



**Ibiyemi Omeihe**

University of the West of Scotland, School of Business and Creative Industries

Hamilton International Technology Park

Stephenson Place

Blantyre

Glasgow

G72 0LH

[Ibiyemi.omeihe@uws.ac.uk](mailto:Ibiyemi.omeihe@uws.ac.uk)

**Dr Christian Harrison**

University of Greater Manchester

A676 Deane Rd,

Bolton

BL3 5AB

[C.Harrison2@bolton.ac.uk](mailto:C.Harrison2@bolton.ac.uk)

**Kingsley Omeihe**

University of the West of Scotland, School of Business and Creative Industries

High St,

Paisley

PA1 2BE

[king.omeihe@uws.ac.uk](mailto:king.omeihe@uws.ac.uk)

# **What Lies Beneath? Exploring the challenges of Authentic Leaders within the Oil Industry**

## **ABSTRACT**

This developmental paper sets out the rationale and design for a study exploring the challenges of authentic leadership within Nigeria's oil sector, a key driver of Africa's largest economy. While authentic leadership has gained prominence as a corrective to ethical failings and declining trust in leadership, the construct remains conceptually fragmented, normatively framed, and predominantly shaped by Western contexts. Such framing risks overlooking the lived realities of leaders in developing economies, where socio political, regulatory uncertainty, and ethical tensions influence leadership practice.

The study proposes a phenomenological approach underpinned by interpretivism to capture leaders lived experiences in this complex setting. Authentic leaders will be identified through follower nominations, ensuring that authenticity reflects recognition by subordinates rather than self-assertion. Semi structured interviews will provide rich qualitative data, with analysis following a systematic coding process to surface both explicit accounts and underlying meanings. Reflexivity, member checking, and peer debriefing are planned to enhance transparency and rigour.

**Keywords: Authentic Leadership, Developing Economies, Nigeria, Oil Sector, Phenomenology, Leadership Challenges**

## INTRODUCTION

Organisations today face increasingly complex environments characterised by financial scandals, leadership malfeasance, and rapid technological shifts (Sendjaya *et al.*, 2016; Johnsen, 2018; Liu *et al.*, 2023). These dynamics have triggered what many describe as a crisis of confidence in leadership, fuelling calls for approaches that can restore trust, legitimacy, and resilience (George, 2003; Luthans and Avolio, 2003; Liu, Liao and Wei, 2015; Gardner *et al.*, 2021; Gardner and McCauley, 2022). Within this context, authentic leadership has gained traction due to its perceived capacity to address leadership gaps in contemporary organisations. Authentic leadership, with its focus on self awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and an internalised moral perspective, has been advanced as one such response. It has been linked to greater employee engagement and the nurturing of ethical, trust based work environments (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008; Gardner and McCauley, 2022). At the same time, the growing prominence of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has positioned authenticity as essential to meeting the moral and social expectations facing contemporary organisations (Kim *et al.*, 2018; Fox, Davis and Baucus, 2020).

Yet, as Alvesson and colleagues remind us, leadership constructs are not neutral or universally applicable but socially produced and contextually contingent (Alvesson and Einola, 2019a; Alvesson and Einola, 2022). Despite authentic leadership's growing popularity, the field remains dominated by Western centric narratives (George, 2003; Ngunjiri and Hernandez, 2017), exemplified through figures such as Martin Luther King Jr. and Warren Buffett (George, 2003; Avolio *et al.*, 2004; du Plessis and Boshoff, 2018). This reliance has created both conceptual and empirical bias, with limited exploration of authentic leadership in non-Western contexts where institutional complexity, cultural expectations, and governance challenges significantly shape leadership practices (Dickson, Den Hartog and Mitchelson, 2003; Eagly, 2005; Lyu *et al.*, 2019; Omeihe, Harrison and Omeihe, 2021).

The COVID 19 pandemic further revealed the complexities of authentic leadership. Leaders sought to display authenticity through symbolic gestures, such as televised vaccinations, as a means of restoring public trust (Ljungholm, 2020). These episodes highlight both the demand for authenticity and the difficulty of demonstrating it credibly, suggesting that authenticity may be as much about perception and attribution as about traits or intentions (Shamir and Eilam, 2005).

This study examines authentic leadership within Nigeria's oil sector, an industry central to Africa's largest economy and long entwined with questions of legitimacy, corruption, and societal trust investigation (Steel and Webster, 1991; Quartey *et al.*, 2017). Adopting a follower attribution perspective (Bradley-Cole, 2018), authenticity is defined not by leaders' claims or traits alone but by social recognition from multiple followers. Using interviews with 16 follower identified leaders, the study addresses the question: What challenges do authentic leaders encounter in a developing economy?

This study situates authentic leadership within a resource dependent, politically complex context and by doing so, extend existing theory while acknowledging its contested, socially constructed character. It responds to the need for research that is both theoretically generative and sensitive to the lived realities of leaders operating in underexplored environments.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Authentic leadership is often presented as a corrective to the ethical failings and leadership deficits evident in contemporary organisations. While the literature has expanded rapidly, much of it is descriptive rather than critical, resulting in fragmentation and a lack of clarity about the practical and theoretical implications of authentic leadership across diverse contexts (Crawford *et al.*, 2020). Critics point to conceptual ambiguity, definitional inconsistency, and a lack of contextual sensitivity as persistent problems (Iszatt-White and Kempster, 2019; Crawford *et al.*, 2020). In

this sense, authentic leadership is often portrayed as more aspirational than empirical, a construct whose appeal lies in its moral promise rather than its demonstrated applicability.

These tensions become evident when considering contexts outside the West. Consequently, leaders in African, Asian, and Latin American settings remain marginal in the narrative (Ngunjiri and Hernandez, 2017). This imbalance risks producing a form of theoretical monoculture where authenticity is defined through Western assumptions of individualism, stability, and moral clarity (Alvesson and Einola, 2019a). This study responds to these limitations by challenging the dominant assumptions underpinning authentic leadership and offers a contextual investigation grounded in the lived experiences of leaders in a developing economy.

### **Competing Conceptualisations of Authentic Leadership**

Scholarly exploration of authentic leadership converges on the notion that it represents a morally grounded and desirable form of leadership yet diverge in their conceptualisations. The literature presents at least five influential perspectives: authentic leadership as (1) an idealised model, (2) a four dimensional construct, (3) a subset of transformational leadership, (4) a root construct for other leadership theories, and (5) an evolving interplay of the self.

The first perspective presents authentic leadership as an idealised construct characterised by positive traits, behaviours, and emotions shared between leaders and followers. Advocates claim such leaders rebuild trust eroded by misconduct, acting as multipliers of organisational potential (Beddoes-Jones and Swailes, 2015). Empirical studies link authentic leaders to enhanced creativity, resilience, and follower ethicality (Gaddy *et al.*, 2017). With Iszatt-White and Kempster (2019) notably describing the leadership approach as an idealised construct in their paper. Yet, the risk of portraying authenticity as an inherently “good” leadership style is evident. As Alvesson (2019)

observes, such idealisation can mask the socially constructed and politically charged realities of leadership.

The second perspective conceptualises authentic leadership as a four dimensional construct comprising self awareness, internalised moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency. These dimensions are considered mutually reinforcing. Self awareness refers to the leader's reflective capacity to understand personal strengths and limitations, grounded in introspection and feedback (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008). Internalised moral perspective as described by Alilyyani, Wong and Cummings (2018) involves a self regulatory mechanism guided by moral values. Balanced processing refers to the leader's ability to consider diverse viewpoints in decision making, evolving from the earlier concept of "unbiased processing" (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008). This was revised to reflect the inherent biased nature of human information processing (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Relational transparency is about openness and honesty in interpersonal exchanges, enhancing mutual trust and transparency (Ngunjiri and Hernandez, 2017). Despite its appeal, this model assumes a coherent, stable self and a universally legible moral compass. Critics note that what counts as "moral" is culturally contested (Alvesson and Einola, 2019b). In the context of study Nigeria , where communal obligations, extended kinship networks, and state fragility influence ethical expectations balanced processing may be compromised by political and familial pressures, while transparency may clash with cultural norms around discretion. Thus, applying the four dimensions without contextual adaptation risks overlooking how authenticity is enacted and constrained in practice.

The third perspective frames authentic leadership as a subset of transformational leadership. It positions authentic leadership as either a form of transformational leadership or as its conceptual precursor. Scholars argue that both leadership styles share characteristics such as optimism, moral grounding, and the ability to inspire (Joo and Nimon, 2014; Avolio, Walumbwa and Weber, 2009). Earlier studies on authentic

leadership used the concept of authenticity to describe worthy transformational leaders. These leaders were described as authentic transformational leaders whose conduct were underpinned by morals (Sidani and Rowe, 2018). However, the Nigerian oil context raises questions about distinctiveness. Leaders may mobilise transformational rhetoric, such as calls for national development, while engaging in practices that perpetuate corruption or exclusion. If authentic leadership is indistinguishable from transformational leadership in such settings, its unique value is undermined.

The fourth perspective positions authentic leadership as a “root construct” that underlies other positive leadership styles (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). This framing suggests authenticity provides the ethical and psychological grounding for servant, ethical, and spiritual leadership (Peus *et al.*, 2012). Yet critics argue this claim risks definitional overreach, rendering authenticity a vague umbrella under which many forms of leadership are subsumed (Tibbs *et al.*, 2016).

Finally, the fifth perspective interprets authentic leadership as a “battle of self,” emerging from the broader psychological and philosophical notion of authenticity (Algera and Lips-Wiersma, 2012). Consequently, this offers wide ranging implications for the construct. This view highlights the dynamic and evolving nature of the leader’s identity, shaped by personal experiences, social contexts, and moral dilemmas. Here, authenticity is not a fixed trait but a continuous process of self construction. This processual framing resonates with Nigeria’s oil sector, where leaders often manage shifting allegiances, conflicting expectations, and uncertainty. Yet it also complicates operationalisation: if authenticity is continuously reconstructed, measuring or identifying “authentic” leaders becomes difficult. It then becomes pertinent to unpack the challenges these leaders encounter across diverse contexts.

Notably, there remains limited understanding of the challenges faced by authentic leaders themselves. This paper responds directly to these oversights by exploring the challenges of authentic leadership within Nigerian oil companies. Interestingly, most

studies focus on the organisational problems these leaders help to resolve (Crawford *et al.*, 2020), rather than the challenges they encounter in their roles. This omission is notable, as the challenges may directly shape leaders' ability to enact authenticity. This study seeks to move beyond prescriptive frameworks and offer a more grounded, contextual understanding of what it means to lead authentically in a developing economy. This study contributes to the field by identifying specific challenges faced by authentic leaders in Nigeria's oil sector and also by questioning the universality of prevailing conceptualisations. It argues for a rethinking of authentic leadership as a dynamic, contextually mediated process, one that is shaped as much by external pressures as by internal convictions.

## **THE NIGERIAN CONTEXT**

Nigeria, Africa's largest economy, is heavily dependent on oil exports, which generate most of the government revenue (Ayuba, 2023; Morocco-Clarke, 2023). Yet the sector is characterised by paradox: despite abundant resources, development outcomes remain poor, a condition widely attributed to leadership and governance deficits (Ite *et al.*, 2013; Okoi, 2019). Since the 1970s, oil exploration has contributed to environmental degradation, gas flaring, and public health crises (Kadafa, 2012; Odeyemi, 2014). Regulatory non compliance and bribery have further entrenched public distrust (Awobajo, 1981),

In this context, authentic leadership has the potential to provide a counter narrative to corrupt practices. Prior studies demonstrate its association with positive employee outcomes in such sectors petroleum (Ahmad *et al.*, 2016; Cavazotte, Mansur and Moreno, 2021). Yet whether authentic leadership can be enacted within Nigeria's oil sector remains an open question. Leaders may aspire to authenticity but face systemic barriers that limit its realisation. Consequently, by situating authentic leadership within Nigeria's oil sector, the study aims to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how leadership can mediate structural challenges and support more sustainable organisational practices in the context of the study.

## METHODOLOGY

This study will adopt a phenomenological research strategy to examine the lived experiences of authentic leaders in Nigeria's oil sector. Phenomenology is appropriate because it allows for the exploration of how authenticity will be experienced, negotiated, and challenged within a complex institutional environment. The approach will align with an interpretivist paradigm, privileging meaning making and co construction of knowledge through accounts of the participants (Morse, 2015). Authentic leadership has often been presented in static, idealised forms. However, following Gardner et al. (2005) and Alvesson and Einola (2019), this study will proceed from the view that authenticity is not simply a set of universal traits but a socially mediated process, embedded within cultural, political, and organisational realities. The interpretivist orientation will therefore ensure that participant voices are captured while researcher reflexivity will be used to critically interrogate assumptions and hidden tensions.

**Sampling Strategy:** A two tiered sampling strategy will be employed, combining purposive and snowball sampling. In the first stage, employees in Nigerian oil organisations will be asked to identify leaders they perceive as authentic. This follower based nomination process will ensure that authenticity is not defined by leaders' self perceptions or formal status but by recognition across multiple observers (Bradley-Cole, 2018). To be included, leaders will need to be identified as authentic by at least two subordinates, creating a consensus based criterion for selection. In the second stage, snowball sampling will be used to expand the participant pool across different organisations within the Oil industry. This approach will enable the study to capture diversity across contexts while remaining consistent with phenomenological inquiry's emphasis on depth over breadth.

**Participant Demographics:** Data will be collected from participants within the Oil industry. Attention will be paid to gender, age, educational attainment, and years of service. This information will allow the study to reflect on whether and how these

factors influence perceptions of authenticity. The inclusion of both male and female leaders, as well as varying levels of seniority, will be sought to challenge prevailing Western centric narratives that often marginalise women and leaders from nontraditional backgrounds (Iszatt-White and Kempster, 2019).

**Data Analysis:** This will be conducted using a three phase approach adapted from King and Horrocks (2010). For the first phase of the initial Coding, In Vivo coding (Miles, Huberman and Saldaña, 2018) will be employed to capture participants' exact words, preserving their meaning systems and ensuring the analysis remains grounded in their lived realities. For the second phase, codes will then be examined for underlying meanings, contradictions, and tensions, particularly where accounts reveal paradoxes in practising authenticity. Finally, the codes will be reviewed, refined and clustered into broader categories.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has set out the conceptual and methodological groundwork for a study that seeks to examine the lived experiences and challenges of authentic leaders within Nigeria's oil sector. It responds to growing calls to broaden leadership scholarship beyond its predominantly Western narrative and to interrogate the applicability of authenticity in diverse contexts. Consequently, the study explores leadership within a developing economy context to illuminate how authenticity is both enacted and constrained within complex and unstable environments. Though findings are not yet available, the study is positioned to make several important contributions. Conceptually, it seeks to advance authentic leadership scholarship by moving beyond prescriptive accounts toward a more contextually sensitive understanding. Methodologically, the follower based strategy and phenomenological design are expected to generate rich, grounded insights that capture authenticity as lived rather than as merely theorised. Practically, the work has the potential to inform leadership development and organisational practices within the Nigerian oil sector and, more

broadly, in comparable developing economy contexts. At this stage, the paper remains developmental.

The analysis of interview data will form the next phase, with the goal of identifying the tensions, paradoxes, and adaptive strategies that shape authentic leadership in practice. It is anticipated that these insights will contribute to ongoing theoretical debates and raise critical questions about whether authenticity should be understood as a universally desirable construct or as one deeply mediated by context. In presenting this proposal, the intention is to stimulate dialogue and invite constructive feedback that can refine both the conceptual framing and methodological choices of the study. The hope is that such engagement will strengthen the work as it progresses toward full empirical analysis and subsequent dissemination.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmad, K. Z., Hossan, C., Al Sahi Al Zaabi and Saeed, M. (2016) 'Authentic leadership, work engagement and organizational citizenship behaviors in petroleum company', *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 65(6), pp. 811-830.
- Algera, P. M. and Lips-Wiersma, M. (2012) 'Radical Authentic Leadership: Co-creating the conditions under which all members of the organization can be authentic', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(1), pp. 118-131.
- Alilyyani, B., Wong, C. A. and Cummings, G. (2018) 'Antecedents, mediators, and outcomes of authentic leadership in healthcare: A systematic review', *International Journal of Nursing Studies*, 83(2018), pp. 34-64.
- Alvesson, M. and Einola, K. (2019a) 'Warning for excessive positivity: Authentic leadership and other traps in leadership studies', *Leadership Quarterly*, 30(4), pp. 383-395.
- Alvesson, M. and Einola, K. (2019b) 'Warning for excessive positivity: Authentic leadership and other traps in leadership studies', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 30(4), pp. 383-395.
- Alvesson, M. and Einola, K. (2022) 'The gaslighting of authentic leadership 2.0', *Leadership*, 18(6), pp. 814-831.
- Avolio, B. J. and Gardner, W. L. (2005) 'Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), pp. 315-338.
- Avolio, B. J., Gardner, W. L., Walumbwa, F. O., Luthans, F. and May, D. R. (2004) 'Unlocking the mask: a look at the process by which authentic leaders impact follower attitudes and behaviors', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15(6), pp. 801-823.
- Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, F. O. and Weber, T. J. (2009) 'Leadership: Current Theories, Research, and Future Directions', *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60, pp. 421-449.
- Awobajo, S. 'An analysis of oil spill incidents in Nigeria: 1976-1980'. *The Petroleum Industry and the Nigeria Environment*, Warri, 1-12.
- Ayuba, B. (2023) 'Nigeria: Fractured Governance and Lack of Planning', in Khalid, A.M., Ferguson, J.R. and Asadullah, N.M. (eds.) *Economic Integration Among D-8 Muslim Countries: Prospects and Challenges*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing, pp. 257-276.
- Beddoes-Jones, F. and Swailes, S. (2015) 'Authentic leadership: development of a new three pillar model', *Strategic HR Review*, 14(3), pp. 94-99.
- Bradley-Cole, K. (2018) 'The Transformational Influence of Authentic Leadership on Followers in Early Career Relationships', in CotterLockard, D. (ed.) *Authentic Leadership and Followership: International Perspectives*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 167-191.
- Cavazotte, F., Mansur, J. and Moreno, V. (2021) 'Authentic leadership and sustainable operations: How leader morality and selflessness can foster frontline safety performance', *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 313(127819), pp. 1-11.

- Crawford, J. A., Dawkins, S., Martin, A. and Lewis, G. (2020) 'Putting the leader back into authentic leadership: Reconceptualising and rethinking leaders', *Australian Journal of Management*, 45(1), pp. 114-133.
- Dickson, M. W., Den Hartog, D. N. and Mitchelson, J. K. (2003) 'Research on leadership in a cross-cultural context: Making progress, and raising new questions', *The leadership quarterly*, 14(6), pp. 729-768.
- du Plessis, M. and Boshoff, A. B. (2018) 'The role of psychological capital in the relationship between authentic leadership and work engagement', *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 16(1), pp. 1-9.
- Eagly, A. H. (2005) 'Achieving relational authenticity in leadership: Does gender matter?', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 16(3), pp. 459-474.
- Fox, C., Davis, P. and Baucus, M. (2020) 'Corporate social responsibility during unprecedented crises: the role of authentic leadership and business model flexibility', *Management Decision*, 58(10), pp. 2213-2233.
- Gaddy, J. W., Gonzalez, S. P., Lathan, C. A. and Graham, P. K. (2017) 'The Perception of Authentic Leadership on Subordinate Resilience', *Military Behavioral Health*, 5(1), pp. 64-72.
- Gardner, W. L., Karam, E. P., Alvesson, M. and Einola, K. (2021) 'Authentic leadership theory: The case for and against', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 32(6), pp. 1-25.
- Gardner, W. L. and McCauley, K. D. (2022) 'The gaslighting of authentic leadership', *Leadership*, 18(6), pp. 801-813.
- George, B. (2003) *Authentic leadership: Rediscovering the secrets to creating lasting value*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Iszatt-White, M. and Kempster, S. (2019) 'Authentic Leadership: Getting Back to the Roots of the 'Root Construct'?', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 21(3), pp. 356-369.
- Ite, A. E., Ibok, U. J., Ite, M. U. and Petters, S. W. (2013) 'Petroleum exploration and production: Past and present environmental issues in the Nigeria's Niger Delta', *American Journal of Environmental Protection*, 1(4), pp. 78-90.
- Johnsen, C. G. (2018) 'Authenticating the Leader: Why Bill George Believes that a Moral Compass Would Have Kept Jeffrey Skilling out of Jail', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 147(1), pp. 53-63.
- Joo, B.-K. and Nimon, K. (2014) 'Two of a kind? A canonical correlational study of transformational leadership and authentic leadership', *European Journal of Training and Development*, 38(6), pp. 570-587.
- Kadafa, A. A. (2012) 'Oil exploration and spillage in the Niger Delta of Nigeria', *Civil and Environmental Research*, 2(3), pp. 38-51.
- Kim, B.-J., Nurunnabi, M., Kim, T.-H. and Kim, T. (2018) 'Doing Good Is Not Enough, You Should Have Been Authentic: Organizational Identification, Authentic Leadership and CSR', *Sustainability*, 10(6), pp. 1-16.
- King, N. and Horrocks, C. (2010) *Interviews in qualitative research*. Sage.

- Liu, S.-m., Liao, J.-q. and Wei, H. (2015) 'Authentic Leadership and Whistleblowing: Mediating Roles of Psychological Safety and Personal Identification', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 131(1), pp. 107-119.
- Liu, Y., Fuller, B., Hester, K. and Chen, H. (2023) 'Authentic leadership and employees' job performance: mediation effect of positive employee health', *Journal of Management Analytics*, 10(3), pp. 566-582.
- Ljungholm, D. P. (2020) 'COVID-19 vaccine safety regulation: Globalized infectious diseases, health literacy, and anti-immunization sentiment', *Analysis and Metaphysics*, (19), pp. 31-37.
- Luthans, F. and Avolio, B. J. (2003) 'Authentic leadership development', in Cameron, K.S. and Dutton, J.E. (eds.) *Positive organizational scholarship*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
- Lyu, Y., Wang, M., Le, J. and Kwan, H. K. (2019) 'Effects of authentic leadership on work-family balance in China', *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 34(2), pp. 110-123.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M. and Saldaña, J. (2018) *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*. Sage publications.
- Morocco-Clarke, A. (2023) 'In the midst of so much injustice, can there be a seat for energy justice at the Nigerian table?', *The Journal of World Energy Law & Business*, 16(3), pp. 251-266.
- Morse, J. M. (2015) 'Critical analysis of strategies for determining rigor in qualitative inquiry', *Qualitative health research*, 25(9), pp. 1212-1222.
- Ngunjiri, F. W. and Hernandez, K.-A. C. (2017) 'Problematizing Authentic Leadership: A Collaborative Autoethnography of Immigrant Women of Color Leaders in Higher Education', *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 19(4), pp. 393-406.
- Odeyemi, J. O. (2014) 'A political history of Nigeria and the crisis of ethnicity in nation-building', *International Journal of Developing Societies*, 3(1), pp. 1-12.
- Okoi, O. (2019) *The paradox of Nigeria's oil dependency*. Africa Portal. January. Available at: <https://africaportal.org/feature/paradox-nigerias-oil-dependency/>.
- Omeihe, I., Harrison, C. and Omeihe, K. 'Authentic leadership skills within a developing economy context'. *35th BAM Annual Conference Proceedings: Recovering from Covid: Responsible Management and Reshaping the Economy*.
- Peus, C., Wesche, J. S., Streicher, B., Braun, S. and Frey, D. (2012) 'Authentic leadership: An empirical test of its antecedents, consequences, and mediating mechanisms', *Journal of business ethics*, 107(3), pp. 331-348.
- Quartey, P., Turkson, E., Abor, J. Y. and Iddrisu, A. M. (2017) 'Financing the growth of SMEs in Africa: What are the constraints to SME financing within ECOWAS?', *Review of development finance*, 7(1), pp. 18-28.
- Sendjaya, S., Pekerti, A., Härtel, C., Hirst, G. and Butarbutar, I. (2016) 'Are Authentic Leaders Always Moral? The Role of Machiavellianism in the Relationship Between Authentic Leadership and Morality', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 133(1), pp. 125-139.
- Shamir, B. and Eilam, G. (2005) "'What's your story?' A life-stories approach to authentic leadership development', *The leadership quarterly*, 16(3), pp. 395-417.

- Sidani, Y. M. and Rowe, W. G. (2018) 'A reconceptualization of authentic leadership: Leader legitimation via follower-centered assessment of the moral dimension', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 29(6), pp. 623-636.
- Steel, W. F. and Webster, L. M. (1991) *Small enterprises in Ghana: responses to adjustment industry* [Series Paper 33], Washington DC: The World Bank.
- Tibbs, S., Green, M. T., Gergen, E. and Montoya, J. A. (2016) 'If You Are Like Me, I Think You Are More Authentic: An Analysis of the Interaction of Follower and Leader Gender', *Administrative Issues Journal: Education, Practice & Research*, 6(1), pp. 118-133.
- Walumbwa, F. O., Avolio, B. J., Gardner, W. L., Wernsing, T. S. and Peterson, S. J. (2008) 'Authentic leadership: Development and validation of a theory-based measure', *Journal of management*, 34(1), pp. 89-126.