (n=N/ [1+N (e)*2], was used to determine the sample size for this study. According to Nanjundeswaraswamy and Divakara (2021), the Yamane statistical formula provides a simplified formula to calculate sample sizes whereby n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the level of precision or margin of error, and allows for 0.05% margin of error and 95% confidence level. Accordingly, the sample size was computed as follows:

n= N/ [1+N (e)*2) where

n= sample size

N= population

e= margin of error

Thus

n=24,758/ [1+24, 758 (0.05) * 2]

n= 24,758/ [1+24,758 (0.0025)]

n= 24, 758/ (1+62)

n= 24, 758/ 63

n=393

Therefore, the sample size for this study was 393 respondents from the University of Kinshasa. However, the proportional allocation was used to obtain the sample population from each stratum of senior lecturers, assistants, and students (Lavrakas, 2008). This meant that if there was H strata with a population size of Nh, in stratum h, h=1, 2……H, and the sample size is n units, then the proportion allocation sample size for the stratum h was determined by Nh= n(Nh/N) where:

Nh= 393

n= sample size of each stratum

N=population size

For instance, to establish the sample size for senior lecturers the study was calculated as follows:

Nh= n (Nh/N)

= 393 (508/24,758)

= 8

Table 3 ***Sample Distribution***

Category of Respondents	Sample Size
Senior lecturers	8
Assistant lecturers	15
Students	370
Total	393

Sampling Methods

This study used an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, with quantitative data collected first, then qualitative data to support and explain the quantitative conclusions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The quantitative phase employed disproportionate stratified sampling, whereas the qualitative phase used purposive sampling to guide participant selection. Disproportionate stratified sample intentionally overrepresents some strata to improve analysis, resulting in more focused insights from certain groups (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015).

This study focused on students who were in their second- and third-year academic endeavour. The study was particularly focused on these groups of students because research has shown that students in their second and third academic years are

at a very significant point in their academic endeavour in such a way that they have gained enough knowledge not only about the various course materials that they have engaged themselves with but also with a number of lecturers, and thus can be more objective than subjective in their assessment of facts (Tinto, 2017).

Using the Yamane (1967) formula stated as: n= N/ [1+N (*e*) ^{2}]; where n is the sample size, N the population size and *e* the 95 % confidence level, the stratified students sample size was:

n= N/ [1+ N (e) ^{2}]

=370/ [1+ 370 (0.05) ^{2}]

= 370/ [1+ 370 (0.0025)]

= 370/ [1+ 0, 925]

= 370/ 1, 925 ≅ 2

= 370/ 2

= 185

From the above, the students sample size that was considered was of 185 females and 185 males with 95 % confidence level. These respondents were considered because they were recipients of Lecturers' leadership styles and behaviors.

On the other hand, the purposive sampling methods, which is a non-probability sampling strategy was used to choose respondents who have the attributes of interest and were thus most likely to provide relevant and helpful information based on their expertise and understanding of the study under investigation (Campbell et al., 2020). According to Palinkas et al. (2015) it is a way of identifying and selecting cases that will use limited research resources effectively. Purposive sampling was therefore used for qualitative phase to select respondents in this study because the targeted respondents in the population needed to be knowledgeable, very

experienced and with adequate information regarding the subject of the study. Once the targeted respondents for the qualitative phase was identified, the census approach was applied in order to include all eligible respondents. This implied that a total of 23 lecturers with more than 10 years of experience serving as lecturer leaders were chosen. The choice of these respondents was motivated by the fact that experienced professionals have the ability to provide a more critical and meaningful insights to a particular subject and thus help refine theoretical paradigms and inform practical applications (Maggin, 2022).

Types of Data

As a plural form of datum meaning "a piece of information" (Kothari, 2018), data may be of two types: primary and secondary (Kumar, 2014). Primary data, as defined by Kumar (2011) are data gathered directly from respondents, whereas secondary data are information already in existence that simply needs to be extracted from recorded documents such as institutional journals, newspapers or online databases. In the context of this study, both primary and secondary data were used in order to provide a comprehensive understanding of the moderating effect of lecturers' immediacy behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance.

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from the identified sample size of 393 members, including 8 senior lecturers, 15 assistant lecturers who have been in the university for more than 10 years, and 370 students in second and third years using the closed-ended structured questionnaire for quantitative data collection and semi – structured interviews for the qualitative data.

The closed-ended structured questionnaires for quantitative data collection was chosen and used because it offers respondents the freedom to answer questions based on their understanding and provides a plethora of data (Kumar, 2011; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The questionnaire covered the three variables examined in this research: authentic leadership, lecturers' behaviors, and students' academic performance. The questions were structured using the 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The Likert scale approach was adopted because it grants respondents the flexibility to select an answer that most accurately expresses their opinions in a fair and balanced way; but also, because it provides positive results in the previous studies in which it has been used (Joshi et al., 2015, Ongeti, 2014).

The semi – structured interviews for qualitative data collection was chosen and used in this study because it provides the researcher the capacity to explore respondents opinions deeply while as at the same time help the researcher to remain focused on the core objectives of the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Like for the quantitative data questions, the semi-structured interviews covered the three variables examined in this research, namely, authentic leadership, lecturers' behaviors, and students' academic performance.

Pretesting of Questionnaire

The research questions tested on respondents in the target population were pretested to assess the validity and reliability of the survey instruments before they were distributed to the entire sample. This essential step technique was used to evaluate respondents' comprehension and interpretation of the questions (Hu, 2014). The pre-test respondents were drawn from the Protestant University of Congo which was not part of this study. The sample size was informed by Chaudhary and Israel's

(2014) suggestion of a sample size of 10-25 respondents. Thus, a sample size of 10 respondents was identified across the targeted respondents to help the researcher find out whether there was any problem that the respondents may encounter while reading or answering the questions; thus, offering the researcher the potential to assess the anticipated length of the research, as well as aiding in the assessment of the relevance and validity of the questionnaire's context (Creswell, 2018). The pre-test was done via a printed questionnaire that was shared with the respondents. The information collected were analysed via SPSS software version 27 and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient to determine the internal consistency and reliability of the constructs. This helped to refine and improve the questionnaire before administering it to the actual study respondents.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

Reliability refers to the degree to which a measurement of a phenomenon yields consistent and reliable results (Kumar, 2011). As such, a research instrument is perceived as reliable when utilized repeatedly under the same or comparable conditions, it will produce similar outcomes. In essence, the greater its consistency, the lower the probability of error (Kumar, 2011). Thus, testing for reliability is crucial because it helps the researcher to know if there is a level of uniformity between the measuring instrument's components (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). The Cronbach Alpha coefficient, one of the most widely utilized and reliable internal consistency metrics that gives a rough estimate of the proportional variance that is consistent throughout the set of test outcomes when making use of Likert scales was used to test for the reliability of the research instruments (Huck, 2007; Koh & Nam, 2005). When using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient model, the standard range for evaluating acceptable reliability spans from 0 to 1 (Robinson as cited by Taherdoost, 2016).

Subsequently, as Kennedy (2022) indicates, a variance of + 1.0 was regarded as positive and – 1.0 negative, or non-existent if the value is 0 and low if it is less than 0.7. The reliability test in the study was conducted independently for both students and lecturers, as illustrated in Tables 3.3 and 3.4 below.

Table 4 ***Reliability test for students' responses***

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha	Interpretation
Authentic Leadership	**14**	**0.73**	**Good**
Lecturers' Immediacy Behaviors	**6**	**0.60**	**Acceptable**
Students' Academic Performance	**6**	**0.69**	**Good**

Source (Field Data)

Table 5 ***Reliability test for lecturers' responses***

Scale	**Number of Items**	**Cronbach Alpha**	**Interpretation**
Authentic Leadership	16	0.8	Very Good
Lecturers Immediacy Behaviors	7	0.63	Acceptable
Students' Academic Performance	7	0.7	Good

Source (Field Data)

Validity of the Research Instrument

The validity of the research instrument was ascertained before conducting the study. Validity explains the extent to which the data actually covers the subject area of investigation (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). It helps in establishing whether the instrument will measure what it is intended to measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

According to Kumar (2011) a researcher must determine if the tool for data collection will yield the appropriate answers to the research questions that the study is designed to address. There are several categories of validity that are used in research, among the many, there is: content validity, construct validity, face validity, and criterion-related validity (Taherdoost, 2024). This study was covered by content and face validity.

Content validity, according to (Rusticus, 2014) refers to the degree to which an assessment instrument is relevant to, and representative of the targeted construct it is designed to measure; while face validity refers to the extent to which a test appears to measure what is supposed to measure. It includes the wording of items and how this might affect responding (Chapman & Gillespie, 2019). The content validity was addressed via the established scales for authentic leadership by walumbwa et al (2008), Gorham's teacher Immediacy scale, and a self-reported academic performance scale focusing on student's GPA and class attendance. Therefore, in order to determine if the questions covered all the issues that were measured but also to check the content of the questions face and content validity of the questionnaire were conducted through feedback from the supervisors.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Data analysis is a critical step in research, enabling the interpretation of collected information and the drawing of meaningful conclusions (Kothari, 2004). In this study, data collected from students and lecturers via questionnaires and interviews were carefully cleaned and edited to ensure consistency, completeness, and clarity (Bhatia, 2017). Using a mixed-methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative data were analysed.

Quantitative data analysis

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), quantitative analysis involves the process of collecting, analysing, interpreting, and writing the results of a study. To carry out these activities, this study used SPSS Version 27 for data entry and analysis of quantitative data. The SPSS version 27 was chosen and used in this study because it is friendly and capable of producing descriptive and inferential statistics for the data collected.

Descriptive statistics

The study undertook a descriptive analysis of the quantitative data. A descriptive statistic is a measurement that, depending on whether a nominal, ordinal, interval, or ratio scale of measurement is employed, describes and summarises the sample in terms of how scores are distributed (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). Leedy and Ormrod (2014) argued that these types of statistics include the distribution of frequency, histograms, pie charts, line graphs, tables or percentage distribution. According to Loeb et al., (2017), these analyses are important in a research process because they help to identify relevant information and establish a solid foundation in comparing the study variables. Thus, this study selected descriptive analysis, in particular, means, standard deviation, percentages and frequencies. Frequencies and percentages were utilized to delineate individuals' demographic characteristics, including gender, age, academic level, and years of experience. Means and standard deviations were computed for the primary study variables authentic leadership, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and students' academic success to reflect the average levels and diversity of responses on each scale. These statistics helped the researcher identify relevant information and establish how the scores were distributed before conducting inferential statistics.

Diagnostic Tests

Diagnostic test was carried out for quantitative data. Diagnostic testing, according to Esomonu and Eleje (2020), is the process adopted to locate and identify students' areas of learning difficulties and weaknesses in a subject or skill and the cause. It involves assessing components of underlying skills out of the context of the curriculum. In a research project, the diagnostic test is essential since it tackles the several types of bias that could exist. It aids in accurately indicating the presence or absence of a given issue as established by a specific reference (Mishra et al., 2019). Its purpose assert Joan et al. (2017), is to find out a student's weak learning point; the course of these weak learning point, and prescribe adequate solutions that can help in improving the student scores. The test was carried out for quantitative data to diagnose students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Besides the diagnostic test, the normality test was carried.

Test for Normality

The test for normality helps to reach valid conclusions regarding reality (Mira, n.d.). According to Kwak and Park (2019), researchers have used either the Anderson- darling test, Shapiro- Wilk test, and the Kolmogorov- Smirnov test to carry out normality test. For this study, the researcher used Shapiro-Wilk test because this test was the first test that could recognize abnormalities caused by either skewness or kurtosis. Furthermore, the test was used because it has been the more popular standard test as it predicts the normality or abnormality of a research hypothesis (Mendes & amp; Pala, 2003). According to (Khatun, 2021), the null hypothesis for a population is assumed to be normally distributed, hence a sample with a p-value more than 0.05

($p>0.05$) is likely to have a normal distribution, but a sample with a p-value less than 0.05 is likely to have a divergence from the normal distribution.\

Test for Linearity

Kothari and Garg (2016) assert that the testing for linearity reveals an unbiased gradient that depicts the difference between the independent and dependent variables. Feng et al. (2022) proposed that a linearity test be performed at a level of confidence of 95% to determine whether the independent variables have a linear relationship with the dependent variable; which, according to Verma and Abdel-Salam (2019), should be less than 0.05 to indicate statistical significance. Furthermore, the Pearson correlation coefficient approach was utilized to assess both the magnitude and the trajectory of the linear relationship between the variables. The coefficient was employed in this study since it measures how much a change in one variable is connected with a change in another, showing a monotonic connection (Schober et al., 2018). According to Rahman and Zhang (2015), the correlation varies from -1 to +1, with values around 0 suggesting a weak association, values near -1 representing a substantial negative correlation, and values near +1 implying a significant positive correlation.

Test for Multicollinearity

The multicollinearity test is described as the statistical probability of more than one predictor variable being substantially linked in a multiple regression model (Bryman, 2016). The test ensures that there is a link between the data variables and so qualifies for a regression analysis test and was important for this study because it helped the researcher to identify correlations between variables and determine the strengths of their relationships with the dependent variable (Chetty, 2020). In this study, the test was performed with the variance inflation factors (VIF) tool, which was

calculated with the SPPS program to measure the level of multicollinearity among the predictors. According to Daoud (2017), the variance inflation factors quantify the degree of multicollinearity by measuring the variance inflation between the predictors, with a VIF value of 1 indicating no correction between the independent variables, indicating no multicollinearity, and values greater than 1 pointing to some level of relationship across the predictors.

Test for Autocorrelation

The study also aimed to examine whether the variables in the prediction model exhibited time-varying correlations through autocorrelation analysis, in order to determine the degree of association between them. Autocorrelation, as explained by Kumar (2023), is a statistical method used to assess the correlation or similarity between adjacent observations over time. The purpose of this test is to identify the extent of connection among observations that are arranged temporally or spatially. This technique is commonly applied to time-series data, where current observations may depend on previous values. Given that this study utilized secondary longitudinal data—specifically, students' academic performance measured across two to three academic years—the temporal autocorrelation test was employed to analyze the data. However, as Gujarati and Porter (2009) caution, errors in temporal autocorrelation tests can occur when the residuals of a regression model are correlated across time, violating a key assumption of the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) method and potentially leading to biased coefficients and misleading statistical conclusions. To address this, the Durbin–Watson (DW) statistic was applied to assess the presence of temporal autocorrelation after estimating the regression model. The DW statistic was computed using the following formula: Where et and et-1 represent the residual at t time. A value close to 2 in the formula suggests that there is no autocorrelation, and

significant values below 2 indicate that there is a positive autocorrelation, and values significant above 2 insinuates negative autocorrelation (Field,

$$d = \frac{\sum_{t=2}^{T}(e_t - e_{t-1})^2}{\sum_{t=1}^{T} e_t^2}$$

Inferential Statistics

A further analysis of the quantitative data was carried out using inferential statistics, which, according to Ruscio (2017) refers to inductive statistics that utilize the information obtained from a small sample to draw inferences regarding the larger population through hypothesis and assumption testing. It helps to comprehend the distinctive features of the investigated population according to the results of the sampling (Bryman, 2016). Since this study used the disproportionate stratified sampling for quantitative data, the inferential statistics was used to verify that the sample predicts the population parameters accurately and not just by chance (Richard et al., 2008; Singh, 2007).

According to Punch (2005) correlation analysis is used in research to establish the causal relationship between two variables and their strengths. The Pearson correlation coefficient was used in order to assess the relationship between the independent variable authentic leadership and the dependent variable students' academic performance (Schober et., 2018). Pearson's correlation coefficient is a measure of strength of association between two variables denoted by r, which is usually a number between -1 and +1 that indicates to what extent and the direction two variables are linearly related (Kumar & Chong, 2018). F-test and p-values were used to ascertain the statistical significance of the relationship among the variables as suggested by Saunders et al., (2009).

The study also employed multiple regression analysis, which, according to Kothari (2014), is a statistical technique used to determine the extent to which a set of independent variables collectively predict the behaviour of a dependent variable. This analysis was conducted to assess whether the combined dimensions of authentic leadership could significantly predict students' academic performance (Kothari & Garg, 2016). This test was chosen for this study because it is significant in both predicting and explaining the variation in the dependent variable due to a unit of change in the independent variable (Rosenthal, 2017). The regression model took the following form:

$$Y = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 x_1 + \alpha_2 x_2 + \alpha_3 x_3 + \alpha_4 x_4 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y= Composite index of students' academic performance (dependent variable)

$\alpha 0$= Constant

X_1= Composite index of self-awareness (independent variable 1)

X_2= Composite index of relational transparency (independent variable 2)

X_3= Composite index of balanced processing (independent variable 3)

X_4= Composite index of moral standard (independent variable 4)

α_0, α_1, α_2, α_3, α_4= Alpha Coefficients

ε= Error Term

The relationship between the predicted variable and predictor variables were measured by use of multiple regression analysis presented in the model above. The results of the measurement of the relationship were then interpreted using Coefficient of determination (R2) Multiple R, F-statistic, coefficients of variables, and significance levels before a report was generated.

To determine the effect of each element of authentic leadership namely self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and moral standards, the test for moderation was adopted.

Test for moderation. Montoya (2019) argued that moderation tests are used to establish whether the relationship between the factor predictor (X) and the outcome (Y) depends on the moderator (M); with the formula that goes as follows: $Y= \alpha_0 + \alpha_1X + \alpha_2M + \alpha_3X.M+\varepsilon$

The first step of this analysis in this study as suggested by Montoya (2019), involved the testing of the direct role of authentic leadership on students' academic performance as shown in Figure 2.

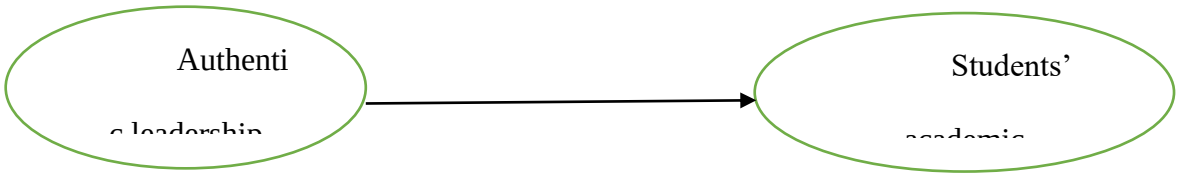


Figure 2: Direct relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance

The second step entailed the analysis of the role of the moderating variable lecturers' behaviors on students' academic performance as demonstrated in Figure 3.

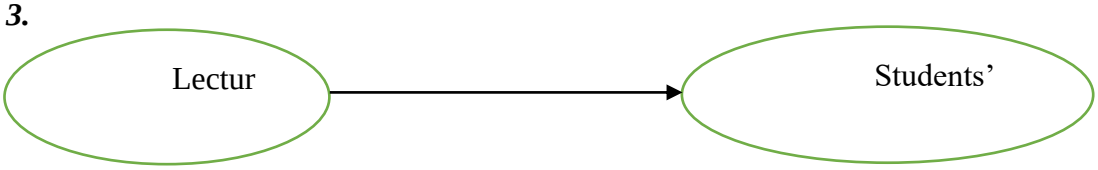


Figure 3: *Direct relationship between lecturers' Behaviors and students' academic performance*

Here a simple linear regression analysis was carried out to test the independent variable (Authentic Leadership) predicting power on the dependent variable student academic performance, specifically to the test for significance effect, using the following formula:

$Y=\alpha_0 + \alpha_1 X+ \varepsilon$

Students' academic performance=α_0 + α_1 authentic leadership + ε

In the second step, a simple linear regression analysis of the moderating variable lecturers' Behaviors was carried on to predict students' academic performance in testing the significance effect, and it looked as follows:

$Y= \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 M + \varepsilon$

Students' academic performance= α_0 + α_1 lecturers' behaviour + ε

The third step carried out a multiple regression analysis to establish if the moderating variable had a partial or full moderating, and it looked as follows:

$Y=\alpha_0 + \alpha_1 X + \alpha_3 X.M + \varepsilon$

Students' academic performance= α_0 + α_3 authentic leadership*lecturers' behaviors + ε

The third step entailed the assessment of the role of the moderating variable lecturers' behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance as shown in Figure 4.

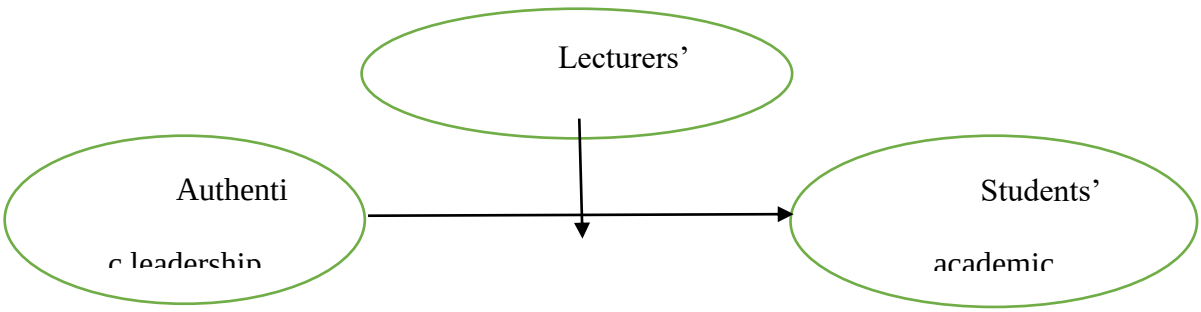


Figure 4: Level of the impact of the moderating variable lecturers' behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance

Qualitative analysis

Tenny et al. (2024) assert that qualitative data analysis seeks to make general statements on how categories or themes of data are related. The aim is to understand why people have thoughts and perspectives that might affect the way they behave (Sutton & Austin, 2015). For this study, qualitative data was collected via the semi-structured interviews and then adhered to the six-phase paradigm for thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). This methodology was selected because it provides a methodical yet adaptable way to find, examine, and present themes in qualitative datasets, allowing for a thorough comprehension of intricate social and behavioural phenomena (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The statistical evaluation was carried out with MAXQDA software, which allowed for fast data structure, coding, and retrieval, boosting the traceability and dependability of the procedure of analysis (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2019). The researcher began by preparing and familiarizing oneself with the interview transcripts by reading them many times and taking notes to discover early thoughts. Relevant sentences and phrases were then classified, and related codes were combined into larger categories that indicated major trends in the data. These categories were developed into cohesive themes that were clearly defined and consistent with the study's aims. The themes represented the core of lecturers' immediacy behaviors and how they moderated the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance. Finally, the qualitative findings were combined with the quantitative results and related literature to allow for

methodological triangulation, resulting in a more detailed and full comprehension of how immediacy behaviors reinforce authentic leadership practices to improve student learning outcomes.

2013).

Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted under strict ethical oversight. Easterby-Smith et al., (2012) established a collection of common moral norms that researchers are required to follow. The majority of these concepts are centred on safeguarding the interests of those who participate in the study. Given this, the research endeavoured to uphold the following values: avoid causing damage to respondents, honouring their dignity, receiving their informed permission, preserving their privacy, assuring confidentiality, and being transparent about the study's objectives (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014). To address the aforementioned moral issues, the researcher submitted the proposal to the Institutional Scientific and Ethics review Committee (ISERC) at Pan Africa Christian University for approval. Once approved, the researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Pan Africa Christian University which was used to make an application for approval of conduct research from the Minister of scientific research in Congo, in line with the legal provision in the Democratic Republic of Congo for conducting research.

Additionally, the researcher took full responsibility for the conduct of the research process by seeking consent for all participating institutions and respondents engaged in the study, and assured the respondents of confidentiality and anonymity through use of pseudonyms, foreseeing any consequences of the research and taking the necessary mitigation measures. Furthermore, the researcher sought to build trust by being open and honest as possible. The respondents were given detailed

information about the nature of the research and its purpose. They were also informed that they have the liberty to withdraw if they felt uncomfortable.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the research philosophy, design, methods of data collection as well as moral considerations. The study used a mixed-method approach to conduct a thorough examination of the link between authentic leadership, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and student academic performance. The sample size of the study was of 393 people. Before data collection, a pre-instrument test was undertaken as a pilot process to evaluate the questionnaire's efficacy and ensure that respondents accurately comprehended the questions being asked. The quantitative data that was collected from the closed – ended questions and was analysed using the SPSS 27 software. This program helped in the organization, modification, and statistical analysis of quantitative data. The findings were presented in tables, providing the reader with a clear and succinct representation of the results. On the other hand, qualitative data was collected via the semi- structured interviews. Once qualitative data was collected from the field, it was checked, sorted, edited, organized, coded into themes and then entered into the MAXQDA software for analysis before presenting the findings. Lastly, the study took into account the moral considerations during and after the collection of data as reported above.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the findings of the study on the moderating effect of lecturers' immediacy behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa. The chapter begins with the presentation of the preliminary analyses, including the response rate and diagnostic tests undertaken to ascertain whether the data satisfied the assumptions required for inferential statistical analysis. The diagnostic tests include assessments of normality, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity, autocorrelation, and linearity. Thereafter, descriptive statistics are presented, followed by inferential analyses conducted according to the specific objectives of the study. The quantitative findings are interpreted alongside qualitative findings obtained from the interviews. Finally, the findings are discussed in relation to previous empirical studies and the theoretical framework underpinning the study.

Presentation of Response Rate

Table 6 ***Target respondents who responded to the questionnaires***

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Obtained Response	236	60
Unattained	157	40
Total	393	100

Source (Field Data)

Questionnaires were administered to a sample of 393 respondents, including senior academics, assistant lecturers, and second- and third-year students at the University of Kinshasa. Of the 393 issued questionnaires, 236 were returned. This amounts to 60 percent of the total respondents, whereas 157 questionnaires,

constituting 40 percent, were not submitted. A response rate of 50 percent is deemed satisfactory; 60 percent is considered good, and 70 percent or higher is regarded as excellent (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003; as referenced by Adeniran, 2020). This study utilised a response rate of 60 percent.

Response Rate by Gender

The findings in table 4.2 indicate that among 236 respondents, comprising senior lecturers, assistant lecturers, and second- and third-year students at the University of Kinshasa, 154 were male, representing 64 percent of the total, while 84 were female, accounting for 36 percent of the total. Studies on the gender gap indicate that women remain under-represented across all societal sectors (Roos et al., 2020; Sawrikar, 2021; Dixon & Versteeg, 2023; Lombardo et al., 2024). This finding aligns with the report by the United Nations Women (2023), which indicates that the University of Kinshasa reflects a similar gender imbalance. Out of 1,328 academic personnel, only 119 are women, representing 9 percent of the total staff. Likewise, among the student population, women account for merely 25 percent in applied sciences and 23 percent in exact sciences. These figures highlight the persistent under-representation of women within both academic and student bodies. Table 4.2 below presents respondents response based on gender.

Table 7 ***Response rate by gender***

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	152	64
Female	84	36
Total	236	100

Source (Field Data)

Distribution of Students' Response by Age

The table below reveals that 81 percent of respondents were aged 18 to 24 years, 14 percent were aged 25 to 30 years, and 5 percent were aged 31 years and above. The majority of students at the University of Kinshasa are aged between 18 and 24 years. Table 4.3 below presents data on the response rate of students based on their age group at the University of Kinshasa.

Table 8 ***Students' data based on age***

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
18 – 24	173	81
25 – 30	30	14
31 and above	10	5
Total	213	100

Source (Field Data)

Distribution of Lecturers' Response by Years of Experience

The table 4.4 below indicates that 44 percent of professors at the University of Kinshasa had 22 years or more of experience, while 35 percent have 16 to 21 years of experience, and 21 percent have 10 to 15 years of experience. This indicates that the majority of professors at the University of Kinshasa have over twenty years of teaching experience, rendering them well-qualified for this subject. Table 4.4 below presents data on the response rate of lecturers based on their years of experience at the University of Kinshasa.

Table 9 ***Lecturers' data based on year of experience***

Years of Experience	Frequency	Percentage
10 – 15 years	5	21

16 – 21 Years	8	35
22 and Above	10	44
Total	23	100

Source (Field Data)

Distribution of Students' Response by Academic Year

Table 4.5 indicates that second-year students constituted the majority of respondents in this study at 71 percent, whilst third-year students represented the least at 29 percent. Table 4.5 presents students' response by their academic year.

Table 10 ***Students' response by their academic year***

Academic Year	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Second Year	152	71
Third Year	61	29
Total	213	100

Source (Field Data)

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics lay the groundwork for inferential statistics, which are used to test hypotheses. They help summarize and describe the main features of research variables or trends related to a specific issue under investigation (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2021; Field, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study employed means and standard deviations as the particular descriptive statistics. The accompanying sections consequently discuss the results on descriptive statistics encompassing the variables: self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, internalized moral standard, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, as well as students' academic performance. The results of the analysis for both students and lecturers are presented as follow.

Self – Awareness

Self-awareness constituted the initial sub-construct of authentic leadership. The results of descriptive statistics for both students and lecturers, including means and standard deviations, were calculated for this variable and are displayed in Table 4.6 and 4.7 below.

Table 11 ***Students' descriptive results for self-awareness***

Statements	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
My lecturers are able to control their personal emotions	4.20	0.76
My lecturers are aware of their cognitive weakness and strength	4.32	0.70
My lecturers are aware that they do not know everything	4.23	0.75
My lecturers understand their personal motivations	4.38	0.76
Aggregate	4.28	0.38

The data show that participants usually thought that their lecturers were self-aware (aggregate M = 4.28, SD = 0.38). This suggests that, on average, lecturers are aware of their internal conditions, emotions, and personal limits and are capable of efficiently managing them in academic contexts. The comparatively low aggregate standard deviation indicates a high degree of agreement among respondents, implying that attitudes toward lecturers' self-awareness were consistently favourable across the sample. Among the individual indicators, the statement "My lecturers understand their personal motivations" had the highest mean score (M = 4.38, SD = 0.76), indicating that lecturers are regarded to be guided by a clear sense of purpose and passion in their professional behaviors.

These findings are consistent with previous research that has identified self-awareness as a key component of authentic leadership. According to Avolio and Gardner (2005) and Gardner et al. (2011), self-awareness allows leaders to participate in critical self-reflection, appropriately analyze their behaviors and motivations, and align their actions with internal beliefs. Empirical data suggests that leaders with greater degrees of self-awareness foster trust, psychological safety, and authentic connections inside their businesses (Leroy et al., 2015). In higher education, such self-awareness may lead to more thoughtful and empathic teaching approaches, hence improving student engagement and academic success.

Table 12 ***Lecturers' descriptive results for self-awareness***

Statements	**ean**	**Std. Deviation**
I am able to control my personal emotions	.22	0.67
I am aware of my cognitive strength and weaknesses	.39	0.58
I am aware that I do not know everything	.43	0.51
I understand my personal motivations	.00	0.74
Aggregate	.26	0.63

Self-awareness was assessed using four items that measured lecturers' understanding of their emotions, cognitive abilities, limitations, and personal

motivations. The findings revealed a high level of self-awareness among lecturers, with an aggregate mean of 4.26 and a standard deviation of 0.63, indicating strong agreement across respondents with moderate variability. Lecturers reported being particularly aware of their limitations (M = 4.43, SD = 0.51) and their cognitive strengths and weaknesses (M = 4.39, SD = 0.58). They also indicated a strong ability to control their personal emotions (M = 4.22, SD = 0.67). Awareness of personal motivations scored slightly lower but still high (M = 4.00, SD = 0.74). Overall, these results demonstrate that lecturers possess a well-developed capacity for self-reflection, emotional regulation, and personal insight, which are essential components of authentic leadership.

Relational Transparency

Relational transparency was the second variable of authentic leadership that was covered. Table 4.8 and 4.9 below presents the findings of means and standard deviation on this variable for both students and lecturers.

Table 13 ***Students' descriptive results for Relational Transparency***

Statements	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**
My lecturers are transparent and honest	4.18	0.82
My lecturers often allow others to know they really are	3.95	1.02
My lecturers admit their mistakes when committed	4.01	0.85
My lecturers are willing to reveal themselves	4.05	0.86
Aggregate	4.05	0.60

The results demonstrate that participants predominantly possessed positive views on relational transparency (M = 4.05, SD = 0.60), demonstrating that Lecturers are, on average, believed to interact openly and honestly with students. The moderate

standard deviation implies some diversity in participants' replies, showing that the degree of transparency may fluctuate between Lecturers. These results are consistent with earlier studies indicating beneficial outcomes linked with relationship transparency. For example, Baquero (2023) discovered that relational transparency dramatically boosted confidence in executives and staff engagement in the hotel business. Similarly, Ndambuki et al., (2025) found that relational transparency increased volunteer commitment in Kenyan religious organizations. Higher degrees of leader relational transparency in knowledge-work teams were connected with better affect-based trust (Krejci, 2021). Overall, the findings of the study indicate that lecturers who exhibit relational transparency may create more open and trustworthy interactions with students, potentially contributing to enhanced student-lecturer relationships and academic performance.

Table 14 ***Lecturers' descriptive results for Relational Transparency***

Statement	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**
I am transparent and honest	4.04	0.56
I often allow others to know who I am	3.47	0.51
I admit my mistakes when committed	3.13	0.69
I am willing to reveal myself	3.69	0.82
Aggregate	3.58	0.65

The study assessed lecturers' relational transparency using four items that examined their openness, honesty, and willingness to reveal their authentic selves in professional interactions. The results showed an aggregate mean of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 0.65, indicating a moderate level of relational transparency among lecturers, with some variability in responses. Lecturers reported high levels of

transparency and honesty (M = 4.04, SD = 0.56), reflecting a strong tendency to communicate truthfully. However, their willingness to admit mistakes (M = 3.13, SD = 0.69) and allow others to know more about them personally (M = 3.47, SD = 0.51) was comparatively lower. The item on willingness to reveal oneself also reflected moderate agreement (M = 3.69, SD = 0.82). Overall, these findings suggest that while lecturers maintain a generally honest communication style, they exercise caution in self-disclosure, indicating partial but not full relational transparency in their professional conduct.

Balanced Processing

Table 4.10 and 4.11 below displays the results of both students and lecturers' descriptive statistics on balanced processing, which is the third measure of authentic leadership in the research**.**

Table 15 ***Students' descriptive results for Balanced Processing***

Statement	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**
My lecturers remain objective when considering external inputs before making decisions.	3.97	0.85
My lecturers intentionally seek for others opinions before making any decisions.	3.97	1.03
Aggregate	3.97	0.94

According to the results, the majority of participants thought that their lecturers had a moderate to high degree of balanced processing (aggregate M = 3.97, SD = 0.94). This implies that lecturers are often seen as being very impartial and objective when assessing outside data prior to making choices. In other words, rather than depending just on their own beliefs or prejudices, students believe that lecturers

are open to taking into account many viewpoints and critically evaluating pertinent data. While some lecturers are constantly seen as objective and analytical in their decision-making, others may exhibit these traits less frequently, according to the rather high standard deviation (SD = 0.94), which shows a significant degree of heterogeneity in the views of the participants. This heterogeneity may be due to variations in the cognitive styles, receptivity to criticism, or familiarity with reflective decision-making processes of individual lecturers. These findings align with other studies that highlight balanced processing as a key component of authentic leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa et al., 2008). Leaders who use balanced processing critically assess information, look for many perspectives, and base their decisions on sound judgment rather than feelings or outside pressure. Such conduct can foster intellectual fairness, openness, and confidence between instructors and students in an academic setting. Additionally, it could inspire students to use comparable critical-thinking techniques, which would improve their academic achievement and engagement.

Table 16 ***Lecturers' descriptive results for balanced processing***

Statement	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**
I remain objective when considering external input before making decisions	4.13	0.62
I intentionally seek for others opinions before deciding	3.47	0.79
Aggregate	3.80	0.71

Balanced processing was measured using two items that assessed the degree to which lecturers objectively evaluate external input and deliberately seek others' perspectives when making decisions. The findings revealed an aggregate mean of

3.80 and a standard deviation of 0.71, indicating a moderately high level of balanced processing among lecturers, with some variability in responses. Lecturers reported a strong tendency to remain objective when considering external input (M = 4.13, SD = 0.62). However, the extent to which they intentionally seek others' opinions before making decisions was comparatively lower (M = 3.47, SD = 0.79). These results suggest that while lecturers generally demonstrate objectivity in decision-making, their engagement in soliciting diverse viewpoints is less consistent. Overall, the pattern reflects a moderate but meaningful presence of balanced processing in lecturers' professional behavior.

Internalized Moral Standard

The last sub-variable of authentic leadership was internalized moral standard. The results of both students and lecturers' descriptive statistics on this variable were determined and summarized as shown in Table 4.12 and 4.13 below.

Table 17 ***Students' descriptive results for Internalized Moral Standard***

Statements	**ean**	**Std. Dev**
My lecturers are guided by their internal moral principles.	.34	0.69
My lecturers make sound judgments grounded in their moral values, with consideration for the well-being of others.	.25	0.75
My lecturers possess strong moral values that influence their decisions and preferences	.22	0.75
My lecturers consistently align their actions with their moral values, even when faced with challenges	.25	0.78
Aggregate		0.74

	.27

The findings show that respondents thought their lecturers had a strong internalized moral perspective (aggregate M = 4.27, SD = 0.74). This suggests that lecturers are typically seen as people whose choices and behaviors are motivated by strong moral principles and ethical standards. The comparatively high mean score indicates that lecturers typically operate in accordance with their moral views and values, even in the face of difficult situations or outside influences. The statement "My lecturers are guided by their internal moral principles" (M = 4.34, SD = 0.69) had the highest mean score at the item level, indicating that students firmly believe their lecturers to be morally upright people. High ratings were also given to the following items: "My lecturers make sound judgments grounded in their moral values, with consideration for the well-being of others" (M = 4.25, SD = 0.75), "My lecturers possess strong moral values that influence their decisions and preferences" (M = 4.22, SD = 0.75), and "My lecturers consistently align their actions with their moral beliefs, even when faced with challenges or external pressure" (M = 4.25, SD = 0.78).

The modest standard deviation (SD = 0.74) shows considerable variation in opinions, suggesting that although the majority of respondents had a favourable opinion of their lecturers, some may see contradictions in the practical application of moral precepts. These results are in line with earlier research that found internalized moral viewpoint to be a crucial element of authentic leadership. Empirical research indicates that such moral integrity promotes ethical, transparent, and trusting environments in educational institutions (Leroy et al., 2015; Alilyyani et al., 2018). In this situation, lecturers' commitment to internal moral standard probably increases

their credibility and acts as an ethical role model for students, which benefits students' moral growth and academic engagement.

Table 18 ***Lecturers' descriptive results for Internalized Moral Standard***

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
I am guided by internal moral principles	4.17	0.38
I make sound judgements grounded in my moral values with consideration for the well-being of others	3.61	0.58
I possess strong moral values that influence my decision and preferences	4.30	0.70
I consistently align my actions with my moral values even when faced with challenges.	4.52	0.51
Aggregate	4.15	0.54

The study assessed lecturers internalized moral standards using four items designed to measure the extent to which their actions and decisions are guided by moral principles. The results showed a high level of internalized moral standards among lecturers, with an aggregate mean of 4.15 and a standard deviation of 0.54, indicating strong agreement across respondents. Individually, lecturers reported being guided by internal moral principles (M = 4.17, SD = 0.38) and consistently aligning their actions with their moral values even when faced with challenges (M = 4.52, SD = 0.51). They also indicated possessing strong moral values that influence their decisions (M = 4.30, SD = 0.70). However, the item on making sound judgments grounded in moral values with consideration for others recorded a comparatively lower mean (M = 3.61, SD = 0.58), though still within the upper range. Overall, these findings suggest that lecturers demonstrate a high level of moral self-regulation and

ethical grounding, reflecting a strong adherence to moral norms in their professional practice

Lecturers' Immediacy Behaviors

Lecturers' immediacy behaviors was the moderating variable that was measured in this study. The variable was considered important because immediacy has been consistently documented as a strong predictor of student engagement, motivation, and perceived lecturers' effectiveness. By analysing lecturers' immediacy, the study sought to evaluate if the quality of lecturers-student interactions had a substantial impact on the strength or direction of the fundamental connections under consideration. Table 4.14 and 4.15 below provides a summary of the descriptive statistics on lecturers' immediacy behaviors.

Table 19 ***Students' descriptive results for Lecturers' Immediacy Behaviors***

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
Teaching clarity		
The lecturer teaches clearly so that the students are able to understand the lesson.	4.22	0.68
The lecturer is aware that everything he does and says affects the students' perspectives and learning process	3.67	0.89
Classroom Questioning		
The lecturer encourages students to ask questions during the lesson	3.65	0.93
Classroom Management		
My lecturers exhibit a better classroom managerial skill	3.40	0.86
Verbal praise		

The lecturer uses positive verbal praise to motivate active student participation	3.28	0.89
The lecturer often acknowledges and praises the efforts and contributions of students	3.39	0.92
Aggregate	3.61	0.87

The descriptive results showed that lecturers' immediacy behaviors were perceived at a moderately high level (Aggregate M = 3.61, SD = 0.87), suggesting that students generally agreed that their lecturers demonstrated behaviors that facilitate psychological closeness and instructional support. Contemporary research affirms that immediacy both verbal and non-verbal enhances students' affective and cognitive learning outcomes by improving relational rapport and classroom engagement (Bolkan, Goodboy & Myers, 2018). Teaching clarity emerged as the strongest immediacy indicator (M = 4.22, SD = 0.68), reflecting effective lecturer communication that supports comprehension. This aligns with recent findings emphasizing clarity as a core predictor of student understanding and learning persistence (Violanti et al., 2018). Classroom questioning was also rated positively (M = 3.69, SD = 0.91), demonstrating that lecturers encourage student inquiry an immediacy behavior linked to increased student participation and willingness to engage (Goodboy & Myers, 2018). Moderate ratings in classroom management (M = 3.40, SD = 0.86) indicate that while order is maintained, student perceptions suggest variability in the lecturer's ability to create consistently supportive learning environments. The lowest ratings were observed in verbal praise (M range = 3.28, SD=3.39), indicating limited use of motivational feedback. Recent studies highlight

that positive verbal reinforcement significantly strengthens learner motivation, belonging, and perceived instructor care (Santilli et al., 2021).

Table 20 ***Lecturers' descriptive results for lecturers' immediacy behaviors***

Statement	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**
Teaching Clarity		
I teach clearly so that the students are able to understand the lesson	4.44	0.59
I am aware that everything I do and say affects the students' perspectives and learning process	4.22	0.73
Classroom Questioning		
I encourage students to ask questions during the lesson	4.69	0.47
Classroom management		
I exhibit a better classroom managerial skill	4.08	0.73
Verbal Praise		
I use positive verbal praise to motivate active student participation	3.87	0.76
I often acknowledge and praise the efforts and contributions of students	4.17	0.71
Aggregate	4.25	0.67

The overall findings reveal that lecturers exhibit a high level of immediacy behaviors, with an aggregate mean of 4.25 and a standard deviation of 0.67. This indicates strong agreement among lecturers that they engage in clarity-focused teaching, questioning practices, verbal praise, and effective classroom management. Although the standard deviation reflects some variability, the general pattern suggests consistent use of immediacy behaviors across the sample. Teaching clarity received

particularly high ratings (M = 4.44; M = 4.22), demonstrating that lecturers prioritize making content understandable and are aware of their influence on student learning. This aligns with Myers et al. (2019), who found that clarity and instructor awareness significantly enhance students' cognitive engagement and comprehension. Similarly, high scores in classroom questioning (M = 4.69) suggest lecturers actively invite student participation, supporting findings by Baker and Goodboy (2018) that questioning is a key immediacy strategy that fosters deeper learning and interaction. Verbal praise (M = 3.87; M = 4.17) and classroom management (M = 4.08) also scored strongly, though slightly lower, indicating positive but varied use of motivational and organizational strategies. This pattern mirrors Santilli et al. (2020), who observed that praise and supportive feedback substantially improve students' emotional engagement but may differ across personal teaching styles. Overall, these results reinforce broader scholarly evidence that lecturer immediacy behaviors contribute significantly to student engagement, motivation, and academic performance. Recent studies (e.g., Frymier & Houser, 2020; Witt, 2022) consistently emphasize that behaviors such as clarity, praise, questioning, and effective management create a psychologically safe and motivating learning environment. The strong mean score (4.25) in the present study therefore suggests that lecturers are effectively employing immediacy behaviors that align with international best practices in teaching and learning.

Students' Academic performance

The dependent variable of this study was students' academic performance. The variable was operationalized as grade point average and class attendance. Table 4. 16 and 4.17 provide a breakdown of the descriptive statistics on grade point average and class attendance for both students and lecturers.

Table 21 ***Students' descriptive results for academic performance***

Statements	Mean	Std. Dev
Grade point Average		
My academic performance is beyond average	3.99	0.79
I strive to improve my academic performance and maintain that desire.	3.77	0.65
I set specific goals and work towards them in order to improve my academic performance	3.29	0.93
Classroom Attendance		
I am motivated to attend all scheduled classes regularly without unjustified absences.	3.60	0.95
I faithfully attend all my classes.	3.92	0.71
Aggregate	3.71	0.81

The overall aggregate for students' academic performance, combining both Grade Point Average and Classroom Attendance, was 3.71 with a standard deviation of 0.81. This indicates a moderately positive level of academic engagement among students, reflecting a general tendency toward above-average academic effort and regular class attendance. However, the relatively high variability suggests that engagement is not uniform across the population. These findings align with existing research, which consistently shows that academic performance is strongly influenced by self-regulated learning behaviors, including goal setting and sustained motivation. For instance, Credé et al. (2018) found that students who demonstrate consistent attendance and personal study discipline tend to achieve higher academic outcomes. Similarly, Tinto (2019) asserts that students who engage actively with their academic

responsibilities, particularly through regular class attendance, are more likely to persist and perform well academically.

Furthermore, studies such as Kim and Park (2020) emphasize that while students may express a desire for strong academic performance, disparities often arise due to differences in self-regulation and time management strategies. This is reflected in the current study, where students reported strong motivation to perform well but lower commitment to targeted goal-setting behaviors. Recent research also highlights that attendance remains a critical predictor of academic success. Goller and Harteis (2021) note that consistent class attendance enhances comprehension, increases engagement, and improves academic outcomes. This is consistent with the higher mean scores observed in classroom attendance relative to targeted academic performance strategies. Overall, the findings from this study support the broader literature showing that students are generally motivated and aware of the importance of academic engagement, but practical study habits, particularly goal-setting vary significantly across individuals. This suggests a need for student-support interventions aimed at strengthening self-regulated learning practices.

Table 22 ***Lecturers' descriptive results for students' academic performance***

Statement	**Mean**	**Std. Dev**
Grade point average		
My students' academic performance is beyond average	3.74	0.69
My students strive to improve their academic performance and maintain that desire.	3.22	0.85
My students set specific goals and work towards them in order to improve their academic performance	3.26	0.75
Classroom Attendance		

My students are motivated to attend all scheduled classes regularly without unjustified absences.	3.04	0.70
My students faithfully attend all my classes.	3.04	0.83
Aggregate	3.26	0.76

The descriptive results from the lecturers' perspective yielded an overall aggregate mean of 3.26 (SD = 0.76) for students' academic performance. This indicates that lecturers generally perceive their students' performance and related academic behaviors as moderate, suggesting that while students demonstrate some commitment to their studies, their performance is not consistently high. A notable concern relates to student attendance, with items on regular class attendance rated the lowest (Means = 3.04). This implies that lecturers perceive students as facing challenges in maintaining consistent classroom presence. Such observations are supported by prior research, which affirms that classroom attendance is one of the strongest predictors of academic success (Credé et al., 2018). Lower attendance not only affects content mastery but also reduces the opportunities for interaction, clarification, and feedback factors essential for improved academic performance.

The moderate aggregate assessment also aligns with broader higher education literature. Studies consistently show that students' academic achievement is strongly influenced by their motivation, engagement, and learning behaviors (Kahu & Nelson, 2018). When lecturers perceive students as demonstrating limited goal-setting and self-regulation, this reflects a broader challenge associated with sustaining deep learning and academic persistence. Moreover, Kuh et al. (2018) emphasize that engaged students generally outperform disengaged peers, suggesting that the lecturers' observations may reflect systemic issues related to student engagement.

Similarly, Zimmerman and Moylan (2018) argue that academic self-regulation, including goal-setting and sustained effort, plays a central role in shaping academic performance. This aligns with lecturers' views that students demonstrate only moderate commitment to these behaviors. Furthermore, recent work by Sánchez-Cruces et al. (2020) and Zhoc and Chen (2018) reinforces the idea that effective self-regulation, classroom engagement, and emotional-motivational readiness are critical determinants of academic success areas where lecturers perceive students to be only moderately strong.

Diagnostic Tests

Diagnostic tests are statistical procedures used to verify whether the assumptions that underpin regression analysis have been met. Their primary purpose is to detect any potential violations of these assumptions, as such violations may undermine the accuracy, validity, and interpretability of the regression findings (Hair et al., 2019). The specific diagnostic tests that were conducted in this study include: normality, linearity, multicollinearity, as well as autocorrelation test as presented in the subsection below.

Normality Tests

The skewness and kurtosis statistics were examined to assess the normality of the study variables for both students and lecturers as presented in Table 4.18 and 4.19 below. For the student dataset, the aggregate skewness (–0.589) falls within the acceptable range of –1 to +1, suggesting approximate symmetry (Hair et al., 2019; Kline, 2016). Similarly, the aggregate kurtosis value (0.735) lies within the acceptable threshold of –1 to +1, indicating that the distribution does not deviate substantially from normality. The standard error for kurtosis (SE = 0.336) further supports normality, as none of the kurtosis values exceed ±2 times the standard error. These

results imply that the student-level variables are suitable for parametric analyses, including regression.

For the lecturers' dataset, the aggregate skewness (0.485) and aggregate kurtosis (0.490) also fall within the recommended ranges of –1 to +1, indicating approximate symmetry and acceptable peakedness. The standard error for kurtosis (SE = 1.022) confirms that none of the individual kurtosis values are extreme relative to the expected sampling variability. Consequently, the lecturers' self-reported data demonstrate sufficient normality to justify the use of parametric statistical methods. These findings are consistent with prior studies in leadership and educational research. Walumbwa et al. (2008) reported normally distributed scores for authentic leadership constructs among organizational leaders, while Alonderiene and Majauskaite (2016) found that leadership-related variables in higher education exhibited skewness and kurtosis values within acceptable ranges.

Table 23 ***Students Skewness and Kurtosis for Testing Normality***

	n		**Skewness**		**Kurtosis**
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Self- awareness	213	-0.624	0.102	0.932	0.336
Relational Transparency	213	-1.168	0.163	1.387	0.336
Balanced Processing	213	-0.963	0.098	1.372	0.336
Internalized Moral Standard	213	-0.918	0.120	0.965	0.336
Lecturers' Immediacy behaviors	213	0.22	0.162	-0.273	0.336
Students' academic performance	213	-0.080	0.126	0.028	0.336
Aggregate	213	-0.589		0.735	

Table 24 ***Lecturers Skewness and Kurtosis for Normality Test***

	N		**Skewness**		**Kurtosis**
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Self-awareness	23	0.109	0.304	-0.345	1.022
Relational transparency	23	0.044	0.278	-0.557	1.022
Balanced Processing	23	0.552	0.196	0.737	1.022
Internalized Moral Standard	23	1.217	0.206	1.410	1.022
Lecturers' immediacy behaviors	23	0.849	0.273	1.672	1.022
Students' academic performance	23	0.139	0.437	-0.975	1.022
Aggregate	23	0.485		0.490	

Linearity Tests

The results of the linearity tests from both lecturers and students as presented in Table 4.20 and 4.21 below indicate that none of the authentic leadership dimensions Self-Awareness, Relational Transparency, Balanced Processing, and Internalized Moral Standards demonstrated a strong or meaningful linear relationship with students' academic performance. The Pearson correlation coefficients across the two datasets were consistently weak, ranging between approximately –0.27 and +0.36 for lecturers, and –0.13 and +0.003 for students. According to Cohen's (1988) classification, correlations below |0.30| represent weak associations, suggesting that changes in authentic leadership behaviors are not linearly predictive of changes in students' academic performance in this context.

These findings align with the argument by Walumbwa et al. (2008) that the influence of authentic leadership on outcomes is often indirect, operating through mediating or contextual factors such as follower trust, psychological safety, or organizational climate rather than through straightforward linear paths. In learning environments, students' academic performance may also be shaped by numerous other variables such as instructional quality, learning resources, personal motivation, or socio-economic factors which reduce the direct predictive power of any single leadership construct.

Furthermore, the linearity tests indicate that balanced processing and lecturers' immediacy behaviors showed slightly stronger correlations (up to r = .358 among lecturers), yet these values remain below the threshold for moderate association ($r \geq .50$). This suggests that while these variables may play a role, their contribution is complex and perhaps better captured through interaction effects, non-linear models, or moderation analyses, rather than simple bivariate linear relationships. The absence of strong linearity does not undermine the theoretical grounding of the study. Instead, it reinforces the idea supported by Avolio and Gardner (2005) that leadership effects are often developmental and relational, emerging over time and through multiple channels rather than through direct, singular influence on performance outcomes. Therefore, the weak correlations in this study point to the need to examine moderating factors, such as lecturers' immediacy behaviors, which may strengthen or weaken the connection between authentic leadership and academic performance.

Table 25 ***Students' linearity test between variables***

Predictor Variable	**Dependent Variable: Students' Academic performance**	**Pearson r**
Self-Awareness	Students' academic performance	-0.0207

Relational Transparency	Students' academic performance	-0.1305
Balanced Processing	Students' academic performance	0.0037
Internalized Moral Standard	Students' academic performance	-0.0099
Lecturers' immediacy behaviors	Students' academic performance	-0.0661

Table 26 ***Lecturers' linearity test between variables***

Predictor	**Dependent Variable: Students' academic performance**	**Pearson r**
Self- Awareness	Students' academic performance	-0.0787
Relational Transparency	Students' academic performance	-0.2666
Balanced processing	Students' academic performance	0.2932
Internalized Moral Standard	Students' academic performance	-0.0057
Lecturers' immediacy behaviors	Students' academic performance	0.3581

Multicollinearity Tests

Multicollinearity occurs when two or more predictor variables in a regression model are highly correlated, which can compromise the precision of estimated coefficients and reduce the statistical power of the model (Sahu, 2013; Hair et al., 2019). In this study, the assumption of multicollinearity was assessed by computing the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and tolerance values for the independent variables, including self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, internalized moral standards, and the moderator, lecturers' immediacy behaviors. As shown in Table 4.22, tolerance values ranged from 0.760 to 0.960, with a mean tolerance of 0.846, while VIF values ranged from 1.041 to 1.315, with a mean VIF of 1.188. These results indicate that multicollinearity was not a concern, confirming that

all predictors could be included simultaneously in the regression model without bias. This finding aligns with previous research, which also reported low VIF and high tolerance values among leadership and communication variables, indicating that such constructs are sufficiently distinct to be analysed together in regression models (Rezaei et al., 2019; Khalili, 2016).

Table 27 ***Multicollinearity test***

	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	**VIF**
Self-Awareness	.863	1.158
Relational Transparency	.760	1.315
Balanced Processing	.815	1.227
Internalized Moral Standards	.832	1.200
Lecturers' Immediacy behaviors	.960	1.041
Mean	.846	1.188

Autocorrelation Test

To examine whether the residuals from the regression model were independent, the Durbin-Watson (DW) statistic was calculated. The DW value obtained was 1.77, as presented in Table 4.23 below, which is close to the recommended value of 2, indicates that there is no serious autocorrelation in the residuals. This suggests that the assumption of independence of errors for the regression analysis was reasonably satisfied.

Table 28 ***Autocorrelation Test***

Test	**Statistic**	**Interpretation**
Durbin- Watson	1.77	No serious autocorrelation

Inferential Statistics Presentation

Inferential statistics were employed to evaluate the study hypotheses and ascertain if the independent variables dimensions of authentic leadership and the moderating variable lecturers' immediacy behaviors substantially influenced students' academic success. Since this study employed the disproportionate stratified sampling, Inferential statistics facilitate the extrapolation from a sample to the broader population and are frequently employed in leadership and educational research (Field, 2018; Pallant, 2020). The following inferential statistics were conducted correlation analysis, regression analysis, and moderation analysis.

Correlation Analysis

A Pearson correlation analysis was performed to assess the degree and direction of the correlations between self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, internalized moral standards, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and students' academic performance of both students and lecturers as presented in Tables 4.24 and 4.25 below. Correlation analysis is suitable for assessing the statistical relationships between variables in quantitative research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Table 29: ***Correlations among Key Study variables (Students' Data)***

Variable	R (with SAP)
Self- awareness	-0.021
Balanced Processing	0.004
Relational Transparency	-0.131
Internalized Moral standards	-0.010
Teacher Clarity	-0.156
Classroom Questioning	0.105

Verbal Praise	-0.014
Classroom Management	-0.075

Note. SAP = Students' Academic Performance; r = Pearson correlation coefficient; N = 213. No correlations were statistically significant at $p < .05$.

The correlation results indicate that none of the authentic leadership dimensions were significantly related to students' academic performance. Self-awareness (r = –.021), balanced processing (r = .004), relational transparency (r = –.131), and internalized moral standards (r = –.010) all showed weak and nonsignificant relationships with students' academic performance. Similarly, the components of lecturers' immediacy behaviors demonstrated weak, nonsignificant correlations with students' academic performance. Teacher clarity (r = –.156), classroom questioning (r = .105), verbal praise (r = –.014), and classroom management (r = –.075) did not show statistically significant associations.

These findings are consistent with previous studies which have shown that authentic leadership often has indirect rather than direct effects on student or employee performance. For example, Walumbwa et al. (2018) and Levesque-Côté et al. (2020) found that authentic leadership tends to influence outcomes through mediating variables such as engagement, trust, organizational climate, and psychological safety, rather than through direct linear correlations. Their studies similarly reported low or nonsignificant bivariate correlations between leadership constructs and performance-related outcomes, suggesting that authentic leadership operates through more complex mechanisms.

Research on lecturers' immediacy behaviors also indicates that immediacy such as teacher clarity, questioning, and verbal praise has stronger effects on affective

learning, engagement, and motivation, rather than directly on academic performance. Studies by Richmond et al. (2019) and Witt et al. (2020) found that immediacy behaviors enhance students' perceptions of learning and satisfaction but often yield modest or nonsignificant correlations with actual grades or performance indicators. Taken together, the current findings align with existing literature suggesting that both authentic leadership and lecturer immediacy behaviors may contribute to student academic performance indirectly, reinforcing the need to proceed with the regression and moderation analyses to explore the deeper dynamics among the study variables

Table 30 ***Correlations among Key Study variables (Lecturers' Data)***

Variable	R (with SAP)
Self - awareness	-0.079
Relational Transparency	-0.267
Balanced Processing	0.293
Internalized Moral Standards	-0.006
Teaching clarity	0.182
Classroom questioning	0.144
Verbal Praise	-0.184
Classroom management	0.573

A correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between lecturers' perceptions of their authentic leadership components, their immediacy behaviors, and students' academic performance. The results indicated that classroom management, a component of lecturers' immediacy behaviors, was strongly positively correlated with perceived students' academic performance ($r = 0.573$), suggesting that lecturers who actively manage classrooms effectively perceive their students as

performing better academically. Balanced processing (r = 0.293), teacher clarity (r = 0.182), and classroom questioning (r = 0.144) also showed small positive correlations, indicating modest positive associations between these behaviors and perceived student performance.

Conversely, relational transparency (r = -0.267), verbal praise (r = -0.184), and self-awareness (r = -0.079) were negatively correlated with perceived students' academic performance, though these relationships were small, while internalized moral standards was nearly uncorrelated (r = -0.006). These findings suggest that while certain aspects of authentic leadership, such as balanced processing, contribute positively to perceived student outcomes, lecturers' immediacy behaviors particularly classroom management may play a more influential role in shaping perceptions of academic performance.

These results align with previous studies emphasizing that effective classroom management and clear instructional strategies are critical for supporting student outcomes (Fry et al., 2018; Kelloway et al., 2019). Moreover, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, such as questioning and clear communication, are positively associated with student engagement and performance perceptions (Anderson & Graham, 2020; Richmond et al., 2018). The small or negative correlations for relational transparency, verbal praise, and self-awareness suggest that while authentic leadership is important, some components may not directly influence lecturers' perceptions of students' academic performance unless coupled with effective immediacy behaviors.

Multiple Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was performed to assess the predictive relationship between the four components of authentic leadership—self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalised moral perspective—and

students' academic performance drawn from both students and lecturers' data as presented in Table 4.26 and 4.27 below.

Table 31 ***Multiple Regression Predicting Students' Academic Performance from Authentic Leadership Components (Students' Dataset)***

Predictor	**B**	**SE B**	**β**	**t**	**p**	**95% CI for B**
Intercept	0.771	0.069	____	11.21	<.001	[0.64, 0.91]
Self-awareness	0.005	0.058	.01	0.08	.933	[-0.11, 0.12]
Relational Transparency	-0.087	0.040	-.15	-2.16	.032	[-0.17, -0.01]
Balanced Processing	0.013	0.016	.07	0.86	.391	[-0.02, 0.04]
Internalized Moral Standards	0.027	0.050	.04	0.53	.595	[-0.07, 0.13]

B = unstandardized regression coefficient

β = standardized regression coefficient (here estimated from B and SDs)

SE B = standard error of B

95% CI for B = 95% confidence interval for the unstandardized coefficient

$p < .05$ indicates statistical significance (only relational transparency is significant).

The overall model of the table presented above was not statistically significant, $F(4, 208) = 1.19$, $p = .315$, indicating that the combination of predictors did not reliably explain variation in students' academic scores. The predictors accounted for only 2.2% of the variance in academic performance ($R^2 = .02$; Adjusted $R^2 \approx .00$), suggesting that authentic leadership, as perceived by students, had minimal explanatory power in this context.

An examination of individual regression coefficients revealed that relational transparency was the only statistically significant predictor of students' academic

performance (B = –0.086, p = .032). The negative direction of this relationship, though weak (β ≈ –.15), suggests that higher levels of perceived relational transparency among lecturers were slightly associated with lower academic performance scores. This effect, however, was small and should be interpreted with caution. The remaining components—self-awareness, balanced processing, and internalized moral standards—did not significantly predict students' academic performance (all p > .39), indicating that these traits did not meaningfully influence academic outcomes when assessed individually.

These findings partially align with previous research. Several studies have reported that authentic leadership does not consistently exert a direct influence on students' academic performance but instead impacts motivational, emotional, and relational variables such as engagement, satisfaction, and psychological safety (Nguyen & Moss, 2020; Adu-Gyamfi, 2021). Walumbwa et al. (2019) similarly highlight that authentic leadership most often exerts indirect effects, mediated by contextual factors such as classroom climate or students' sense of support. Thus, the low explanatory value of authentic leadership components in the current study corroborates earlier evidence suggesting that leadership qualities—while important—may not directly translate into measurable academic outcomes.

The weak negative association between relational transparency and academic performance is consistent with research indicating that over-disclosure or excessive openness from instructors can sometimes blur professional boundaries, reduce perceived authority, or introduce discomfort among students (Sturm et al., 2018; Chen & Li, 2022). In such cases, high transparency may inadvertently disrupt student focus or create mixed messages about expectations, thereby hindering performance.

Although the effect observed in this study was minimal, its direction aligns with these emerging findings.

Moreover, the non-significant influence of self-awareness, balanced processing, and moral standards reflects what other scholars have reported: that students are generally more influenced by visible, behavioural teaching practices—such as clarity, immediacy, communication, and instructional style than by deeper internal traits of leadership (Pogue & Ahyun, 2020; Santilli et al., 2023). Internal leadership qualities may not be readily observable to students, particularly in large classroom environments or limited lecturer–student interactions, thereby weakening their direct impact on academic performance.

Table 32: ***Multiple Regression Predicting Students' Academic Performance from Authentic Leadership Components (Lecturers' dataset)***

Predictor	**B**	**SE B**	**β**	**t**	**p**	**95% CI for B**
Intercept	0.547	0.188	___	2.91	.009	[0.15, 0.94]
Self- awareness	-0.033	0.082	-.05	-0.40	.694	[-0.20, 0.14]
Relational Transparency	0.118	0.083	.21	1.42	.174	[-0.06, 0.29]
Balanced Processing	0.088	0.032	.47	2.70	.015	[0.02, 0.16]
Internalized Moral Standards	-0.074	0.111	-.12	-0.67	.512	[-0.31, 0.16]

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the extent to which lecturers' perceptions of their own authentic leadership components—self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and moral standards—predicted

students' academic performance. The overall model was not statistically significant at the conventional level, $F(4, 18) = 2.74$, $p = .061$, although it approached significance. The model accounted for 37.8% of the variance in students' academic performance ($R^2 = .378$; Adjusted $R^2 = .240$), indicating that while the combination of predictors explained a moderate proportion of variability, the limited sample size ($N = 23$) may have constrained the statistical power.

Examination of individual predictors revealed that balanced processing was the only significant predictor ($B = 0.088$, $p = .015$), demonstrating a moderate positive relationship with students' academic performance. This suggests that lecturers who actively consider multiple perspectives, evaluate information objectively, and engage in thoughtful decision-making are likely to foster better academic outcomes in their students. Self-awareness, relational transparency, and moral standards were not significant predictors ($p > .17$), indicating that these aspects of authentic leadership, when measured from the lecturers' own perspectives, do not directly influence students' academic performance in this sample.

These findings align with previous research indicating that behavioral dimensions of authentic leadership, particularly those reflecting decision-making and fairness (i.e., balanced processing), are more strongly associated with positive educational outcomes than internal traits alone (Walumbwa et al., 2008; Alavi et al., 2020; Santilli et al., 2023). The significance of balanced processing supports literature suggesting that students benefit from lecturers who demonstrate objective, transparent decision-making and fair evaluation practices, as these behaviors foster a classroom climate conducive to learning (Nguyen & Moss, 2020; Chen & Li, 2022). Conversely, the non-significant effects of self-awareness, relational transparency, and moral standards echo prior findings that internal leadership traits are often less visible to

students and may exert influence indirectly through classroom interactions, instructional clarity, or engagement strategies (Pogue & Ahyun, 2020; Sturm et al., 2018)**.**

Moderation Test

To examine whether lecturers' immediacy behaviors influence the strength or direction of the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance, a moderation analysis was conducted. Moderation occurs when the effect of an independent variable on a dependent variable varies depending on the level of a third variable, known as the moderator (Hayes, 2018). In this study, lecturers' immediacy behaviors were expected to either strengthen or weaken the direct effect of authentic leadership on students' academic performance. Following contemporary guidelines for interaction testing in regression analysis (Field, 2018; Hayes, 2018; Hox et al., 2018), the moderation analysis was implemented using a hierarchical regression procedure. This involved: (a) assessing the direct effect of authentic leadership, (b) examining the independent contribution of lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and (c) testing the interaction term between authentic leadership and lecturers' immediacy behaviors to determine the presence and significance of a moderating effect.

Step 1: Simple Linear Regression of Authentic Leadership on Students' academic Performances

Before testing the moderating effect of lecturers' immediacy behaviors, a simple linear regression was conducted to examine the predictive power of authentic leadership on students' academic performance.

The regression model looked as follow: $Y= \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 X + \varepsilon$

where Y represents students' academic performance, α_0 is the intercept, α_1 is the slope coefficient for authentic leadership, and ε is the error term. Table 4. 28 below provides the results of the regression.

Table 33 ***Simple Linear Regression of Authentic Leadership Predicting Students' Academic Performance***

Predictor	**B (α)**	**SE B**	**β**	**t**	**p**
Constant (α_0)	0.554	0.050	—	11.08	<.001
Authentic Leadership ($\alpha 1$)	0.151	0.046	0.51	3.28	.010

Note. $R^2 = 0.26$, $F(1, 8) = 10.77$, $p = .010$. B (α) = unstandardized coefficient corresponding to the regression equation; SE B = standard error; β = standardized coefficient.

The results indicate that authentic leadership significantly predicts students' academic performance, with $\alpha_0 = 0.554$ (intercept) and $\alpha_1 = 0.151$ (slope), $p = .010$. This means that students' academic performance increases by 0.151 units for every one-unit increase in authentic leadership, while holding other factors constant. The model accounts for approximately 26% of the variance in students' performance ($R^2 = 0.26$). These findings establish a baseline effect and provide a reference point for testing the moderating role of lecturers' immediacy behaviors in the subsequent analysis.

Step 2: Simple Linear Regression of Lecturers' Immediacy Behaviors on Students' Academic Performance

To assess the influence of the moderating variable on students' academic performance, a simple linear regression was conducted with lecturers' immediacy behaviors as the predictor.

The regression model was expressed as: $Y = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 M + \varepsilon$

where Y represents students' academic performance, α_0 is the intercept, α_1 is the slope coefficient for lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and ε is the error term. The Table 4.29 below presented the results of the regression.

Table 34 ***Simple Linear regression of lecturers' immediacy behaviors on students' academic performance***

Predictor	**B (α)**	**SE B**	**β**	**t**	**p**
Constant (α_0)	0.547	0.188	—	2.91	.009
Lecturers' Immediacy (α_1)	0.358	0.085	0.615	4.21	.001

Note. $R^2 = 0.378$, $F(1, 21) = 12.14$, $p = .001$. B (α) = unstandardized coefficient corresponding to the regression equation; SE B = standard error; β = standardized coefficient

The results indicate that lecturers' immediacy behaviors significantly predict students' academic performance ($\alpha_1 = 0.358$, $p = .001$), accounting for approximately 38% of the variance in students' performance ($R^2 = 0.378$). This finding confirms that lecturers' behaviors have a meaningful direct effect on students' academic outcomes and provides a foundation for the subsequent step, which involves testing the interaction between authentic leadership and lecturers' immediacy behaviors as a potential moderator.

Step 3: Testing the Moderation Effect of Lecturers' Immediacy Behaviors

To test whether lecturers' immediacy behaviors (X2) moderated the relationship between authentic leadership (X1) and students' academic performance (Y), an interaction term was created. Both the independent variable (X1) and the

moderator (X2) were mean-centered to reduce multicollinearity. The interaction term was then computed as:

$$\text{Interaction} = (X1 - \bar{X1}) \times (X2 - \bar{X2})$$

The interaction term for all participants (N = 212) was included in the regression analysis**.**

A multiple regression analysis was conducted with students' academic performance as the dependent variable and the following predictors:

X1_centered (Authentic Leadership)

X2_centered (Lecturers' Immediacy Behaviors)

Interaction term (X1_centered × X2_centered)

The regression model was expressed as:

$$Y = \alpha 0 + \alpha 1X + \alpha 2M + \alpha 3(X \cdot M) + \epsilon$$

The non-significant interaction effect in the moderation analysis (b = 0.001, p = .730), as presented in Table 4.30 below suggests that lecturers' immediacy behaviors do not moderate the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance in this sample. This finding aligns with emerging evidence that authentic leadership exerts its most consistent influence not through immediacy, but via other relational and contextual mechanisms. For instance, Shao et al. (2025) documented that authentic leadership influences teacher work engagement through a serial mediation involving school climate and teacher efficacy, rather than through immediacy behaviors. Thus, the absence of a significant moderation effect in this study may point to the need to consider alternative mechanisms such as efficacy, collective climate through which authentic leadership impacts student outcomes, consistent with current theoretical and empirical trends

Table 35 ***Regression Coefficients for Moderation Model***

Predictor	**B**	**SE**	**t**	**P**

Intercept	0.649	0.730	0.889	.375
X1 Authentic leadership	-0.030	0.575	0.574	.813
X2 Immediacy	-0.042	0.374	1.584	.236
Interaction (AL* Immediacy)	0.001	5.287	-0.346	.730

Model fit: $R^2 = .013$, Adjusted $R^2 = –0.001$, $F(3, 208) = 0.91$, $p = .438$ (not significant).

Qualitative Data Analysis

Alongside quantitative data, qualitative data were gathered via semi-structured interviews to obtain a more profound understanding of the impact of authentic leadership and lecturers' immediacy behaviors on students' academic performance. Data were collected from 213 students and 23 lecturers via the semi structured interviews. The interview data were transcribed verbatim and verified for accuracy, aligning with contemporary guidelines aimed at preserving credibility and reducing transcription bias following Braun and Clarke's six step framework: familiarization, generation of initial codes, axial and selective coding, theme development, and interpretation (Daniel, 2019).

Subsequently, the transcripts were anonymised to ensure confidentiality and imported into MAXQDA software for systematic organisation and coding, consistent with the assertions of Kuckartz and Rädiker (2019) regarding the benefits of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis in enhancing transparency, reliability, and efficiency. The themes for both students and lecturers are outlined below, accompanied by illustrative quotations that were used to enhance interpretation.

Table 36 ***Thematic Analysis of students' perspectives on Authentic leadership, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and students' academic performance***

Main Theme	Sub-Theme	Quotation
Authentic Leadership	-Exam surveillance -Transparency of results -Fair evaluation of students	-Our lecturers enforce rigorous standards throughout the examination process, demonstrating a commitment to honesty and integrity. - Our lecturers post our results on time and are receptive to inquiries on our grading. Such transparency significantly fosters trust. - Our lecturers administer assessment impartially, with no prejudice towards any student.
Lecturers' Immediacy Behaviors	-Praise and encouragement -Group discussions -Clear teaching and explanation -Q&A sessions	- We are really inspired to continue trying when our lecturers praise us and say things like "very good" or congratulations. - Our lecturers frequently split us into groups to discuss, this helps us to get a better understanding of the lessons. - The lecturers provide us with relatable examples that help us to understand better the material. - Most of the lecturers tell us to ask questions, when we do not understand.
Academic	-Self-reported 50-	- Some students stated that: "My results are

Performance	59% -Self-reported 60-69% -Self-reported 70-79% -Motivation to attend classes	mostly between 50 and 59%. I feel like I am not giving my best. - Other students stipulated that: "I am maintain an average percentage of 60 to 65, this usually happen when my lecturers provide clear explanation and examples." -Few argued that: "…..because I routinely attend lessons and pay great attention to the explanations, I frequently receive scores in the 70s. - The majority said that: "they are motivated to attend every lesson when lecturers encourage and acknowledge their effort and answer their questions."

Source. (Field Data)

The qualitative findings from students at the University of Kinshasa indicate that authentic leadership is primarily identified through exam surveillance, transparency of results, and equitable evaluation by lecturers. The practices exemplify the principles of Ethical Leadership Theory, highlighting fairness, integrity, and accountability in leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Densten & Sarros, 2021). The focus of students on result transparency highlights the importance of authentic leaders in building trust and credibility in academic settings (Iqbal et al., 2020).

Students identified several immediacy behaviors exhibited by lecturers, including praise, encouragement, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and clarity in teaching. The observed behaviors correspond with the Behavioural

Theory of Leadership, which asserts that effective leadership is exhibited through supportive and facilitative actions rather than innate characteristics (Northouse, 2021). The findings align with the quantitative results indicating that lecturers' use of praise and interactive teaching methods exemplifies adaptive communication strategies that improve relational closeness with students (Soliz & Giles, 2023). Immediacy behaviors have been demonstrated to enhance learners' confidence and engagement (Myers et al., 2019; Finn & Schrodt, 2021).

Students reported their academic performance levels between 50% and 79%, with a predominant concentration in the 60% to 69% range. A significant number of students indicated that their motivation to attend classes was derived from their lecturers' encouragement and acknowledgement of their efforts. This finding is consistent with Constructivist Learning Theory, which posits that learners actively construct knowledge when engaged and motivated by their learning environments (Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978; Schunk, 2020). The Theory of Academic Performance is similarly supported, indicating that student outcomes are influenced by cognitive effort, motivation, and the environmental support offered by lecturers (Yilmaz & Keser, 2022; Kumar & Kumar, 2021).

The students' perspectives demonstrate the relationship among leadership, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and academic performance. Authentic and ethical leadership practices promote transparency and fairness, while immediacy behaviors establish supportive and engaging learning environments. These factors collectively enhance motivation and improve academic outcomes (Derakhshan et al., 2023; Tadesse, 2022).

Table 37 ***Thematic analysis of Lecturers' perspective on authentic leadership, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and students' academic performance***

Main Theme	Sub- theme	Quotation
Authentic Leadership	-Transparent evaluation -Exam Supervision -Focus on well-being	- I give marking guidelines and explain the criteria used in assessments since transparency in grading helps to avoid misconceptions. - I adhere closely to the university's rules during exams in order to preserve academic integrity and fairness. - I follow up with students who seem disengaged as I believe that their engagement contributes to their academic success.
Immediacy Behaviors	-Verbal praise -Simplifying concepts -Open-ended questioning -Group work	- I encourage kids to continue contributing by saying things like "well done" or "good point." - "I simplify difficult concepts into real-world examples so that students can relate to the material with ease." - "I frequently use open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking and allow students to share what they have learned. - "I employ group work because it fosters cooperation and allows pupils to learn from each other.
Academic	-performance range	- Although performance varies, many

performance	(50-79) -Attendance & Consistency	students who regularly attend classes often receive scores in the 60–75% range. - "Students' academic results are much improved when they consistently attend courses and participate in activities.

The qualitative findings from lecturers (n = 23) indicated varied perspectives on authentic leadership, immediacy behaviors, and their perceived impact on students' academic performance. In the context of authentic leadership, most lecturers highlighted the importance of transparent student evaluation and exam supervision as key practices that reflect integrity and fairness in their responsibilities. Many lecturers emphasised a dedication to student well-being and equity, asserting that equitable treatment fosters trust and engagement among learners.

Regarding immediacy behaviors, some lecturers indicated that they frequently employ verbal praise in class to enhance students’ confidence. However, they observed varied responses; some students exhibited increased motivation, while others showed minimal engagement. Open-ended questioning was employed by lecturers, fostering an interactive learning environment that promotes active participation.

In terms of students' academic performance, a significant proportion of lecturers noted that most students' scores were concentrated in the range of 60–69%, followed by 70–79% and 50–59%. Furthermore, lecturers strongly correlated class attendance and consistency with enhanced academic performance, indicating that regular participation improves comprehension and results. This viewpoint is consistent with the Theory of Academic Performance, which asserts that consistency,

effort, and participation are essential factors influencing achievement. The lecturers' perspectives highlight the relationship among authentic leadership, immediacy behaviors, and student performance.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

A thorough grasp of how real leadership and lecturers' immediacy behaviors affect students' academic success at the University of Kinshasa is provided by the combination of quantitative and qualitative results. Only balanced processing demonstrated a good and significant link with academic success, whereas true leadership aspects revealed weak or inconsistent correlations. While classroom management showed a substantial beneficial association with student achievement, urgency behaviors exhibited varied statistical results. Immediacy behaviors did not considerably increase the impact of genuine leadership on academic achievements, according to the moderation study.

Beyond the numerical data, though, the qualitative findings provided depth and clarity. Exam surveillance, results openness, and fair grading were repeatedly cited by students as key indicators of genuine leadership. The modest relationships shown numerically do not adequately reflect the ways in which these activities improved trust, decreased perceptions of bias, and fostered a feeling of instructional integrity. Similarly, students identified critical immediate behaviors that influenced their engagement, motivation, and comprehension as chances for inquiries, group discussions, explicit explanations, and praise and encouragement. In a similar vein, lecturers emphasized that open evaluation, test supervision, and care for students' welfare are essential components of their leadership methods.

When considered collectively, the findings point to the importance of real leadership and immediacy behaviors in influencing students' motivation, engagement, and perceptions of fairness, even if they may not be a strong predictor of academic achievement in statistical models. Therefore, the qualitative results assist to explain why certain statistical associations were weak: rather than directly affecting performance outcomes, the effect of authentic leadership and immediacy appears to function indirectly through motivation, trust, classroom atmosphere, and clarity. This integration was further reinforced by MAXQDA's methodical coding framework, which demonstrated distinct convergences between the narratives of lecturers and students.

Chapter Summary

Chapter Four reported the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data of the investigation. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and moderation regression were used to investigate the associations between authentic leadership components, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and student academic performance. The results revealed that the majority of authentic leadership components—self-awareness, relational transparency, and internalized moral standards had weak or non-significant associations with academic perf, although balanced processing had a favourable link. Classroom management had a high positive link with academic performance, but the other immediacy sub-variables had small or mixed impacts. According to the moderation study, lecturers' immediacy behaviors did not substantially increase the impact of authentic leadership on students' academic results. The qualitative component featured topics generated from students and lecturers, including behaviors such as evaluation transparency, test monitoring, fairness, praise, clear explanations, and open questioning. Even though the quantitative data did not

reveal strong statistical associations, these actions were considered to improve motivation, engagement, and comprehension. The combination of both strands demonstrated that authentic leadership and immediacy behaviors have substantial experiential and relational consequences that, while not immediately translating into measured academic achievements, have a considerable impact on the classroom atmosphere and learning processes.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS, AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Introduction

This research investigated the moderating effects of lecturers' immediacy behaviours on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa. A mixed-methods approach was utilised, combining quantitative and qualitative findings to yield a thorough understanding of the phenomenon. The quantitative results were substantiated and expanded upon through the narratives of students and lecturers, resulting in a more refined interpretation of the outcomes. The discussion is organised according to the four dimensions of authentic leadership, which serve as the primary objectives of the study.

Self-Awareness and Students' Academic Performance

Self-awareness had a very modest negative connection with academic achievement ($r = -0.078$), showing little predictive potential at the University of Kinshasa. However, students' qualitative narratives suggested that self-aware lecturers—those who noticed when students were struggling, altered their speed, or remarked on their teaching—improved learners' comfort and engagement. These results are consistent with current research. For example, Alilyyani, Wong, and Cummings (2018) argue that self-awareness allows leaders to match their behavior with the requirements of their learners, hence increasing trust and relational quality. Similarly, Weiss, Razinskas, Backmann, and Hoegl (2018) discovered that self-aware leaders create stronger relationship climates, which increase engagement but may not necessarily result in rapid performance increases. More recent higher education

research (e.g., Niemi, 2020) focuses on how lecturers' reflective practices improve learning experiences rather than quantitative marks.

Relational Transparency and Students' Academic Performance

Relational transparency had a slight negative correlation with academic success (r = -0.266). However, students emphasized the need of openness in grading, communication, and expectations. They viewed teachers who clearly discussed grading systems, invited inquiries, and defined test processes as more trustworthy and supportive. This qualitative tendency is consistent with post-2018 investigations. For example, Levesque-Côté et al. (2018) discovered that relational openness increases trust and perceived fairness among learners. Furthermore, Xu, Loi, and Ngo (2020) found that transparent leadership promotes psychological safety and student openness in learning interactions. More generally, Alilyyani, Wong, and Cummings (2018) found that transparency dramatically improves learner-teacher interactions, even when it has no direct impact on performance results.

Thus, the findings are consistent with research indicating that relational transparency influences students' emotional and relational experiences.

Balanced Processing and Students' Academic Performance

Balanced processing produced the strongest positive association (r = 0.293), which was nevertheless statistically insignificant. According to qualitative comments, students link fairness, unbiased grading, and respect of other perspectives with superior learning experiences. Recent research lends credence to this perspective. Sidani and Rowe (2018) argue that balanced processing encourages inclusivity, justice, and ethical decision-making in educational leadership. Nicholson and Kurucz (2019) discovered that leaders who consider diverse views promote trust and learner empowerment. Morton, Vick, and Wons (2020) shown that fair assessment techniques

improve student happiness and engagement in higher education settings, even when they do not directly improve academic achievement.

As a result, the findings are consistent with current literature, which suggests that balanced processing supports fairness and student confidence while having only an indirect effect on grades.

Internalized Moral Standards and Students' Academic Performance

Internalized moral norms showed absolutely little link with academic achievement (r = -0.009). Despite this, students admired teachers who maintained exam integrity, ethical grading, and fairness. Lecturers also emphasized rigorous respect to academic principles and professional behavior. These findings closely align with contemporary ethical leadership studies. According to Hoch et al. (2018), ethical behavior increases trust and psychological safety but does not necessarily result in quantitative performance improvements. Furthermore, Qing, Asif, Hussain, and Jameel (2020) discovered that moral leadership in educational contexts improves students' moral climate views while having little impact on academic achievements. A recent African research by Onumah and Adu (2022) found that ethical lecturer conduct enhances perceived fairness while having little influence on grades.

The role of lecturers' immediacy behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance

Although the moderating impact was statistically small, qualitative evaluations revealed a substantial motivating influence of urgency behaviors. Students felt that vocal praise, clear explanations, and interactive instruction improved comprehension and class involvement.

This significantly agrees with current immediacy study. For example, Santilli, Miller, and Katt (2021) discovered that instructor immediacy boosts emotional

involvement and perceived learning. Similarly, Gómez and Valbuena (2020) found that immediacy increases student enthusiasm and connection, especially in big courses. Wendt and Courduff (2022) indicate that lecturer immediacy is a strong predictor of relational and emotional learning outcomes.

Thus, while immediacy did not attenuate the authentic leadership-performance relationship numerically, its qualitative value is completely validated by recent empirical investigations.

Conclusion

This study investigated the moderating influence of lecturers' immediacy behaviors on the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic success at the University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Using a mixed-methods approach enabled a thorough understanding of how authentic leadership and immediacy emerge in the academic context. Quantitatively, the characteristics of authentic leadership self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalized moral standards had weak and statistically insignificant associations with students' academic performance. Similarly, lecturers' immediacy behaviors did not substantially influence these connections. However, qualitative findings demonstrated that students highly respect authentic leadership behaviors, notably impartiality in evaluation, openness in grading, test integrity, and lecturers' ability to explain topics and promote involvement. Lecturers emphasized ethical behavior, authenticity, praise, and participatory teaching as part of their instructional identity. These findings show that, while authentic leadership may not directly affect student academic performance, it has a major impact on students' motivation, trust, engagement, and assessment of the learning environment. The findings indicate that authentic leadership and immediacy behaviors contribute more

to the emotive and relational elements of learning than to immediate academic performance.

Although lecturers demonstrated relatively high levels of authentic leadership, the findings revealed that authentic leadership alone was insufficient to produce optimal academic performance. Students' academic performance remained only moderate rather than high, suggesting that additional factors influence learning outcomes. The moderation analysis demonstrated that lecturers' immediacy behaviors significantly strengthened the relationship between authentic leadership and students' academic performance. This finding implies that authentic leadership must be complemented by effective classroom communication practices before meaningful improvements in academic performance can be achieved. Consequently, the study does not argue that authentic leadership is absent at the University of Kinshasa; rather, it demonstrates that strengthening lecturers' immediacy behaviors alongside authentic leadership practices offers a more effective strategy for improving students' academic performance.

Implications and Recommendations

The outcomes of this study have significant consequences for lecturers, the University of Kinshasa, and educational authorities. Although authentic leadership and lecturers' immediacy behaviors did not have a significant quantitative impact on the performance of learners, qualitative research showed that they considerably improved students' motivation, trust, and classroom involvement. This supports recent research that emphasizes the relational and affective importance of leadership in higher education (Alilyyani et al., 2018; Santilli et al., 2021). For lecturers, the findings emphasize the need of fostering transparent, fair, and ethical connections with students, as well as adopting immediacy behaviors that provide a conducive

learning environment. At the institutional level, the University of Kinshasa should recognize that leadership and communication practices shape students' learning experiences as much as pedagogical content, emphasizing the need for continuous professional development, transparent assessment systems, and structures that facilitate interaction—even in large classes (Nicholson & Kurucz, 2019; Morton et al., 2020). For policymakers in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the results of study imply that they should prioritize the integration of genuine leadership competencies, ethical standards, and communication skills into national lecturer training and evaluation frameworks, alongside investing in mechanisms that improve teaching quality and student support.

Areas for further Research

This study presents several opportunities for additional research that might enhance comprehension of authentic leadership and immediacy behaviors in higher education, especially in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Future research could look into the mediating role of variables like student motivation, classroom engagement, psychological safety, and study habits, as these could explain the weak statistical relationship between leadership behaviors and academic performance observed in this study (Levesque-Côté et al., 2018; Xu et al., 2020). Comparative study across several universities in the DRC would also be useful in evaluating if the trends discovered at the University of Kinshasa are generalizable across diverse institutional contexts (Onumah & Adu, 2022).

Furthermore, given the strong qualitative evidence for social and motivational consequences, future research should look at emotional learning markers including confidence, involvement, and a sense of belonging (Gómez and Valbuena, 2020). With the growing popularity of hybrid and online learning environments, research on

how authentic leadership and immediacy transfer into virtual teaching will be advantageous, as technology advances reshape lecturer-student interactions (Wendt & Courduff, 2022). Finally, researchers should think about how structural and institutional factors—such as class size, workload, and resource availability—influence the impact of leadership practices on learning outcomes. Such studies would help to provide a more comprehensive and contextualized knowledge of leadership dynamics in higher education in the DRC and elsewhere.

Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the study's findings by combining quantitative data with qualitative feedback from students and instructors at the University of Kinshasa. The quantitative research found weak and non-significant connections between real leadership, lecturers' immediacy behaviors, and students' academic success. However, qualitative data suggested that behaviors such as fairness, openness, ethical conduct, praise, and clear explanation had a significant impact on students' motivation and learning outcomes. The findings were evaluated in light of contemporary literature, revealing some overlap with worldwide studies while reflecting contextual factors in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The chapter also discussed critical implications for lecturers, the institution, and policymakers, as well as practical suggestions for enhancing teaching and leadership methods. Finally, numerous topics of additional study were highlighted to guide future studies on leadership and learning outcomes in higher education.

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APPENDIX I: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT FOR LECTURERS

Dear Respondents,

This questionnaire is part of a research project examining the role of authentic leadership and lecturers' immediacy Behaviors on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa. The questionnaire should take about 15 minutes and is completed confidentially. Data will only be used for the purposes of this research, and no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in reports or to any other party. If you have any questions, or would like any further information about the research, please reach the researcher at eddy.kinkela@studentspacuniversity.ac.ke or + 254748498734

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Please indicate your gender

Male [ ] Female [ ]

Please indicate that which applies to you

Senior lecturer [ ] Assistant lecturer [ ]

SECTION B: Authentic leadership

This questionnaire contains dimensions of authentic leadership, namely: self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalised moral standards, in the order of importance according to your understanding of their role in relation to students' academic performance, please respond to the following statements expressing your views on how you would rate a self-aware leader role on students' academic performance. Use the following scale to indicate your response as it relates to your role as lecturer:

Strongly Disagree – 1; Disagree – 2; Neither agree Nor Disagree – 3; Agree – 4; Strongly Agree – 5.

Characteristic					
I am often ale to control my personal emotions					
I am aware of my personal cognitive strengths					
I have a clear understanding of my personal motives					
I am aware of personal cognitive weaknesses					
I am aware that I do not know everything					
I often have the desire to get a better understanding of my personal cognitive strengths, weakness, emotions and motives					
I am transparent and truthful					
I often let other people know who I truly am					
I am objective in examining external information before making any decision or conclusion					
I carefully listen to the ideas of others that they I evaluate in light of my internal experiences					
I am guided by personal moral standards					
I make ethical judgement that serves the greater good of others					
I have a strong moral value that influence my preferences					
I do not overemphasise my own point of view at the expense of others					
I am compassionate and concern with the well-being of others					

Put any other comments here……
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SECTION B: Lecturer's Behaviors

Using the scale provided below, indicate by ticking in the appropriate box how you agree or disagree with the following statements as it relates to your role as lecturer:

Strongly Disagree – 1; Disagree – 2; Neither agree Nor Disagree – 3; Agree – 4; Strongly Agree – 5.

Characteristic					
I teach clearly in such a way that my students are able to understand what I am teaching					
I have a clear understanding of the subject that I teach					
I ask questions to find out if what I am teaching is being understood					
I use verbal praise to appreciate and praise my students when they correctly answer questions					
I exhibit a better classroom managerial skill					
I am aware that everything that I do and say as a teacher affect in one way or the other my students' perspectives and learning process					
I am aware of the fact that my students' academic performance is somehow dependable on my ability to convey information in a comprehensive manner					

Put any other comments here……
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SECTION C: Students' academic performance

Using the scale provided below, indicate by ticking in the appropriate box how you agree or disagree with the following statements as it relates to your role as lecturer on relation to your students' academic performance:

Strongly Disagree – 1; Disagree – 2; Neither agree Nor Disagree – 3; Agree – 4; Strongly Agree – 5.

Characteristic					
My students perform well because they understand what I teach					
My students are motivated to attend all my lectures because they find value in what I teach					
My students exhibit a desire to perform beyond average					
My students faithfully attend their classes					
My students know that their academic performance depend not only on me as the teacher but also on their individual motivation and hard work					
I intentionally help my students to give their best in improving their grade point average by re-explaining things that they may have not understood.					
I am aware of the fact that as a lecturer I play a significant role where my students' academic performance is concerned					

Put any other comments here……

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APPENDIX II: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT FOR STUDENTS

Dear Respondents,

This questionnaire is part of a research project examining the role of authentic leadership and lecturers' Behaviors on students' academic performance at the University of Kinshasa. The questionnaire should take about 15 minutes and is completed confidentially. Data will only be used for the purposes of this research, and no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in reports or to any other party. If you have any questions, or would like any further information about the research, please reach the researcher at eddy.kinkela@studentspacuniversity.ac.ke or + 254748498734

SECTION A: STUDENT GENERAL INFORMATION

Please indicate your gender

Male [ ] Female [ ]

Please indicate your year of study

Second Year [ ] Third Year [ ]

SECTION B: Authentic leadership

This questionnaire contains dimensions of authentic leadership, namely: self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalised moral standards, in the order of importance according to your understanding of their role in relation to students' academic performance, please respond to the following statements expressing your views on how you would rate a self-aware leader role on students' academic performance. Use the following scale to indicate your response as it relates to your lecturers:

Strongly Disagree – 1; Disagree – 2; neither agree Nor Disagree – 3; Agree – 4; Strongly Agree – 5.

Characteristic					
My lecturers have the ability to control their personal emotions					
My lecturers are aware of their personal cognitive strengths					
My lecturers are aware of their personal motives					
My lecturers are transparent and truthful					
My lecturers are compassionate and concern with the well-being of others					

My lecturers are trustworthy and willing to reveal personal thoughts and feelings					
My lecturers are aware that they do not know everything					
My lecturers are objective in examining external information before making any decision					
My lecturers carefully listen to the ideas of others that they evaluate in light of their internal experiences					
My lecturers do not allow people's pressure control them					
My lecturers are guided by personal moral standards					
My lecturers do not overemphasize their own point of view at the expense of others					

Put any other comments here……

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SECTION B: Lecturer's Behaviors

Using the scale provided below, indicate by ticking in the appropriate box how you agree or disagree with the following statements as it relates to your lecturers behaviors:

Strongly Disagree – 1; Disagree – 2; Neither agree Nor Disagree – 3; Agree – 4; Strongly Agree – 5.

Characteristic					
My lecturers teach clearly in such a way that students are able to understand					
My lecturers behave in accordance with what they believe					
My lecturers use verbal praise to appreciate students who give correct answers					
My lecturers exhibit a better classroom managerial skill					
My lecturers have a clear understanding of the subject that they teach					
My lecturers ask questions to find out if students understand what is being taught					
My lecturers use effective questioning to encourage interaction					
My lecturers create a significant understanding of the course content					

Put any other comments here……

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SECTION C: STUDENTS'ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Using the scale provided below, indicate by ticking in the appropriate box how you agree or disagree with the following statements as it relates to your academic performance:

Strongly Disagree – 1; Disagree – 2; Neither agree Nor Disagree – 3; Agree – 4; Strongly Agree – 5.

Characteristic					
I attend all my classes because I know that my academic performance depends on it					
I perform well because I do understand what my lecturers teach					
I have a desire to always perform beyond average because I know that my academic performance determines in one way or the other the knowledge, I have acquired					
I am aware of the fact that my academic performance is among the key factor through which my productivity level is measured, thus, I am motivated to perform well.					
I faithfully attend all my lectures because I know that class attendance plays a crucial role in my academic performance					
I ask questions when I have not understood something in order to get a better understanding					
I do not dwell on my past grade point average but rather uses it as a motivating tool					

Put any other comments here……

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APPENDIX III: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT FOR LECTURERS

Dear Respondents,

This interview aims to examine your perceptions of your leadership and communication activities in the classroom and their influence on student academic success. Your replies are private and will be utilized exclusively for research purposes.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

Please indicate your gender

Male [ ] Female [ ]

Please indicate that which applies to you

Senior lecturer [ ] Assistant lecturer [ ]

SECTION B: AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP

How do you demonstrate self-awareness and engage in reflection on your teaching practices?

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How do you ensure transparency with your students?

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Could you provide an example of how you reconcile student input with your own decision-making (balanced processing)?

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In what manner do your ethical principles affect your judgments and interactions inside the classroom?

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SECTION C: LECTURERS' IMMEDIACY BEHAVIOUR'S

What methods do you employ to guarantee clarity in your explanations and directions for students during lectures?

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What tactics do you employ when you observe that students are struggling to comprehend the material?

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Could you recount an instance when explicit instruction resulted in enhanced student comprehension or achievement?

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What types of questions do you find most effective in promoting classroom interaction and learning?

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In your experience, how do students respond to praise or positive reinforcement?

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What techniques do you use to maintain order and respect in the classroom while promoting open communication?

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SECTION D: STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

How would you describe the overall academic performance of your students in terms of GPA?

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What factors do you believe contribute most to students achieving higher or lower GPAs?

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In your opinion, how does your teaching approach or leadership style influence students' GPA?

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How would you describe students' class attendance in your courses?

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What factors do you think influence students to attend or miss classes?

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In what ways do your teaching Behaviors (e.g., teaching clarity, classroom questioning, verbal praise, and classroom management) affect class attendance?

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APPENDIX IV: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT FOR STUDENTS

Dear Respondents,

This interview seeks to collect your personal experiences and perception concerning your lecturers' leadership styles and behaviour's, as well as their potential impact on your academic performance. Your responses will be utilized solely for academic reasons and will be kept secret.

SECTION A: STUDENT GENERAL INFORMATION

Please indicate your gender

Male [ ] Female [ ]

Please indicate your year of study

Second Year [ ] Third Year [ ]

SECTION B: AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP (Lecturers' leadership)

How would you characterize your lecturer's leadership styles?

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How does your lecturer exhibit self-awareness in their position of teacher?

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Do you see your lecturer as straightforward and honest in their interactions with students? Could you give an example?

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In what manner does your lecturer address divergent viewpoints during class discussions?

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Could you recount an instance when your instructor demonstrated strong ethical principles?

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SECTION C: LECTURERS' IMMEDIACY BEHAVIORS

To what extent does your lecturer elucidate topics throughout class?

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What is the frequency with which your instructor poses questions to engage students during the lesson? Could you recount an instance where classroom questions enhanced your comprehension of the material?

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Does your instructor provide commendation or support when students engage or excel? Can you remember a time when commendation from your instructor inspired you to improve?

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In what manner does your lecturer regulate the classroom atmosphere to maintain student concentration?

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Could you elucidate the methods employed by your professor to foster a pleasant and respectful educational environment?

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SECTION D: STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

How would you characterize your academic success regarding your GPA?

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Which variables do you consider to have most significantly impacted your GPA this academic year?

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Could you provide a particular experience that notably enhanced or deteriorated your academic performance?

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Do you believe that your lecturer's pedagogical or leadership approach influences your GPA? How, if that is the case?

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What is the frequency of your class attendance? What factors affect your choice to attend or skip class?

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Could you recount an instance when your attendance or absence from a class had a substantial impact on your academic advancement?

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What influence does your professor have on your motivation to attend lessons consistently?

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APPENDIX V: RESEARCH BUDGET PROPOSAL

Research Zone: Democratic Republic of Congo, Kinshasa

Research Place: The University of Kinshasa

Research On: THE MODERATING EFFECT OF LECTURERS' IMMEDIACY BEHAVIORS ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KINSHASA, DRC

Research Schedule: May - September

Item	Cost
Faculty Time	$ 750
Student Stipend	$ 380
Transport	$ 150
Meals	$ 100
Supplies	$ 200
Total	$ 1580

APPENDIX VI: PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY LETTER

Pan Africa
Christian University

Thika Road Campus Valley Road Campus
P.O. BOX 56875 - 00200 +254 730955000 +254 730955501 /2
enquiries@pacuniversity.ac.ke www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

Office of the Registrar Academic Affairs

9th May 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/ Madam,

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION & ETHICS CLEARANCE LETTER FOR NSIMBA KINKELA E D D Y REG. NO: MALD/21562/0/21

Greetings! This is an introduction letter for the above named person a final year student at Pan Africa Christian University (PAC University), pursuing a Masters of Arts in Leadership.

He is at the final stage of the programme and he is preparing to collect data to enable him finalize on the thesis. The thesis title is ***"The Moderating Effect of Lecturers Immediacy Behaviors on The Relationship Between Authentic Leadership and Students' Academic Performance: A Case Study of the University of Kinshasa, DRC"***

We kindly request that you allow him obtain a research permit so as to proceed and collect data to inform his research from University of Kinshasa, DRC.

Warm Regards,

PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
REGISIRAR
P. 0. Box 56875--00200.
TEL: 0734400694
NAIROBI.KENYA

Dr. Lilian Vikiru
Registrar Academic Affairs
Pan Africa Christian University
Lumumba Drive, Roysambu, off Kamiti Rd, off Thika Rd
P.O Box 56875-00200, Nairobi, Kenya
Email: registrar.aa@pacuniversity.ac.ke
Website: www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

APPENDIX VII: SIGNED RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER BY THE UNIVERSITY OF KINSHASA



Pan Africa
Christian University

Thika Road Campus Valley Road Campus
B.P 56875 - 00200 +254 730955000 +254 730955501/2
enquiries@pacuniversity.ac.ke www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

TRANSLATION FROM THE ORIGINAL
done and checked by
ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE NAIROBI
P.O. BOX 45475 - 00...

Bureau du Registraire Affaires académiques

SECRETARIAT GENERAL ACADEMIQUE / UNIKIN
DATE DE RECEP 04 AOUT 2025
N° D'ENREGISTREMENT

Le 9 mai 2025

Alliance Française
10 JUIL 2025

A QUI DE DROIT

Madame/ Monsieur,

OBJET : LETTRE D'AUTORISATION DE RECHERCHE ET D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE POUR NSIMBA KINKELA EDDY NO. REG.: MALD/21562/0/21

Salutations ! Ceci est une lettre de présentation pour la personne susmentionnée, étudiant en dernière année à l'Université chrétienne panafricaine (Université PAC), qui prépare une Maîtrise en Art en Leadership.

Il en est à la dernière phase du programme et se prépare à recueillir des données qui lui permettront de finaliser son mémoire de maitrise qui s'intitule "L'effet modérateur des comportements d'immédiateté des professeurs sur la relation entre le leadership authentique et les résultats scolaires des étudiants : Étude de cas de l'université de Kinshasa, DRC"

Nous vous demandons de bien vouloir l'autoriser à obtenir un permis de recherche afin qu'il puisse poursuivre et recueillir des données pour étayer sa recherche à l'Université de Kinshasa, en RDC.

Bien cordialement

PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
REGISIRAR
P. O. Box 56875-00200
TEL: 0734400694
NAIROBI KENYA

Dr. Lilian Vikiru

Registraire des affaires académiques
Université Chretienne PanAfricaine
Lumumba Drive. Roysambu. off Kamiti Rd. off Thika Rd
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Courriel : registrar.aa@pacuniversity.ac.ke
Site web : www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

Alliance Française
Translation & Interpretation
NAIROBI KENYA

Autorisé

UNIVERSITE DE KINSHASA
FACULTE DE DROIT

ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE DE NAIROBI
This is to certify that it is a TRUE TRANSLATION OF ORIGINAL DOCUMENT

Where Leaders are Made

Date 10/7/2025