



# **The role of missional leadership in the growth of urban African Initiated Churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo**

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Thesis accepted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
*Doctor of Philosophy in Theology with Missiology* at the North-  
West University

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Graduation: June 2025

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this Ph.D. thesis: *The role of missional leadership in the growth of urban African Initiated Churches in the DRC*, is my work and has not been submitted either by me or another person to any other university.

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November 2024

## EPIGRAPH

The journey was fraught with challenges and even perilous at times.  
I was on the verge of being completely overwhelmed by it.  
Nevertheless, I am still able, and with justifiable cause, to exclaim with enthusiasm and  
gratitude:  
“Thy grace, O God led me there and I made it”  
Glory to the Great King!

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my beloved wife and children for all the sacrifice they consented to see me reach this level in my life.

Furthermore, I dedicate this thesis to all scholars and writers who have devoted themselves to studying African Initiated Churches, missional leadership, urban mission, and church growth. They have served to illuminate, expand, and shape my understanding of the subject matter.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am indebted to a higher power for bestowing me the gift of life and good health, enabling me to achieve my full potential. This is a testament to the benevolence of a divine force.

People provided guidance and support, demonstrating the importance of gentleness and love and offering firm guidance when necessary. This was evident in the case of my promoter and co-promoter, successively Professors Fohle Lygunda Li-M and Muswubi T Aaron.

Some provided solace and comfort, offering a tangible demonstration of support and encouragement. While I cannot acknowledge each individual who offered such support, I am grateful for the collective efforts of those who provided assistance, guidance, and a shoulder to lean on.

Additionally, other individuals provided me with the resources necessary to progress, including financial assistance, spiritual and material support, and a diverse range of knowledge. This was accomplished by brothers Bijou Bundoki and his wife Marie B Mujinga, Rev. Jean Claude Bampeta and his wife Odette Kangola, Gana Kiboko, Henry Mukanya and Jacquie Bilonda, and Amedee Boma and his wife Sylvie Mbakata.

Ultimately, I postulate that my father, Mpolo Raphael, would be gratified if he were still alive and could affix his signature to this document. However, this is not to be. It appears destiny has already ordained that he has preceded me in the afterlife.

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to all of you.

## **ABSTRACT**

Globally, leadership has been a pivotal factor in the expansion of the Church and the relocation of the Centre of gravity of Christian leadership from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern and Eastern Hemispheres. Urbanization and globalisation have been identified as the most significant among the various causative factors. This is an absolute requirement. In recent decades, a notable phenomenon has emerged in sub-Saharan Africa: the rapid inception and phenomenal growth of churches initiated exclusively by Africans and for Africans. The African Initiated Church (AIC) phenomenon has also affected Christianity in the DRC. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the second most populous country in terms of church membership, with Nigeria being the most populated. The following section will present the methodology employed in this study.

This study employs qualitative research methods to gain insight into and examine the extent to which African-descended churches in the DRC, as urban churches, are utilizing missional leadership as a strategy and style to foster their growth. The main question is as follows: “To what extent is the growth of the AIC in the DRC due to missional leadership?” The study is concerned with the missional characteristics of the leadership in question and their impact on the qualitative and quantitative growth of the church.

The findings reveal that to facilitate growth within the church, the AIC in the DRC requires implementing a missional leadership approach for several key reasons. Some reasons are intrinsic to the factors that motivated their inception and to the strategies and leadership styles that are being applied to the development of the church. The absence of a biblical vision, mission, methods, and church objectives has prompted the AIC's leadership to rely on expedient and passive church development strategies, such as transfer and natural birth rate, which result in a numerical increase but fail to facilitate the spiritual development that would naturally lead to church development through communal participation in the mission of God.

This attitude is further compounded by the influence of political, social, and economic factors and the impact of globalisation, urbanization, and migration. As a result, the church is experiencing both proliferation and growth, but not necessarily in a balanced or appropriate manner. In light of these circumstances, it is evident that the DRC's AICs must transform their approach. Rather than relying on traditional strategies, leaders must adopt a missional mindset through training and other initiatives.

Before addressing these multifaceted challenges, the AIC leaders in the DRC must transition from Christendom to a missional mindset. This shift can be facilitated through training, equipping, and other strategic initiatives rather than relying on these unproductive attitudes. It is inadvisable to prioritize natural birth, given that the Christian birth rate is less than that of Muslims. Moreover, the rate of decline in the number of Christians is greater than that of Muslims, which has the effect of slowing down the pace of church development.

**Key concepts:** missional leadership, church growth, African Initiated Churches, and urban church and mission

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACK : Assemblée Chrétienne de Kinshasa

AICs: African Initiated Churches.

CCC: Campus Crusade for Christ

CG: Church Growth

CI: Context Intelligence

CL: Church Leadership

COVID-19

CPM: Church Planting Movement

CQ: Cultural Intelligence

DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo

DS: Digital Strategy

G: Church Growth Variable

GCM: Global Church Movement

LI: Leadership Impact

MC2: Multiplying Cells and Communities

Ms: Missional

NCD: Natural Church Development

NIV: New International Version

NT: New Testament

OT: Old Testament

RCC: Renewal Church in Congo

SLM: Student-Led Movement

SM: Media Strategy

VUCA: Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background**

An analysis of the leadership styles currently employed for this purpose identified the necessity for investigating the capabilities of missional leadership to facilitate church growth in general and the AICs in particular. The findings and recommendations of the author's recent master's research have also motivated this study (Mpolo, 2020: 114, 138, 144).

It is inevitable that any system, whether secular or religious, will rely on leadership for its development. In the contemporary era, the global church and its institutions within the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are situated within a context that can be described as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA). A new leadership approach is not just desired but urgently needed and is more effective and efficient than traditional approaches (Horney et al., 2010). The issue is determining the most appropriate way to apply the leadership style and effectively contextualize it to foster church development. According to Yukl (2013:23), "Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it and facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives".

Considering this, Christian leaders encourage all members of the Church to perceive the Church's mission as participation in God's mission. Furthermore, they facilitate individual and collective efforts to achieve shared objectives under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

The study will focus on a select group of churches that exemplify the characteristics of AICs in the DRC and whose leadership significantly impacts and contributes to their respective churches' growth. The aim is to assess the leadership's ability to facilitate transformative changes among church members, thereby fostering qualitative and numerical growth within the church because of collective believers' participation.

#### **1.2 Problem Statement**

##### **1.2.1 Practical problem**

In recent decades, the African Initiated Church (AIC) movement has significantly influenced Christianity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). This is evident in the significant role it has played in the development of the Church and Christianity in modern Africa. As the

Pew Research Center reported, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is the second most populous country regarding church membership, with Nigeria ranking first (Hackett *et al.*, 2011:11, 15; Pew Research Center, 2011:11, 15; 2017; Statista, 2024 ;). A substantial body of research indicates that the DRC is one of ten countries where the impact of global Pentecostalism and its associated charismatic movements on the development of the Church is readily apparent. This conclusion is supported by a range of sources, including the Center for the Study of Global Christianity (2013), Lindhardt (2015:1-2), Wariboko (2017:1-2, 5), Zurlo *et al.* (2020), and Majawa (2020:2-3).

This study will examine the missional capabilities of some AIC leaders in their capacity to influence and facilitate the spiritual transformation of the church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Considering the situation above, some questions arise. The question thus arises as to the extent to which the leadership's influence fosters the expansion of the church in a missional manner.

### **1.2.2 Research Problem**

This study focuses on the extent to which leaders of African Initiated Churches (AICs) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) require missional leadership strategies and styles to enhance their growth in a context that is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and acceleration (VUCA). The impact of AIC leadership on the church's growth in the DRC cities is readily apparent today. A considerable number of churches have experienced quantitative growth because of the charismatic influence of their leaders. Nevertheless, despite the ostensible success of these leaders in the mission field, there has been a paucity of analysis concerning their capacity for transformative leadership and the role that such leadership should play in stimulating church growth in the DRC (Pew Research Center, 2011:54; 2017; Statista, 2024).

Since the 1990s, literature and research on the relationship between leadership and organizational expansion (church growth) have been developed into various leadership models that promote the church as an organization. Most of these models delineate leadership's mobilizing and energizing role within the organizational structure. Leaders facilitate organizational problem-solving and facilitate the organization's ability to capitalize on opportunities for organizational growth (Kouzes & Posner, 2012:1). The church, whether described as *ecclesia*, *koinonia*, or the body of Christ, is a living organism that depends on leadership for its effectiveness. It is an organized living entity whose purpose is to engage in the divine mission under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is, therefore, imperative to

transition from focusing on leadership traits to an alternative leadership paradigm. This view is also supported by Elkington *et al.* (2015:1) as they state: “New church leaders are expected to be a leader without having the benefit of ongoing support for their leadership development process.”

Van Dierendonck and Patterson (2010:3) emphasize the necessity for a novel approach to leadership.

Within a few short years, our view on what accounts for good leadership has changed dramatically. The idea of a heroic, hierarchical-oriented leader with primacy for shareholders has quickly been replaced by a view on leadership that gives priority to stewardship, ethical behaviour, and collaboration through connecting to other people.

In the context of the African church, where leadership is heroic and charismatic, there is a need for a shift in leadership management or a mixture with another type of leadership that enables the participation of all church members in God's mission. This is because the traditional forms of leadership that have existed for many years are no longer fit for purpose in the modern era.

As Niemandt notes, both secular and spiritual/church leadership and the associated concepts and ideas are being questioned in the context of a rapidly evolving global landscape. Additionally, Christian leadership is confronted with novel insights regarding the nature of leadership in biblical times. In the contemporary era, marked by the prevalence of complexity in a dynamic global environment, there is a pressing need for a novel conceptualization of leadership that can effectively navigate the local church's and broader communities' complexities.

A preliminary literature review would undoubtedly provide further insight into the various aspects of the debate surrounding this study.

### **1.2.3 Preliminary literature review**

The preliminary study yielded a substantial corpus of material about the research areas of primary interest, including the overarching theme of leadership and the specific focus of AICs. In this way, the materials illuminate concepts such as leadership and missional leadership, church growth, African-initiated churches (AICs), and urban missions.

### 1.2.3.1 Church and church growth

Understanding the church provides meaningful insights into the church growth concept because behind each description lies appropriate principles of growth that can be applied and contextualized (Sanchez, 2015:8). Biblical descriptions of the church convey enduring truths. Each image portrays the church from a distinct perspective, offering pivotal insights for fostering a distinctive form of growth (Serrano, 2018:3). The most useful metaphors of the church are the body of Christ (Schoeman, 2012:162), a living organism, complex and adaptive system (Doornenbal, 2012: 145-149; Elkington, 2015:1-3, 7-8), a hermeneutical and interpretive space (Niemandt, 2019).

The most valuable and fundamental concepts within the context of the church are undoubtedly "*ekklesia*" (literally, "called out") and "*koinonia*" (literally, "fellowship"). The former term is mentioned more than 115 times in the New Testament. It is derived from the Greek term *ekklesia*, which is commonly defined as "an assembly" and "to call out" or "the called-out ones" (Bullinger, 1995:72; Towns, 1995:45-47). Therefore, the concept of "*ekklesia*" gives rise to the notion of a community and assembly governed as a kingdom. Ervin Budiselić and Charles Van Engen establish a connection between the concepts of God's Kingdom and the Church, linking them to the figure of Jesus Christ as the King of the Kingdom and the Head of the Church (Van Engen, 2015:48-50; Budiselić, 2016:152-153).

The pivotal point of research on the issue of church growth was the emergence of the Church Growth Movement (GCM), which first appeared in the 1960s with Donald McGavran and subsequently gained significant traction between the 1980s and the 1990s. Many churches have experienced notable expansion due to their contributions (Liza *et al.* 2017:120-122). Subsequently, the paradigm shifted to church health with the contributions of Rick Warren (1996), Christian Schwarz (1996), and Steinke (1996) due to the emergence of various controversies and criticisms (Krejcir, 2005:396-98). The current trend is the "missional" paradigm, which gained prominence in the mid-1990s under the leadership of Lesslie Newbigin. Some authors posit that the "missional" approach represents a continuation of traditional perspectives on church growth and health (Stetzer, 2006:18; Doornenbal, 2012; Van Aarde, 2017). For others, however, the missional church concept represents a complete contradiction to the traditional paradigm of church development. It rejects the hubris of tradition and technique. It repositions itself as a people sent on a mission—a people responding to the sending nature of God as expressed in Christ (McNeal, 2009: xiii; 2011: xx). As Niemandt (2019) posits, the "missional" paradigm represents the optimal

ecclesiological framework for navigating the contextual challenges posed by the age of acceleration and complexity.

The evolution of the church in Africa and its leadership has occurred within the context of a shift in the Centre of gravity of global church leadership from the global north to the global south. This shift has been influenced by the emergence and expansion of the global Pentecostal/Charismatic movement (Woodbridge and James III, 2013:835-36; Lindhardt, 2015:1-2; Anderson, 2018:52; Deressa, 2020:364). The growth and advancement of African Initiated Churches is contingent upon the effectiveness of their leadership. The ability of the church to serve its members and fulfil its mission is directly proportional to its ability to develop leaders who can serve its members (Jenkins, 2002: 2-3, 79; Sundkler & Steed, 2004; Morrison, 2011; Zurlo *et al.*, 2020: 9-10). According to Zurlo *et al.*, the ongoing shift of the church's leadership from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern Hemisphere is increasing. For two principal reasons, the related Christian population will move from 67 per cent in 2021 to 77 per cent by 2050. Firstly, the growth of Christianity in Africa was driven mainly by the witness and evangelistic efforts of Africans, who established autonomous, local, and indigenized churches (Zurlo *et al.*, 2020:10; 2021:18-19).

Secondly, the AICs have successfully included various aspects of African culture in their expressions of the Christian religion and its practices. The AICs have become a firmly established presence within the Christian community, particularly in Africa, where they are regarded as a significant and widely accepted expression of the Christian faith from an African perspective. By the end of the 20th century, the AICs had proliferated throughout the entirety of the African continent, thereby becoming the most prominent Christian denomination (Kealotswe, 2014:228-229). According to the classification established by Pew Research, the DRC church is identified as one of the ten largest religious organizations in the world. Additionally, it is one of the three most populous African countries, with Nigeria and Ethiopia having more significant adherent numbers (Pew Research Center, 2011:11; Statista, 2024).

As previously stated, the AICs' appeal and rapid growth can be attributed more to their adaptability to the African worldview than to all church members' participation in the gospel proclamation. The potential for a significant increase in the Muslim population by 2050, coupled with a higher rate of religious switching and fertility, represents a significant challenge to the Christian demographic. According to the Pew Research Center (2015), by 2050, there will be near parity between Muslims (2.8 billion, or 30% of the population) and Christians (2.9 billion, or 31%), which would be the first time in history that this has occurred.

Moreover, by 2070, Islam will become the most prevalent religion globally (International Centre for Muslim and non-Muslim Understanding, 2015:11).

It is, therefore, time for Christian leaders worldwide, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the largest number of believers resides, to alter their approach to leading the church. A shift towards missional leadership represents an effective strategy for mobilizing the church to engage in disciple-making.

### **1.2.3.2 Leadership and missional leadership**

The concept of leadership has a long history, both in the context of biblical teachings and in secular fields of study. Despite a consensual and unique definition, leadership remains a complex phenomenon and a fundamental concept essential for any organization's effectiveness, whether for-profit or nonprofit, religious or secular. Inadequate and mediocre leadership results in the loss of hope and, in an organizational context, leads to dysfunction (Yukl, 2013; Kolzow, 2014; Northouse, 2016:1-2). Effective leadership remains pivotal in a nonprofit organization such as a religious institution. The leadership environment in such an organization differs considerably from that of a for-profit entity, with followers typically joining based on their own volition (Setley & Gautsch, 2015; Northouse, 2016:8).

Despite the commonalities with secular leadership, Christian leadership must rely on the head, Jesus Christ. A Christian leader is defined as an individual whose character has been shaped by the teachings of Jesus Christ. This influence is evident in their ability to motivate others, regardless of context (Van den Broeck & Jordaan, 2018:12 and Kellerman, 2014:306). In every contextual situation akin to VUCA, where conventional principles and models can be leveraged, the hallmark of Christian leadership is the unified effort to influence others purposefully, foster spiritual growth, and actively advance the expansion of God's kingdom on Earth (Thomas, 2018:108).

Most authors concur that the concept of leadership is pivotal to the growth of a church. This is because the leadership of a church is often seen as a facilitating function. He bears the responsibility of facilitating the realization of each church member's potential and advancement within the organizational structure (Elkington *et al.*, 2015:3; Choco, 2018: 19; Tamunomiebi *et al.*, 2018:49).

Indeed, the church, as the body of Christ, can be defined as a complex adaptive system that maintains its existence through the mutual interaction of its constituent parts. The capacity to adapt is the ability to respond expeditiously to new opportunities, to adapt to volatile situations,

and to avoid complacency (Schulze & Pinkow, 2020:2). Leadership, as an enabling function, serves to foster innovation and creativity, thereby maintaining the mutual interaction of the various constituent parts within the organizational system. This, in turn, ensures the continued strength of the system and the accomplishment of the mission for which the organization was designed. Enabling leadership is associated with relational and innovative leadership practices (Elkington & Booyesen, 2015:79-80; Schulze & Pinkow, 2020:3-4). It is the responsibility of those in leadership positions to facilitate the development of an organizational structure that is adaptable and conducive to fostering connections and engagement among individuals with diverse perspectives and expertise, all of whom are driven by a common purpose and committed to achieving a shared objective that benefits the larger community (Ketley, 2020).

The reflection of Christian leaders appears to be just one element of a vast body of literature in the secular domain, with a slight adaptation to the spiritual sphere (Åkerlund, 2016; Niemandt, 2019). His leadership abilities and aptitudes assist in identifying the actions or movements of God's mission within a specific context, which the church can then address in a manner that aligns with its own cultural identity (Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006:14; Mancini, 2008:7; Young Ju, 2012, DeVries, 2016; Tamunomiebi, 2018). Every religious institution is situated within a specific cultural context, which imbues its activities with distinctive characteristics. Nevertheless, the church context must be aligned with Scripture to preclude the possibility of syncretism. For leaders to effectively exercise authority, they and the church they oversee must be guided by the teachings of the Bible and other scriptural texts (Hall & Janman, 2010: XV). As noticed above, the figure of Jesus continues to serve as the primary source of inspiration for leaders within the Christian church, providing guidance and motivation through the influence of the Holy Spirit.

To address the issue of "missional leadership," some authors have acknowledged that missional leadership can be both secular and Christian. It is incongruous with the modern world of hyper complexity, such as that described by the acronym VUCA, because it is capable of managing change and addressing every complex environment (Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006; Karen West, 2007; Niemandt, 2012a:1-2; Rob Elkington et al., 2015; Niemandt, 2019 and Kornelsen, 2019:27-41). Consequently, missional leadership represents a pivotal subject within the field of missiology in the 21st century, as it offers insights into the fundamental characteristics of the church, its core activities, and how authority is structured within a specific context (Niemandt, 2012a:1-2; Guder, 2015: 116; 2016:36-37). According to the missional paradigm, the church serves as a hermeneutic space for listening to and discerning God's love (Mpinga, 2014:184;

Niemandt, 2016a:91; Craig S. Keener, 2016: 129-130). Adebayo posits that missional and contextual hermeneutics facilitate evangelizing in immediate contexts that align with God's global agenda (Adebayo, 2015:85-87). The neighbourhood constitutes a crucial aspect of the rationale behind the church's existence. The ability of Christianity to expand and integrate into communities was contingent upon its capacity to address the issue of contexts in an appropriate manner (Acts 2:47).

The significance of missional leadership can be seen in its capacity to facilitate a transformation of individuals and institutions through the establishment of meaningful relationships, thereby enabling them to engage in God's mission (Hesselgrave & Stetzer, 2010:24; McNeal, 2009, 2011: xiv; Seung, 2019). Lygunda li-M (2010:7) describes missional leadership skills as the basic competencies needed to communicate the restoration message, advance holistic ministries, plant and oversee missional churches, and develop new leaders driven by a clear sense of purpose and mobilize others.

The concepts of missional leadership and the missional church are inextricably linked. They can be considered two sides of the same coin. The missional church provides the context for missional leadership. For missional paradigms to be effective, adopt a missional spirituality rather than a missionary one (Niemandt 2016a). Missional spirituality can be defined as a holistic approach to spirituality that is integrated into one's way of life. It is a relational attitude cultivated through transformative spirituality and missional leadership (Doornenbal, 2012:212).

In contrast, missionary spirituality is a form of spirituality that emphasizes the importance of crossing cultural and geographical boundaries to disseminate the teachings of the Gospel to those who are not yet familiar with it. (Niemandt, 2016:86).

Indeed, missionaries rely on this spirituality to overcome cultural challenges, traumatic events, and life-threatening situations. The experience of trauma served to deepen their comprehension of the mission, prompting a spiritual transformation that encompassed a shift in their way of life, attitudes, and conduct. In missional paradigms, spirituality facilitates transformation and fosters relationships within the church.

### **1.2.3.3 African Initiated Church**

The growth and development of the African Initiated Churches have been described in various ways due to their significance. Most researchers define it as follows: “all churches founded by Africans, in Africa and without direct links to ‘Missionary’ ‘godfathers” (Pobee & Ositelu, 1998:55; Hollenweger, 1997; Hyatt, 2002:205 & Öhlmann *et al.*, 2016). Nevertheless, some

scholars maintain that the AICs should be regarded as the third wave of African Initiated Christianity, representing African Pentecostal-Charismatic churches. They are closely associated with the global Pentecostal movement. Nevertheless, they are regarded as an Indigenous religious movement in their own right (Bartos, 2015; Lindhardt, 2015:3 McCloud, 2015:6; Gichimu, 2016; Bongmba, 2016:256-57; Swart, 2020: 90). The initial wave manifested as a series of mission churches. The main objective of these churches was to achieve autonomy. The second generation of African-initiated churches has emerged primarily since the early twentieth century and is distinguished by indigenization and hybridization (Bartos, 2015:22-35; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020:5-7).

The attraction of the AICs' churches can be attributed to implementing dynamic and "exuberant" worship services guided by the principles of Pentecostal/charismatic preaching. These services prioritize the expression of emotions and the facilitation of individual spiritual experiences, which collectively contribute to their distinctive role (Anderson, 2001: 48). An additional factor contributing to the attraction of the AICs is their espousal of a prosperity gospel, which posits that "God wants believers to prosper physically, materially and spiritually" (Wariboko, 2012: 35-37; Ntozakhe, 2015: 140; Togarasei, 2016: 1006; Mashau, & Kgatle, 2019; Sanou, 2021:22).

Additionally, AICs have developed the capacity to adapt African culture, values, and religion in a manner that aligns with the existential and spiritual needs of their followers while simultaneously maintaining a sense of cultural authenticity. Conversely, the potential for syncretism increases when the focus shifts from the author's context to the follower's needs. This is because the recipient culture and worldview elements may gain greater influence than the word of God. Syncretism occurs when the elements of the culture exert dominance and control over the divine domain. These African elements and motivations play a significant role in the theology and praxis of AICs (Anderson, 2003:181). They place particular emphasis on the human problems and environmental factors that have contributed to the emergence of these issues. The AICs are commendable in addressing the African context and worldview (Oosthuizen, 1988; Freeman, 2012b:20; Masondo, 2013; Masiwa Ragies Gunda, 2014:145-151; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2015; Öhlmann *et al.* 2018:9).

In light of the above considerations, the study defines an AIC as a church that acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord and which has separated from a mission church or an existing African independent church or has been founded as an independent entity under an African initiative and leadership (Gichimu, 2016: 810). Furthermore, regardless of its geographical location (in

Africa or elsewhere), an AIC is a Spirit-led church where African worldviews and the existential questions of its members are at the centre of interpretation.

In the DRC, the absence of a census precludes the possibility of accurately determining the number of AICs. As stated by Fatimata Burki, the number of AICs was estimated to be 12,400 in 2015, with approximately 6,500 of them operating in the capital city of Kinshasa. In 2023, the number of these churches increased to 20, 850 and almost 100,000 servants. The small commune of Ngaba, with 180,650 inhabitants has 223 churches (Eglise du réveil du Congo, 2023; Kassay Ngur-Ikone, 2024: 180-181; Milamba Ibalayam, 2024:187). The most recent studies indicate that between 40 and 60 per cent of Christians in Africa are affiliated with these indigenous churches. In descending order, the countries with the highest number of members are South Africa, the DRC, and Nigeria. The DRC is among the top five countries in membership, representing 8% of the total (Ositelu, 2002; Pew Research Center, 2011; Hotez, 2014).

#### **1.2.3.4 Mission and urban mission**

The term “mission” can be used both in organizational and church contexts. In organizational discourse, the mission statement communicates the organizational *raison d’être*. The concept of mission has its roots in the idea of “the sending of specialized personnel to a particular geographical location to the task of the whole church involving all God’s people through participation in the fulfilment of God’s purposes throughout the world” (Bosch, 1991:227; Van Aarde, 2016:285). This shift in understanding and focus was a central tenet of David Bosch and Lesslie Newbigin's theological discourse, which centred on the concept of *Missio Dei*.<sup>1</sup> Since the 1950s, there has been a notable shift in perspective on this subject (Keller, 2012:253-254).

This shift in thinking leads to the missional concept, which describes the church as a cross-cultural missionary who adopts a missionary stance about their community, engages with the culture (in the world) without being absorbed by the culture, and becomes intentionally indigenous. Thus, the church must shift its thinking in mission and concentrate on the urban areas because the world's population is migrating to concentrate in urban agglomerations, making the world an urban society (Gonsalves, 2005).

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<sup>11</sup> The concept of *missio Dei*, which is currently understood to refer to the mission of God, can be traced back to a paper delivered by Barth at the Brandenburg Mission Conference in 1932. In this paper, Barth asserted that mission is not the Church’s primary responsibility but rather a divine imperative. This perspective gained increasing traction until it was ultimately embraced at the 1952 Willingen conference of the International Missionary Council (Wim Dreyer, 2016: 6).

The urban expansion that commenced in the twentieth century will undoubtedly persist in the twenty-first century, resulting in an increase in the proportion of the urban population between 61% and 67.2% by 2030-2050 (Svetlana, 2013:73; United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, 2019: 10). Considering these circumstances, the Church in Africa and the DRC in particular bears a significant responsibility to address the specific challenges and opportunities presented by urban mission. In light of the recent papal visit, it is imperative that church leaders, particularly those who lead the Renewal Church in Congo (RCC), which represents the AICs in the DRC, assume their apostolic role with greater responsibility.

Given the intertwined forces of urbanization, globalisation, and VUCA, a comprehensive assessment of urban mission strategies and methodologies is crucial for developing contextualized and sensitive churches. This is particularly important as the church strives to fulfil its divine mandate to engage with urbanized communities. Consequently, this is an age marked by constant and sometimes dramatic changes in how people understand themselves, society, the world, and ultimately, God. These developments present a significant challenge and have far-reaching implications for the mission of the urban church.

At present, three principal factors exert a significant influence on the mission. The initial factor is the significant expansion of the church in the southern and eastern regions, which occurred concurrently with a notable decline in the traditional Western churches. The second factor pertains to the exponential expansion of the global Pentecostal church since the 1980s. The final factor is derived from the phenomenon of globalisation and its associated phenomena, including urbanization and religious pluralism (Bosch, 1991:227; Padilla, 2001:6).

### **1.3 Problem statement**

This study is an analysis of the role that missional leadership plays in fostering church growth. The purpose is to evaluate the degree to which the leadership that facilitates the growth of African Initiated Churches (AICs) in the DRC) is missional.

In the contemporary era, effective leadership is a crucial factor in the growth and advancement of any organization, regardless of its religious or secular orientation. The prevailing view among authors is that the success of any organization or society is contingent upon the type of leadership it possesses (Gill, 2011:1).

However, given the multitude of leadership styles and types, the efficacy of leadership hinges on the ability to select and implement the most suitable approach in each organization and

context. While any leadership theory can be applied in any environment, provided the conditions are favourable, some types of leadership are inherently suited to specific contexts. One might posit that missional leadership is best suited for the development of the church because it provides all church members with the tools necessary to participate in God's mission in their daily lives.

The necessity of missional leadership is contingent upon the prevailing and prospective primary local and global contexts, namely globalisation and urbanization. Some studies have demonstrated that the global population is increasingly concentrated in urban areas, with a corresponding decline in rural populations (Ritchie & Roser, 2018). To fulfil its urban mission, the church must adapt and adjust its leadership to consider the realities of globalisation.

Since the 1980s, the expansion and growth of AICs in Africa have significantly impacted the global landscape of Christianity. As a result of migration, AICs have become firmly established in Europe, Asia, and America. This is evidence of a shift in the leadership influence or centre of gravity of world Christianity towards the South and the East (Jenkins, 2002:2; Musoni, 2019:2). Among the reasons for this shift, especially in postcolonial Africa, is the desire to assume an exclusively African leadership. This has been a significant factor, as several authors have noted (Anderson, 2001 & Öhlmann *et al.* 2020:4).

Notably, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is among the three countries where AICs are particularly prevalent, alongside Nigeria and Ethiopia. Regrettably, there has been a paucity of research conducted on these churches, which nevertheless occupy a prominent position within the context of world Christianity.

Consequently, this research will assist church leaders in the DRC and AICs, particularly in re-examining their leadership methods and strategies to enhance their missional orientation. A church or denomination shifts from a missionary to a missional approach by re-examining its objectives, activities, and efforts to engage the community in the mission of God. The process is initiated when a church or denomination recognizes the necessity to revisit its objectives, activities, and efforts to involve the community in *missio Dei*.

## **1.4 . Research questions and objectives**

### **1.4.1 Main research questions and sub-questions**

The research main question to be answered by this research study is: to what extent do the leaders of the African Initiated Churches in the DRC foster missional church growth?

The individual problems that will be investigated are:

- 1) What are the origin, developments, context and challenges of the AIC leadership in the DRC?
- 2) What is the scope and impact of urbanization, migration and globalization on AIC leadership?
- 3) What are the missional leadership guidelines from Pauline's letters to Titus and the Ephesians?
- 4) What are the empirical research findings on the role of missional leadership in the AIC?
- 5) How are the missional leadership guidelines applicable to the AICs' leadership in the DRC?

### **1.4.2. Main research objectives and sub-objectives**

The main aim of this study will be to determine the degree to what extent leaders of the African Initiated Churches in the DRC are missional in fostering the growth of the church.

To realize the main aim of this study, the following specific objectives will be:

1. To discuss the origin, developments, context and challenges of the AIC leadership in the DRC.
2. To discuss the scope and impact of urbanization, migration and globalization on AIC leadership.
3. To discuss the missional leadership guidelines from Pauline's letters to Titus and the Ephesians.
4. To present the empirical findings of the role of missional leadership in the AIC.
5. To propose and apply the missional leadership guidelines to the AICs' leadership in DRC.

## **1.5 Central Theoretical Statement**

To answer the main research question as formulated above, this research will contend that, in the local realities of Christianity in the DRC, as it is undergoing the ongoing influence of globalization, urbanization and migration, needs to shift from Christendom to a missional church to prevent a hypothetical church decline.

Over the past several decades, global Christianity has undergone a profound and far-reaching transformation. The centre of Christian leadership has shifted from the West to the South and East (Pew Research Center, 2011; 2017; Hackett *et al.*, 2011).

Furthermore, most of the global population migrates to urban areas, including large towns. Therefore, the mission paradigm must be reinvented to meet the needs of adaptability and contextualization. To achieve this, the context in which the mission paradigm is applied must be considered.

For several reasons, a well-defined missional leadership style is optimal for advancing the church. Firstly, it enables all church members to engage in God's mission in their daily lives. Secondly, it is well-positioned to navigate the complexities of the current and future global context, including the effects of globalisation and urbanization. Thirdly, the growth of the AICs in Africa and beyond underscores the need for African leaders to receive training in missional leadership, enabling them to contribute to the transformation of global Christianity. Some authors concur that the Centre of gravity of world Christianity has shifted to the South and East (Jenkins, 2002:2). Consequently, the findings of this research study will enable church leaders in the DRC and AICs to reassess their leadership methods and strategies to enhance their missional effectiveness. In conclusion, it can be stated that the factors above have resulted in a shift in the Centre of gravity of world Christianity towards the South and East.

### **1.6 The Thesis of this study**

As previously stated, the global Centre of Christianity has undergone a significant geographical shift, moving from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern Hemisphere. The expansion of the AICs in Sub-Saharan Africa represents the most prominent phenomenon of Christianity in modern Africa. This trend is expected to continue by 2050 (Zurlo & Johnson, 2016:160; Johnson *et al.*, 2016:1, 22-23; Zurlo *et al.*, 2020:14; 2021: 5-6; Chitando, 2004:119-120; Ositelu, 2002:3; Martinus, 1987:72).

The AICs are currently regarded as a significant expression of the Christian faith from an African perspective. By the conclusion of the 20th century, the AICs had proliferated throughout the entirety of the African continent, becoming the most populous Christian denomination (Kealotswe, 2014:228-229). As evidenced by a plethora of statistical research, this ongoing phenomenon has had a profound impact on the landscape of Christianity in Africa, particularly in South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Nigeria. The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is among the top five countries with an 8 per cent

membership (Ositelu, 2002:32; Pew Research Center, 2017; Statista, 2024; Hackett *et al.*, 2011).

Unfortunately, the actual causes of this emergence and expansion, along with their perceived attractiveness, are more often attributed to their adaptability to the African worldview and to address the existential problem accordingly than to the participation of the entire church membership in the proclamation of the gospel and discipleship (Gunda, 2014:145-151; Öhlmann *et al.* 2018:9; 2021:11-12). It is projected that by 2050, the global religious population will reach a state of near parity between Muslims and Christians. Furthermore, there is a possibility that by 2070, Islam will become the largest religion in the world. (Pew Research Center, 2015:7-11; International Centre for Muslim and non-Muslim Understanding, 2015:11; Hackett *et al.*, 2015:7-11).

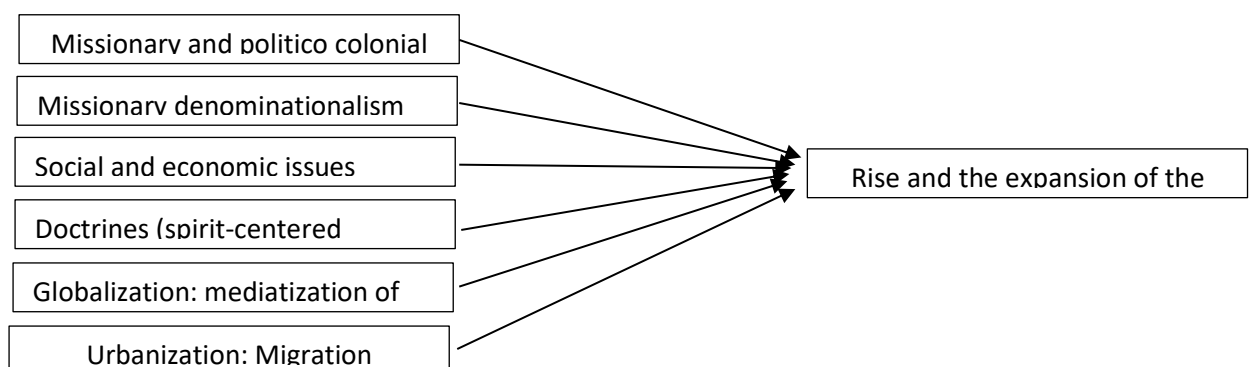
Therefore, it is incumbent upon Christian leaders, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the largest number of believers reside, to alter their approach to leading the church. Shifting towards missional leadership in urban contexts represents an appropriate and effective strategy for mobilizing the entire church to engage in disciple-making (Masuku, 2021:7).

Since the colonial era, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has consistently demonstrated a proclivity for the proliferation of Christianity in Africa (Ositelu, 2002:31; Kavus, 2021:2).

Considering the evidence above, the present research proposes the following thesis: It is recommended that the AICs' leadership modify their leadership styles and practices to prevent the decline of Christianity in Africa. Missional leadership must be implemented to facilitate the involvement of all church members in the *missio Dei*.

### 1.6.1 The Conceptual Framework diagram

**Figure 1- 1: Conceptual Framework**



**Source:** the author 2024

## **1.6.2 The explanation of the framework**

The diagram above graphically represents the relationship between the church's growth in DR Congo and the leadership attitude of the AICs. Consequently, the approach to be adopted in this study is delineated, while the biblical insights requisite for achieving its overarching objective are also elucidated.

The following section provides a comprehensive explanation of the concepts above. The emergence of the AICs can be attributed to two primary causative factors: colonial and post-colonial leadership. Most AICs can be understood as a form of protest against the attitudes of particular leaders. The growth of the AICs can be attributed to two factors: the styles of leadership employed and the strategies used to facilitate church growth. Most AIC leaders possess notable charisma or gifts, which contribute to the appeal of their respective churches and drive member attendance. Church members do not play an active role in the development of the church community.

Two additional factors contributing to the growth of AICs are church growth strategies, the influence of globalisation (mediatization), the doctrine (hermeneutic) that effectively addresses African worldview and existential issues, and the social, political, and economic issues related to migration to urban areas. A significant number of AICs rely on the transfer of members from other local churches, the implementation of faith-branding and marketing strategies, and biological growth to facilitate the expansion of their churches.

As evidenced by the statistical data, the methods that have precipitated the accelerated growth of AICs will ultimately become obsolete. Following a period of stagnation, the number of Christians is expected to decline, with growth occurring in other religious groups.

To overcome this situation, it is necessary to adopt a missional leadership approach that facilitates the desired outcome. By emphasizing discipleship of conversion and biological growth, churches can optimize the potential of all members and ensure their continued development over the coming years ( Elkington *et al.*, 2015:3; Elkington & Booysen, 2015:79-80; Choco, 2018: 19; Tamunomiebi *et al.*, 2018:49; Schulze & Pinkow, 2020:3-4).

## **1.6.3 Research design, process, and work guidelines**

### **1.6.3.1 Research design**

This survey is qualitative. To gain insight into the nature of leadership that drives the growth of AICs in DR Congo, the study has examined a diverse array of AICs' objectives and goals

concerning the church organization. This was achieved through observation and standard survey tools, including questionnaires and interviews. Qualitative research requires the researcher to immerse himself in a group to make observations. Such descriptions are grounded in the people's life-worlds to be studied and produce insider insights and perspectives of the group and its practices (Mason, 2002: 9; Donkoh & Mensah, 2023:6).

In all, to achieve the goals and objectives of this qualitative work, the methods to be used include AICs documentation analysis, direct observation, questionnaires, and interviews, a sort of triangulation.

### **1.6.3.2 Research process**

One of the primary objectives of a researcher is to design a study that exhibits robust internal and external validity and reliability. Through its various data collection and triangulation techniques, the qualitative method is an appropriate tool for enhancing a study's validity, strength, and interpretative potential, reducing investigator biases, and providing multiple perspectives (Thurmond, 2001:253-254). According to Donkoh and Mensah (2023:6-7The), triangulation enhances a study's generalizability while minimizing the qualitative limitations associated with sampling. The crucial aspect of triangulation is not merely the juxtaposition of disparate data types but the endeavour to interrelate them to mitigate the potential biases identified in each. Research triangulation aims to validate a study's results (Noble & Heale, 2019; Bans-Akutey & Tiimub, 2021:1-2). It is common practice for research methods to present the research enterprise as a linear progression, thereby ensuring the legitimacy and value of the resulting data. To gain a deeper understanding of the AICs, it was necessary to conduct a series of interviews, complete questionnaires, and undertake direct observation. This approach was employed to shed light on the underlying causes of their formation and gain insight into the leadership strategies that have been instrumental in guiding the church's growth and expansion. The description above of the AICs necessitated a multifaceted approach, encompassing interviews, questionnaires, and direct observation, to elucidate the underlying causes of their genesis and ascertain the prevailing leadership strategies employed.

A comprehensive approach involving a sequence of interviews, questionnaires, and direct observations was employed to enhance the understanding of the AICs. This approach was employed to elucidate the underlying causes of their formation and gain insight into the leadership strategies that have been instrumental in guiding the church's growth and expansion. As previously stated, a multifaceted approach was necessary to elucidate the

underlying causes of the AICs' genesis and ascertain the prevailing leadership strategies. This approach included interviews, questionnaires, and direct observation.

The descriptive method is typically employed to present a situation and explain observed phenomena (Elliston, 2011: 68-69). The study enabled a description and analysis of the AICs' leadership, mission, and strategies for the church's growth in urban areas.

The methods used to analyse the data were based on the recommendations of Creswell (2003: 190): (1) prepare the data for analysis; (2) perform various analyses; (3) go further and further in understanding the data; (4) make an interpretation of the more significant meaning of the data and (5) appropriate conclusions will be drawn.

### **1.6.3.3 Work guidelines**

In light of the discussion above, the following scope was employed to achieve the various objectives of this thesis.

#### **1.6.3.3.1 Missional leadership**

The following section will elucidate three fundamental concepts related to the missional paradigm. The initial concept to be considered is 'missional,' an antonymous adjective for 'missionary.' The core concept of missionary work has remained consistent throughout history, comprising the movement of qualified individuals from Christianized regions in the north and west to pagan regions in the south to convert the latter to Christianity. This resulted in the establishment of mission agencies as specialized offices addressing evangelism-related matters. The second connotation is that missional is a mindset and the essence of the church and connects the concept to the *missio Dei*. In essence, being missional entails organizing the church following the mission of God, as opposed to the church's mission. The final interpretation of the missional paradigm entails the involvement of church members. The role of the church leadership is to facilitate the participation of the entire church in the *missio Dei*.

The issue of leadership represents a fundamental challenge for the development of all organizations. Several countries in sub-Saharan Africa continue to exhibit characteristics of colonial leadership even after decades of independence. The legacy of colonial leadership is evident in numerous domains, including the governance of African churches. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, numerous countries continue to exhibit the consequences of colonialism, including psychological trauma, collective shame, and resentment. Additionally, the legacy of colonialism has contributed to the persistence of ideological conflict, racism, and genocide (The Lutheran World Federation, 2004:50)

### **1.6.3.3.2 The church in the urban**

The optimal methodology for developing or selecting strategies that facilitate the expansion of the church is first to gain an understanding of her description. All methodologies and approaches to church development are derived from her related description. Some argue that the church should be managed as any secular organization and apply common marketing strategies. In contrast, some view the church as a living entity rather than a mere organization. Consequently, the principles selected for the church's growth should be carefully considered.

The contemporary ecclesiastical environment is undergoing globalisation, with migrations, urbanization, and the media forming the core elements of this phenomenon. Given the potential benefits that could be derived from aligning with these realities, it would be prudent for any church to consider integrating an urban mission as a core component of its operations.

The same can be said of the mission of the Church. It would be prudent for the church to consider the specific characteristics of various urban and rural communities. The global urban population, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, has a strong proclivity towards urban living. Given the significance and appeal of urban areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is imperative for the church, particularly the AICs, to pay closer attention to the evolving urban landscape. It is, therefore, evident that the factors mentioned above should be considered when analyzing the impact of urbanization on the church in the DR Congo, particularly on the AICs.

### **1.6.3.3.3 Causative factors of the rise and rapid growth of the AICs**

The advent and swift proliferation of AICs across the globe have materialized, as numerous scholars posited decades ago. The phenomenon of the AICs has been described as the most significant development in Christianity during the twentieth century. Consequently, it was paramount for the study to address this issue to ascertain the underlying causes of the growth and proliferation of these churches. While the motivations may differ between the colonial and modern AICs, the attitudes of leadership have played an indispensable role in both the emergence and expansion of these institutions. All other factors, including political and policy considerations, economic, social, religious, and so forth, are subservient and contingent upon the prevailing leadership of the era in question. This is why the most evident consequence of this phenomenon is the relocation of the Centre of Christianity and its leadership to the global South. This leads to the conclusion that the global South is the future of Christianity.

The issue of church growth represents a central concern of this study. Scholars and leaders in the field of theology have conducted extensive research on the most effective methods for developing the church on a global scale. Several models and principles on church growth have been devised, either as a continuation or a correction of existing ones.

Conversely, suppose the primary objective of church leaders is to expand the church. In that case, this justifies utilizing any principles deemed appropriate given the nature of the church. By disclosing these findings, the study aimed to alert the church in the DRC to the potential risks associated with conformity and to encourage it to adopt a more authentic approach to its development and expansion. Moreover, various studies have demonstrated that AICs constitute a significant element of global Christianity. How African church leaders navigate their growth will be pivotal in shaping the future statistical profile of global Christianity compared to other religious traditions, particularly Islam.

The study employed questionnaires and interviews to investigate the selected church development strategies. The objective was to ascertain whether the leadership was facilitating the involvement of the entire church community in God's mission and church growth. This illustrates the concept of being more missional than missionary.

It has been observed that African and Congolese churches' leadership styles and practices result in more transferred members than converted members. Notwithstanding their apparent satisfaction with the actual statistics, African and Congolese church leaders would be well advised to heed the challenging threats to church growth. Mobilizing all church members as members of the body to self-develop and contribute to the development of others for communal discipleship would be a prudent course of action.

#### **1.6.3.3.4 Descriptions of the work**

To ensure the most significant practical utility, the study drew upon existing literature to describe the features of the AICs and address all of the issues mentioned above. In examining issues about the Democratic Republic of Congo, the study drew upon findings from investigations conducted through a combination of methods, including interviews, direct observations, and the analysis of other rare written documents.

#### **1.6.3.3.5 Missional leadership is the appropriate solution to sustain the church's growth**

Ultimately, the present thesis demonstrates that, despite the numerous challenges confronting the church's future growth in Sub-Saharan Africa and globally, the missional paradigm and

the missional leadership style are well-suited to facilitate the continued expansion of the church. All studies were conducted from a leadership and missiological perspective. This thesis examines the expansion of Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

#### **1.6.4 Methodology**

The research aims to present findings in a manner that is as accurate and reliable as possible to provide insights that can be utilized for various purposes. The methodology employed in a study is a determining factor in the quality of the research. The methods and techniques employed in any scientific or academic endeavour guarantee the integrity and reliability of the resulting outcomes by precluding the possibility of erroneous conclusions (Elliston, 2011: 55, 67, 76-77). It includes the methodological framework encompassing the forms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation researchers propose to address the identified problem (Creswell, 2014:16-17; Lygunda, 2017:60).

This study employs qualitative research methods to gain insight into how African-descended churches in the DRC utilize missional leadership as a strategy and style to facilitate growth in an urban context (Creswell, 2014:32).

##### **1.6.4.1 Methods of data generation, comparison, and analysis**

The data were generated, observed, and collected via questionnaires and oral interviews conducted in French. The responses were documented, thus necessitating the taking of field notes in a notebook. Once the interview is concluded, the responses must be verbally presented to the respondent to confirm that the written account accurately reflects their original statements.

The bracketing principle was employed to prevent the pre-understanding of information from influencing the data. This entails that the researcher abstains from expressing or implying ideas, presumptions, and personal understanding when listening to, interacting with, and reflecting on informants' stories (Creswell, 2003: 11-13). This is done to prevent the description of the phenomenon under study from being influenced.

The participants were selected from among church leaders, presumed to be the most suitable individuals to disseminate the anticipated and official information. Their involvement depended on their willingness, accessibility, and availability (Creswell & Clark, 2011). To ensure the integrity of the process, only those who have served as team leaders for a minimum

of five years were invited to participate in the interviews. The questionnaires were administered to members of related churches for data triangulation.

In addition, the research drew upon both primary and secondary sources. The former comprised documents from related churches, while the latter encompassed any literature that addressed the issue under study.

To analyze the data, the researcher employed a coding system to organize and present the respondents' responses and identify emerging trends. The results will be discussed to draw appropriate conclusions regarding the findings in the existing literature.

Throughout this work, the researcher has complied with ethical procedures according to North-West University requirements. For example, a letter stating the purpose and procedures of the study will be provided to participants to obtain consent.

#### **1.6.4.2 The Direct observation**

This direct observation method involves observing the object or the setting where the phenomena occur. The direct observation method systematically records observable phenomena or behaviour in a natural setting. The core issue in observation is the need to study and understand people within their natural environment (Baker, 2006:172-74; Kumar, 2011:2). Observation is a helpful tool for qualitative study. It helps get relevant information about the research. It provides profound knowledge of the object in particular cases from which general conclusions can be made (Mwaka, 2016: 200; Kalemba, 2015: 8).

The objective of observation is to gather open-ended, firsthand information by observing people and places at the research site. There are three principal types of observation: participant observation, nonparticipant observation, and changing observation. The researcher employed the method of nonparticipant observation (Creswell, 2012: 214). In the method of nonparticipant observation, the observer visits a site and records notes without becoming involved in the participants' activities.

##### **1.6.4.2.1 The Reasons to use this method**

The primary rationale for employing observation is its complementarity with the qualitative method. Observation continues to represent a significant element within qualitative or empirical research (Dźwigoł & Bartosz, 2020: 142). This research project examines the growth of AICs in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Consequently, direct observation has

been an indispensable method for data collection. This approach enabled the researcher to obtain more immediate information about the subject of their investigation.

In the beginning, the survey research and direct observation facilitated the data collection. The additional readings were incorporated later in the research process.

### **1.6.5 The Research instruments: Interview**

Qualitative research is primarily conducted through interviews, which involve researchers posing general questions to one or more participants and recording their responses (Creswell, 2014: 25). The interview is a data collection method like a questionnaire. It involves a face-to-face phase during which information is gathered on a specific topic, such as the current situation in the community. It is of the utmost importance for the researcher to maintain an objective and impartial attitude, avoid any indications of superiority or disapproval, and foster a collaborative and constructive approach. The foundation of this technique is its interactive nature, whereby a researcher poses a series of questions to respondents in a personal, direct manner (Smith, 2008: 161; Mwaka, 2016: 195, 205; Kalemba, 2015: 12; Mancosa, 2016: 89).

There are three principal categories of interviews: structured, unstructured, and semi-structured. In this study, the researcher employed a semi-structured interview approach due to its flexibility, which enabled the researcher to adapt the questionnaire's content during the interview.

The primary sources for this work were interviews and questionnaires, which provided the researcher with first-hand data.

A questionnaire is a document utilized in the design of a survey, which is completed and returned by the study participants to the researcher (Creswell, 2012: 382). Questionnaires are a versatile tool with many applications, most notably in social science, where they are employed to ascertain a given population's prevailing attitudes and opinions.

The study employed two distinct participant groups: the leadership team and the general church membership. The objective of the interview was to gain insight from the leadership team members. At the same time, the questionnaire was administered to the ordinary church members.

The responses provided by the leadership team facilitated the identification of the church's organizational structure and the mission and objectives that serve to sustain its activities. This facilitated an understanding of the leadership style applied to the selected church. The

responses of the church members proved invaluable in understanding their concrete participation in the mission of God and, after several years in the church, how they can evaluate their spiritual development.

## **1.6.6 The Population and sampling method**

### **1.6.6.1 Population**

The study's target population was derived from the AICs in Kinshasa and Lubumbashi/DRC. The population to be interviewed in each selected church was composed of leaders of the respective religions, and a few were selected randomly. The investigation encompassed aspects of the church's mission and objectives, as well as its leadership structure. To achieve this objective, each leader must have an equal and independent chance of being included, given that they represent the most important individuals within this context.

### **1.6.6.2 Sampling method**

#### **1.6.6.2.1 Sample inclusion criteria**

Despite the dispersed nature of the AICs throughout the Democratic Republic of Congo, the study concentrated on Kinshasa and Lubumbashi, the two most populous cities in the country, where the AICs have a discernible presence. Moreover, due to the prevailing insecurity in the country, it was inadvisable to proceed eastward.

In addition, four main churches were selected for study: La Louange (LL), ACK, La Communauté Évangélique La Presence de Dieu (CEPD), Communauté Évangélique Peniel Victoire (CEPV), Centre Évangélique La Résurrection (CER), and Centre Évangélique Salem (CES), as well as Église Prince de Paix (EIPP). As with La Louange, these churches have a nationwide presence. The churches mentioned above have been established in numerous locations throughout the country.

#### **1.6.6.2.2 Sample exclusion criteria**

The present study excludes all churches whose leadership is derived from a non-African source. This also applies to Protestant and classical Pentecostal denominations connected to missionary agencies. In this context, it is crucial to examine the role of missionary agencies in fostering connections between Protestant and classical Pentecostal denominations.

### **1.6.6.2.3 Suggested sample size**

To achieve the set objective, Mwaka (2016: 198) proposes limiting the sample size to only "outstanding and influential personalities" as respondents "to obtain group-representative answers" when the group is large. The process of sampling in qualitative research is contingent upon some factors, including the specific purpose of the research, the nature of the research problem, the primary data collection strategy employed, and the availability of information-rich cases. The insights generated from the qualitative inquiry are more dependent on the information richness of the cases and the analytical abilities of the researcher than on the sample size (Mancosa, 2016: 92–93).

The points mentioned above illustrate that sample size is not the sole determining factor in generating insights derived from qualitative inquiry. Instead, the information richness of the cases and the researcher's analytical abilities play a more significant role.

## **1.7 Ethical considerations**

The study was conducted under the NWU Code of Ethics, and an ethical formality will be sought. The respondents will be selected from the targeted AICs according to their willingness to participate in the study. Respondents were given an informed consent document before being deemed eligible for the interview phase.

Given the nature of the data to be collected, the potential risks associated with this study are minimal and highly unlikely. The research was limited to leadership and church development data, as previously documented in the literature. All personal and confidential information that could potentially cause harm was strictly prohibited. The primary concern was the potential for participants to criticize the leadership and its style. Such overt expressions of discontent may lead to feelings of discomfort among leaders, a sense of powerlessness, and dysfunction within the church.

The study will employ effective communication strategies to minimize this risk, including disseminating informed consent and incorporating interview and survey response meetings.

Concerning data collection, the interviews will be conducted primarily in French. The interviews with the heads of the religions, and on occasion with their assistants or collaborators who are also leaders, lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. The interview did not pose any sensitive questions concerning the various aspects surveyed.

## 1.8 Schematic presentation of research procedures

Timelines	Research Questions	Aims and Objectives	Research Methods
30-Jan-30 Mar 2024	What are the origin, developments, context and challenges of the AIC leadership in the DRC?	To discuss the origin, developments, context and challenges of the AIC leadership in the DRC.	By literary analysis of relevant scholarly material
30 May-30 June 2024	What are the scope and impact of urbanization, migration and globalization on AIC leadership?	To analyze the scope and impact of urbanization, migration and globalization on AIC leadership.	By interacting with missiological and leadership literature.
30 June-30 July 2024	What are the missional leadership guidelines from Pauline's letters to Titus and the Ephesians?	To uncover missional leadership guidelines from Pauline's letters to Titus and the Ephesians.	By biblical analysis of the relevant biblical texts
30 July 30 August 2024	What are the empirical research findings on the role of missional leadership in the AIC?	To present the empirical research findings of the role of missional leadership in the AIC.	By interacting with missiological and leadership literature.
30- November 2024	How are the missional leadership guidelines applicable to the AICs' leadership in the DRC?	To apply missional leadership guidelines proposals to the AICs' leadership in the DRC.	By interviewing the selected AICs team leaders and church members

**Table 1- 1: Research schematic presentation**

**Source:** The study

## 1.9 Provisional classification of chapters

### Chapter 1. The Introduction

This chapter is about the background, the problem statement, the research purpose and questions, the aims and objectives, the methodology and the clarification of the concepts.

### Chapter 2. The origin, development and challenges of the AIC leadership in the DRC

The second chapter addresses the issues about the origin, the development and the challenges the AIC leadership is facing when dealing with the growth of the church in the DRC.

### Chapter 3. The scope and impact of urbanization, migration and globalization on AIC leadership

The third chapter addresses the issues of urbanization, migration and globalization concerning their influence on the development of the AIC in the DRC, the world and Africa.

**Chapter 4.** The missional leadership guidelines from Pauline's letters to Titus and Ephesians.

Chapter four is an overview of leadership and missional leadership concepts. It focuses on the biblical foundation, principles, strategies and tactics of the missional leadership on one side, and the other, it sheds light on some key issues of church leadership and secular leadership.

**Chapter 5.** Research mythology: Presentation of the empirical findings of the role of the AIC missional leadership.

Chapter five is a presentation of the research findings about the role of AIC missional leadership in the DRC.

**Chapter 6.** Discussion and recommendations: the missional leadership guidelines proposals to the AICs' leadership in the DRC.

The sixth chapter provides the missional leadership guidelines proposals to the AICs' leadership in the DRC. After discussing the findings, some recommendations and guidelines are given to the AICs leaders.

**Chapter 7.** The conclusion.

Chapter seven gives the general conclusion of the research and the guidelines for future research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE ORIGIN, DEVELOPMENTS, AND CHALLENGES OF THE AICs LEADERSHIP IN THE DRC

#### 2.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter established, among others, the theme, objectives, central theoretical argument, methodology and structure of this research. By addressing the first research question, the objective of this chapter (Chapter 2) is to describe the origin and development of the AICs church through a literary analysis of relevant academic material. The description intends to discern points that may constitute challenges for growing the church in the DRC.

The history of Christianity in Africa is incomplete without reference to a vibrant and widespread phenomenon: African Initiated Christianity. Unlike the pre-colonial and colonial periods, from the 1960s to the 1990s, the term African Independent Churches became quite popular. Its appeal can be found in the fact that, in many instances, African church leaders broke away from the churches founded by the missionaries to establish their churches (Chitando, 2016:283-85).

To date, the African Initiated Churches (AICs), whatever their connotation, represent the most energetic and prolific expression of Christianity in Africa during the twentieth century. They have been the fastest-growing churches on the continent and are viewed as part and parcel of the shift of the gravity centre of Christianity from the West to the global South (Daneel, 1987:9; Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006:38-39; Mwaura, 2008:161-62).

The rise of the AIC and its rapid expansion in Africa in general, and in the DRC in particular, have been made possible by the contribution of various factors. Many of these factors are still contributing to its development. Nonetheless, the existence and the rapid growth of the AICs worldwide present numerous challenges that need to be overcome.

#### 2.1.1. Definition of the AIC

African Initiated Churches (AICs) is a recent term that is defined and described as “all churches founded by Africans, in Africa, and primarily for Africans, without direct links to Missionary godfathers” (Pobee & Ositelu, 1998:55; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020:4; 2021:11-12). This definition captures three essential features, namely that the AICs are of African origin, were founded by Africans, and, although some of them are not exclusive and admit White members, are largely

adapted to the needs, life-view, and lifestyle of Black people (Daneel, 1987:30-32). Furthermore, as founded by Africans, they did not directly emerge from the European and North American mission initiatives of the 19th and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The AICs also design diverse expressions of the African Christian faith (Bello, 2013:43; Kealotswe, 2014:227). It signals that these churches are initiated by Africans and independent in their origin and organization, juridical independent from their mother churches (Pobee, 2002:12; Daneel, 1987:17-18; Asonzeh Ukah, 2007:8).

Nonetheless, the spread of the AICs has been so phenomenal that these African Churches migrated to Europe and North America, where they are attractive to a large segment of the African diaspora. According to the Organization of African Instituted Churches (OAIC):

An AIC is a church that acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord, and which has separated by seceding from a mission church or an existing African independent church, or has been founded as an independent entity under African initiative and leadership” (Gichimu, 2016:810). To emphasize this overarching common characteristic of being initiated in Africa by Africans, we deliberately use the term African Initiated Churches instead of other commonly used interpretations of the "I" in the acronym AIC, such as Independent, Indigenous, and International (Öhlmann, 2021:11).

### **2.1.2. The importance of studying the African-Initiated Churches**

Many reasons have motivated scholars to be interested in the development of the AICs since 1948. The first reason is missiological since missiology is concerned with the analysis of the factors that have contributed to the origin and growth of Independent Churches. It shows what mistakes were committed by historical missioning churches in the past and provides valuable insights into the type of reactions that could be expected to a particular policy or circumstance. Such an analysis moreover promotes the understanding of the African's interpretation of Scripture and the theological emphasis he places in terms of his existential situation and experience (Mwambazambi, 2011:5, 7; Masoga & A. Nicolaides, 2021:23). Game and Afta affirm that it is their pragmatic approach to existential questions of life, their emphasis on visionary reinterpretations of the Bible and the backing of charismatic figures that help the AICs quickly acquire local appeal, popular acclamation and drew clientele largely from the existing mission churches (Game & Afta, 2005:317). Indeed, the lack and inability of European Christianity to address most of the existential realities of Africans and the stigmatization of African Traditional Religion mainly contributed to the emergence and the proliferation of

African Independent Churches in the 19th century in Africa (Olowola, 1984:21; Henry, 2016:4; Adedibu, 2018:2).

Secondly, studying the AICs helps to catch the factors that contributed to the rapid growth both in the number of these churches and in their membership since the beginning of the century (Daneel, 1987:17-18). This missiological analysis helps to discover how the Christian message has been contextualized within a particular culture, how the preaching has been intelligible, and how Bible translation adapted. So, studying the AICs offers a unique opportunity for observing how the Africans, once removed from the immediate influence of Western-oriented missionaries, deal with their traditional religions and the existential situation and worldview of the Africans without syncretism. This is a dynamic process with extreme danger of syncretistic distortion while the essential features of the gospel are contextualized. This allows discovering the way Christian communication is adapted and rendered intelligible without forfeiting crucial scriptural truths (Daneel, 1987:24-25).

The last reason relates to leadership. In effect, the shift of leadership from the global North to the global South has been observed for many decades. The African Independent Churches constitute the principal areas and field where this leadership is evolving. It is natural to make these leaders accountable for the way they address one-third of worldwide church members. The shift of leadership generates various implications in the domain of mission perception and application (Brown, 2015:57-71).

### **2.1.3. Classification of the AICs**

The explosion of African Christianity and the proliferation of churches and denominations on the continent are noticeable. African Christianity represents one of the most vital segments of present-day Christianity, and Africa probably houses a larger variety of manifestations of Christianity than any other continent. About one-third of Africa's Christians can be estimated to be members of African Initiated Churches (Kollman, 2010:4; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2021:11).

Today attempts to classify African Christianity for assessing the AICs are not an easy enterprise for various reasons. The first is that there are thousands of African Initiated Churches, and though each one has its characteristics, many of them share traditions with Christians from other parts of the Christian world, and these can also be used in classifying them. Furthermore, the changing realities in African Christianity, including its dramatic growth and the rise of Pentecostal-charismatic Christianities, disrupt previous classificatory approaches. Pauw contends:

The impact of Pentecostalism and the Charismatic movement on the one hand, and the growing number of Independent Church leaders who avail themselves of study courses in Theology and Bible knowledge on the other, are factors which have come into play more recently and are having a further effect on the direction in which AICs are moving and developing (Pauw, 1995:7).

Thus, typifying and classifying the AICs become complex because each country has its particular history, circumstances, and factors that surround the activities and policies of incumbent missions. A typology developed in one country cannot be applicable at all in another country. So, generalizing the classification of the AICs over the area of Africa is a danger and can be caricatured due to the dynamism of this movement (Pauw, 1993:142-147; 1995:7; Kollman, 2010:5-6).

The lack of basic registers of appreciation makes the classification of the AICs more difficult. African Initiated Churches are complex and heterogeneous denominational churches, probably more than 10,000 churches of different expressions, whose primary commonality is their formation in colonial and postcolonial Africa of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5). There is no an idiosyncratic of African initiated church.

#### **2.1.3.1. Sundkler's classification**

To simplify the process, scholars adopted two approaches for classifying the AICs: the Sundkler's and the waving approaches. According to Sundkler, there are two main groups of the AICs. The former is labelled Ethiopian churches and appeared by the 1880s for nationalism motivations. The latter group encompasses the Zionist, Aladura, and messianic churches. They appeared by the 1900s with spiritual motivation (Sundkler, 1961; Grenstedt, 2000:24; Ranger, 2007; Kollman, 2010:4-8; Masondo, 2014:4; Gichimu, 2016; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5-8; 2021:11).

#### **2.1.3.2. Classification by wave**

Waving based on periodical emerging is another way researchers have used to classify the churches in Africa. These are the three waves or generations that produced different subcategories of African Initiated Churches (Adogame & Spickard, 2010:5-6; Gichimu, 2016; Padwick & Lubaale, 2011).

#### **2.1.3.2.1. Pre-colonial**

During the pre-colonial period and without any contradiction, Kimpa Vita Dona Beatriz remained the main African AICs leader, and her Antonian movement is the Congolese prophet-initiated and the oldest African independent movement derived from Christianity. It was one of the first instances of African appropriation of the Christian message and the Bible, combining political and religious aims into what would become a long ethno-messianic history (Fretheim, 2016:93; Mokoko Gampiot, 2017:8; 2021:1).

Without having wielded any official power, Kimpa Vita is considered a historic forerunner of African messianism and millenarianism by the establishment of an African-Catholic indigenous version of Christianity. She became an important prototype of religious leaders who created a new synthesis by appropriating Christian symbols and messages to their traditional religions. Today, various movements such as Bundu dia Kongo recognize their appurtenance to Kimpa Vita ideology (Moon, D. 2021:2; Hendrickx, 2021:1, 10).

#### **2.1.3.2.2. First generation: Secessionist Churches**

The first churches falling under the categorization of African Initiated Churches emerged as secessions from Mission Churches (Sundkler, 1961). It was an anti-colonial move in the churches where African Christians split from the mission churches and founded churches under their leadership, notably in the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century as well as twentieth-century pre-independence. These first AICs were formed as Christian movements to preach the gospel and to protect African values and forms of society against the impact of colonialism and any negative or overly restrictive aspects of missionary-founded churches (Gichimu, 2016:810-811). During colonial times, religion served as a weapon to resist colonial rule and its threat to their values (Opoku, 2010:514)

Because of the focus on independence from foreign leadership, these churches were termed differently as Independent, Separatist, or Nationalist. In the different African regions, different self-designations exist: African Churches in West Africa, Ethiopian Churches in Southern Africa, Independent Churches, and Nationalist Churches in East Africa (Sundkler, 1961; Gichimu, 2016). One of the reasons for the emergence of the Ethiopian spirit was the perception that missionaries were involved in colonial schemes to subjugate Africans. Indeed, Masondo underlines the fact that all Christian mission agencies were tainted with impure motives for colonizing central Africa. Even the protestant missionary societies that came in the last part of the 18th century also traded slavery. Many other mission bodies followed with

impure motives as well. These impure missional motives, as were housed in Western Christianity in Africa, amongst others, gave rise to the formation of the AICs (Masondo, 2014:2).

Some of these first-generation African Independent Churches still exist, such as the Lutheran Church in South Africa, which seceded from the Berlin Mission Church in the late nineteenth century. Nonetheless, nowadays, the first-generation African Independent Churches in their original form play a marginal role, and many of them have either since disappeared or have incorporated elements of African traditional religious or Pentecostal elements of belief so that they can be considered as African Initiated Churches of the second or third generations.

#### **2.1.3.2.3. Second generation: Spiritual churches**

The second generation of African Initiated Churches emerged principally since the beginning of the twentieth century, by the 1920s, and their focus was indigenization and hybridization. These churches are characterized by a synthesis of African spiritual worldviews with Christian beliefs. The African Initiated Churches of the second wave are often called Spiritual or Indigenous Churches and are designated differently around the continent. In West Africa, they are recognized as Aladura Churches (Ositelu, 2002), while East Africans call them Roho/Akurinu (Gichimu, 2016), and Zionist/ Apostolic Churches in Southern Africa (Anderson, 2003). Until today, the Spiritual Churches have particularly and increasingly faded in a general move towards African Pentecostal-Charismatic Churches (Meyer, 2004). The emergence and proliferation of African Independent Churches in Africa was Africa's response to Europeanized Christianity with its imperialistic doctrines and practices that negated the expectation of its new context – Africa. The second wave was a form of silent protest against colonial powers and missionary churches (Oduro, 2016:431-32; Spitzeck, 2018:1-2; Adedibu, 2018:1). This was marked by prophetic and healing spiritualities that shook sub-Saharan African Christianity in the 20th century. This wave was characterized by the 'centrality of the Bible, ecstatic prayers, healing, prophecy, visions and dreams, elaborate rituals, flexible modes of worship and liturgies, and charismatic leadership.' It marked a new brand of African Christianity that resonated with African cosmologies through their belief systems and ritual praxis. The visionary experiences of a charismatic leader emerged prominently as drivers in this category. (Adogame & Spickard 2010:5; Masuku, 2021:4). No missionary commissioned such people, yet these prophets helped spread the Christian message in Africa. Some prominent people among them were William Wade Harris, Joseph Babalola, and Garrick Braide in West Africa, Isaiah Shembe in South Africa, and Simon Kimbangu in Zaire (Onyinah, 2007:307).

#### **2.1.3.2.4. Third generation: African Pentecostal-Charismatic**

The churches of the third wave are African Pentecostal-Charismatic churches founded after national independence in the 1950s and 1960s under the influence of the Pentecostal global movement (Maxwell, 2006c: 388-389; Kollman, 2010:11; Spitzeck, 2018:3; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5-8). Christianity in post-colonial Africa is highly influenced and shaped by the prosperity message (Togarasei, 2011; Kgatle, 2019:1). The thread of line that marks both groups is their quest to address the everyday existential problems of the people and see benevolent spiritual entities as means to help people in their day-to-day problems (Masuku, 2021:5). The three categories of the AICs, regardless of their expressions of the 'T', make Africans feel at home as a refuge ground from the attitude of Western missions (Daneel, 1987:18; Kealotswe, 2016:56).

The rise and the growth of the AICs worldwide are not hazardous or incidental phenomena. Despite their diversity and particularity, African Christianity in the Sub-Sahara has some common features that ease their identification as such. The first characteristic of the AICs is that they are “Pentecostal-led” Christianity. This new Christian experience in Africa evolved through African ingenuity in the appropriation and adaptation of evangelical Pentecostal Christianity from a variety of sources (Onyinah, 2007:314). Secondly, the AICs of post-independence are fragmented. African Christianity in post-independence Africa is highly diversified and divided along confessional lines, largely because of the Christian denominationalism that had been planted by Western missionary-founded churches. The additional causes of these divisions are many, ranging from doctrinal and cultural differences to economic, political, and ideological conflicts. In the context of Africa, Christian fragmentation may be attributed to a host of factors, including material gains of church leaders, personal conflicts, theological and ecclesiastical differences, prophetic visions, search for power, monetary demands by church leaders, rapid church population growth, persecutions in the churches, family tensions, cultural tensions, social rejection, socio-political factors, and magic/witchcraft accusations. More often than not, these divisions along confessional lines have been heightened by cultural and political differences arising from the places of origin of the various missionary-founded churches. Significantly, the different and separate Christian churches represent different Christian spiritualities, some of which are radically opposed to one another.

The last characteristics of the AICs are initiative and creativity. After this long journey, the AICs should be seen as an important local contribution to global Christianity and as more than

just reactions to mainline churches or colonialism. Much of what the AICs do and experience emerges as their creative genius and authentic response to their sociocultural environment, a contribution for which they are solely responsible without any conditioning by foreign missions. Globally, the AICs represent currents that can inspire a vision for a new way of living (Vellem, 2015:2). Molobi contends that as AIC leaders are ministering over wide areas of Africa, no matter with what they confront, they affirm the positive values of African culture in protest against the individualism, secularism, and Northern models of development that were propagated by colonial governments and missionary churches (Molobi, 2011:4).

### **2.1.3.3. Common factors for the rise and development the AICs**

The rise and growth of the AICs worldwide are not hazardous or incidental phenomena. The AICs emerged as a result of multiple factors. Both processes of launching and developing the AICs have to be understood in the overlapping context of Africa on a broader scale. These commonalities about the AICs shed light on this most important phenomenon of the 21<sup>st</sup> Christianity and its implications in the DRC. Thus, the rise and development of the AICs in the DRC is not an isolated case.

Appreciating the multiple factors that gave rise to the movement facilitates a deeper understanding of the movement. These factors continue to influence the growth and dynamism of the movement in the contemporary period. AICs remain highly complex religious movements inspired by prophetic action and the quest to mint African identity in the face of rapid social change (Chitando, 2016:287-88).

The rise and the expansion of the African Initiated Churches have been so phenomenal that, by the year 1967, the movement was launched in thirty-two of the forty-one nations and colonies south of the Sahara, in Madagascar and one nation in North Africa. AIC members constitute the majority of the Christian population of Sub-Saharan Africa (Venter, 1999:106; Nmah, 2010:482). The shift of the Centre of Christianity from the global North to the global South is the result of this phenomenon. According to recent statistical studies, the paradigm shift and the expansion of the AICs to the global South will continue by 2050 (Zurlo & Johnson, 2016:160; Johnson *et al.*, 2016 :1, 22-23; Zurlo *et al.*, 2020:14).

The reasons for the emergence and the prolific expansion of the AICs in Africa and worldwide are much diversified. In most cases, the factors that led to the emergence of AICs are not necessarily those that sustain them or characterize later stages of their history (Daneel, 1987:68;

Venter, 1999:108). For instance, lamenting about the disorder and the lack of restriction in the religious field in DR Congo, Lubunga declares:

The charismatic movement, which started in the form of small prayer groups, developed rapidly into a full charismatic flow that drew members from major established churches. There seems to be no brake on its diversification since new forms and congregations are steadily being born without restriction. The terrain is favourable to the proliferation of these prophetic and miracle-driven movements since the country experiences a weakened political leadership after years of wars and tribal conflicts. There is no authority controlling this new form of Christianity, and people are being attracted and galvanized by unconventional forms of worship, the performance of miraculous signs, and the promise of instantaneous healing, wealth, and well-being without any effort (Lubunga, 2016:533-34).

The case of the DRC is probably the same in other parts of Africa, with perhaps a light difference. The following sub-sections will overlap some main causal motivations of the rise and the growth of the AICs.

#### **2.1.3.3.1. Historical factors**

Africa is a continent with 55 different countries, each with its history and political intricacies, even though, in some cases, the same social, political, and economic forces can produce the same social, political, and economic outcomes all over the continent (Lyons & Jolley, 2018:49).

Nonetheless, the emergence of most early independent churches in Africa is, in one way or another, connected to the history of a people and the missions that worked among them. Thus, to some degree or another, the history of Africa has a colonial legacy as the foundation of the search for its independence. Despite their good intention to evangelize Africa, unfortunately, missionaries came into Africa along with colonial administrators and traders with the plan to introduce Christianity, commerce, and civilization (Okon, 2014: 192-198). Every AIC has its proper missiological history connected to its people. The best understanding of the AICs' history and development helps both for appropriate classification and for falling into any generalization (Olowola, 1984:24; Nmah, 2010:485-86; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5-8). Even though they rise during the same period, the history of a country and every church as an institution has its particularity that depends on the influencing factors and circumstances of the time (Pauw, 1995:7).

The way missionaries dealt with colonialism in one country differs greatly from the attitude of those who operate in another country. Each country in Africa has experienced specific political, theological, historical, and socio-economic contextual realities that influenced the emergence of the AICs. These factors interplay and produce people's protest reactions in specific fields (Mwaura, 2008, 186; Benyah, 2018:232).

The economic area of colonialism in the DRC was the worst in Africa. The phase of the Red Rubber boom was done abusively and with most atrocities in the Congo. This initial phase of colonization is as essential to an understanding of the Congo's history as that of the Red Rubber. The context of Congo's atrocities is a period of extreme violence in world history. The brutality of the rubber collection tactics resulted in the deaths of an estimated 10 million people, and this Congolese rubber earned the nickname "Red Rubber" (Gewald, 2006:473; Loffman, 2023; Lowes & Montero, 2016:2-6).

#### **2.1.3.3.2. Social factors**

Social factors have played an important role in the expansion of African Initiated Churches (AIC) in Africa (Olowola, 1984:25). Gobo (2020:243) observes overtly that:

Colonial history is, most importantly, a history of mental and cultural colonialism. The legacy of this form of invasion (cultural and mental invasion) lasts much longer than the political relationship, and the impact is deeper because the damage is at the very essence of who we are as a people – our identity. A people confused about their identity cannot function in their full capacity.

Thus, the destruction of African cultural values and their replacement by Western values through the cooperation of Christian missions in Africa and European imperialism has lasting consequences. Through this alliance, it became the religion of the conqueror that contributed to the destruction of African values and traditional practices and also to the advance or penetration of the West into the non-Western world (Opoku, 2010:508, 525; Ocheni & Nwankwo, 2012:50; Chikerema, 2021:2; Khan *et al.*, 2021:1367). The emergence of the AICs remains relevant and appropriate to the African struggle against the imposition of foreign values. Where they were either unable effectively to express their hostility to colonialism or resented the discrimination within the European-dominated Protestant churches, they often formed independent or separatist churches to remedy their grievances. While missionaries were the torch-bearers of Western culture, Africans used their religion as a weapon to resist colonial rule and its threat to their values (Vansina, 2010:180-81, 86; Opoku, 2010:513-14; Kgatla, 2015:110).

Another social issue related to colonizers' racism and discrimination attitude based on the colour of one's skin. Many of the missionary churches had a policy that looked down on the Africans as inferior and incapable of self-management. The above features of missionary Christianity fueled the emergence of a new strand of Christianity that aimed at rectifying these social ills (Bosch, 1991: 303–304; Ukah, 2007:8; Jesudas M. Athyal, 2015:24).

The African response to the negative attitude and the disintegrating effect of missionary Christianity on African culture was expressed in three distinct ways: acceptance, rejection, and adaptation. The breakaway churches, in part, represented the African reaction or adaptation to colonialism and were emancipatory. Especially in areas of European settlement, where political repression was intense, and such churches proliferated and attracted African nationalists. The case Simon Kimbangu founded his “Eglise de Jésus-Christ sur la Terre par le Prophète Simon Kimbangu”[The Church of Jesus Christ on the Earth by the Prophet Simon Kimbangu] (EJCSK) in 1921 in the Belgian Congo now DRC (Osltelu, 2002:63-65; Anderson & Tang, 2008:113; Opoku, 2010:526-27,31; Kgatla, 2015:111).

#### **2.1.3.3.3. Political realities**

Politics can be understood as the way of managing an organization. It can also refer to the style of governance established in a country. Each colonial authority employed a style of administration that was tailored to their overall objectives in the colony. The four colonizer countries used an administrative style that suited his objectives. Thus, one can identify four administrative styles or approaches that were used by the colonial powers in Africa: indirect rule, long associated with the British; direct rule, associated with France, Germany, and Portugal; company rule, closely linked to the Belgians; and finally, a hybrid approach connected to southern Africa (Khapoya, 2015:116-117). These leadership styles were also applied in the churches as missionaries collaborated with politics.

The political climate of the colonial period was very challenging for the natives. Various movements arose because of political oppression in one form or another. They were political protest movements arising out of political frustration, the cases of Simon Kimbangu in the Congo state (Olowola, 1985:32; Falaye & Alokun, 2015:31).

As a social issue, political injustice resulting in segregation and racism has influenced the birth of a kind of AICs. For this reason, the AICs are often described as political protest movements against a background of colonial paternalism, and the emergence of African Initiated Churches on the African continent is closely linked to the rise of African nationalism (Daneel, 1987:43-

68). African Christian's experiences in the church were not very different from what their brothers and sisters outside of church circles were experiencing. Many scholars recognize that Ethiopianism and other separatist movements emerged as African opposition to colonial paternalism, being interpreted as the religious strand of African nationalism preparing the way for political independence (Chitando, 2004:121; Masondo, 2005:94; Kollman, 2010:4; Manyonganise, 2014:161-162; Gichimu, 2016:810-811).

#### **2.1.3.3.4. Economic factors**

The economic deprivation in Africa has greatly contributed to the emergence of the AICs and the Charismatic movement inwards and outwards. These economic protest movements were directed against the exploitation of tribal lands or other riches by colonial powers. Many of these churches draw their members towards the socio-economic level.

If the AICs are no longer the exclusivity of Africans, it is obvious that the socioeconomic and political challenges in Africa, as well as educational aspirations, have played a great role in the settlement of African Christianity within Africa and the Diaspora. Migrants travel with their home-grown religious subscriptions, transposable ritual practices, and potable practices (Olowola, 1984:24; Pauw, 1995:14, 18; Shorter & Njiru, 2001, 30; Ndung'u, 2009:88-89; Nmah, 2010:485-86; Adedibu, 2018:1). Mwaura argues firmly that “modern charismatic churches and now new religious movements generally, can be linked to current economic, theological, cultural and political trends” (Mwaura, 2008: 186). It is the economic deprivation occasioned by poverty, bad governance, and abuse of human rights in Africa in the 1980s that led to people seeking solace and welfare in the charismatic churches that provided material, spiritual, and social support. These churches seem to be very pragmatic in finding solutions to life's debilitating issues, such as hunger and poverty (Benyah, 2018:232). There are these economic and economic reasons that have also contributed to the emergence of the AICs in the diaspora.

#### **2.1.3.3.5. Nominalism and multiplicity of missionary agencies (denominationalism)**

A Christian nominalist claims the name Christian but has no authentic, personal, sin-forgiving, and life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ. His allegiance to Jesus is in name, not heart. Nominalism is a challenge because over 60 per cent of Christians worldwide are 'non-practising' or 'nominalist'. Nominalism creates an illusion of growth and encourages the establishment and perpetuation of religion by spectators. It also breeds clericalism (Abby, 2011:1; Grondin, 2023:7-8; Tiénou, 2017:1-5).

Various reasons encourage nominalism. For some scholars, the nominal attitude of African Christians is the result of the rejection of African culture by missionaries. In lieu and place, they promoted a Christianity based on rituals and tradition through which people could identify themselves as Christian instead of their relationship with Christ (Isaak, 2018:577). There is also the institutionalization of the church that promoted the phenomenon of folk Christians. Folk Christians identify themselves as Christian by belonging to a Christian household (Tiéno, 2017:2).

The multiplicity of missionary agencies and protestant denominationalism eased the emergence of the AICs through the process of scission from mainlines (Anderson, 2011:275; Nmah, 2010:484; Bello, 2013:443-444). The multiplicity of churches introduced by missionaries created the impression that it was normal for everyone who so wished to establish his church. The explosion of African Christianity is not news since many have catalogued the proliferation of churches and denominations on the continent (Pauw, 1995:9-10; Kollman, 2010:4). African countries' independence from colonial rule gave the AICs another boost, and it went along with the establishment of yet more churches.

In various countries, African as well as Asian, Protestant missions have successfully concluded a comity agreement, in terms of which a particular missionary territory was divided up between different missionary agencies in a way that largely excluded overlapping. This reality has been a catalyzer of the rapid growth of the African Churches behind nominal Christianity (Goheen, 2014:196).

Denominationalism in Africa is responsible for the Christian expansion and revivals as shown in that continent today (Choi, 1999:13). African Christianity in every epoch, particularly in post-independence, has been highly diversified and divided for various reasons. Firstly, the existence of diverse Christian denominations in African Christianity is deeply divided along confessional lines, largely because of the Christian denominationalism that had been planted by Western missionary-founded churches. These many divisions encompass doctrinal and cultural differences and economic, political, and ideological conflicts.

In the current context of Africa, Christian fragmentation may be attributed to a host of factors, including material gains of church leaders, personal conflicts, theological and ecclesiastical differences, prophetic visions, search for power, monetary demands by church leaders, rapid church population growth, and persecutions in the churches, family tensions, cultural tensions, social rejection, sociopolitical factors, and magic/witchcraft accusations. Significantly, the different and separate Christian churches represent different Christian spiritualities, some of

which are radically opposed to one another (Ndlovu, 2016:54; Spitzeck, 2018:3; Mugambi, 2016:106).

#### **2.1.3.3.6. The influence of Pentecostalism and the Receptivity of the field in Sub-Sahara**

Given the ever-presence of the spirit in African worldview, Pentecostalism, with its pneumatic spirituality, has become an attractive alternative both to older forms of Christianity and to pre-Christian religions with its emphasis on deliverance and exorcism. In almost all denominations in Africa, one can recognize the profound influence of Pentecostal spirituality (Moon, 2021:1). The mutual influences between the AICs and classical missionary Pentecostal churches are expressed through their theological similarities, such as an emphasis on healing and prophecies. The case of Simon Kimbangu, founder of the Kimbanguist Church, who attracted a multitude of people who thronged his village of N'kamba in search of healing (Anderson, 2003:167; Ndung'u, 2009:87-89; Masondo, 2014:2, 4).

Thus, both kinds of churches have successfully responded to the existential needs of the African worldview. The main common denominator of Pentecostals and the AICs is the pneumatic ingredients, in particular, the emphasis on experiences of the power of the Holy Spirit (Fatokun, 2005: 367-368; Mashau, 2016:1; Lindhardt, 2018:5; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5-8). All the AICs can be categorized under the umbrella of the Pentecostal movement in Africa because they all emphasize the working of the Holy Spirit. However, it should be noted at this stage that they vary from one another in terms of their *modus operandi* (Mashau, 2013:5).

Pentecostal is also attractive because of its use of the prosperity gospel. The prosperity gospel spread widely in Africa in the 1980s. Now, this doctrine is associated with many of Africa's fastest-growing churches. This message seems to be relevant for the African context because it takes spiritual causality seriously (Kgatle, 2019:2; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5-8; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2020:37-38, 40). The Prosperity Gospel in contemporary African Christianity has been saluted as the solution to people's poverty, where governments have failed to supply the basics of life (Togarasei, 2016:1007-1008; Barron, 2022:88-89).

#### **2.1.3.3.7. Reaction to mission, creativity, and adaptability to the African Worldview**

The missionaries had a negative attitude toward African religion and culture. Their Christianity had a disintegrating effect on African culture, as mentioned previously. Most missionary agencies and colonial enterprises were tainted with imperial, cultural, commercial, and ecclesiastical colonialism motives during the second wave of Christianization, particularly in central Africa. Even the protestant missionary societies that came in the last part of the 18th

century also traded slavery. African leaders' reactions to this colonial attitude were acceptance, rejection, and adaptation (Opoku, 2010:526-27; Masuku, 2021:4).

The second reaction was motivated by the lack of addressing the African Traditional Religious beliefs and the existential realities of Africans in the Western expressions of Christianity. Western Christianity and missionaries' messages could not address the African worldview and the existential problems (Masondo, 2014:2; Adedibu, 2018:1; Niyigena, 2022:300-301). This was a major factor that encouraged people to initiate churches from the middle of the 1960s to the end of the 1990s. The result was the rise of various independent churches that took the spirit world seriously and forged a new type of spirituality that remained loyal to both the biblical and African worldviews (Fatokun, 2005: 367-368; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2016:69-70, 263; Falaye & Alokun, 2015:31-32; Adedibu, 2018:1). It is by the inclusion of many aspects of African culture in their expressions of the Christian religion and its practices that they have rapidly growth and gained an African audience (Kealotswe, 2014: 48-50, 227-28). This can be testified by the fact that the AICs have established themselves theologically as genuine expressions of the Christian faith from an African perspective.

Indeed, most scholars agree that the attitude and the way African Initiated Churches deal with the existential problems and all issues connected to the African worldview matter in the adaptation of the AICs and the rejection of Western and colonial Christianity. There are these issues of African worldview that make these churches and their prosperity message relevant (Anderson, 2003:179; Togarasei, 2016:1008; Kgatle, 2019:1; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2020:37-38,40; Adamo, 2021:4; Barron, 2022:88-89). The creative initiative is the strength of AICs and the third way of reaction. The AICs are creative through the way they address the existential needs of their members and insert African worldview beliefs into their practices (Olowola, 1984:24-26; Fatokun, 2005: 369; Mushayavanhu & Dunca, 2014:1; Kealotswe, 2016:48-50). There are both this "spirit of African culture" and this creativity towards Africans' existential needs in practice that sustain and promote the growth of African Christianity and the AICs (Marthinus, 1987: 97-101; Akrong, 1998:58-59, 63; Anderson, 2003:178-179; Ukah, 2007:5; Kgatle, 2018:1; Oduro, 2016:434; Masuku, 2021:7).

#### **2.1.3.3.8. Protecting African values and forms of society against the impact of colonialism**

The first AICs were formed as Christian movements to preach the gospel and to protect African values and forms of society against the impact of colonialism and any negative or overly

restrictive aspects of missionary-founded churches. Many ACs emerged as a rejection of this colonial imperialism to protect African values (Henry, 2016:4; Gichimu, 2016:810; Adedibu, 2018:2). Asamoah-Gyadu also observed that the evangelical missionary enterprise in Europe has failed to address the African worldview; the result was the rise of various independent churches that took the spirit world seriously and forged a new type of spirituality that remained loyal to both the biblical and African worlds (Asamoah-Gyadu, 2016:263). It is one of the reasons for the rapid growth of Pentecostalism in Africa (Olumide, 2019:7).

#### **2.1.3.3.9. Bible translation and bible interpretation (hermeneutic)**

Bible translation into African native languages is a positive contribution of Western and colonial missionaries to the African continent in general and to the African Churches. The translated Bible is a powerful tool that helps for the emergence and the rapid expansion of African Christianity. It provides Church leaders with new possibilities to define themselves and bolstered nationalist movements in their struggle against colonialism (Barrett 1968:129; Venter, 1998: 419; Mwaura, 2008:179; Gunda, 2014:149-150; Ndlovu, 2016:56). The translation of the Bible also constitutes the basis of daily ministry. The AICs apply the Bible to the daily needs of their members and communities in every area of life (Anderson, 2014:275; Kealotswe, 2014: 232). Local Christians acquired from the vernacular translations confidence in the indigenous cause. Reading the Bible in their tongue enabled autochthones to distinguish between the missionary and Scripture (Athyal, 2015:25). Thus, the Bible in the vernacular serves as an "oracle" in all spheres of life and enables a new process of growing self-awareness. The sudden importance and significance of the mother tongue and, by implication of one's own culture and traditions thus becomes a factor in a new process of national awakening (Marthinus, 1987: 84-88; Venter, 1998:417; Onyinah, 2007:306; Nmah, 2011:485; Goheen, 2014:192; Gunda, 2014:149-150,154; Asamoah-Gyadu; 2016:66; Ndlovu, 2016:67, 70; Molobi, 2020:330-32).

#### **2.1.3.3.10. Globalization and urbanization**

Globalization is centripetal processes that lead to the continuous expansion of the global economic system accompanied by the consequent globalization of cultural structures, technological structures, and religious structures. Globalization also has played a great role in the rise and expansion of Christianity in Africa and the implementation of Western cultural values. The process of globalization expands from the pre-colonial period up to today. It is to say that even the slave trade and colonization are included in this ongoing process (Venter, 1998:424-27). Thus, despite their good intentions to evangelize Africa, and due to the bad times that prevailed, missionaries relied on colonial administrators and traders to accomplish the plan

to introduce the Gospel in Africa. The success of missionaries during this period was laid on colonial rule, and Christianity itself was seen as part of a larger order comprising Western education, colonial administration, commerce, and industry (Venter, 1998: 417; Nunn, 2010:147; Okon, 2014:198).

The influence and contribution of globalization are more evident in the post-colonial era through migration and media technologies. More churches of the AICs have been initiated by migrant workers and the use of media technologies to spread the message and endorse the prosperity gospel (Venter, 1998: 433; Meyer, 2010:113; Klinken, 2015:139-140; Wilkinson, 2015:94-95). According to Candy Gunther Brown (2015:57-59), through translating the Bible into vernacular languages, Western missionaries empowered formerly illiterate populations to develop skills necessary to participate in globalizing economies and shifted the central categories of the gospel from Western to indigenous terms. It is now necessary for Africa to play a reverse influence on leadership as it is the new Centre of World Christianity (Hunt, 2015:3-5).

The focus on the urban ministry is another key to the success of the AICs in their expansion. Urbanization is linked to globalization. In the colonial era, the urban centres and related infrastructures were built in the optic of facilitating exchange and mobility. Indeed, urbanization in Africa is growing at an alarmingly fast rate for manifold reasons, ranging from the problems of economics, injustice, education, and employment (Vellem, 2013:3). Cities have become attractive with higher records of service delivery than rural setups. The AICs' ministry accommodates urban ministry for the majority of the poor who flock to cities in search of employment, better education, and other opportunities. Thus, AICs help people to get out of these evils, making honest believers in them (Masuku, 2021:7).

#### **2.1.3.3.11. Leadership**

Leadership is another issue Africans used to claim independence in all areas. Leadership has mattered both in the rise and in the rapid expansion of African Initiated Churches in Africa and worldwide. Leadership is one major factor that motivated Africans to endeavour to secede from missionary agencies. Many AICs rose as a protest toward the European missionary's monopoly and alienation of church leadership (Falaye, 2015:88-89; Falaye & Alokun, 2015:31-32). Their major concerns were to develop an indigenous expression of Christianity and to create a space where African members could worship God in their way of satisfying their spiritual needs and aspirations (Kealotswe, 2004:206, Fatokun, 2005:366).

Furthermore, African leaders are responsible for the spread of the AICs all around Africa and succeeded in shifting the Centre of Christian vitality to the global south as predicted (Bediako, 1995:154; Jenkins, 2002:2; Barrett, Kurian & Johnson, 2001:12-15). The phenomenon of the shift of the centre of gravity in global Christianity from the Western to the non-Western world is one of the most significant developments of twentieth-century Christianity (Asonzeh, 2007:1; Matsobane, J.2013:286; Kealotswe, 2014: 227; Adedibu, 2018:2; Woodbridge & James III, 2013:838-42).

Both the rapid expansion of the AICs and the shift are the most important experiences of Christianity in the twentieth century. Much of what the independent churches do and experience emerges as their creative genius and authentic response to their sociocultural environment, a contribution for which they are solely responsible without any conditioning by foreign missions (Venter, 1999:106; Nmah, 2010:482; Vellem, 2015:2). Molobi contends that as AIC leaders are ministering over wide areas of Africa, no matter with what they confront, they affirm the positive values of African culture in protest against the individualism, secularism, and Northern models of development that was propagated by colonial governments and missionary churches (Molobi, 2011:4). This is why, even statistics predict that the paradigm shift and the expansion of the AICs to the global South will continue by 2050 (Zurlo & Johnson, 2016:160; Johnson *et al.*, 2016 :1, 22-23; Zurlo *et al.*, 2020:14).

Despite controversies in the source of this leadership, colonial, and missionary education or other, today, the AICs represent currents that can inspire a vision for a new way of living in global Christianity.

#### **2.1.4. Key features and development of the AICs**

The African Initiated Churches have adopted or developed some characteristics that one can qualify as distinctive traits depending on their generation or the wage of their birth. There are also these distinctive traits that have played a significant role in the attractional dimension of the AICs and their rapid proliferation.

##### **2.1.4.1. African Theology and hermeneutics**

The first distinct factors that have enhanced the development of the AICs are both their theology and their hermeneutical reasoning systems.

Theology is an exclusive concept that envisions all reflection about God (salvation through Christ, church, and human existence, etc...) (Molyneux, 1988:10). Unlike, hermeneutics is a

broad interpretive tool that includes all the sacred texts of religions (Islam and Hinduism) and other non-religious fields such as literature and all other written works of art (Jasper, 2004:8; Porter & Robinson, 2011:2-6; Philosophy.institute, 2023:1). Theology is Christian-dominated and oriented. Hermeneutics and theology work hand in hand to enable people to understand the biblical scriptures fully. Hermeneutics provides rules for sound interpretation and sound theological doctrines. Every doctrine is the result and the product of its hermeneutics. Therefore, Bible interpretation impacts which Christian denomination one joins. Many of the differences between the various Christian denominations revolve around hermeneutics (Demars, 2018). That is, denominations differ because interpretations differ. Therefore, skills in hermeneutics help in appreciating and deciphering between various interpretations of Scripture (Thiselton, 2009:1; Gathogo, 2015:2; Speckman, 2016:205; Adewale, 2020:6, 10; Kavusa, 2022:8-9,70).

Theology and hermeneutics determine and orient the doctrines and practices of the church. The African Initiated Churches do not escape from this truth. Some scholars do not hesitate to identify African hermeneutics to the rapid expansion and adaptation of the AICs (Goheen, 2014:193-95; Kealotswe, 2016:48-50; Nsiah, 2018:26, 36; Sakupapa, 2018:408-409; Adewale, 2020:18-19, 31; Waweru, 2018:214-215).

African Theology is a theology that is grounded in the Bible and speaks to the Africans' spiritual needs of today as concretely as possible (Aryeh, 2017:183-185; Ossom-Batsa, 2022:91-92). The emphasis is on what the text means to Africans in their contemporary context according to the African worldview and consideration of issues of every concern of the African society without exception (Farisani, 2017:8-9; Nsiah, 2018:36-37; Amevenku & Boaheng, 2021: xv).

African theology and hermeneutics have certain characteristics. The first is that African theology and hermeneutics are diversified, culturally, and contextually driven due to cultural diversity in sub-Saharan Africa. Two natures of context prevail in African theology: The Western or biblical context and the multiple contexts of the African continent (Krog, 2005:17-19; Wünc, 2015:1; Adamo, 2015:36; Nsiah, 2018:32; Ossom-Batsa, 2022:99; Mojola, 2022) as there are context and culturally driven, African theology and hermeneutics focus on African cosmology and worldviews.

Secondly, African theology has been developed into various trends. Most of them focus on the existential needs of their members and rely on Pentecostalism for the commonalities in this domain. The dominant trends are liberation theology and hermeneutics, where the concepts of

deliverance, healing, poverty reduction, and prosperity gospel are underscored (Mashau, 2016:1; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5-8; Waweru, 2018:220-221). Faith healing constitutes one of the attractions of new converts from mainline churches to African Instituted Churches (AICs), the case of Simon Kimbangu, founder of the Kimbanguist Church, attracted a multitude of people who thronged his village of N’kamba in search of healing (Nahashon W. Ndung’u.2009:87-89). Liberation theology and hermeneutics look into the Bible to see what the word of God says to the situation of the oppressed (Waweru, 2018:218; Adewale, 2020:28-30).

The third feature is that African theology and hermeneutics are spirit-oriented because they are connected to Christian tradition and African cosmology with a focus on the Scripture. AICs do all they can to promote this worldview through their theologies based particularly on the Old Testament worldview (Kealotswe, 2014:235-238; Magezi & Igba, 2018:3-4).

African theology is also Christocentric. A sound Christian theology and hermeneutics are recognized by the way Christology is handled. There cannot exist Christian theology without Christology. Christian theology falls or stands on how it understands, translates, and interprets Jesus Christ in a given time, place, or human situation. The doctrine of incarnation (of Jesus Christ) can be considered the cornerstone of Christianity. The heart of the encounter of the Good News with our context is Christology (Magezi. & Igba, 2018:5; Mika, 2019:135).

Nevertheless, the issue of Christology remains a great challenge for a great category of the AICs where the ancestral Christological approach is predominant and the departure point (Magezi & Igba, 2018:3-4, 6). To reach this end, the reverse hermeneutic method is used. The reverse hermeneutical method involves the reversal of the hermeneutical cycle, in which case the hermeneutical movement is from the cultural context to the biblical text instead of the other way around. Within the African Initiated Churches, there exists innumerable misinterpretations and appropriation of the doctrine of incarnation, the case of the questionable incarnation of Christ of Simeo Ondeto of Legio Maria in Kenya (N. Schwartz, 2005:173; Matthew, Kustenbauder, 2009:14-18). There is also the famous Kimbanguism’s incarnation and reincarnation of the Trinity. The Holy is incarnated by Simon Kimbangu, the father and founder, then in Diangenda, and finally in Simon Kimbangu Kiangani. Kisolekele is the Father, and Dialungana is the reincarnated Jesus (Gampiot, 2017:123-128; Vähäkangas, 2019:135-140).

Finally, African theology and hermeneutics, and mostly for the AICs, are derivative of Pentecostal hermeneutics because of its pneumatic spirituality that emphasizes deliverance and exorcism and also helps to face existential challenges and questions raised in Africa, where

traditional Western forms of Christianity have no adequate answers (Nel, 2019:1-2,4). Furthermore, in Pentecostal-type AICs, the experience of the Spirit becomes an essential key in the hermeneutical process. The hermeneutical processes of members of Pentecostal-type churches are considered from the perspective of how members read and interpret the Bible in their daily lives. The Bible is used to explain the experience of the working of the Holy Spirit in the church 'with supernatural "gifts of the Spirit, especially healing, exorcism, speaking in tongues, and prophesying. The African worldview is intensely charismatic and alive; the gospel is interpreted in a lively manner and infused with many culturally relevant elements (Ukah, 2007:9).

#### **2.1.4.2. African Leadership and founders**

Leadership is the most important characteristic of the AICs. All AIC, without exception, is an African initiative wherever it is located worldwide. The early AICs seceded from missionary-founded churches as protesting the leadership monopoly of colonial missionaries (Olowola, 1984:22; Falaye, 2015:88-89; Falaye & Alokun, 2015:32).

The nature of leadership has been of very large influence since the inception and the expansion of the African churches in the homeland and worldwide despite their low degree of education in the theological field (Nel, 2019:1-8). Nonetheless, they seem more innovative in the appropriation of modern and sophisticated media technologies.

The leadership of the AICs has also succeeded in making the message of the Gospel relevant to the African worldview. So that they are perceived as an authentic African expression of Christianity because they have created space for certain spiritual or pneumatic elements that are of great importance (Kgatle, 2018:1).

#### **2.1.4.3. African World view**

Relating to the African worldview is also an AICs' characteristic and factor that, by the end of the 20th century, had greatly contributed to the spread of the AICs all over Africa. Worldview is the way of delineating the philosophical elements involved in the way people view their version of reality. Their growth was made possible by the inclusion of many aspects of African culture in their expressions of the Christian religion and its practices (Onongha, 2022:40; Chalk, 2013:9-10; Kealotswe, 2014:228).

African worldview and Global South share the same beliefs that are firmly anchored into an ever-present spirit world and constant fear of serious harm caused. Spiritual forces are intertwined with the social and material world (Nel, 2019:1-10; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5-8;

Adamo, 2021:4). Global south worldview and primal spirituality assume that Africans live in an 'intentional world' where nothing happens by chance; all events have spiritual causes. Sacred and secular realities are inseparable. Negative events are thus to be resisted by imprecatory prayers and curses (Bediako, 1995:94).

#### **2.1.4.4. Emphasis on the Spirit**

Most African initiatives in Christianity have had a pneumatic orientation. Pneumatic Christianity is closer to the grain of African culture, and its worldview resonates closely with the indigenous primal worldview. This tendency to the spirits' world reality explains why the AICs are relevant and emphasize the Pentecostal spirituality and the prosperity gospel, as underlined previously (Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5-8; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2020:37-38, 40). The gospel of prosperity finds fertile ground in Africa because of the poverty and suffering that people experience. Many African governments have failed to supply people with the basics of life, including health care, food, and water. The gospel of prosperity then came, promising a miraculous supply of these needs (Togarasei, 2016:1007-1008; Barron, 2022:88-89; Anim, 2010:67). The prosperity gospel spread widely in Africa in the 1980s. Now, this doctrine is associated with many of Africa's fastest-growing churches (Kgatle, 2019:2)

Healing methods are key elements of the African worldview. The AICs just embraced and modified them to suit their particular Christian context. The emphasis is put on the individual's problem and the environment that led to the problem. The central recruitment strategy of these churches is healing (Masondo, 2014:2, 4).

## **2.2. Origins of the African-Initiated Churches in the DRC**

### **2.2.1. Introduction**

The previous section has developed almost eleven (11) causative factors that have greatly contributed to the rise and rapid development of the AICs in the Africa Continent. As stated previously, the case of the DRC is the first to be understood in this broader context.

The Democratic Republic of Congo is a vast country, the second-largest country in Africa, where abuse, atrocities, and exploitation walk alongside its history. The ever presence of these threats at every step of its history seems to make them the legacies that the country inherited from the Kongo Kingdom, the private property of Leopold II, and the Belgium colony, even after the independence. Congo's post-independence history is the bloodiest of all Sub-Saharan countries (Hesselbein, 2007:9-10).

Despite this obscure side, the Congo Democratic has always been a fertile land for Christianity in Africa since pre-colonial times. Like the majority of the African Initiated Churches, the development of Christianity in the Democratic Republic of Congo (hereafter DRC) is closely linked to the history of the country, particularly the ever-changing political landscape since the Portuguese exploration up to the current global world. Each era has put its mark on Christianity in the DRC. Thus, the evolution of the AICs in the DRC can be accurately understood through three crucial periods of its development: pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial eras. Each of them provides insights about the forces that dominated the then social and political environments, which influenced, or even determined, the attitudes (Peel, 1978:445-446; Ositelu, 2002:31; Magesa, 2016:256; Lubunga, 2016:529; Kavus, 2021:2). Remote though these epochs may seem, Christian expansion in Africa has something in common with each of them. In the case under the study of the Congo Democratic, the colonial legacy left deep imprints on the country, some of which proved to be crucial in later processes of Congolese state-building and state-unraveling (Hesselbein, 2007:19).

Indeed, the rapid numerical expansion of the AIC in Africa, then in the DRC, is not a hazardous phenomenon. Most factors that contributed to its expansion have also greatly influenced its rapid development and proliferation. Globalization and urbanization, for instance, have a significant role in the growth of the AIC. Pentecostalism influence, for instance, has been eased by the impact of people's mobility and the mass media. Meanwhile, besides these aforementioned factors, key features of the AIC are non-negligible and influence their growth.

### **2.2.2. Causative factors for the rise of the AICs in the DRC**

The previous section has highlighted the common factors that motivated the rise and also the development of the AICs in the African Continent. Most of these factors have also to be considered in the case of the DRC. This section sheds light on the particularities of the influence of these factors in the context of the church in the DRC. The first non-negligible factor is historical.

#### **2.2.2.1. The historical factors**

The history of the life of humans and the country provides grids that influence the way people deal with daily life. It is important to understand the type of forces that influenced the history of the DRC because most of them have left legacies that perspire in the way people behave. The history of the DRC overlaps in three periods: pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial.

### 2.2.2.1.1. Pre-colonial Congolese Initiated Churches (Kongo Kingdom 1480s-1885)

The pre-colonial history of Africa Sub Saharan is connected to the history of the Kongo kingdom as a famous emblem of Africa's past. It is an exceptionally important cultural landmark for Africans, the African diaspora, and anyone interested in Africa's pre-colonial history. Of all pre-colonial West-Central African states, the Kongo kingdom was the largest and most powerful. Right up to the present day, African leaders and intellectuals have been inspired by the history of the Kongo kingdom, taking it as an example of pre-colonial grandeur and globalized relations. It is also a key marker of identity construction for several colonial and post-colonial religious and political movements (Bostoen & Brinkman, 2018:1-3).

A great part of the pre-colonial history of DRC corresponds to the situation of the powerful Kongo Kingdom located along the coastal part of the Atlantic Ocean, extending on both sides of the River Kongo. Its superficies covered part of what is now the Central region of Africa and the Southern part of the continent, including countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Congo, part of Gabon, and Angola. Due to the lack of data on its beginning, the story of the Kongo Kingdom is retraced from the discovery of Diego Cao by the 1480s to its fragmentation at the Berlin conference in 1884-1885 when it was affected as private property of the King of Belgium Leopold II (Mukoko, 2017:27; Bayeck, 2021:2; Hendrickx, 2021:1).

When Diego Cao reached the mouth of the Congo River in 1482, and the Portuguese entered Central Africa, the Kongo Kingdom was in its prosperous and glorious era<sup>2</sup>. The Kingdom was extremely developed with sophisticated political, spiritual, and educational systems<sup>3</sup>. Its resources included ivory, gold, and copper combined (Milbrandt, 2012:6; Bayeck, 2021:1-2). It was described as the greatest of the Kingdoms and became a Christian kingdom with the introduction of Catholic Christianity by 1491 (Hendrickx, 2021:1). At that period, the Kingdom of Kongo was deeply Christianized and represented a truly vibrant period of Africa's Christian history by the fifteenth–eighteenth century. At that period, Christianity became a well-

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<sup>2</sup> The Old Kingdom of Kongo stretched from Angola to the Zaire River and then further northwards until Gabon. In the south the boundaries were over the river Kwanza. It was a region of over 300,000 km<sup>2</sup>. There were six provinces (Mpenba, Soyo, Mbamba, Mbata, Nsundi and the Mpangu) plus some attached or vassal territories. The capital city was Ubanza (Sao Salvador). In the Portuguese epic, *Os Lusíadas*, Luis de Camões called the Kingdom of Kongo "the greatest of the Kingdoms" (Benjamin Hendrickx, 2021:1)

<sup>3</sup> Kongo's capital city was Mbanza Kongo, located in today's Angola. Hence, the Portuguese who arrived off the coast of Kongo found a powerful and organized kingdom. In an attempt to describe Kongo's architectural sophistication and development, "the Milanese ambassador in Lisbon compared the capital city Mbanza Kongo to the prestigious city of Évora, the royal residence in Portugal (Rebecca Bayeck, 2021:1-2).

established and deeply indigenized part of Kongolese culture and identity, strongly influenced by a primal religious worldview, so that the aspects of Kongolese culture that were not directly contrary to fundamental Church doctrine were deemed acceptable (Fretheim, 2016:92-96; Magesa, 2016:256).

During this phase of Christianization, missionaries employed an inclusive approach that allowed Christianity and Kongolese primal religion to coexist and enabled Christianity to authentically take root since they share the same cosmology. The Kongolese primal religious cosmology had a strong influence on the developing Church. It is in this context, for example, that the term *nganga* was adopted by the missionaries to translate the word priest so that Catholic priests and Kongolese religious leaders were perceived, to a large extent, as religious equals: as *ngangas*, both were understood to have special religious sensitivities and the ability to contact the Other World<sup>4</sup>. By the eighteenth century, Christianity was well established in Kongo (Fretheim, 2016:98; MacGaffey, 2018:56-57).

Unfortunately, after a few moments of simulacra collaboration, this first encounter between the Kongo kingdom and the Portuguese led to the beginning of the slave trade. Before Portugal's arrival, the Kingdom's rulers relied on slaves only to supply local foods for nobility, for example (Thornton, 1982:327; Harmon, 2002:27; Choices for the 21st Century Education Program, 2005:2-5). From 1514 to the early 1800s, the slave trade became an integral part of the economy of the area under the influence of Portuguese, Dutch, British, and French (Ocheni & Nwankwo, 2012:46; Woodbridge & James III, 2014:839-42). Heywood (2018:2-5) explains that "the relationship between the Portuguese and the Kongo rulers led to the development of slave' trade in a region where none existed before. Kongo relied on the export of slaves to sustain the diplomatic, material, and cultural ties the country developed with Europe."

By the 1600s, the Portuguese's desire to control the kingdom and all its resources led them to become more aggressive. After killing the King, the kingdom was divided, and the Kongo's previous political unity vanished and was replaced with anarchy, coupled with the distrust and

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<sup>4</sup> Within Kongolese primal religion, *nganga* referred to those who possessed special spiritual abilities or knowledge, and specifically the ability to contact the Other World. *Ngangas* possessed *kindoki* and could use their abilities for good purposes as diviners to gain insight and knowledge by various means including casting stones, interpreting dreams, seeing visions, or being possessed for lengthy periods of time. *Ngangas* were viewed as important members of the community and were accorded positions of respect. The earliest Portuguese missionaries noted the importance of this role and strategically used the term *nganga* to translate the word priest, thereby indigenizing the role and casting themselves as familiar players within the Kongolese religious worldview (Fretheim, 2016)

rejection of Europeans by the Bakongo (Choices for the 21st-century education program, 2005:4; Bayeck, 2021:2, Hendrickx, 2021:2).

It was during this period, dominated by the slave trade under the influence of Portuguese and Catholic mission in the Kongo Kingdom, that Kimpa Vita was born, and her Antonian, a political-religious movement, rose<sup>5</sup> to liberate the Kongo from the Catholic and colonial authorities as well as the Kongo aristocracy (Fretheim, 2016:93; Mokoko, 2017:8; 2021:1).

Indeed, Kimpa Vita, known as Dona Beatriz, was born around 1684 to parents who were members of the highest group of the Kongo aristocracy. She was twenty-two years old when she launched the movement (Mokoko Gampiot, 2017:43-45). She also received both the traditional initiation of Kimpassi, of which she was a priestess and an in-depth Catholic education. Born in a period of decadence in the kingdom, she declared that she met Saint Anthony in a dream and was charged with a message of restoring the Kingdom of Kongo<sup>6</sup>. By the end of the 17th/beginning of the 18th Century, the restoration of the Kingdom, the renaissance of political unity, the success of the "revealed" religion, and also an awakening of nationalism were the current political-religious movements (Hendrickx, 2021:4, 6-8; Bayeck, 2021:3).

Kimpa Vita's movement is the Congolese prophet-initiated and oldest African independent movement derived from Christianity. It was one of the first instances of African appropriation of the Christian message and the Bible, combining political and religious aims into what would become a long ethno-messianic history. Indeed, she declared that:

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph were born and lived in Kongo in the Sao Salvador area. Kongo is the holy land - the founders of Christianity are black by race. Christ was born in Sao Salvador (Bethlehem) and baptized in Nsundi (Nazareth). The Virgin Mary's mother was a slave of the black leader (Marquis) Nzimba Npanghi, and Saint Frances belonged to the

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<sup>5</sup> Antonianism, was led by a Congolese prophet called Kimpa Vita, also known as Dona Beatriz (her Christian name), in the early eighteenth century. She initiated a nationalist and spiritual revival movement with a discourse that perfectly suited the mentality and expectations of her compatriots, whom she successfully mobilized for the restoration of the kingdom of Kongo.

<sup>6</sup> Kimpa Vita began proclaiming the impending arrival of Judgment Day, putting forward three main themes. Firstly, she condemned the use of the cross and images of Christ, which many Congolese perceived as new, more powerful fetishes than the traditional magic. Secondly, she preached for the first time that a Black Christ would come to liberate oppressed peoples from bondage. Thirdly, she prophesied the prompt restoration of the Kingdom of Kongo, bringing with it the return of prosperity. Appropriating the imported Catholic saints in the traditional logic of ancestor worship, she identified Jesus, Mary, St Francis, St Alexis, and St Anthony of Padua as Kongo ancestors, explaining that Kongo was the actual Holy Land and that the founding figures of Christianity were African (Gampiot Mukoko, 2021:2).

clan of the Marquis of Vunda. Within two years, she elaborated her dogma and constructed a rudimentary Church organization, basing her doctrine upon her belief that blacks differ from whites (Hendrickx, 2021:5)

Her teaching was considered heretical and subversive by the Roman Catholic Church and the aristocracy of the kingdom. As many people were drawn to her in the ruins of the old capital of Kongo, she was arrested and burned as a witch and heretic in 1706 (Lubunga, 2016:530).

Hence, questions remain about the short spiritual dimensions of Kimpa Vita's ministry due to the dual relationship to Christianity. The former is her religious experience, including the Kongo mystical tradition of Kimpassi, into which she has been not just initiated but inducted as a priestess<sup>7</sup>. The latter is because she belonged to the Catholic Church through her baptism and catechism training. All these beings and concepts have played a role in understanding and interpreting Kimpa Vita's brand of Catholicism. On this basis, her doctrine was built on that of the Portuguese Catholic Church, and allusions to Saint Anthony abounded in the prayers of Portuguese sailors. However, the act of appropriating Saint Anthony and having him intervene in Congolese politics with attributes other than those of Christ and the Holy Spirit was entirely novel (Mukoko Gampiot, 2017:43-48; Hendrickx, 2021:3).

Despite the controversies about the concrete influence of Dona Beatriz in Christian Congolese areas, her messianic preaching deeply shaped Congolese history and collective identity. Without having wielded any official power, Kimpa Vita is considered a historic forerunner of African messianism and millenarianism by the establishment of an African-Catholic indigenous version of Christianity. Today, various movements, such as Bundu dia Kongo, recognize their appurtenance to Kimpa Vita ideology (Hendrickx, 2021:1, 10).

It is also during this period, which corresponds with the second exposition of the Kongo to Europe, at the age of exploration, that the Baptist missionary reached the mouth of the Congo River (Ohihon, 2022:4).

The encounter between David Livingstone and Morton Stanley at Ujiji will be a determinant for the history of the Congo. Stanley is the pivotal actor who ended the pre-colonial era by continuing the discovery mission of David Livingstone. The colonial system of exploitation

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<sup>7</sup> In the accounts of her contemporaries, she was an "anti-sorceress" who practiced healing, and this status necessarily enhanced her prestige among her fellow Congolese, for the *nganga*, the anti-witch or medicine (wo)man, was rather well perceived in the Kongo society of the time. The *nganga marinda* were the traditional religious agents; they were the persons communicating with the spiritual world, the mediums and even priests.

(commerce, Christianity, and civilization) is Livingstone's invention to abolish slavery and slave trading<sup>8</sup> (Harmon, 2002: 40-41; Milbrandt, 2012: 18; Mokoko Gampiot, 2017:27-28; Ohihon, 2022:4; Renou-Nativel, 2020:6). Unfortunately, his program of redeeming Africa from slavery and paganism via commercial penetration certainly led to the subjugation and division of the continent by the great powers of Europe later in the century (Kilbride, 2016:806). Furthermore, it is the result of Stanley's mission's continuation (1879-1880 and 1887-1890) that introduced him to the Belgian King Leopold II for his private expedition to Congo (Harmon, 2002: 43-44).

#### **2.2.2.1.2. Colonial Congolese Initiated Churches (King Leopold 1885-1908 and Congo free state: 1908-1960)**

A review of the then conditions is important for the best understanding of how the Congolese initiated the church and led it to grow.

The second and critical phase in the development of the DR Congo corresponds to the colonialism of Africa Sub-Saharan. In Congo, the process of colonialism was preceded by the wave of missionaries and intensified with H. Morton Stanley's travels from 1877-1878. Stanley's missions in the Congo enabled his encounter with King Leopold II of Belgium for the establishment of the Congo Independent State as his fiefdom from 1885 to 1908 (Congo Independent State) and a colony of the Belgian government from 1908—1960 (Covington-Ward, 2007: 75; Hesselbein, 2007:16).

When Stanley established the 'king's authority' in the 'Congo Free State', he tried to replicate the political and administrative frameworks he knew from Europe, though in a minimalist and perverted form. Administrative and state structures were imposed on a population that had – depending on the region, language, and historical experience – a variety of political organizations. Some felt themselves to be descendants of the Kingdom of Kongo, with a hierarchical form of political organization and patterns of trade with distant lands. Even sovereignty, which theoretically lay in the hands of Leopold II, was in practice exercised by the state administration and the military as well as by missionaries and companies (Hesselbein, 2007:16-19).

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<sup>8</sup> By abolishing the slave trade, therefore, legitimate commerce and the introduction of the ways and means of civilization were made as probable as they were possible; and, hand in hand with civilization, the teachings of the Christian missionary would dignify labor, inculcate peace, secure honesty, and generally elevate the whole of the population (Arthur Montefiore, 2016:72)

Colonialism ushered in forced labour as the second brand of slavery. Colonization was an excuse for every possible form of intervention: military expeditions bought slaves from local traders to use them as 'volunteers'; when villages were taken, their inhabitants were also captured and shown little mercy. Thus, in Africa, the colonial powers were reduced to 'slavery' to whole sections of the local population by forcing them to do all kinds of labour, drudgery, and compulsory service, it was inevitable that the slave trade would continue to exist in other forms (Duchet, 1978:32-35, 44-45).

Congolese experienced the worst colonial slavery with more brutality and atrocities, mostly during the phase of the Red Rubber boom. Many voices testified that the context of Congo's atrocities is the worst in the world's history due to its extreme violence. The brutality of the rubber collection tactics resulted in arms mutilation and the deaths of an estimated 10 million people (Gewald, 2006:473; Loffman, 2023; Lowes& Montero, 2019; 2021:2-6).

In sum, the slaves still provided the labour power needed for the production of colonial wealth. There existed a variety of practices in a variety of different contexts and periods: (a) domestic slavery and prisoners of war in feudal times; (b) the slave trade with the establishment of trading posts; (c) the replacement of the slave trade by the forced labour in the colonial countries, a form a system of exploitation. Consequently, the abolition of slavery and institutions or practices similar to slavery only became a fact with national independence (Duchet, 1978:47-49).

The slave trade was the most destructive activity during the pre-colonial and colonial eras in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in the Congo. It also has been the common threat that prevailed during these two periods of the history of the Congo Democratic (Heywood, 2018:242; Ross, 2020:94-96).

It is in these political, economic, and social contexts that Simon Kimbangu was born in 1889 in Nkamba and launched Kimbanguism in 1921, during the decadence of the Kongo Kingdom and the rise of colonial Congo, all under Western influence. Unlike Kimpa Vita's connection to the Catholic faith, Simon Kimbangu, besides his initiation as nganga, was born and grew up as a catechist in the Protestant Baptist faith, which had been working already since 1878 and before the advent of colonialism in 1908 (Vellut, 2005:14; Mokoko Gampiot, 2017:29). He evolved in

this duality until he was called for the minister by 1918<sup>9</sup> (Covington-Ward, 2007: 78; Lubunga, 2016:531-32; Mokoko Gampiot, 2017:29, 63).

Kimbanguism claims to be the ultimate realization of a prophetic chain initiated in the ancient Kingdom of Kongo in the seventeenth century. Simon Kimbangu and his followers were inspired by Kimpa Vita's hope to nationalize Christianity and rebuild the kingdom of Kongo both mystically and spiritually. Furthermore, besides his charismatic dimension of healing, by his apostolic circuits, Kimbangu also preached against the colonial order. He stood against colonial domination by over-emphasizing his famous and prophetic sentence: "The White man shall become black, and the Black man shall become white." Thus, the Bible was to be read and served as a foundation for commitment to the cause of racial liberation. Passages from the book of Exodus narrating the liberation of the children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt offered parallels with Africans' oppression, which made them popular among Congolese audiences. Kimbangu focused his discourse on the deteriorated Black identity: he preached Black liberation from the colonial yoke and prophesied that a temple would be built in Nkamba as a sign of Black spiritual liberation (Mokoko Gampiot, 2017:78).

Despite his imprisonment, Kimbangu's movement rapidly gained momentum. This is because his discourse was that of a nationalist but also a Black man aware of the differences and the gap between Blacks and Whites in terms of progress. His message suited the expectations of his compatriots; Awareness of the colonial situation thus aroused a nationalist and anticolonial sentiment among the people from the Belgian Congo, the French Congo, and Angola. The post-Simon Kimbangu brand of Kimbanguism bases its doctrines on three theological sources: The Bible; the prophetic speeches of its spiritual leader, Diangienda (the founder's youngest son); and the church's inspired hymns (Mokoko Gampiot, 2017:78-83).

At a more political level, Kimbangu's teaching made the Congolese aware of the real problems and rekindled their dissatisfaction with their social situation, including oppression, dire poverty, and a lack of inventions by Black people in the White-dominated field of science. Kimbangu was regarded as a liberator whose mission was to bring peace, prosperity, and happiness, but also a new science that would be more powerful than that of the colonizers. Kimbangu's activities, being both political and religious, did cause a reaction from colonial authorities and

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<sup>9</sup> A member of the Baptist Church, Kimbangu rose to the position of catechist, teaching the Bible to his fellow Congolese. But he entered history through a more personal experience pertaining to Christian mysticism, which led Efraim Andersson to describe him as a "natural mystic."<sup>9</sup> His position gave him the opportunity to live permanently in contact with both his fellow Congolese and European colonists who belonged to the same church as he did. Contemporary Protestant observers of Kimbangu's activities described him as "a decent, orderly man who read his Bible and did his work conscientiously." Mokoko Gampiot, 2017:66

religious leaders. Kimbangu's "goal is to create a religion that fits the natives' mind set. . . . Everybody can see that our European religions, fraught with abstract notions, do not answer the needs of the African, who demands protection and solid facts (Mokoko Gampiot, 2017:52, 67

It also emphasizes the role and the successive embodiments of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, as Paraclete, the Holy Spirit has already come and was incarnated first in Simon Kimbangu himself and reincarnated twice in Diangenda and Simon Kimbangu Kiangana, the present top leader (Fancello & Mary, 2010:43-44).

During the colonial period (1908-1960) and alongside Catholic, Protestant missions and Kimbanguism remained the most popular and best-organized independent church in the DRC. The colonial state divided up the colony into spiritual franchises, giving each approved mission group its territory. At independence in 1960, some forty-six Protestant missionary groups were at work (Fancello & Mary, 2010; 116). Despite the persecution, Kimbangu was arrested in September 1921 and his death in 1951. The church was recognized on the eve of Independence in 1959 and would become a strong community after Independence. The major contribution of Kimbangu to Christianity in Africa and the DRC was the integration of charismatic experiences, particularly healing and prophecy, into Christian life. The Belgian government persecuted and arrested Kimbangu in September 1921, and he was kept in prison until he died in 1951 (Lubunga, 2016:531-33; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2016:262-63).

#### **2.2.2.1.3. Post-colonial Congolese Initiated Churches**

The post-colonial history of the church and particularly of the AICs is evolving hand in hand with the overall history of the country. The DRC's post-colonial history is the continuation of what happened during the Kingdom or pre-colonial and colonial periods. The post-colonial mindset and deeds proved clearly that the seeds of division, disorder, and chaos sown during the previous stages of Congolese development have grown. Short after the completion of its independence today, Congo is the harvest of systematic leadership abuses. The actual situations of the DRC can be retraced through three democratic revolutions.

The first democratic revolution was the anticolonial struggle for independence that was completed by the 1960s. This first phase corresponds with the first republic (1960-1964). Shortly after the independence, disorder and chaos settled in the Congo on the grounds of tribal, ethnic, and political divisions. Halas, instead of a democracy in which the state was held to represent the interests of the population as a whole, an authoritarian "modernizing" state gave way to mere autocracy, one-partyism, and military rule by 1965 (Ranger, 2008:9).

So, the second democratic revolution (1960-1990) was the challenge to one-partyism and military rule and reached its climax by the 1980s. This challenge led to the collapse of one-party regimes and the introduction of an electoral system with one candidate. Unfortunately, this attempt did not ensure democracy, and neither did the concept of multipartyism in the 1990s.

The third democratic revolution is the struggle against the presidential third term, the struggle for incorrupt “transparency”; and the struggle not only to develop electoral institutions but also to achieve a democratic culture and practice (Ranger, 2008:9).

This short overview describes the deliberated non-preparation of leadership equipment as future managers of public affairs. At the independence, the country counted only seventeen Congolese who earned a university degree for 120 political parties. Belgium refused to allow Africans in government posts, Africans had little sense of the Congo as a unified political entity. Most Africans thought of themselves as members of their ethnic group, not of the country of Congo. Additionally, ninety-five per cent of the economic assets of the Belgian Congo were in the hands of the 110,000 whites that lived there (about one per cent of the population). It was clear that self-rule would be difficult for the Congo (CHOICES for the 21st Century Education Program, 2005:36).

It is not surprising that most of the AICs started emerging timidly between the 1970s and the 1980s and exploded by the 1990s due to the following factors.

The DRC church is one of the top ten largest countries in the world and one of the three biggest African countries, with Nigeria and Ethiopia in the number of adherents (Hackett *et al.*, 2011:11, 15; Center for the Study of Global Christianity, 2013; Lindhardt, 2015:1-2; Wariboko, 2014:1-2,5; Zurlo *et al.*, 2020; Majawa, 2016:2-3).

## **2.2.2.2. Internal factors**

### **2.2.2.2.1. The local initiative of Congolese leadership**

Overall, it is clear that AICs emerged due to a multiplicity of factors. These factors continue to influence the growth and dynamism of the movement in the contemporary period.

Both the rapid expansion of the AICs and the shift are the most important experiences of Christianity in the twentieth century. On the eve of the crisis in the DRC that coincided with the arrival of the Pentecostal by the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, various spokesmen of prosperity message, faith movement, and charismatic obedience led mass evangelism and training in the

country. Many Congolese were so influenced that they were mentored and trained (Mwaura, 2008:179; Mayrargue, 2008: 4; Kapuku, 2014:64).

Many youth leaders rose from this time and launched their Churches with their creative genius. These initiatives were an authentic response to their sociocultural environment, a contribution without any contribution of foreign missions. The impact of their minister goes over wide areas of Africa, no matter what they confront; they affirm the positive values of African culture (Venter, 1999:106; Nmah, 2010:482; Molobi, 2011:4; Vellem, 2015:2).

Therefore, besides Kimbanguism, whose children's leadership has enabled the sustainability of the movement from the colonial threats, the major part of AICs/ERC founders are young, both men and women. Church leadership is no longer a close arena of white men, neither a reaction to the actions of missionaries, but an African initiative. Furthermore, these movements were not historical accidents: they were the outcome of very deliberate and calculated steps that were taken by Africans (Woodbridge & James III, 2014:838, 42; Chitando, 2016:283:287). Africa has made a major contribution to the ongoing shift of the Centre of gravity of Christianity to the global South taking place in the twentieth and early twenty-first century. The completion of this process also demonstrates that the church in the DRC and Africa can serve its members and fulfil its mission proportionally to its ability to develop leaders for ministering to its members (Jenkins, 2002: 2-3, 79; Sundkler & Steed, 2004; Morrison, 2011; Van Klinken, 2015:131-132; Zurlo *et al.*, 2020: 9-10; 2021:18-19). African autochthones preachers, evangelists, catechists, schoolteachers, lay readers, nurses, petty traders, and women of note have greatly contributed to carrying the Gospel into the heart of Africa (Ranger, 2008; 9-10).

#### **2.2.2.2.2. The content of the gospel (prosperity message and faith movement)**

The social, economic, and political factors of the 1980s in the DRC led the common people to look for rapid solutions. Facilitated by media technology, the prosperity gospel and the faith movement responded to this latent desire. African indigenous religions assumed that spiritual power would result in social and financial power. The Western televangelists seemed to embody this principle, and the content of the message that was spread related to the existing historic African worldview and context takes spiritual causality seriously (Olumide, 2019:7; Kgatle, 2019:2; J. Asamoah-Gyadu, 2020:37-38, 40; Öhlmann *et al.*, 2020: 5-8).

The faith and prosperity message seemed to provide quick solutions to the political and economic crisis of the 1980s-1990s, when most people in most countries in Africa suffered a

drastic fall in their material standard of living and poverty increased across the continent (Ukah, 2005: 96-97; 2007:11). It was by this period that it had been noticed a visible shift from mission-led to Charismatic and African-led churches, and many churches were founded by natives around Africa, particularly in DRC. Hence, the emphasis on charismatic renewal and the exercise of prophetic ministries and healing and deliverance, the prosperity gospel that made them attractive to young Africans and created the implosion of the Christian experience in contemporary Africa (Mayrarguel, 2008:4-5, 7; Asamoah-Gyadu, 2016:263; Olumide, 2019:7).

### **2.2.2.2.3. Internal pressures and the weakness of political leadership**

The internal pressures relate to the political, economic, and social factors of the date under the dictatorship of political rules that led to the advent of democracy by the 1990s (Olowola, 1984:24).

The wave of Democracy by the 1990s changed the attitude of rulers who deliberately relaxed the restriction on religious issues. Christianity in the DRC changed tremendously during the Post-colonial (Klaus Koschorke, 2005:9-16; Olumide, 2019:5-7). Since that moment, the authority braked control over this nascent church that could operate without restriction due to weak political leadership; the terrain was ever favourable to the proliferation of these prophetic and miracle-driven movements that met the existential needs, proposing quick solutions to the problems of poverty and sickness for (Chitando, Gunda & Kügle, 2014:8-9; Burki, 2015:1-2; Lubunga, 2016:533-34, 554).

Indeed, disorders of all kinds weakened Kinshasa society since the end of President Mobutu's reign. Furthermore, social poverty, violence and the excesses of parallel economy accentuated what the traditional Churches call to Kinshasa the “anti-values”.

Indeed, the emergence of “revival churches” intensified in the 1990s following the wind of individual freedoms and associations, which blew during the sovereign national conference (CNC 1991-1992) (Kapuku, 2014:60).

Where disorder appears, the devil can also make a profit and inoculate the false. 1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2Tim.3:1-5; 2Ti 3:5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

#### **2.2.2.2.4. The legacy of schism or fragmentation**

The trend to schism and to split into various churches played an important role in the rapid growth of the AICs. Indeed, the trend to split is a religious legacy inherited from colonial mission agencies and protestant denominationalism. By introducing a multiplicity of churches as an effective policy, colonizers, both politicians and missionaries, normalized and freed the establishment of the church by those who wished (Pauw, 1995:9-10; Kollman, 2010:4; Nmah, 2010:484; Bello, 2013:443-444; Goheen, 2014:196).

Denominationalism in Africa is responsible for the Christian expansion and revivals as shown in that continent today (Choi, 1999:13). Christian denominations in African Christianity are deeply divided along confessional lines, largely because of the Christian denominationalism that had been planted by Western missionary-founded churches. The motivation of these many divisions encompasses doctrinal and cultural differences and economic, political, and ideological conflicts (Ndlovu, 2016:54).

Fragmentation and schism, coupled with the absence of a central authority, represent a permissive expansion of the AICs around Africa. Historically, the problem has continued to remain at the root as an abettor to the genuine growth of the movement (Mayrarguel, 2008:6; Olumide, 2019:15). Unfortunately, Mugambi (2016:106) notices that the fragmentation has led to entrepreneurial Christianity and faith branding. The number of Christian denominations grew from 1,600 in 1900 to 45,000 today, with projections of 70,000 in 2050. Nowadays, there is a multitude of denominations and organizational models. The worst is that each of these denominations represents a particular organizational model (Spitzeck, 2018:3).

#### **2.2.2.3. External factors**

##### **2.2.2.3.1. The shift of the Christian Centre of leadership**

The external and global forces related to the ongoing shift of Christianity's gravity Center from the Global North to the Global South and its effects on the church in the DRC. For some, this shift was foreseen since the 1950s. Meanwhile, by the way, this happened in contradiction with those who predicted the dominance of Islam, the phenomenon remains the most important in the history of Christianity in the 21st century. It engendered a phenomenal explosion of Christianity in Africa in recent decades, both in relative and absolute numbers (Nmah, 2010:482; Van Klinken, 2015:131-132; Johnson *et al.*, 2016 :1, 22-23; Zurlo *et al.*, 2020:14; Adedibu, 2018:2; Deressa, 2020:365).

Its completion by the 1970s and the 1980s was inevitable and described as the rebirth of Christianity for some, and for others, the “Third Church, the Southern Church”. Meanwhile, what caught the attention was how fast this phenomenon has been happening in the last seventy years (Woodbridge and James III, 2013:835-36; Lindhardt, 2015:1-2; Anderson, 2019:52; Deressa, 2020:363-365).

#### **2.2.2.3.2. Global political and economic forces**

Furthermore, there are also global factors in the political, economic, social, and religious fields that eased this phenomenon, as noticed by Ukah (2007:11):

The economic crisis of the mid1980s, which resulted in the adoption of World Bank/IMF-designed structural adjustment, resulted in the retrenchment of workers, high graduate unemployment, social disorganization, and near economic meltdown. This situation fueled the quest for spiritual solutions to people’s many problems, but also the ready acceptance of religious answers to social and material questions. Gradually, a new class of religious elite with a university education and a strong appetite for foreign ideas and tastes emerged, bearing a new religious message.

Thus, in such a situation of political uncertainty and economic hardships, indigenous forms of Christianity spread quietly and quickly, and the quest of people is about a kind of spirituality that relates to its worldview. It is on this new message, known variously as Prosperity Christianity, Health and Wealth Gospel, or The Faith Movement that most new churches were founded and consolidated by the turbulent of the 1990s and promised individuals a comprehensive solution to all their worries on condition (Robert, 2000:53; Ukah, 2007:12; Duncan, 2014:10).

#### **2.2.2.3.3. Global Pentecostalism and pneumatic influence**

We cannot separate the spiritual experiences of Pentecostals from the wider context of the political, economic, and social power of the then time (Olumide, 2019:4-6).

Both globalization and Pentecostalism, mostly in their new form, have greatly influenced and contributed to the rapid growth of the AICs all over Africa and in the DRC. In almost all denominations in Africa, one can recognize the profound influence of Pentecostal spirituality. Furthermore, with the technological advances in mass communication and people mobility, African Christians have produced a creative synthesis that combines the universal truth of Christianity with charismatic spirituality born out of their tradition (Moon, 2021:1).

Many factors justify the receptivity and the appropriation of Pentecostal features by Africans and Congolese. Pentecostalism was, in many ways, a natural fit for the African culture. The pneumatological emphasis of Pentecostalism spoke to the spiritual holism of the African worldview. The worldview that Pentecostal addresses is the same as the African culture and cosmology. Bompani (2010:309) explains:

The attraction of the AICs is that these churches, as well as some varieties of Pentecostalism, take the negative forces within African cosmology seriously by responding to real problems as perceived by Africans, namely witchcraft, sorcery, and evil spirits, understanding that it is acceptable to interpret socio-economic hardships and deprivation in contemporary society within the context of adverse cosmic forces. Thus, the AICs were considered experts in granting people protection and fortification against the powers of evil, which accounts to a large degree for their popularity and growth.

Pentecostal's influence spread over all of Sub-Saharan Africa, and new churches were founded by individuals in the late 1970s and 1980s; they consolidated in the turbulent 1990s, a period of democracy and multipartyism (Ukah, 2007:12; Bompani, 2010; Togarasei, 2016:2-8). In a time of economic crises of varying severity, the social, political, and economic collapse, Pentecostal's pneumatic and prosperity gospel was welcome as a spontaneous means for solving the dilemma. Today, major features of the AICs have Pentecostal connotations (Lindhardt, 2018:6-7, Sperber & Hern, 2018:830-832). Since that date, Christianity in Africa has experienced major change and phenomenal growth in Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity across the continent (Freeman, 2020:44).

### **2.3. The Challenges of the AIC in the DRC**

The church initiated by the Congolese has undergone various challenges through the ages of its evolution. The history of its inception and evolution highlighted indirectly and overtly many challenges some have been overcome, while some others need to be addressed diligently.

#### **2.3.1. Proliferation instead of development of churches**

The first type of challenge relates to the type of church development. Instead of growing, churches in every city of the DRC are proliferating. Many voices are sounding and echoing this abnormal situation that is perceptible in every street, particularly in the working-class districts of the city. There are almost three motivating forces behind this anarchical religious situation: the socio-economic situation of the country with a high rate of poverty and

unemployment, the non-respect of legal policy regulation, and the influence of migration through push-pull forces.

Indeed, religious and many researchers have noticed this alarming situation of the church, which they attributed to the poverty and the socio-economic situation of the DRC for three decades. In 2014, there were more than 17000 independent churches; to date, there are more than 42000 in the country, and 15000 of them are located in Kinshasa. The pace of the proliferation is too accelerated (Evangeliquesinfo, 2024; Radio Okapi, 2019; Nsambana Bonkako, 2014: 261-267; Grace Amzati, 2024). The members attend the church to solve their misery, while for the leaders, the church is lucrative.

The non-respect of the legal regulation policy is another cause of church proliferation in the country. There still exist some articles and legal dispositions that regulate religious matters, like Article 24 of the 1964 Constitution.

The study identified various motivations for migration in the DRC. There are push and pull, economics and conflict motivations (Corker. 2013: 4; Thompson, 2011: 10). Most leaders move with their church from one area to another, particularly from the inner parts of the capital and main cities of the country. This relocation of their churches is posing the problem of promiscuity of churches in a very small area.

Proliferation is not necessarily positive for church growth. It does not take into account the existence of other churches which operate in the same area. Thus, it is a form of disease of uncontrolled growth, the cancer, of cells. It is a disease of church growth because it demonstrates a lack of unity within the body of Christ. A church that is set up next to or opposite an existing one causes noise pollution, which affects the health of neighbouring people.

### **2.3.2. Leadership**

Leadership is the first challenge that the AICs in the DRC are facing. These insufficiencies of leadership qualities, skills and mindsets have a great repercussion on the overall church. Leadership challenge manifests in diverse manners.

#### **2.3.2.1. Educational background of leaders**

The issue related to the hermeneutics and bible interpretation is the apparent concern of the lack of theological education background of most of the AICs leaders. If most of them have resolved the issue and have graduated from certain theological institutions, the main

motivation remains conformity with the legal framework of the country instead of enhancing the doctrinal concern. After this training, there seem to be no changes in the content. This educational deficiency leads to the fact that most of them fail to set appropriate biblical vision, mission and objectives of the church. People without vision are blind.

### **2.3.2.2. Lack of accurate leadership skills**

Leadership is the most contextual process that can exist. When leadership lacks both cultural and contextual intelligence, the result is catastrophic. The lack of leadership skills and intelligence generates the non-adaptability in leadership. In the case of the DRC, there is also an oversteering more on what attracts than what transforms church members.

The actual context of VUCA needs innovative and adaptive leaders who have developed discernment and missional spirituality.

### **2.3.2.3. Lack of strategies and tactics**

The lack of appropriate strategies and tactics for developing the church is another challenge that leadership faces when the church is more attractional than incarnational and focuses more on increasing numbers than the transformation.

### **2.3.3. Non-respect of the legal framework**

Today, the AICs operate under the umbrella of ERC (hereafter Eglise de Réveil au Congo). The ERC, as an organization, is firmly spread in the DRC, counting almost 20.850 denominations with 100.000 church workers in leadership positions. The ERC is a confessional non-profit organization with a legal personality. It is created by Ministerial Order No. 278/03 of February 6, 2003, and Order No. 206/CAB/MIN/J/2009 of December 4, 2009, granting it the Interface of all churches and communities, ministries and prayer groups charismatics and revival in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Journal Officiel, 2013:6-7; RadioCongoShare, 2022:1).

The ERC also finds its legal foundations in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of December 10, 1948, the Constitution of February 18, 2006, of the Democratic Republic of Congo, particularly in its title II relating to fundamental rights and the Declaration of the Second Vatican Council on religious freedom (Kaoudji, 2015:265-66).

Twentieth-century Euro-Americans did not abandon evangelism or missions. For example, the American Bill Bright founded Campus Crusade for Christ in 1951, circulating billions of “Four Spiritual Laws” tracts and screening the Jesus Film (beginning in 1979) for 5.1 billion people in

234 countries. Another American, Billy Graham, the best-known evangelical of the twentieth century, was touring Europe by 1947 (Brown, 2015:57-59).

Meanwhile, the respect for the legal framework remains a great concern, particularly the policy of implantation and exercise. Many of these churches operate noisily in a very small perimeter. One result is the discretization among the population. This leads to a lack of collaboration between church leaders.

#### **2.3.4. Hermeneutics questions: Stereotype, conformism and Lack of innovation**

The lack of appropriate training in theological issues leads to doctrinal blindness. Most of the leaders act as clones. They reproduce some doctrinal practices and content without any prior discernment. Instead of challenging false teachings and false doctrines, the lack of discernment and hermeneutical skills blinds them; they become their vehicle. The point is that blind people cannot lead people to a safe place. As we will see through Paul's ministry, false doctrines are always an updated matter that efficient church leaders should be equipped to address firmly.

This challenge is also doctrinal and theological. Poverty, migration and the socio-economic crisis of the proliferation of churches in the DRC have conditioned the type of message that leaders are communicating. The church uses attractional methods more than incarnational ones. The doctrine has more content that solves the existential problems than the transformational ones of the members.

The proliferation of churches across the country whose two main major causes are socio-economic, which lead to poverty and unemployment. Thus, several churches are born as a solution to the leader. This is demonstrated by the way members are called upon each Sunday to contribute to the various needs of the church and the leader.

#### **2.3.5. Poverty and jobless membership**

The issue of poverty and meagre income of the majority of the AICs members has manifold consequences. This situation influences the content of the gospel, which becomes members' existential situation-oriented. Most AIC members are unemployed. For those who have one, it is a very average income. The church has thus become a place for a better life, a place in search of a quicker solution. The direct consequence affects the type of message, which is centred on the existential. As mentioned above, most churches attract members to the extent that they communicate these messages effectively.

### **2.3.6. The improper ministerial motivations**

Improper motivations for the ministry are another challenge the AICs in the DRC are facing. Poverty and the persisting condition of joblessness inspire the most courageous people to enter and perform the ministry to solve their daily existential issues.

### **2.4. Conclusion**

This chapter highlighted important issues about the rise, the development and the common challenges the AICs are facing in Africa and worldwide. About the rise, the church has identified internal and external factors that motivated the founders to initiate the church in the DRC. Most of these causative factors are also acting as agent for their rapid proliferation. Among these factors, globalization and its related results (urbanization and migration) have played a very great role.

The research also identified five challenges the leadership of the AICs is facing. They range from leadership issues, the non-respect of the legal polity of church regulation, poor hermeneutical habits, the social condition of membership and improper motivations.

So, before proposing some guidelines for overcoming these challenges and improving the leadership process, the next chapter describes the scope and the impacts of globalization, urbanization and migration on the AIC church as they process to develop the church in the DRC.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE SCOPE AND IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION, URBANIZATION AND MIGRATION ON AIC LEADERSHIP AND CHURCH GROWTH

#### 3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has addressed the issue of factors that motivated African and Congolese leaders, in particular, to launch and develop the church in the DRC. Then, the light was also shed on the nature of leadership challenges they are dealing with.

The question that this research aims to answer is: “What is the scope and impact of urbanization, migration and globalization on AIC leadership?” In the previous chapter, globalization has been identified as one of the factors that influenced both the rise and development of the church in Africa and the DRC. The purpose of the present chapter is to use relevant scholarly material to describe the way globalization, through all its related results, has influenced the rise and is still impacting the development of these Churches Initiated by Africans and Congolese.

Although there have been several factors that have facilitated its establishment and development, the impact of globalization as a global phenomenon through urbanization and migration has been and will remain the most remarkable. Globalization and urbanization produce a domino effect impact, including the growth of agglomerations. The creation of new cities increased large agglomerations with gigantic structures. The mission has become increasingly urbanized and must adapt to new urban and media realities.

#### 3.2. Globalization

##### 3.2.1. Definition

Globalization is a term variously employed, even by experts, within a single discipline. There is substantial debate, not only about its definition but also about its significance and how it shapes our world. The term *globalization* as it's used today became common use in the 1980s, reflecting several technological advancements that increased international interactions (Scholte, 2007:4; James & Steger, 2014:430). It is generally understood to include two inter-related elements: the opening of international borders to increasingly fast flows of goods, services, finance, people and ideas; and the changes in institutions and policies at national and international levels that facilitate or promote such flows (Herzog, 2014: 391-394; Demir, Canakci & Egri, 2021: 1-11; Lodhi, 2021: 522-524 ). Therefore, Globalization is a social and

cultural process in which individuals of different cultural backgrounds interact with each other in all spheres of life more intensively than before. This integration is increasingly exposing people to different ways of thinking, cultural values and new forms of family life (Crozet, 2017:4-6).

Globalization also refers to the integration of economics and societies all over the world; it involves technological, economic, political, and cultural exchanges made possible largely by advances in communication, transportation, and infrastructure.

### **3.2.2. Effects of globalization**

Globalization means the speedup of movements and exchanges (of human beings, goods, services, capital, technologies, or cultural practices) all over the planet. Globalization has numerous effects at individual, societal, and country levels. Some of them are overviewed as follows.

#### **3.2.2.1. Urbanization**

Urbanization is the first result of globalization. By definition, urbanization refers to the population concentration, which is the relative proportion of people residing in urban areas in a given area (such as a region, country, or continent). Urbanization is also a process whereby people move from rural areas or the countryside to cities for permanent residence or temporary business activities. Urban growth reflects a general increase in either the land area or the population size of an urban area. Thus, Urbanization—how cities develop and grow—is now central to determining people’s quality of life (Philips, 2009:148-149; Benesh, 2015:35; UN-Habitat, 2023:2).

An urbanized area is “a place and the adjacent densely settled surrounding territory that together comprise a minimum population of 50,000 people,” where the “densely settled surrounding territory” is defined as “one or more contiguous blocks having a population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile.” Urbanization is the process that involves the emergence and growth of cities (Ompad *et al.*, 2007:53, 58).

Much of that migration took place in the last century, at the turn of which less than fifteen per cent of the global population lived in urban contexts (Walter, 2011:54). Currently, over half the world’s population lives in urban areas (Činčala, 2019:210). The growth of the city is the key factor in the increase of mega-cities around the world. The city changes its name as it grows in size. A large metropolitan is an area with a population of 1.5 million or more. A metropolitan is

an area with a population between 500,000 and 1.5 million. The medium-size urban areas have a population between 200,000 and 500,000, and the small urban area has a population between 50,000 and 200,000.

There exists no harmonized global definition of cities and rural areas. Nonetheless, for the study, cities are circumscribed and relatively small areas where concentrated individuals perform almost all the activities of their lives (sleeping, working, eating, and playing) (OECD/EU 2020, 2020:3; Ortman *et al.*, 2020:4).

Cities have become a positive and potent force for addressing sustainable economic growth, development, and prosperity. They drive innovation, consumption, and investment in both developed and developing countries. The urban and sub-urban pixels constitute the “built-up” part of the city, while the fringe and captured open spaces make up the “urbanized open space”. Collectively, these constitute the urban extent (Eyita-Okon, 2022:7).

#### **3.2.2.1.1. Global trends in urbanization**

Urbanization and growth go hand in hand. Urbanization fosters growth and is generally associated with greater productivity, opportunities, and quality of life for all. Cities create wealth, generate employment, and drive human progress by harnessing the forces of agglomeration and industrialization (UN-Habitat, 2016: iv, 4).

The Global urban trend is an increase in its urban population. Nevertheless, urban areas are expected to absorb virtually all the future growth of the world's population. By 2036, 62 per cent (5.4 billion) of the global population is expected to reside in urban areas. Ninety-six per cent of urban growth will occur in the less developed regions of East Asia, South Asia, and Africa (Misilu *et al.*, 2010:243; OECD/UN ECA/AfDB, 2022:11; Dodman *et al.*, 2023: 916-17).

According to UN-Habitat, urbanization continues in all regions at differing paces, and by 2022, more than half of the world’s population—56 per cent—were living in cities. This figure is expected to rise to 68 per cent by 2050. An estimated 2 billion people are expected to join the global urban population by 2050, with all regions projected to become more urbanized (UN-Habitat, 2023:2-3). This rapid phenomenon has various causes ranging from national fertility, people migrations, and economic growth. There are also effects like the rise of various types of

Settlements like cosmopolitan, metropolitan, mega-cities<sup>10</sup>, city zoning, and increase of slums, etc... according to the level of urbanization<sup>11</sup>.

### **3.2.2.1.2. Urbanization in Africa**

Since pre-colonial times, urbanization has always been a major preoccupation in Africa. OECD/UN ECA/AfDB (2022:4) contends that:

Urbanization is one of the most profound transformations that the African continent will undergo in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Since 1990, the number of cities in Africa has doubled in number - from 3 300 to 7 600 - and their cumulative population has increased by 500 million people. Africa's cities are the most rapidly growing cities in the world; they are the youngest, and they are changing fast. Their impact on Africa's economic, social, and political landscape in the coming decades is likely to be profound.

The urbanization of Africa can be traced back to the pre-colonial times. Whatever the period, the urbanization of Africa was influenced by the political, economic, and social factors of the time.

During the past three decades, there has been rapid urbanization in Africa as the legacy of the colonial past. The colonizers established centres of life (manifested in administrative, cultural, economic, and recreational activities) in those areas that gave them access to ports. Such access

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<sup>10</sup> Urbanization is a major change taking place globally. The urban global tipping point was reached in 2007 when for the first time in history over half of the world's population 3.3 billion people were living in urban areas. By 2030, 60% of the world's population will be urbanized. This rush to the cities, caused in part by the attraction of opportunities for wealth generation and economic development, has created the phenomenon of 'megacities': urban areas with a population of 10 million or more. By 2005, 17 out of the 20 megacities in the world are located in the world's less developed region (see FIG.2007:7, 21; Ompad, et al. 2007:59; Santos. 2014:70; UN-Habitat, 2016:7).

<sup>11</sup> Metropolitan Area is a large population center and adjacent communities, with a high degree of economic and social integration. Also known as an urban agglomeration, such a region typically has a large city (100,000 residents or more) as a hub extending its sphere of influence into the surrounding communities. These communities may not be urban in character themselves, but they link closely with that city through transportation (roads and public transit), employment (commuters), media (city newspapers and radio and TV stations), and leisure activities (clubbing, dining, entertainment, and professional sports). Micropolitan Area is a geographic entity, which has an urban core of at least 10,000 residents but less than 50,000. Like a metropolitan area, it consists of the county containing the core urban area and any adjacent counties with a high degree of social and economic integration with that urban core, as measured by commuting there to work. Mega region or a megalopolis consist in two or more metropolitan areas expanding so that they intermingle with one another to form a continuous urban complex (See Macionis & Parrillo, 2017:6-7)

to ports was vital because it allowed for the outward shipment of raw materials back to the colonizing countries and the inward shipment of manufactured goods. The legacies of colonialism for the cities of Africa affected both spatial or environmental characteristics and also the regulation of social space<sup>12</sup>. Many of the social and political problems experienced by contemporary African cities are also deeply rooted in their colonial past (Kempe, 1998:345-346). Baffoe and Roy (2023:174) notice that:

Colonialism has had a significant influence on contemporary city planning, economic, political structures, and institutions in cities in many developing countries... From the 2nd half of the twentieth Century, third-world cities began to diverge from Western colonist nations' political and economic control. Colonial imprints are very much alive today as contemporary planning systems in many African and Asian cities continue to draw inspiration from colonial planning ideologies. The legacy of colonialism is now etched on the landscape and in the societies of many, if not most, of the 'cities of the global south', and it still distinguishes them from those of the 'global north', even though they have grown in extent and population far beyond their colonial origins, and the former 'colonial masters' have largely departed.

Indeed, the role of colonial cities has rested on the net expansion of colonial and world trade, and the central functions were aimed to serve colonial administrative and economic interests. The rules and practices of colonial urban management were encouraged, creating residential racial and class segregation and the displacement of the poor to the city's peripheries. Thus, in colonial Africa, the Township Rules in the 1920s formally imposed social class and race-based residential rules and commercial use zoning, and the role of colonial cities has rested on the net expansion of colonial and world trade (Baffoe & Roy, 2023:175-76). Rapid urbanization has been perhaps the most dramatic of the social phenomena that marked the end of the colonial era in Africa.

Rapid urbanization has been unprecedented in post-colonial Africa with the help of Colonial rule (the 'indirect rule' strategy of the British with French 'direct rule'<sup>13</sup>(Rapaud & Steiner,

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<sup>12</sup> Baruah, J. et al. 2017:1 observe that "the spatial structures of cities in Sub-Saharan Africa are strongly influenced by the type of colonial rule experienced. The differences in process which reflect aspects of differences in colonial legal systems continue to affect city lay-outs today.

<sup>13</sup> Ali, et al., in, *Colonial legacy, state-building and the salience of ethnicity in sub-Saharan Africa* (2018, p1) explain the differences between direct and indirect rules. Britain adopted a 'divide and rule' strategy in which ethnic identities played a central role. A prominent feature of British colonial rule was its emphasis on native administration, a system of decentralized control in which the local population was segregated along tribal lines

2023:6). French<sup>14</sup>, compared to the British, adopted more centralized and standardized urban institutions within cities) (Baruah *et al.*, 2017:5). Some older towns remained important centres of commerce and cultural life, while others were completely transformed by changing economic and political developments.

Over the next 40 years, Africa will have the fastest-growing cities in the world. About 800 million Africans will either migrate to or be born in urban areas in the next four decades. By 2050, Africa will count almost 15 mega-cities with more than 10 million inhabitants and will house nearly 1.5 billion people, 60% of the region's projected population. Kinshasa of DR Congo is one of the ten African megacities of the time (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2014:1; Güneralp *et al.*, 2013:1-2; Činčala, 2019:210; OECD/UN ECA/AfDB, 2022:18-19; Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2023:15-16).

Natural fertility, industrialization<sup>15</sup>, and particularly various trends of migration from rural to urban are key factors that encourage this noticeable growth of the cities. When we observe the statistics of the present urban, three things emerge: the phenomenal growth of cities both in terms of numbers and size, the growth of cities in the Southern Hemisphere, and the enormous socioeconomic need in these cities (Kempe, 1998: 346-350; Walter, 2011:54). The twentieth century has been recorded as a century in which the whole world became one immense city (Ortiz, 2003:49).

In most of Africa, urbanization has occurred at a very rapid pace, making the continent the most rapidly urbanizing region in the world, with an annual urban population growth rate of 3.6% from 2005–2015. The urban growth rate in Africa is almost 11 times more rapid than the

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and ruled indirectly by local chiefs. Native administration empowered chiefs rule over their respective local populations. They institute a rigid association between one ethnic identity and access to basic resources (such as land and local government services). In contrast, France's colonial policy featured a more centralized approach in which ethnic cleavages played a less significant role. Local administrative boundaries in French colonies did not necessarily represent specific ethnic groups and, therefore, did not hinder various ethnic groups from belonging to the same political unit.

<sup>14</sup> Marie Lechler<sup>1</sup> and Lachlan McNamee (2018) in, *Indirect Colonial Rule Undermines Support for Democracy: Evidence from a Natural Experiment in Namibia*. *Comparative Political Studies*, 51(14), p 1858–1898, clarify the difference between indirect and direct colonial rules through their definition. They define Indirect rule as “domination via collaborative relations between a dominant colonial center and several regionally based indigenous institutions” and direct rule as a “system of colonial domination in which both local and central institutions are well integrated and governed by the same authority and organizational principles.

<sup>15</sup> For post-colonial Africa, urbanization connotes modernization, economic growth and human development through access to better opportunities and social amenities, sound public service delivery. With industrialization would come—at least as promised—new prosperity increased (Eyita-Okon, 2022:1-2).

growth rate in Europe. African cities are among the poorest in the world; their growth rates signal a major challenge to their resource base to build and sustain adequate infrastructure and public services for their growing populations (UN-Habitat, 2016:7). By 2050, the proportion of the population living in urban areas is projected to exceed 60% due to the growth of small towns and intermediary cities (Christopher *et al.*, 2022:1360).

According to the OECD (The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development), in Africa, since 1990, the urban population has tripled in size, and the number of cities has more than doubled, increasing from 3 300 to 7600. Thousands of new cities have emerged, often in rural areas with high population densities (OECD/UN ECA/AfDB, 2022:12-13; Roll, 2023). Such urban growth is expected to continue into the foreseeable future, even if national policy. By 2025, the proportion of the population residing in urban areas in Africa is projected to increase from approximately 57 per cent by 2025, with significant variation in the level of urbanization among the regions. The population of African cities is expected to triple from about 400 million to 1.2 billion by 2050 (Kempe, 1998:354; Heinrigs, 2021:19; Eyita-Okon, 2022: 6).

In sum, different studies are in accordance that the world's population is heading towards an African majority. Actually, in 2023, Africa is the second most populous world region, making up almost 20% of the world's population with 1.4 billion people. This population will be the only one to grow significantly to 26.2% by 2050 and 2060 (Statista, 2024). While Asia will remain the world's most populous region in 2100, it will begin to decrease from 2060. North America and Oceania will also continue to grow, but Africa's population is estimated to be the only one to grow significantly (Pew Research Center, 2019). So, global population growth between 2030 and 2100 will be mainly led by Africa, whose population will increase by 2.2 billion people (23% more than the growth at a global level)<sup>16</sup> (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2023:9).

### **3.2.2.1.3. Urbanization of the DR Congo**

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo) has a superficies (the second largest country in Africa with an area of surface area of 2.3 million km<sup>2</sup> after Algeria). By 2025, its population will be between 106,550,000 and 111,356,921, the equivalent of 1.37% of the total world's population. It is the third most populous country in Africa after Nigeria and Ethiopia. Its

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<sup>16</sup> Mo Ibrahim Foundation (2023) contends that “between 2023 and 2100, Africa's share of the world population will grow from 18% to 38%. Between 2030 and 2100, Africa's population will increase by +2.2 billion and will be the main driver of global population growth”

population represents the fiftieth most populous nation in the world. Rapid urbanization becomes virtually synonymous with the city's deterioration with loss of open spaces, poverty, and slum growth (Kouassi Yeboua, 2023:4; Statista, 2024) Most of the Sub-Saharan African cities face similar problems. Kinshasa's city is far from achieving sustainable urbanization (Misilu *et al.*, 2010:245; Yeboua, 2023:2). Based on these provisions, on the current path, the total population of DR Congo will double by 2045 and overtake Ethiopia in 2050 to become the second most populous country in Africa after Nigeria ( Yeboua, 2023:12-13).

It is of utmost importance to notice that the high population growth and the rapid urbanization go side by side in the DR Congo. Its rate of urbanization is still varying up to 60% in 2050. For instance, in 2019, 45% of the population was living in urban areas, and it is projected to reach 64% in 2050 (UN-Habitat, 2023:2). As a result of this rapid urbanization, the population of Kinshasa, the capital city with an annual growth rate of about 5.1%, is projected to reach 24 million people by 2030 (The World Bank, 2018:11; Yeboua, Cilliers & Kwasi. 2021:10; Yeboua, 2025:4). It will become the most populous city in Africa, ahead of Cairo and Lagos ( Yeboua, 2023: 4; Tshanga, *et al.*, 2023:168).

Much of this growth was due to the push factors of conflict and inadequate rural services rather than the pull factors of better opportunities to be had working and living in cities. This prospect is an opportunity but also presents the threat that Kinshasa<sup>17</sup> may become the largest slum in Africa unless urbanization is properly managed and the trend of urban exclusion and marginalization is reversed.

The Democratic Republic of Congo's urbanization path is peculiar. Unlike other economic factors, much migration to cities in the DRC has been induced by push factors—avoiding conflict and its attendant risks as well as inadequate rural services—rather than the pull of better employment and opportunities in cities (World Bank, 2018:2).

### **3.2.2.2. Migration**

Migration is the movement of people within countries and between countries. Increased migration is one of the most visible and significant aspects of globalization: growing numbers of people moving within countries and across borders, looking for better employment opportunities and better lifestyles. Despite the problematic dimension, migration contributes

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<sup>17</sup> Anna Fleck, In, *Africa's Next Megacities* (2023),p3, The situation of Kinshasa is a paradox. It is the capital city of one largest and the richest African's country. Kinshasa is also one of the three mega cities of the continent among Cairo and Lagos.

to sustainable development by promoting and increasing interactions between different regions and populations around the globe through the convergence of cultural and economic systems. It is this convergence that promotes and increases interaction, integration and interdependence among nations. The more countries and regions of the world become intertwined politically, culturally and economically, the more globalized the world becomes (Adgera *et al*, 2024:2).

### **3.2.2.3. Acceleration of the flows through advanced technologies and communication**

Advances in technology enable and accelerate the flow and the resulting international interactions and dependencies. These technological advances have been especially pronounced in transportation and telecommunications. Among the recent technological changes that have played a role in globalization are the following:

*Internet and Internet communication.* Globalization is seen in our daily lives through the Internet, its most visible aspect and, in many ways, its driving force. Globalization tends to be most perceptible and observable in almost every facet of life, mainly due to the emergence of internet technology. Indeed, the internet has increased the sharing and flow of information and knowledge, access to ideas and exchange of culture among people of different countries. It has contributed to closing the digital divide between more and less advanced countries (. Borcuch, Piłat-Borcuch & Świerczyńska-Kaczor, 2012:118-119; Nahalková Tesárová & Križanová, 2021:2; Westford, 2022).

*Communication technology.* The introduction of 4G and 5G technologies has dramatically increased the speed and responsiveness of mobile and wireless networks.

*Transportation.* Globalization has created a global economic system characterized by a growing level of integrated services, finance, retail, and manufacturing that need to be distributed through improved transport and logistics. Advances in air transport and fast rail technology have facilitated the movement of people and products. Changes in shipping logistics technology have made it possible to move raw materials, parts and finished products around the globe more efficiently. Besides the transportation of people and goods, globalization also involves the spreading of ideas, practices and technologies in all sectors of society, even the military (Rodrigue, 2013:17-19; Warren Chin, 2019:768; Bacchus, 2024).

### **3.2.2.4. Consumerism and Consumer Culture**

The shift to cities is creating waves of new consumers who promise burgeoning markets for businesses and will fuel rapid economic growth. Growth in demand for many products will

exceed the rate of expansion of the consuming classes. Expanding urban economies are creating waves of new consumers (McKinsey, 2012: 23, 26).

The notion of consumerism itself becomes fundamental in understanding the current forms of globalization and the modern world because there is a market as well as economic orientation in globalization that aims to consume resources to generate profit.

Consumerism is a socioeconomic phenomenon lying on the conviction that the way of life is not simply living over some total or relative limit measure, however, the possibility that prosperity and satisfaction are concentrated on individual spending on products and ventures (Lage *et al.*, 2022:1-3).

It is crucial to distinguish between consumption, the act of purchasing and using goods, and consumerism, the ideology that emphasizes the acquisition of goods as the central tenet of life. While consumption is a basic economic activity, consumerism transcends mere economic transactions shaping individuals' values and identities, defined as "the cultural expression and manifestation of the ubiquitous act of consumption." (Atrey, 2024). Consumerism is the psychological desire to possess what others have. Fitriyani *et al.* (2024:397-398) contend that consumption, as a social phenomenon, cannot be separated from human life because by consuming, everyone can survive. The need to follow the latest trends and brands becomes paramount. Social media and targeted advertising create a culture where materialistic values have great importance (Kamal *et al.*, 2013; McNaught, 2021:363).

Thus, modern globalization, aided by communication technologies and international organizations, has further accelerated cross-border interactions. However, beyond economic integration, it has also fuelled consumerism, where acquiring goods and services becomes central to identity and social status. There exists a complex relationship between globalization and consumerism; their growth is intertwined through the system that exists behind present forms of consumption and consumerism. Within this context, there are mobile trends that have been identified around globalization and consumerism, which have made consumerism an issue at present (Singh, Rashmi & Tyagi, 2017:41-44).

Thus, a connection between globalization and consumerism could be established based on the factors which are 1) access to resources and markets on a global basis, 2) production of consumers all over the world with an extensive range of products and 3) the notion of

consumption being fundamental and central in understanding the current forms of globalization (Chintha & Georg, 2012:44)

According to Singh, Babita and Tyagi (2017:586), the homogenization of consumer culture instead of decent variety is one of the significant effects of the globalization procedure. The consumer culture works with the notion of “brand”. One strategy is to try and establish a specific brand as an integral part of what people understand or want to see. Significantly, consumer culture focuses on the brand rather than on the intrinsic qualities of the product. Brand damage disproportionately affects sales and profitability in various areas where that specific brand exists (Cuterela, 2012:144).

### **3.2.2.5. Change in urban mission**

Today, the twin forces of urbanization and globalization are reshaping the context of global mission. Globally, the mission field today is a different place than it was only twenty years ago.

#### **3.2.2.5.1. Definition of Urban Mission**

The urban Christian mission, by common use, is the work as all mission work done by a Christian missionary that focuses on gospel proclamation through word and deed across the spectrum of cultures present in a city. The Bible showcases the priority of urban mission and outlines the essential nature of residential churches that cooperate in their mission of multiplying witness throughout a city for the glory of God (Cook, 2017:3-5).

#### **3.2.2.5.2. Importance of urban mission**

The urban mission is of the utmost importance as a missional field. For these reasons, the Spirit is leading the mission in the city, and the church is to update its mindset and strategies for the city.

Firstly, the city is a Biblical reality. The city in the Bible can be described as a world of stark reality that houses a population of simultaneous saints and sinners where temptation and promise, sin and grace are ever-present companions (Jacobson, 1994:395-397; Gonçalves, 2016:189-190). This is why Christianity has had a long and complex relationship with the city since its inception. During its first centuries, Christianity was primarily an urban phenomenon. It spread from Palestine along urban commercial trade routes to other regions of the world, going east into Asia and south into Africa. In each place it went, it rapidly adapted to new urban contexts (Irvin, 2009:177; Keller, 2010:2-4).

Secondly, cities have become strategically too important for urban missions because of the kinds of people that live in them: the unreached, the poor, and the shapers of culture. Thus, the urban centres of great metropolitan regions are “nerve centres” that disproportionately impact the world. Cities powerfully shape their own cultures and nations, but also, as the more influential global cities of our world go, so go our entire world (Goheen, 2014:21,374). Urban centres have a vital role in shaping the human spirit for good or for ill, and the future of the cities is more than a social and economic issue, it is a spiritual challenge (Goheen, 2014:21,374; Sheldrake, 2014:12; Dias, 2019:44-58).

The third reason is about the implications of globalization and urbanization. The global population that resides in the cities is greater than before. By 2050, more than 70 per cent of this population is expected to inhabit one of the 44 megacities of the world<sup>18</sup>. The church should take advantage of this phenomenon and develop efficient strategies that challenge this rapid global urbanization (Walter, 2011:52; Santos, 2014:70, 75).

Massive Christian mission opportunities are more evident in the cities than in rural areas because the cities attract more people than rural communities. People from different religious backgrounds are all present in the cities: the rich and the poor, the givers and the beggars, sane and insane, the hurts and the unhurt people, hard-working and lazy people, busy people and the less busy, diplomats and businessmen and women, travellers and passers-by and host of others (Alawode *et al.*, 2023:1).

### **3.2.2.5.3. Global trends in urban mission**

God’s mission always takes place in particular social, economic, political, religious, and cultural contexts. The urban mission requires that one is conversant with the environment to do the work of the mission well and adequately. According to Alawode *et al.* (2023:4), the environment is the objects or the region surrounding anything. Accordingly, the term encompasses both the features and the products of the natural world and those of human civilization. Thus, environment means everything surrounding one’s physical and spiritual world.

Present contexts are certainly different from the previous, but God’s reign still breaks into a specific context in today’s world. Engaging in mission requires prayerful discernment of the signs of the times and a faithful reading of the contexts. For an effective contextual and holistic

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<sup>18</sup>. A megacity is an urban center with at least 10 million people living in it. (see Demographia, 2023:2)

mission, the church is challenged to engage in context discernment and analysis at local and national levels, keeping in mind the impact of global and regional factors on local contexts<sup>19</sup>.

The predominant trend in the mission field worldwide is manifold. Firstly, Cities remain, as in the past, important for the church's mission<sup>20</sup>. So, Christian and church mission should be redefined around the opportunities the urbanization, migration and globalization are offering. Unfortunately, the population of the cities is growing more rapidly than the church's adaptability to this phenomenon. The pace of urban growth and urbanization is so rapid that changes in church mission mindset are of date (Dinesh *et al.*, 2019:1; Renn, 2022:1).

Indeed, the mindsets of urbanization and urbanism<sup>21</sup> have evolved through the impulsion of globalization and post-modernism. It is the combination of these two forces that motivate and ease people's migration, as noticed by Dinesh *et al.* (2019:1):

More than 50% of the world's population lives in cities that are bustling with possibilities. Growth in these cities is mainly associated with the change in their demographic and geographical situations. Globalization has contributed further to the movement of people and resources, creating tensions and overpopulation in some parts and reduction in others. Overpopulation and urbanization leading to overcrowding have inevitably been shown to have negative consequences on people's physical and mental health.

What happens to people who move to the cities will depend greatly on their way of adapting and reacting to the influence of globalizing influence and urbanism mindset. The context that

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<sup>19</sup> In exploring its context, the church will see how issues of context affect its life and witness. It may also ask what other factors are important in shaping its context and how these factors have both positive and negative practical implications for people involved in God's mission. The Lutheran World Federation 2004:12

<sup>20</sup> The shift is primarily happening in the developing world. Africa is now urbanizing faster than any other continent According to the UN, half of global population growth by 2050, about 1.2 billion people, will be in Africa. By 2050, almost 25 % of the world's population will live in African cities. (See, Renn. 2022. Why Cities Are Important to the Church's Mission).

<sup>21</sup> Urbanism as a Way of Life As implied earlier, the companion concept to urbanization (population growth and concentration) is urbanism, the culture or way of life of city dwellers. Besides changes in values, attitudes, norms, and customs, we also include lifestyle patterns and behavioral adaptations influenced by one's residential and/or work environment.

Urbanization as a Process, is the changes resulting from people moving into cities and other densely populated areas (Macionis & Parrillo.2017:9)

globalization provides is characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity<sup>22</sup>, and ambiguity (VUCA)<sup>23</sup>. Two key factors of VUCA are acceleration and complexities, which even the church cannot bypass or underestimate. Meanwhile, the context of accelerations and complexity needs a deep contextualization with the openness of cultures to adapt when faced with big changes in the environment (Bosch, 1991: 426; Friedman, 2016: 312; Gregersen, 2013: 370, 376; Cavusgil *et al.*, 2021).

Complexity in urbanization relates to the multifaceted interconnections that may intervene in the city's life. Humans from all horizons with different cultures and worldviews should interact efficiently for the good of the city. Complexity necessitates that people, organizations, and every component need to be effective on many levels, not optionally, but rather a prerequisite for exceptional effectiveness.

Besides complexity, urbanization also entails large uncertainties involved in the future of urban land expansion (Schick *et al.*, 2017:2). The problem of uncertainty<sup>24</sup> has its place in the history of urbanism; it has taken on a new urgency of late (Gunalp & Seto, 2013:1; Zeiderman *et al.*, 2015:1-2).

In the past centuries, the mission of the church was relegated to the responsibility of agencies under the supervision of Western denominations. The manifold aim of mission during the age of discovery and colonialism was expedition, conversion, and civilization of the unreached and unconverted third world (Omwenga, 2014:221-226). Missions agencies were considered an instrument of colonialism and Western domination over the colonized. It belongs to the church and was handled by Western missionaries who moved from their home countries to the third world.

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<sup>22</sup> Cities are complex systems. But they are incomplete systems (Kala S. Sridhar & George Mavrotas, 2022). Ever-expanding urbanization necessitates the use of other terms and concepts to understand fully the complexity and scale of human organization and interaction (Macionis & Parrillo, 2017:6-7).

<sup>23</sup> Our time is characterized by super diversity and super mobility, which in Business Studies we refer to as resulting in a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) (See Kornelsen, 2019:27)

<sup>24</sup> Gómez, J.A, et al., 2021. In, *Analyzing the Spatiotemporal Uncertainty in Urbanization Predictions*, explain that “The spatial uncertainty in urban growth predictions under different scenarios increases as there is more available land for urban expansion. Similarly, the temporal uncertainty increases when we predict further ahead in the future because of the inevitable integration process of noise in the input variables, and changes that always happen in politics, economics, environment, and social contexts, just to name a few. Despite the challenges, we argue that by including spatiotemporal uncertainties in urban growth predictions, stakeholders such as policy makers and urban planners can be better equipped to comprehend the urbanization process, recommend a better course of action, and help policy makers to prioritize public interventions.”

Nonetheless, for decades, most theologians have revisited this Christendom thinking with the concept of *missio Dei*. Schirrmacher (2017: 20–34) highlights this trinitarian pattern of *missio* includes the sending of Jesus by the Father (Matt 10:40; Mark 9:37; Luke 4:18; John 3:17; Acts 3:20), the sending of the Holy Spirit by the Father and Jesus (John 14:26; Luke 24:29; 1 Pet 1:12; Rev 5:6), the sending of the disciples by Jesus (Matt 10:5; 5 Mark 6:7, John 4:38; Acts 9:17) and the sending of people by the church and by apostles (Acts 8:14; Rom 10:15; 2 Cor 9:3; Eph 6:22; Phil 2:19).

David Bosch also adopts this opinion as he argues that the Church is called to participate in God’s mission and, thus, the *missio Dei* is ‘God’s activity which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate’ (Bosch, 1991:401). After this argument, he proposed the idea of ‘missional hermeneutics’ in 1993 and suggested that all scripture should be interpreted in the light of the missionary nature and act of the triune God (Bosch, 1993:24-35). They adopt *missio Dei* as a tool to revisit various biblical passages and uncover their full significance. *Missio Dei* thus articulates the good news that God is a God for people, and therefore, his church rejoices to be part of this mission.

The first trend is that global mission is reshaped by the twin forces of urbanization and globalization<sup>25</sup>. Cities represent a new arena for missions where local and global overlap (Looney, 2017:23). Today, even though this old understanding of mission still exists, there are two main tendencies in the mission field: the short-term mission from West to the South as Zurlo *et al.* (2021:16-17) posit:

The concept of who a missionary is has evolved since the beginning of the twentieth century, making it much more difficult to assess how many missionaries there are in the world. ... Since the 1980s and 1990s, there has been a dramatic explosion in the number of short-term missionaries, particularly youth, who spend as little as a week outside their cultural context performing an array of service-oriented projects.

Missionaries no longer travel to convert unconverted people but move where the Spirit is already working so that they can participate in the mission holistically. The mission is no longer the appendage of those missionaries travelling from the West to the South for the following reasons. Furthermore, missionaries are sent from everywhere, and many missionaries in the

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<sup>25</sup> Looney, 2017: 23 contends that globalization is leading us to see “the world as a single place” with greater and greater connectedness between once-distant locations.

Global South serve as national workers in their own countries. The result is seen through the result.

Another trend in the urban mission is the predominance of Pentecostal and Charismatic movements as proof of the influence of Pentecostal mission inward the continent. They take advantage of tremendous opportunities<sup>26</sup> cities offer for ministry despite lamenting about the challenge for the gospel they present through their growth in size<sup>27</sup> (Zurlo *et al.*, 2021:16-17). Cities remain attractive to the young and the cultural elite. Another opportunity is among the “unreached and the poor.” In the city are people from all over the world who would hardly ever have an opportunity to come in contact with the gospel. As we minister to them, we can also partner with the most influential people in the city in reaching out to them.

#### **3.2.2.5.4. Christian mission in sub-Saharan Africa**

Sub-Saharan Africa consists of all African countries and territories located wholly or partly south of the Sahara. Sub-Saharan Africa is reported to be the fastest-urbanizing region relative to other continents (Appiah, 2022:302)

In sub-Saharan Africa, the history of Christianity's mission spread out into three main periods: pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial. The colonial Christianity of Western missionaries has been of great influence due to its legacy bequeathed to post-colonial Christianity in Africa. The expansion of Christianity in Africa has resulted in a shift in Missions and a shift in the centre of gravity of Christianity. Indeed, the paradigm shifts about missions have refocused the understanding of sending and receiving nations in terms of missionary and mission work. In contrast to the past when Africa was a receiving continent, now the African Church can send missionaries within the continent and across<sup>28</sup> (Adedibu, 2013:406; Wandusim, 2015:92).

Christian missions in Africa spread faster after independence than before, mainly through internal and intensifying migratory of indigenous agencies. Therefore, migration has a missionary component in the context of Africa and is a primary pathway for spreading

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<sup>26</sup> Looney.2017:24 argues that “in the context of globalization, international migration, and transnationalism, planting the seeds of the gospel in cities representing global intersections is more important than ever. Today, cities are hubs of global activity and influence in a highly connected world.”

<sup>27</sup> Zurlo, et al., 2021:18 observe that: In 1900 Middle Africa and Western Africa were among the least-evangelized regions of the world. In 2021, however, Africa is 77 percent evangelized (and 49 percent Christian). Christianity in Africa grew mostly by the witness and evangelistic efforts of Africans and their creation of autonomous, local, and indigenized churches.

<sup>28</sup> Wandusim, 2015 observes that, by the compression of distance due to the advent of faster means of transportation such as airplanes, African churches are able to send missionaries to Europe and other parts of the world easier than they could before.

Christianity. As people from every corner of the world are entering the cities, urbanization and urbanism should become the way of life and the new wave for missions as it has always been in the Old and New Testaments (Johnson, 2012: 4; Asonzeh, 2016:135).

The Christian landscape in Africa and the world at large is being transformed by the emergence and continued proliferation of African-led churches. This has further led credence to the role of African Christianities in the shaping of mission in the twenty-first century as Africa is now one of the major missionary-sending continents in the process described as “reverse mission or diaspora mission”<sup>29</sup>(Da Silva, 2015:233-234; Olofinjana, 2020:56-57).

The concepts “mission” and “missions” became confused and had various connotations in the Sub-Saharan Africa context due to the role mission agencies and missionaries played during colonial times. In this former paradigm, missions were conceived as taking the gospel to nations who had not heard it. During this colonial era, the activities of the European mission churches intended to culturally colonize the spirituality and worldview of Africans. Missionaries were understood as important agents in the ever-expanding nation-state. During this time, the mission was viewed in expansionist, field-occupational, conquering, and triumphalist terms (Andrews, 2009: 664; Omwenga, 2014:226; White, 2017:3). Thus, Christianity was both a justification that European powers used to colonize and exploit Africa and a guise by which Western governments justified the exploitation and conquest of African nations. For an effective interaction with Africans, missionaries needed to learn the local languages of the peoples, and, in many cases, missionaries created orthography to translate the Bible for distribution (Gifford, 2012: 165-167).

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<sup>29</sup> ‘reverse mission,’ understood as the sending of missionaries to Europe and North America by churches and Christians from the non-Western world, particularly Africa, Asia and Latin American, which were at the receiving end of Catholic and Protestant missions as mission fields from the 16th to the 20th century (Dena Freeman, 2020:47

Oseias da Silva 2015 describes the phenomenon of reverse mission has challenged many Churches and mission agencies to consider the extent of its impact in the Western context. This relates to the established practice in Christian religious experience of going forth and sharing the faith with others who do not know the gospel or have lost interest in Christianity.

A classic definition of diaspora mission is ‘Christians’ participation in God’s redemptive mission to evangelize their kinsmen on the move, and through them to reach out to natives in their homelands and beyond. Diaspora mission is a strategy in response to the reality of the demographic trend of diaspora in the 21st century. Diaspora missions includes missions to the diaspora, missions through the diaspora, and missions by and beyond the diaspora. Both definitions capture clearly migration as an important factor in mission. What A classic definition of reverse mission is ‘The sending of missionaries to Europe and North America by churches and Christians from the non-Western world, particularly Africa, Asia, Latin America, which were at the receiving end of Catholic and Protestant missions as mission fields from the sixteenth century to the late twentieth century’. While the definition highlights the intentionality of mission sending from the Majority World, it did not mention migratory factors that contribute to reverse mission.

Despite their undeniable contribution to the expansion of Christianity in Africa, the collaboration between missionaries and colonial administrators negatively affected the reception of the gospel message by the Africans (Mbiti, 1969: 231; Rodney, 1972: 277; Okon, 2014: 192; Masuku, 2023:3). Missionaries in critical times of need depended on traders for funds and relied completely on administrators for physical security and protection (Sanneh, 1990: 88). So, Christianity is viewed as the religious arm of colonialism because both of them have almost the same mission which works side by side, that is to improve the non-European world (Okon, 2014:198-199).

Furthermore, African Christianity has undergone an immense transformation from the 1970s to the present time. The aforementioned foreign missionary presence that prevailed between 1884/5 and 1970 demised to Africa their dominant doctrinal features of plurality with a strong feeling of intolerant rivalry and mutual suspicion carried over from the reformation event (Masuku, 2023:3). This led to the existence of many denominations inside two major camps (Catholic and Protestant), instead of one; and each denomination felt it was the home and the custodian of the Christian Truth (Sserunjogi & Okumu Achar, 2023:979).

Fragmentation was the rule rather than the exception in the Protestant camp, with each church autonomous (Njoku, 2005:218-220,225,238).

Africa, as mission land, was partitioned into many “mission fields”. Each of them was valued and scaled from the least important, considered dangerous, to the most important. Africa and Central America were lower in that categorization. The missionary societies took account of this categorization in sending forth missionaries (Njoku, 2005:231-232). Even in Africa, there were further breakdowns of the different parts, with a place like the Congo being rather blacklisted because of the havoc the mosquito was causing and the high mortality of missionaries who were sent there. These realities demotivated missionaries and delayed the introduction of Christianity in Central Africa by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Njoku, 2005:229-232,252).

Nonetheless, the expansion of Christianity in Africa has undergone various waves. Today, Africa is experiencing a dramatic expansion of Christianity and a shift of the core of Christianity from Europe and North America (Pawliková-Vilhanová, 2007:249-252,258; Athyal, 2015:21-22).

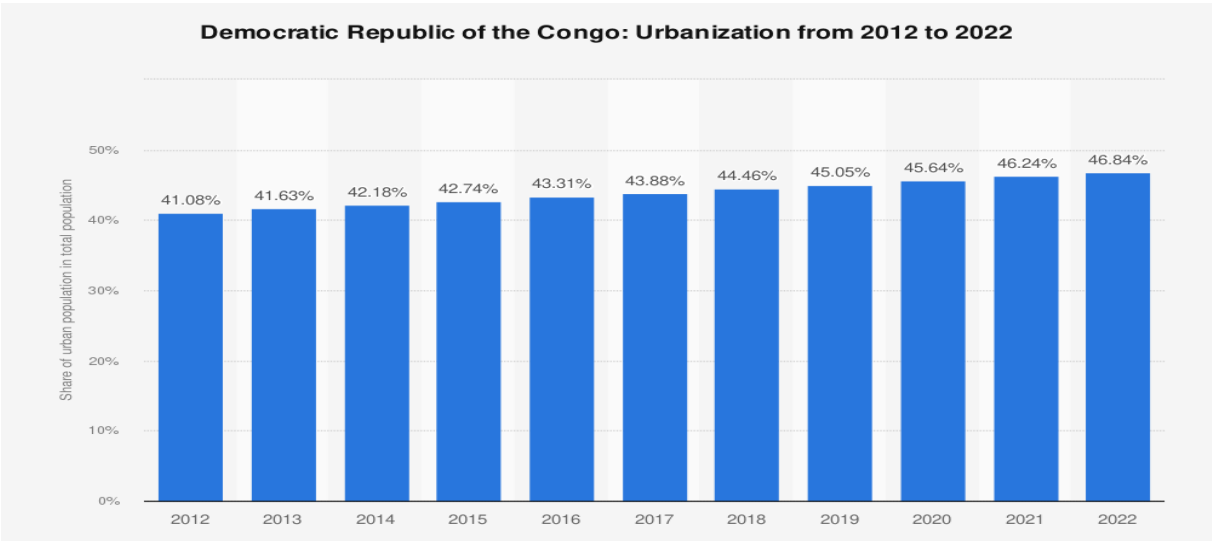
Furthermore, this shifting phenomenon has contributed more to diversification than to concentrating the Christian leadership gravity Centre. If sub-Saharan Africa has an important

part in the number of members, the Center of Christian leadership is disseminated over Asia, Africa and Latin America. It is not a matter of concentration but of plurality of valuable and different Centers. Doing mission work in the fast-growing cities in Sub-Saharan Africa has become very challenging (Appiah, 2022:301; 2023).

**3.2.2.5.5. Urban trends and urban mission in the DR Congo**

The urban state of cities in the DRC, the third largest<sup>30</sup> African country, is in a disrepair condition and is turning around colonial legacy. There is an urgent necessity for reinvention that shifts from the cultural and ideological foundations of the colonial city that served as purpose-built settlements for the extraction and transport of mineral resources toward Europe. Creative reconstruction will ensure urban transformation about urbanization, by making continuous and healthy communities that are in harmony with cultural values (Nsokimieno, 2015:1485).

**Figure 1- 2:** DRC urbanization from 2012 to 2022



**Source:** World Bank 2023

**3.2.3. Impact of urbanization, migration, and globalization on leadership**

In the previous sections, the study shed light on the key insights about the essentials of church growth and the three main effects of globalization, migration, urbanization and the changes in Christian mission. The combined forces of globalization and urbanization under the power of advanced technologies have greatly impacted the way church leadership has proceeded in

<sup>30</sup> World Bank, 2019 notices that The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is Africa’s third most-populated nation with a population of around 80 million people and the country has the third largest population of people living in poverty worldwide. Most of the urban population (74.8 percent) lives in slums and urban poverty and population growth rates are high.

Africa and the DRC in particular. Three domains of Christian leadership have been influenced drastically: communication (mass communication and technology advances), church development (relying on transfer and biological growth), theological practices (Charismatic influenced by Pentecostalism), and initiative (see also section 2.2.2.3.).

### **3.2.3.1. Communication and technology advances**

Communication and technological advances constitute the first domain that impacted church leadership in the DRC. The use of traditional media (radio and television) and social media (YouTube, Facebook and WhatsApp) has greatly contributed to the inception and rapid expansion of the AICs in the DRC. It is obvious that, without the help of these media tools, most of these churches would neither exist nor have a large audience inward and outward. Today, many AIC leaders own a broadcasting traditional media, a YouTube channel and a Facebook page for transmitting church programs and services online. Posters and advertising are also used for mobilizing people for the great events of the church.

### **3.2.3.2. Migration and mobility**

Migration and people mobility are other domains that influenced Christian leadership in the DRC. Through air and road transportation, many leaders have succeeded in the implantation of the church around the world and the country. Some of them have been implanted with the help of the migration or the displacement of certain local members to another country or another region inside the country. The reasons for these displacements are multiple, ranging from the research of good life to study (UNHC, 2023; OIM, 2024).

### **3.2.3.3. Church development and urban mission**

Church development is another sector of impact. Leadership has played a great role in the current situation of the AIC. With the help of media communication and the pace of people's mobility from rural to different cities of the country, many leaders have increased the number of their members.

The leadership of AICs in the DRC has exploited the advantages of globalization and urbanization in the relationship field. Indeed, they enable the building of new relationships and new identities through the realities of one experiment. Therefore, urban man has numerous associations and situations for developing relations. Within this urban reality, the core identity of the individual is built at home, school, church, work, recreation, and community and is not necessarily defined exclusively by ethnicity, race, or language. Many church leaders have taken advantage of this reality to launch ministers at schools, universities, and other open workplaces.

### **3.3. Church growth**

The concept of church growth is biblical. Jesus proclaimed and taught that growth is an essential quality of the Kingdom of God and His intention (Hopkins & Hopkins, 2008:5). Jesus' and apostles' ministries foundation lays on the development or the growth of the church as shown through different teachings (Matt.13 and Eph.4). This is to be true for the ongoing church worldwide and in the DRC in particular.

#### **3.3.1. Definition of church growth**

The New Testament uses at least nine Greek words to describe "growth." The most commonly used one, "*auxano*", has several different meanings. In scripture, it usually refers to the physical growth of plants or people (Matthew, 6:18-28). This passage highlights the two aspects of *missio Dei*, the growth in quantity and quality of the kingdom (Ferreira & Chipenyu, 2021:1).

However, the same Greek word is used to describe other instances of increasing or multiplying, like in Acts 6:7 and Ephesians 4:15 (Vanco, 2023:2-3). Both numerical and spiritual growth is linked to the development of the church. Church growth does not only relate to the number increasing but also and mostly doing more or getting the right people to commit to important ministries that lead to people's life-changing so they can foster a closer walk with God (Gn 1:28; 12:3; Is 11:9; Mt 18–20; Dn 2:34–35; Galatians 6:8-10).

Nevertheless, most authors adopt Wagner's formulation that "Church Growth is that science that investigates the nature, function, and health of Christian churches as they relate specifically to the effective implementation of God's Commission to make disciples of all nations according to Matt 28:19" (Wagner, 1989:114; Towns, 1986:64; 1995:55; Dayat, 2021:1).

In sum, Church growth is teaching and training the followers of Jesus to become who God wants them to be so they can do what God wants them to do. Church growth is about building up one another to Christlike maturity and service. A church in which the people are maturing is a growing church, regardless of how. This means it is possible to grow a church by worldly standards and shrink in growth by biblical standards. Growing in number without a proportional basis of mature Christlikeness is not growing (Kight, 2021:1-2).

#### **3.3.2. The biblical foundations of church growth**

The growth and the mission(s) of the church are inseparable. They are both indispensable for providing to the church her identity. The growth of the church, both numerical and spiritual, is

fundamentally rooted in the Scripture (Znoj & Zurschmitten, 2019:7). Growing the church is a part of the mission of the church as almost all records related to the church are reported.

The first record of church development is reported in Genesis. It deals with God's intention for creating the universe and calling Abraham. Through their work, Cheree Hayes and BibleProject Team explain God's design for the growth of the Church by connecting the main passage of Acts 2:38-47 with Genesis 1:27-31; 15:5, 16:10, 17:2, 26:4, etc. Their point is that: "Growing and multiplying the good work of God has been the call for humans since the beginning. It was true in Eden, ancient Israel, and the early Church, and it's still true today." (Hayes & BibleProject Team, 2021).

The second report of growth is connected to Abraham's call in Genesis 12:2. The two keys of Abraham's call are the promise of becoming a great nation (multiply in number) and being the source or the canal of blessing for all families (quality). This point of view is highlighted by Ligon Duncan III as he portrays the church growth model by connecting Abraham's call to Exodus 1:7. The point is that, according to this account from Genesis to Exodus, the growth of the church can be a painful process that provides a test situation in which we trust the providence of God (Duncan III, 2000). Thus, Israel's increasing population number is a synonym of numerical growth.

Thirdly, most descriptive metaphors of the church bear the notion of growth lying behind. The Bible employs a wide variety of metaphors to depict the Church. These metaphors may offer insight into the biblical standards for ecclesial composition and praxis. Metaphors such as Vine, Body (Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 and Ephesians 4:3-6, 15-16, the community, etc., all have deep implications for organizational design, praxis, and growth metrics within the church (Banks, 2013:82; Serrano, 2018). The metaphor of John 15:1-8 bears fruit through the branches and is an indicator of interdependence, growth, and the essence of the church as God intended it to be. If the indicators are missing, it will cause any church to cease being a church (Fourie, J., 2013:5, 11).

The great commission command (Matt.28:18-20) and the strategy for her management Act.1:8 contains Jesus's fundamental intention for the mission, winning all nations that are supposed to grow the church worldwide. Tedjo *et al.* contend that the accurate model of church growth should be balanced between the inection and the outward growth. Failing in one of these two aspects causes the church's task to be oriented only to evangelism or to the construction (Tedjo *et al.*, 2022:5588).

### **3.3.3. Types of church growth**

Growth indicates the vitality of the church through the power of the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, the power and the strength of the church are not located in the high number of its effective members but in the commitment of the members to Christ as Saviour and Lord.

Therefore, genuine church growth includes both a numerical increase in attendance and their spiritual transformation into a Christlike image. The members cannot influence other people to become Christians, and even the spiritually weak members would not remain in the church. The quality dimension is important for church health (Ferreira & Chipenyu, 2021:8). Both are quite important if the church is to be relevant in the world. Numerical growth has to do with its quantity in number, while spiritual growth has to do with the level of maturity of the individual believers (Ogunewu, 2014:70). The quantitative and qualitative growth of members are the two determinant factors that indicate church growth or decline (Ferreira & Chipenyu, 2021:8).

#### **3.3.3.1. Qualitative growth**

As the body of Christ, the church is expected to grow in both dimensions, qualitative and quantitative, to be a healthy institution. Meanwhile, in God's intention, quantity should be obtained from quality. It is the spiritual/quality that is to be reproduced. Hence, there can be no quantity without quality because qualitative or spiritual growth provides ethical and moral values of Christianity, and also numerical growth without quality is deformed, which is dangerous to the body of Christ (Ferreira & Chipenyu, 2021:6-7; Arimoro, 2025). A mere increased number of members in a church who have not experienced an intimate relationship with Christ results in superficial growth (Igboin & Adedibu, 2020:91).

Both spiritual and numerical growth, as genuine church growth, is determined by personal spiritual growth. When the entire membership obtains qualitative or spiritual growth, the quantitative growth takes place gradually. God gives great church growth depending on the church's keen interest in its spiritual growth, which will bring quantitative growth or membership growth. Church growth is driven by enthusiasts. Enthusiasts foster the internal growth of the church. They also participate actively in its extension and expansion. Expansion Growth occurs as the congregation converts non-Christians and takes more of them into itself. Extension Growth happens when a congregation plants daughter churches among its kind of people in its neighbourhood or region (Hayward, 2005: 2-4; Worancha, 2012:28; Baba, 2022:1-2).

The role of qualitative growth is manifold. Firstly, it provides the Christian ethical and moral values in church growth. Ethics and morality are intertwined. Ethics is a “system of moral principles or code” that regulates the conduct of individuals or groups within a community (Kunyahop, 2008: 1; Igboin & Adedibu, 2020: 91-93). So, ethics is a total of moral principles/values that direct people towards proper choices. Ethics and morality help implement Christian values through a process of transformation. Transformation is a regeneration process for implementing intentionally and progressively Christian ethical and moral values. That is the work of the Holy Spirit by the means of its sword, the word of God (2 Cor.5:17; Gal.6:15; 2 Tim.3:16-17; Gal.5:16).

The church needs fundamental transformation. Transformation has to do with the fundamental nature of the church since the nature of the church is being holy and apostolic, the missional character and integrity of the church need to be regarded as important and interrelated issues (Dreyer, 2016:2). A proper healthy church growth should be anchored on the visible transformational work of Christ, and as exemplified by Christ.

Therefore, church, mission, and ethics are inextricably woven together, and both mission and ethics constitute the facets of one single diamond. Ethics enable the church to correlate her nature with what she does. Whatever the church does, its ultimate mission is to produce disciples, people who behave like Christ (Dreyer, 2016:2). A mission that merely makes evangelism and converts all nations without making them disciples has failed and misused Jesus’ power, as He stated “...All power is given unto me in heaven and the earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” (KJV Bible, Matt., 28:18-19). Disciples are those living a Christlike that is Christian values-centred. Values are fundamental beliefs and assumptions that determine behaviour (Kunyahop, 2008:5). Values based on ethics and morals are observable through serial features like accountability, probity, and integrity. There is a positive correlation between morality and healthy church growth.

Unfortunately, today, what matters more with church growth is the increase in the number and proliferation of churches rather than the quality of Christians that the numerous churches have produced (Igboin & Adedibu, 2020:98).

Thus, the church that grows in quality enables unity through teachings, doctrine, and practice. That is far to be reached in the context of the church, particularly in Africa and the DRC. It has

been noticed that various motivations for the proliferation of the AICs are not pure. If not, there is no need to raise more and more churches on a short and single street (Dreyer, 2016:6).

Thereby, numerical growth without quality is biased. Numerical growth without quality makes the mission incomplete and superficial. The nature of people that will result will lack the core of Christian values. Their life will be selfish-centred and unpowered for God's life. A church needs to make enthusiasts, not just converts, to see revival growth. It is the growth of enthusiasts, not believers, that drives revival growth (Hayward, 2005:14).

### **3.3.3.2. Quantitative (numerical) growth**

Quantitative/numerical growth deals with the increase of church members (adherents). Sound quantitative growth should be intentionally initiated to provide human resources for discipleship. The number is to be initiated as the starting point of discipleship. Strategically, the church can add members in four main ways: conversion, transfer, biological, and expansion (Hopkins & Hopkins, 2008:45). Conversion growth occurs when those outside the church come to rest their faith intelligently on Jesus Christ and are baptized and added to the church. Conversion growth increases the church population and represents genuine church growth (Hong, 2004:102-103).

Conversion has two main steps: the presentation or proclamation focuses on exposing people to the gospel and winning those exposed people to Christ. Therefore, quantitative growth is the one that is strategically and meaningfully done to win the most possible, as Paul declares in 1Co 9:19: "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more".

Exposition and proclamation are done through evangelization. In missional conversation, evangelism is a key factor in Christianity, and it is the responsibility of the entire church, and every individual is mandated to be personally involved in it (Ogunewu, 2014:67).

Nonetheless, the attitude of the AICs related to evangelism is questionable since there is a beginning of decline in some of them (Russell, 2014:38-39; Kurewa, 2014:18).

Numerical growth is also done by church members' birth process. Biological growth intervenes when children of church members grow up in the church and enter the church through the initial profession of faith.

The last church growth strategy is by transfer. Transfer growth occurs when a church receives members from another Christian church who "transfer" their church membership for any

reason. This type of growth may increase the roles of a local church, but it does not enlarge the kingdom or reign of God (Dunaetz & Priddy, 2013: 8).

In sum, the quantitative growth of any church is measured in terms of people won and not in terms of exposure to the gospel. Church growth is directly proportional to the number of members involved in witnessing. That is to say that the naturally balanced and sustainable numerical growth of the church should result in the spiritual development of church members (Worancha, 2012:24). The growth of a local church is the natural product of its spiritual health—the intimate relationship with God.

According to, qualitative growth should produce quantitative growth unless its quality is suspect. Quality that does not lead to quantity is counterfeit and not genuine. Quantity and quality are interconnected and interdependent. Quantitative growth is the entrance point to church growth, which is destined to generate qualitative growth. Quantitative growth that is not aimed at qualitative growth is unsustainable: Quantitative growth needs its qualitative content to increase if the growth is to be sustained. A church that does not provide a balanced growth is not healthy and declines.

The church decline occurs when the quality is absent among members or when both quality and quantity have decreased. Members whose spirituality has declined are not able to influence numerical growth through biological numbers, transfer, and conversion; instead, they leave the church of their own accord. As the members are unable to impact any one of the three dimensions of growth, the church is failing its mandate, and the result is church decline (Ferreira & Chipenyu, 2021:7).

The efficiency in church growth requires strategically and tactically more innovation and creativity in a contextual manner to increase the degree of members' commitment (Stoll & Petersen, 2008:251-52).

It is the degree of members' commitment that significantly influences the trends of church development<sup>31</sup>. The more committed members are to their church, the more resources they are willing to provide, especially resources of time and money. Growth can occur only if there are surplus resources, such as time and money, beyond the minimum required to maintain current operations and to compensate for depreciation in physical facilities and in membership lost to

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<sup>31</sup> Stoll and Petersen (2008:252) notice that members of higher-tension churches give more money and time to their churches than do members of lower-tension churches, and that time and money resources are good predictors of church growth.

death or departure. The church growth model is that church growth is driven by a subset of believers, enthusiasts, and highly committed ones (Hayward, 2005:2; Stoll & Petersen, 2008:253).

Surviving is another key factor related to church growth. Whatever the circumstances and the conditions, it is of the utmost importance to question how the church is surviving so that it can avoid extinction. A church that needs to survive makes enthusiasts, not just converts. Making converts alone will only give short-term growth. In the long term, conversions dry up for a lack of enthusiasts, and extinction follows. The need to make enthusiasts or contagious believers to survive and grow is a recognized strategy in many fast-growing churches. If the church's potential reproduction is too low, then the church's inability to reproduce enthusiasts, not its losses, is at the heart of its decline (Hayward, 2005:13-14).

In the search for effectiveness in church development, various principles and schemas have been developed over these last decades. The following section gives an overview of some of them.

#### **3.3.4. Overview of church growth trends**

The development of the church has been the most important and principal concern of Jesus Christ's ministry. In both the great commission and its relative strategy (Matt.28:18-20 and Act.1:8), one can notice the emphasis on church growth. Over the years, individuals and ministries have been devoted to developing various principles and strategies.

##### **3.3.4.1.Church growth (CG)**

Church growth paradigm and principle have been conceived by McGavran. According to (McGavran,1990), Church Growth is a "theological stance" in which theological and Biblical basic convictions are skilfully combined with social science theories, empirical research, sociological principles, and spiritual insights to mould a useful paradigm for effective evangelism strategy worldwide. McGavran is convinced that church growth should rely more on principles than methods and strategies. Principles are stable, while methods need constant adjustment according to the context. His biblical tenets of Church Growth derived from his understanding of the Great Commission in Matt 28:18-20.

The threefold core that leads church growth is articulated around three fundamental and non-negotiable principles of Church Growth: the numerical growth represented by adding new and countable converts to the Church, the concept of identifying and profiling an ideal, and the concept of people movements.

The work of McGavran received diverse positive and negative critiques that inspired many new ways of thinking.

#### **3.3.4.2.Church Health**

Church health was the next trend in church development. For some, it is a continuation of McGavran's thinking, but for others, it is a new way of dealing with church development. This trend of church growth was developed to solve the weaknesses of McGavran's church growth principles. Warren shifted from the "church growth" to "church health" paradigms based on the church's definition of a living organism. Thus, the church's development depends on her health. To be healthy, the Church also needs a biblical message, a balanced mission, and sensitivity to God's guidance (Warren, 1995:49). Warren also emphasizes growth by conversion instead of by transfer, and he avails himself of media demonstrating originality and creativity.

Growing the church based on the healthy organism concept attracted many proponents like Christian Schwarz, who developed the *Natural Church Development* (NCD) in 1996 (Campbell & Bickle, 2009:316-317). There were also Tim Koster and John Wagenveld, who developed the concept of planting healthy churches as a strategy for church growth based on the body and organismic metaphor (Tim Koster & John Wagenveld, 2014:206). Nathan and Kari Shank, and David Garrison adopted the concept and conceived the strategy of The Church Planting Movement (CPM) for releasing natural growth. Thus, it is obvious to concentrate on efforts for succeeding church planting in the areas that will provide future disciples for church growth. The success also relates to the use of appropriate strategies and methodologies for planting and realizing healthy churches. Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC) appropriated the strategy under Bill Bright and launched great evangelism in partnership with many denominations to start churches by the year 2000.

#### **3.3.4.3.Missional church growth paradigm**

The missional paradigm has been developed to overcome the challenge of Western church decline amidst all attempts to revisit different church development paradigms. It is in this vein that Ed Stetzer relied on the missional concept initiated by Lesslie Newbigin to correct the weaknesses of church growth and church health thinking (Stetzer, 2006:18). Based also on the metaphor of the church as the body and a living organism, to produce the growth of the church each part of the body should contribute for the vitality and the health of the church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the supervision of godly and strong local leadership. Thus, the leadership's principal role is equipping and deploying God's people for works of service. The

emphasis is put on *missio Dei* and the pastoral leadership of every congregation as the key to success (Niemandt, 2010:10).

Unlike in the traditional organization, missional leadership is not a provider of methods for growing a church. It is rather an enabling function that provides equipment and training so that the church community participates in God's mission internationally in their natural neighbours. Missional leaders bring the gospel into a contextual frame of cultural elements such as worship style and small group ministry for its effectiveness.

The foundation of the Missional paradigm (missional leadership and missional church) is twofold: the shift in the concept of mission and the shift in the concept of ministry. The church is a community of priests who, through a Christlike and incarnational life, participate daily in *Missio Dei* <sup>32</sup>(Ferreira & Chipenyu, 2021:6). The accent is put on the priesthood of all the community (the church) and neighbourhoods as natural fields for the harvest. The Missional paradigm also stresses the relation between the context and the scripture. It requires an interaction between Christology, missiology, and ecclesiology.

The missional paradigm focus has been to solve the current situation of the church and to overcome the challenge and the threat of church decline. Indeed, the pace of global growth of Christianity is slow, as aforementioned. Relying only on fertility is very risky and compromising for the future of Christianity.

African churches that are providing the contra balance for the Western decline should become more innovative and creative to prevent the VUCA threats. Growing the church based on the missional paradigm helps to board the entire church in the process of church development through evangelism and discipleship, as explained in this study.

There are many advantages to growing the church-based missional paradigm. Leadership focus will be equipping and training church members for releasing the minister of each member according to Eph.4:11-16. Furthermore, with the skills of ministry, the church will increase the number of members with high motivation. The more there are people highly motivated and committed to *missio Dei*, the more the Christian population will increase.

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<sup>32</sup> Ferreira and Chipenyu 2021 opine that the *missio Dei* is constituted of two aspects that are revealed in Jesus' command to the church (Mt 28:18–20). Firstly, the kingdom family is meant to grow in quantity, as the world is led to Christ through the witnessing of the church. Secondly, the converted peoples should be fed with the Word to become disciples of Christ and also 'grow in quality'

In sum, there exist numerous strategies and principles of church development that Christian researchers and leaders developed. McLaren initiated the “Emerging church” paradigm. Leadership for church growth is another trend of church growth that was developed.

The concept of leadership for church growth was typified by the AICs through their rise and the rapid expansion by the means of African leadership alone. Today, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the AICs have established theologically themselves so firmly as widely accepted expressions of the Christian.

#### **3.3.4.4.Church marketing strategies and faith branding**

Marketing strategies and faith branding for church growth is another trend of church development that has been developed these last years (Odia & Isibor, 2014:48, 52; Einstein, 2008:92). Despite many controversies due to the fact of relying on secular strategies of marketing, the proponents of faith branding agree that it is biblical and represents an effective way of fulfilling the great commission. The question is just about choosing an appropriate communication plan for marketing local churches (Webb *et al.*, 1998:2; Kuzma *et al.*, 2009:6).

There are also many other strategies, principles and materials that individuals, groups and churches have developed for growing the church. This interest demonstrates the importance of this issue for church leaders. The concrete concern is the effectiveness of the process. Today, most of the AICs and para-church organizations have developed their own discipleship and training materials. The case of Campus Crusade for Christ as described below.

#### **3.3.4.5.Campus Crusade missional discipleship materials**

Campus Crusade for Christ is a Christian ministry that has been continually developing strategies, issues, and materials related to evangelism and church development since its inception in the 1950s by Dr Bill Bright. If the vision, the mission, and the fundamental materials have remained the same, various new approaches have been invented and incorporated to improve the effectiveness of church growth. There are some advantages to using campus crusade strategies and materials. Firstly, every material is developed according to a target population or strategy. There are five main strategies: Student Led Ministry (SLM), Global Church Movement (GCM), Leader Movement (LI), Media Strategy (S M) and Digital Strategy (S D). Each of these strategies develops appropriate materials for the target population.

All Campus crusade strategies are promoting the missional mindset. They all appeal to the training of every Christian according to his field for effective participation in the great commission.

Secondly, these materials are constantly updated to be more adaptive. The cases for the media tools and GCM MC<sup>2</sup> have been reinvented. Today, it is possible to launch cells through the sixty-one (61) short movies that serve as follow-up and training materials. These audio-visual training tools are perfectly adapted so that every church member can easily handle them. This is the case with the MC<sup>2</sup> of GCM.

Thirdly, Campus for Christ's material is developed to solve practically the "how" of evangelism and discipleship so that every church member can daily participate in the great commission and God's mission in his natural neighbourhood.

Meanwhile, according to the study, the GCM, which has the church as a target, has developed a practical material for church development, MC<sup>2</sup> (Multiplying Cells and Communities). These materials are suited to launch cells and communities that enhance both the spiritual and quantitative growth of the church.

### **3.3.5. Global trends in Christianity's growth**

The global trend in the development of Christianity is dominated by its shift from the global North to the South in outstanding proportion. The results are fabulous and astronomical. To date, Africa is one of the continents with a great number of mega-churches<sup>33</sup>. Most of the world's largest churches are located in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, reflecting the global shift in Christianity's Centre of gravity southwards (Adedibu, 2013:406; Burgess, 2020:243-244; De Oliveira, 2021:1). The list of global megachurches includes 33 mega-churches with a weekly attendance of 20,000 and above in Asia, 19 in Africa, 15 in Latin America, and 15 in the USA. Concerning its rapid pace, the phenomenon is going to stay many years in the future.

Christianity in the world has become more of an urban enterprise. Globalization and urbanization have engendered an ongoing migration of people from rural to urban with all opportunities and challenges. Furthermore, with the pace of the world's urbanization, the church is no longer confined to any building. It is rather converted into pubs, clubs, restaurants, warehouses, cinemas, museums, and residential facilities, these same secular facilities are being refurbished for the use of churches in sub-Saharan (Murtala, 2022:1).

Statistics analysis from the 1900s to date informs that, globally, Christianity is not growing properly. Studies inform that the statistical high point of Christianity was 1900 when 34.5 per cent of the world's population was one form of Christianity or another. By 2000, Christians had

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<sup>33</sup> mega churches are defined as Protestant churches having at least 2,000 attendees per week

dropped to 32.4 per cent, and then by 2015, they had dropped further to a low point of 32.2 per cent. Our projections for 2020 show a slight increase, with a larger increase by 2050 to 35.0 per cent of the world's population. This increase has a simple explanation. The decline of Christianity in the Global North is now being outpaced by the rise of Christianity in the Global South (i.e., Africa, Asia, Latin America, and Oceania). Christians in sub-Saharan Africa generally have high birth rates, and people from other religions continue to convert to Christianity in China, India, Cambodia, Mongolia, and elsewhere throughout Asia. By 2020, fully two-thirds of all Christians were in the Global South, with only one-third in the Global North. By 2050, we anticipate that 77 per cent of all Christians will live in the Global South (Gina A. Zurlo *et al.*, 2020: 9-10).

The real concern is that the current Christian population growth results more in fertility and birth rates than the fundamental features of *missio Dei*, evangelism (conversion), and discipleship. So, despite the growth that is experienced by the global population increase, the pace of Christian population growth is so slow that the decline is a threat<sup>34</sup>.

**Table 3- 1:** Global Christianity by Tradition 1900-2050

	1900	1970	2000	% p.a.*	mid-2020	2025	2050
Total Christians, % of world	34.5	33.2	32.4	-0.01	<b>32.3</b>	32.5	35.0
Affiliated Christians	522,440,000	1,112,655,000	1,889,808,000	1.22	<b>2,406,184,000</b>	2,543,469,000	3,303,112,000
Roman Catholics	265,756,000	658,556,000	1,025,102,000	0.96	<b>1,239,909,000</b>	1,286,883,000	1,551,403,000
Protestants <sup>1</sup>	134,196,000	251,901,000	429,180,000	1.57	<b>585,596,000</b>	624,924,000	895,056,000
Independents	8,859,000	89,480,000	284,439,000	1.61	<b>391,125,000</b>	422,968,000	621,855,000
African	40,000	16,782,000	71,905,000	2.25	<b>112,100,000</b>	124,599,000	208,105,000
Asian	1,906,000	15,370,000	95,866,000	1.19	<b>121,404,000</b>	128,698,000	169,622,000
European	185,000	6,571,000	13,640,000	1.76	<b>19,351,000</b>	21,014,000	31,244,000
Latin American	33,000	8,963,000	27,949,000	2.31	<b>44,114,000</b>	49,391,000	85,552,000
Northern American	6,673,000	41,438,000	74,339,000	1.13	<b>93,048,000</b>	98,057,000	125,469,000
Oceania	22,000	356,000	740,000	2.04	<b>1,108,000</b>	1,211,000	1,863,000
Orthodox	116,199,000	141,930,000	257,741,000	0.63	<b>292,132,000</b>	296,858,000	312,133,000
Unaffiliated Christians	35,906,000	116,654,000	99,159,000	0.64	<b>112,650,000</b>	117,105,000	117,996,000
Evangelicals <sup>2</sup>	80,912,000	111,809,000	270,635,000	1.80	<b>387,026,000</b>	420,870,000	620,963,000
Pentecostals/Charismatics <sup>3</sup>	981,000	57,637,000	442,677,000	1.89	<b>644,260,000</b>	703,639,000	1,031,500,000
Denominations	2,000	13,100	31,100	1.84	<b>44,800</b>	49,000	64,000
Congregations	400,000	1,329,000	3,000,000	1.57	<b>4,100,000</b>	6,300,000	9,000,000

Note: Categories below do not add up to affiliated Christians because of double-affiliation (between traditions).

1. Including Anglicans. Past tables have listed Anglicans separately.

2. Churches and individuals who self-identify as Evangelicals by membership in denominations linked to Evangelical alliances (e.g. World Evangelical Alliance) or by self-identification in polls.

3. Church members involved in the Pentecostal/Charismatic/Independent Charismatic renewal in the Holy Spirit, also known collectively as "Renewalists."

\* Column % p.a. Trend. Average annual rate of change, 2000–2020, as % per year.

Source: Todd M. Johnson and Gina A. Zurlo, eds., *World Christian Database* (Leiden: Brill, accessed July 2019).

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**Source:** Zurlo 2020

<sup>34</sup> Aaron Earls (2023) The population of religious adherents has a 1.26% growth rate, while the nonreligious have a 0.56% growth rate. Four different religious groups are growing faster than the population as a whole, including the three largest—Christianity (1.18%), Islam (1.87%), and Hinduism (1.2%). Nonreligious people make up slightly more than 11% of the global population today. By 2050, the CSGC projects that percentage to fall below 9%. Currently, less than 2% of people around the world are atheists. Fewer atheists are in the world today (149 million) than in 1970 (165 million).

### 3.3.6. African trend in Church growth

The growth of the church in Africa is one of the most surprising facts of twentieth-century church history. From an estimated 9% professing Christians in 1900, African Christianity has grown to over 50% million adherents by the year 2020. All in 2025, the Global South is home to 69% of all Christians in the world, projected to reach 78% by 2050 (Zurlo, 2020; Zurlo *et al*, 2024). The common notion that nineteenth-century missionary efforts explain African Christianity's recent explosion is an oversimplification. The future state of World Christianity will depend on African Christianity <sup>35</sup>(Deressa, 2020:364)

The precursors of the African Christianity explosion in Sub Sahara are both the pre-colonial and colonial efforts of both Western missionaries who provided materials and education, but also, particularly, the African leadership that launched the AICs. They made a profit from all opportunities offered by the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. These three periods freed the continent from dictatorship and other social, economic, and financial obstacles. When one recognizes the phenomenal growth of the African church, most of its members attend the AICs around the continent (Mayrarguel, 2008:4; Lindhardt, 2018:6).

Another trend in African church development is the influence and emphasis of pneumatic, Pentecostalism, and charismatic. Many scholars have highlighted the ever presence of Pentecostalism and charismatic traits in African Christianity<sup>36</sup> (Mayrarguel, 2008:5-7; Moon, 2021:1).

Other characteristics of African Christianity related to its expansion are the absence of a central authority and the fissiparous (schism) nature of Churches, leading to the creation of many new Churches (Mayrarguel, 2008:6). Independence and liberty of expression seem to be the motivating force of African church. Originally an unanticipated product of the modern missionary movement in Africa, the African Independent Churches (AICs) today number 55

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<sup>35</sup> Deressa 2020 explains that “The signs suggest that what Christianity of the twenty-first century will be like, in its theology, its worship, its effect on society, its penetration of new areas, whether geographically or culturally, will depend on what happens in Africa, in Latin America, and in some parts of Asia.

<sup>36</sup> Moon (2021) observes that African Christians' strategic response to the influence of globalization has produced a creative synthesis which combines the universal truth of Christianity with charismatic spirituality born out of their tradition.

Mayrarguel, 2008:5 also contends that, nowadays, this is a mass process: the spread of different varieties of Pentecostalism is in large part due to African pastors and African Churches which drive the religious awakening in the continent's urban centers. These same local African actors are responsible for more and more initiatives worldwide, reminding us that religion is one of the ways in which the continent participates in a globalized world.

million church members in some 10,000 distinct denominations present in virtually all of Africa's 60 countries.

Fragmentation is a heritage of Pentecostalism and Western missionary Christianity (Olumide, 2019:15). To date, African Initiated Church is more a movement than a church Movement with thousands of enthusiastic young people as deeply committed members.

But probably the most remarkable contribution of Africans to the missionary movement has been the migration of Christian traders, businessmen, and professionals, such as university professors and doctors, to other countries or neighbouring tribes where Christianity is not yet firmly established (Nwadiolor & Nonye, 2024:129). These men and women leave home because of economic privations, but by the working of the Holy Spirit, they have become church planters in their host countries. The fellowships they end up planting are not always denominational or ethnic and become broad-based churches. Their secular jobs support them, and they have no professional missionary training apart from the modelling of healthy churches they have seen while growing up in their home country.

Globalization has greatly affected the growth of the African church. Despite its numerous positive impacts, globalization carries with it some negative impact on the quality of African spirituality and religiosity by media exposition (Chiroma & Chiroma, 2021:143-144; Jesutunwase, 2024: 15). African religious approach and attitude of life are threatened by the Western philosophy of secularism, which promotes a way of life and thought that is concerned only with this world and is opposed to thinking in terms of what is sacred or spiritual (Morris, 2021:2-3).

### **3.3.7. Church growth in the DR Congo**

The evolution of the Church in the DR Congo is tied to its history. Three phases of the democratic revolution noticeably influenced the growth of the church in the country: the autocratic and authoritarian phase of the 1960s, the one-partyism and military rule of the 1980s, and the democracy sustainability of the 1990s (Ranger, 2008:9-12). These post-colonial phases were preceded by the pre-colonial (from 1482 to 1884) and the colonial (from 1884 to 1960). As for the majority of African Sub-Saharan countries, the growth of the church in the DR Congo is done based on secessions and schisms inherited from the previous eras.

The church has experienced a noticeable growth with the advent of African Evangelical and Pentecostal renewal by the 1970s, 1980s, and especially in the 1990s. The revival was due to

the spread of new transnational Christian groups, notably neo-Pentecostal ones, but also numerous local initiatives.

According to the current statistics by the Pew Research Center, the United States and Germany are the only Global North countries listed among the top ten with the highest number of self-identifying Christians. Brazil, Mexico, Russia, the Philippines, Nigeria, China, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Ethiopia fill the rest of the table (Deressa, 2020:366).

### **3.4. Conclusion**

As indicated, the purpose of this chapter was to describe the scope and impact of globalization through urbanization and migration in the AICs leadership process of developing the church in the DRC. This was done by observing. The observation and analysis of the scholars' materials on the subject aimed to provide information towards answering the following question: "What is the scope and impact of urbanization, migration and globalization on AIC leadership?" This question was answered throughout the chapter.

Before focusing on its scope and impact on development, globalization has been identified among the factors that have greatly motivated Africans to initiate churches, first in Africa and now worldwide (Chapter 2).

All the factors that influenced its rise and development have also determined different contextual elements that need a kind of missional leadership. Before scrutiny of this leadership issue, the next chapter seeks to figure out the guidelines of the missional leadership of missional leadership through the Scripture. This will provide the pertinence of this leadership type and its appropriateness for the context of the study.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP GUIDELINES FROM PAULINE'S LETTERS TO TITUS AND THE EPHESIANS

#### 4.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed the scope and impact of globalization, urbanization, and migration on the leadership of the AICs as they develop the church in the DRC. The objective of the present chapter is to provide an overview of Paul's leadership type and style by responding to the following research question: What are the missional leadership guidelines derived from the Pauline letters to Titus and Ephesians? While Paul's leadership approach is not inherently distinctive or prescriptive, his exemplary discipleship in the New Testament offers a valuable model for the church in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The insights derived from the selected biblical passages will serve as the foundation for examining the context and challenges of the missional church in Africa and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), focusing on the African Inland Church (AIC) context. In the Bible, it is written that: "What has been, will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything one can say? Look! Is this something new? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time." (Eccl. 1:9-10, KJV).

#### 4.2. The context of missional Church leadership as presented in the Pauline letters to Titus and Ephesians

These two epistles are contextualized within a specific historical and cultural framework. Paul's objective and rationale behind composing these two letters are distinct. They serve as a template for understanding Paul's typical mindset and approaching ministry during his lifetime.

##### 4.2.1. Influences of Urbanization and Globalization in Crete

Crete is situated in the Mediterranean Sea, to the southeast of Greece, to the southwest of Asia Minor, and the north of Africa. The island is approximately 160 miles (260 km) long and exhibits a width ranging from 7.5 to 37 miles (12 to 60 km) (Bowman, 2025). Due to its advantageous geographical position, Crete had been exposed to Greek and Roman civilization for a considerable length of time despite the reputation of its inhabitants as "liars, evil beasts, and lazy gluttons" (Titus 1:12). The Romans were keenly aware of the strategic importance of Crete which they conquered and ruled for approximately four centuries, from 67 BC to 330

AD. During the Roman rule, the population in Crete increased to approximately 300,000 inhabitants. Furthermore, Crete experienced prosperity and enhanced connectivity with other regions of the Empire. In addition, many luxurious infrastructures were constructed, including theatres, temples, water supply networks, cisterns, aqueducts, and baths (Angelakis *et al.*, 2021:1-3).

Some of the Jewish population in Jerusalem at the time of Pentecost were from Crete and were able to hear the gospel preached in their native language (Acts 2:11). It seems reasonable to posit that at least some of those who heard were converted, carried the gospel back to Crete, and established nascent churches in their hometowns. So, many Christians may have already been residents of Crete by the time Paul first arrived there (Benfield, 2019:3).

The island population had gained a reputation for exhibiting a lack of cultural sophistication, a proclivity for violence, and an enthusiasm for pursuits other than work. Judaizers encouraged those with a work ethic to embrace legalism, while pagan philosophers appealed to their desire for license. The cosmopolitan mixture of traders and tramps posed a constant challenge to the faithfulness of genuine believers, many of whom could not practice what they believed. So, the church on Crete was chaotic and disorganized (Swindoll, 2010: 309).

#### **4.2.2. Influence of Urbanization and globalization in Ephesus**

Ephesus was the most significant Asian crossroads city in the region, which is now western Turkey. It was a seaport city situated on the Aegean Sea. During Paul's ministry, which commenced around 53 AD, Ephesus was a prominent commercial, banking, and cultural hub. It was comprised of numerous cultural groups and was held in high regard by the pagans of the era for its religious significance. The temple and statue of Diana were destroyed 356 years before the birth of Christ, on the very day Alexander the Great was born (Swindoll, 2015:186-188). The deity in question was venerated by the populace, who ascribed to it a triad of attributes: that of a goddess of fertility, magic, and astrology. The commercial activities associated with this deity were closely intertwined with idol worship. As Christianity gained traction, it prompted a swift disruption in the city's cultural and economic fabric, leading to widespread unrest (Acts 19). Therefore, before the arrival of Christianity in the city, it was renowned for its veneration of Artemis (Diana to the Romans) (Fant & Reddish, 2003:5).

By 29 BC, due to its economic and cultural influence, as well as its considerable size (encompassing a population of 300,000), Ephesus had become the capital city of the Roman-ruled Asia province, superseding Pergamum (Filippou, 2018:1-2).

As with all of Paul's writings, Ephesians represents the convergence of three distinct worldviews. These influences encompass the Roman, Jewish, and nascent Christian worldviews. These factors were instrumental in the appeal of Ephesus and the growth of Christianity during its formative period. Paul initiated numerous missionary expeditions from this city (Fant & Reddish, 2003:1-6; Bayes, 2014:135).

It is evident that the cultural plurality that Ephesus experienced during the Roman Empire resulted in the emergence of a multitude of religions, with Artemis as the dominant religion, as Georg Filippou has asserted:

The city of Ephesus, with its cosmopolitan environment, hosted several religions and philosophies. The danger for the recently introduced Christian faith, however, was possible corruption by the cultic beliefs and practices already well-established in the metropolis. New converts did not immediately forget or set aside their former cultic ideas and rituals. The risk for syncretism was great and had to be avoided; the purity of true doctrine had to be maintained (Filippou, 2018:9-10).

Consequently, the prevention of Ephesians church members was a significant factor in the composition of this letter. Paul resided in the city for approximately three years during his third missionary journey, as documented in Acts 18:23-21:17. He was confronted with the challenge of addressing the influence of false teachers who drew inspiration from the religious traditions associated with Artemis (Vincent, 2017:1).

In Paul's time, the Jewish community exhibited a lifestyle and cultural practices analogous to the surrounding population. They were in local commerce as shepherds, fishermen, carpenters, and other trades. Nevertheless, the theocentric nature of Judaism distinguished the Jewish people from other societies. Wherever a Roman or a Greek might travel, they could take their gods with them or find similar rites. The situation was markedly different for the Jews. The Jewish people had but one temple and one God. Consequently, a clear and distinct boundary was established between the Jewish and Gentile populations throughout the Roman Empire. Both parties, with great assiduity, reinforced the partition.

In these circumstances, Christianity proliferated throughout Asia. During Paul's time, the Christian worldview was in its nascent stages and was perceived as a subdivision of Judaism. The number of Christians soon increased (Bayes, 2014:135-136).

#### **4.2.3. The Context and the purpose of the letter to Titus**

Paul's letter to Titus had three primary objectives. In composing Titus' epistle, Paul's initial objective was to provide Titus with personal support and apostolic authorization for his endeavours. This was done by furnishing him with written instructions that he could reference when necessary, demonstrating that his actions were not arbitrary but guided by apostolic directives (Swindoll, 2010). The second objective was to provide instructions regarding the strategies to establish order. The appointment of leaders in each town was a highly strategic decision. The appointment of these leaders would prove invaluable in maintaining the stability of the church, which was facing significant challenges from the proliferation of false teachings (Fourie, 2023). The final objective was determining the most effective strategies for achieving the desired outcomes. Paul advised Titus to prioritize the training and silencing of false teachers as a primary tactic for addressing the issue at hand (Keathley, 2004; MacArthur, 2019).

In light of the circumstances, Paul, having only established the fundamental structure of the church in Crete and hastening to proceed to another location, had entrusted Titus with the responsibility of prosecuting this endeavour as an evangelist (Christian Classics EtherealLibrary, 2009:227; Hughes & Chapell, 2012:351). Accordingly, Paul delegated authority to Titus and tasked him with continuing the work he had initiated. Several developments occurred due to the influence of certain dissident and garrulous opponents with Jewish backgrounds (Swindoll, 2011:308-309). Such individuals disseminate erroneous teachings that inevitably result in transgression. They needed to be confronted, rebuked and silenced (Platt, Akin & Merida, 2013:274-277). Moreover, these teachings were particularly well-received in Crete, a place with a reputation for being conducive to such teachings. Consequently, Paul placed significant emphasis on the actions and reputation of Christians (Platt, Akin & Merida, 2013:274-277). It is recommended that Christians of both sexes and all ages reflect on their conduct, not only in their interactions with one another but also in the eyes of the world (Baer & Praem, 2007: 160; Fee, 2011:211-216).

#### **4.2.4. The Context and the purpose of the letter to Ephesians Church**

Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesian church for some reasons. First and foremost, Paul exhorts the early church to maintain unity. In his counsel to the people of Ephesus, Paul urges them to transcend the divisions created by their former statuses as Gentiles or Jews (Jacoby, 2023). At the time of its composition, Ephesians represents the convergence of three distinct worldviews: The text reflects the influence of three distinct worldviews: that of the Roman Empire, that of Judaism, and that of the nascent Christian tradition (Bayes, 2014: 135). The ethnically

inclusive church, based on religious affiliation and faithfulness, is part of God's plan because it is unified by a shared commitment to the cause of Christ and an agreement on His divinity. Secondly, Paul guides interpersonal relationships and urges the faithful to maintain a defensive stance against the spiritual forces arrayed against them (Keener, 2015:108-110). During this period, the nascent Christian community attracted those previously followers of Judaism and individuals who had converted from the Gentile and pagan communities (Slater, 2012:5; Jacoby, 2023:1-3).

Thirdly, it is evident that Paul was composing his epistles from a Roman prison near A.D. 60-63. During this period, Paul was under house arrest but was permitted to receive visitors and disseminate the teachings of the Gospel (see Acts 28:16–31). He sought to provide the maturing church with the necessary resources to facilitate its continued growth and development. It offers a balanced perspective on the body of Christ and its significance within the divine economy.

Although Paul was not responding to a specific theological or moral issue, he sought to safeguard against future challenges by urging the Ephesians to advance in their spiritual maturity. Paul elucidated his intention, stating that he anticipated this faith community would conduct itself following its celestial calling. In the Epistle to the Ephesians 4:1, the proposition above is supported by the following evidence: Theological realities accepted by Christians through their faith in God give rise to some practices that should be observed in their relationships within the church, in the home, and in the world.

Considering the context, it can be posited that the letter to the Ephesians was written during the first century. Despite the esteemed position of the Church at Ephesus within the scriptural tradition, the city was a prominent Centre for pagan worship. The Temple of Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, was a highly influential religious, financial, and social institution. The religion in question centred on the worship of Diana. This deity was loosely based on the Greek goddess Artemis. There was a clear violation of modesty and purity at the heart of this religion. Furthermore, the religion of Diana ran contrary to all that Scripture says about a woman's role, whether single or married (Bird, 2016:527).

#### **4.3. The Missional Church leadership model, as outlined in the letter to Titus**

The epistle of Paul to Titus offers a wealth of insights into the concepts of a missional church and missional leadership models. The following section will elucidate the principal points.

#### **4.3.1. The selection of local leaders**

In the context of a missional church paradigm, as for every existing society or organization, leadership is ideal in the tenets, and the selection of leaders is of paramount importance because everything rises or falls on leadership (Platt, Akin & Merida, 2013: 259). Such individuals serve as representatives of enthusiastic church members whose contributions are vital for the growth and development of the church (Tamunomiebi, Omosioni & Odunayo, 2018:48). Titus and the appointed leaders are duty-bound to silence, rebuke, and reprove those who mislead the people with all authority through their actions and conduct. The ethical norm, proven by moral character, is the foundation for an influential authority. Ethical excellence is a typical trait of spiritual leaders in the wider sociocultural context, and Proper behaviour is an essential element for the churches' survival (Peltonen, 2017:98).

In summary, when Paul evaluated the requirements of the nascent Cretan churches, he initially focused their attention on the necessity for leadership. The essential qualities of this leadership can be distilled into two key elements: The two essential qualities that Paul identified as necessary for leaders in the fledgling Cretan churches were: 1) proven, evident maturity in Christian character and 2) a passionate adherence to sound doctrine. These qualities enabled leaders to teach this doctrine to others and to confront those who would distort it (Hughes & Chapell, 2012:338; Wilson, 2018:205; Henson, 2018:188).

#### **4.3.2. The process of equipping leaders with a moral code and ethical values**

It would benefit Titus and the leaders above to strive to develop a fundamental moral compass. The internal processes of leadership development profoundly influence external behaviour and relationships. This values-based leadership model is founded on spirituality and strives to develop values, character, morality, and behaviour (Henson, 2018: 186–187). Consequently, Paul's epistle to Titus can be defined as an "ethical exhortation" to guide the entire faith community. Given the expectation that leaders will exemplify the integration of belief and behaviour, it is imperative that they not only preach but also practice what they preach so that followers can rely on these shared ethical standards, principles, and values in complex and critical times. Individuals are driven by intrinsic values that are cultivated through spiritual pursuits (Peltonen, 2017: 98). Religion and spirituality offer substantial insights into the interdependence between a leader's values and belief systems and organizational practices and policies (Van Neste, 2003:22).

Paul thus delineated a comprehensive strategy for operationalizing a novel vision and mission for the Christian community in Crete. This entailed the appointment of duly qualified leaders, the establishment of efficacious communication channels, the empowerment of followers, and the formulation of indispensable policies and procedures (Henson, 2018: 189).

#### **4.4. The Missional Church Model and Leadership in the Letter to the Church in Ephesus**

A significant distinction exists between the context of Ephesus and that previously discussed about Crete and Titus. The situations above are distinguished by their disparate motivating backgrounds, as illustrated in the ensuing analysis. The situations above were analysed to ascertain the underlying motivating factors.

##### **4.4.1. Outline of Ephesians 4:1-16**

Ephesians 4:1–16 constitutes a pericope subdivided by two minor subdivisions.

**The text then describes the unity of the spirit in a walk based on ethical values (4:1–6).**

The imperative to preserve the unity of the spirit per ethical values (4:1–3)

The seven unifying realities of the faith (4:4–6) are the foundation of this unity.

**The ministry is unified through the diversity of its members (4:7–16).**

The diverse gifts of Christ serve as the foundation for Christian diversity (4:7–11). The objective of the diverse gifts (4:12–16) is to establish unity, maturity, stability, and growth within the church (Van Wyk, 2018:4).

##### **4.4.2. The analysis of Ephesians 4:1-16**

This analysis aims to identify all materials about the missional leadership paradigm for future reference. It is founded upon the units delineated in the preceding section.

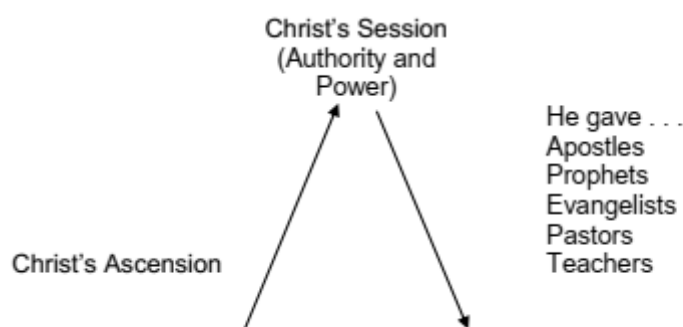
###### **4.4.2.1. Unity in the walk based on ethical values (4:1–6)**

The primary objective is to preserve the unity of the spirit under ethical values (4:1–3). This is the unity of the Spirit, for which the concrete participation of every member is strongly encouraged. In conclusion, the sevenfold use of the word "one" (4:4–6) reinforces the assertion of the church's unity. Consequently, the initial six verses emphasise the concept of unity through reiteration of the term "one" throughout the verses (Helen, 2009)

#### 4.4.2.2. The concept of unity in the ministry through the diversity of ministries (4:7–16)

Equipping the saints for ministry aims to facilitate the realisation of "unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God" (4:13). The second call is to foster unity of faith through the diversity of ministries. The initial significant observation pertains to the correlation that Paul establishes between Christ's ascension and the empowerment of the saints by various gifted individuals (v. 11). Christ's ascension (and ultimate session) is directly tied to the bestowal of power (empowerment) upon these gifted people (Bayes, 2014:114-115,125). The variety of gift vehicles conveys the concept of community in opposition to the notion of uniformity. This divine endowment is an act of grace that enables each Christian to participate in God's mission. Therefore, it is imperative to prioritise the Giver rather than the gift itself or the recipient of the gift. (Slater, 2012:109-111; Charles, 2024).

**Figure 4- 1: The relationship between the ascension of Christ and empowerment**



**Source:** Bayes, 2014: 117

The purpose of empowering these gifted people and promoting unity through diversity within the ministries is to facilitate the growth and maturity of the body. In verses 7–16, Paul elucidates that the keys to church growth are not in numbers but in the pure sense of what develops the members of the Body of Christ through spiritual endowments in general and gifted leadership in particular. This is about the collective maturity of the Church, facilitated by the contributions of its gifted leaders in various ways (Eph. 4:11) and to varying degrees (Eph. 4:7; Wells, 2004: 75; Chapell, 2009: 166).

The church depends upon each member's contribution to the collective ministry for its growth. The ministries referenced in 4:11-16 exemplify this communal giftedness, facilitating unified growth in its multifaceted forms. Growth is also made possible by utilising all Christians'

spiritual gifts, regardless of their nature, as determined by Christ's measure (Talbert, 2007: 115; Slater, 2012:112).

The characteristics of healthy churches or communities are as follows: Spiritual unity, diversity, and maturity are key characteristics. Spiritual unity is contingent upon the unification of church members by divine calling, Christlike conduct, and Gospel confession. The concept of unity in diversity does not entail sameness. In contrast, members of the church possess a range of gifts and responsibilities. Maturity is defined by three key characteristics: Christlikeness (4:13), doctrinal stability (4:13-14), and the union of truth and love (4:15-16) (Merida, 2014:96-103).

**Table 4: 1Repetitive words, phrases and concepts**

<i>Word</i>	<i>Verse</i>	<i>Concept</i>
Calling	1	calling you have been called
	4	hope of your calling
Love	2	forbearance to one another in love
	15	speaking truth in love
	16	building up of [the body] in love
Unity	3	unity of spirit
	13	unity of the faith
	16	fitted and held together
Body	4	one body
	12	body of Christ
	16	whole body/causes the growth of the body
One	4	one body, one Spirit, one hope
	5	one Lord, one faith, one baptism
	6	one God
Authority (Power)	6	who is over all and through all and in all
	10	ascended far above all heavens
Gifts	15	him, who is the head
	7	grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift
	8	he gave gifts to men
Maturity	11	and he gave
	12	building up
	13	mature man
Ascend	15	grow up in all aspects
	16	growth of the body / building up
	8	he ascended
Descend	9	he ascended
	10	he who ascended
	9	he who also descended
	10	he who descended

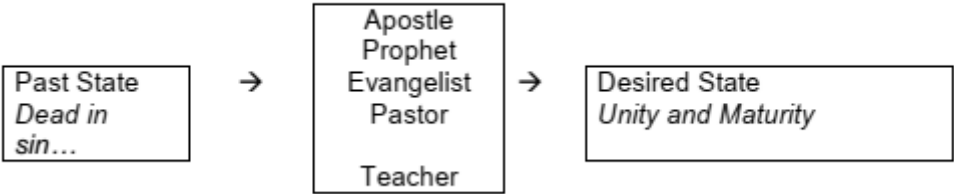
**Source:** Bayes, 2014:128

In verses 7–16, Paul elucidates the essential principles for the church's growth, emphasising the importance of spiritual endowments and gifted leadership in developing members of the Body of Christ. This is about the collective maturity of the Church through the contributions of its

gifted leaders in various capacities (Eph. 4:11) and in varying proportions (Eph. 4:7; Wells, 2004: 75; Chapell, 2009: 166).

Consequently, Ephesians 4:1-16 indicates that the previous condition of believers and the optimal state of the church are mediated by the gifts (functions or ministries) of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher (Wells, 2004:167; Talbert, 2007:109; Slater, 2012:111; Bayes, 2014:133,140).

**Figure 4- 2: Mediatorial roles (leadership)**

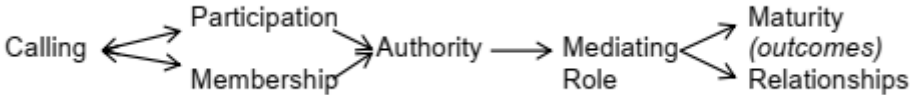


**Source:** Bayes, 2014:140.

The mediatorial roles serve to exemplify the presence of leadership. Each of the five gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher fulfils a leadership role within the context of the church. Each role exerts a distinct influence on the faithful and the unfaithful, intending to achieve a common goal. Each gift functions distinctly yet collectively strives for a unified and mature body of believers (Bayes, 2014:140).

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**Figure 4- 3: Components of divine empowerment**



**Source:** Bayes 2014: 157-159

#### **4.4.3. Strategies and tactics for Titus and Ephesians 4:1-16**

The success of the leadership process is contingent upon implementing strategic and tactical approaches. A strategy is a plan of action to achieve a specific end goal over a specified period. Strategies assist in the definition of the objective of this paper, which is to present a framework for the formulation of long-term goals. Furthermore, it is essential to elucidate the methodology employed to attain these objectives. Tactics are the actions teams undertake to implement the initiatives outlined in the overarching strategy. They constitute the "how-to" steps that are required to transform the overarching plan into tangible reality (Messineo, 2024:1). The analysis above of both texts (Titus and Ephesians 4:1-16) has yielded two strategies, namely, selection and equipping, and two tactics, namely, delegating and Ubuntu.

The analysis of both texts, Titus and Ephesians 4:1-16, has yielded two strategies, selection and equipping, and two tactics: delegating and Ubuntu.

##### **4.4.3.1. Titus 1:5-9 and Ephesians 4:11 strategies for selection and equipping**

The analysis of these two passages reveals two principal strategies Paul employed—the selection and equipping process. In addressing the issue of Titus's leadership in Crete, Paul instructed him first to appoint elders who were both knowledgeable about doctrinal matters and able to exemplify the ethical standards associated with a Christian life (Platt, Akin & Merida, 2013:259; Fourie, 2023). In his writings on Ephesians, Paul asserts that Jesus intends to bestow spiritual gifts upon leaders to facilitate a collective ministry that produces fully developed and adequately equipped members of the Church. The individuals endowed with these gifts assist the church in achieving unity and maturity, enabling it to overcome erroneous teachings about doctrinal matters. Paul commenced his discourse by delineating the church as the body of Christ. In contrast with the Cretan context, Paul elucidates that there are already individuals endowed with gifts, which Jesus Christ anointed as the ones who ascended and descended. The selected and gifted individuals were qualified to equip the entire church community, enabling every member to participate actively in the development of the body.

The primary purpose of the equipping strategy is to fortify leaders in sound doctrine through the five offices. These ministries are doctrinal and exist to prepare God's people for works of service, with the ultimate goal of strengthening the body of Christ. In light of these considerations, it becomes evident that these passages challenge the traditional interpretation of the biblical doctrine of "the priesthood of all believers."

It is evident that the body of Christ remains unified and continues to evolve as each constituent element fulfils its designated function. Therefore, all believers are encouraged and obligated to contribute to the advancement and expansion of the Church. However, they must also accept the guidance and instruction provided by Christ through the doctrinal ministers. Regardless of one's role within the Christian community, it is impossible to fulfil one's obligations without undergoing training from the Bible and the Holy Spirit, typically provided by doctrinal ministers (Cheung, 2014: 84).

Each gift is held in three distinct forms of ownership: that of the donors, the churches, and God. However, the final proprietor is of the most significant consequence and merit; thus, it is paramount that we administer these assets following his intentions. These purposes can be defined as the unity in faith and knowledge, as well as the maturity of the individual (Eph. 4:13a; Bryan Chapell, 2009:169).

Mature leadership strives to provide others with the tools necessary to utilise their talents for the benefit of the ministry and to foster the growth of the collective body (Eph. 4:12). The objective of Christ is that the leaders of the Church should prepare others for ministry by equipping each individual to perform their respective roles. Congregational spiritual maturity is defined by four key characteristics: unity of spirit, accurate knowledge of the Son of God, complete maturity, and a level of growth that aligns with the fullness of Christ.

The church's structure, as presented in Ephesians, is that of a missional church. In this model, the saints are to be equipped by the gifted ones for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:12). Those above "gifted ones" (Eph 4:11) are endowed with the missional functions of apostle, priest, evangelist, pastor, and teacher. The people blessed with these gifts equip the faithful with the requisite tools to fulfil their missional obligations (Hastings, 2012: 297; Lotter & Van Aarde, 2017:2).

#### **4.4.3.2. The strategy of delegation in Titus and Ephesians 4:12**

Tactics pertain to how a strategic plan is to be operationalized within the context of a community. The primary tactic employed by Paul was delegation. Concerning the Cretans, Titus is responsible for selecting elders based on their ethical and spiritual qualities. These leaders have the authority to address doctrinal matters within the community. Moreover, in each social stratum, the most aged individuals were designated as guardians of the younger generation. In addition, the most aged individuals were selected to assume responsibility for the younger community members.

In his approach to Ephesians, Paul's delegation strategy is evident in his delineation of objectives and the role of the five responsibilities, which are designed to equip the entire body of Christ. It is the responsibility of each member of the body of Christ to be adequately equipped to participate actively in the work of the ministry. It is of the utmost importance that ministers in the modern church and the congregation are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfil their roles effectively (Platt *et al.*, 2013:103).

This is of great consequence, particularly for ministers in the contemporary church and the congregation. Verse 12 elucidates the rationale behind the bestowal of these gifts upon the congregation. It is to prepare all God's people for the work of Christian service, to edify the body of Christ. It is incumbent upon divinely gifted leaders to provide members with the tools necessary to engage in a life of mutual service. The objective of ministry is to facilitate the growth of all believers in their knowledge of Christ and of the fundamental tenets of the faith, to foster their development into more mature Christians, and to encourage them to demonstrate love for one another within the context of the community (Van Wyk, 2018:5-6).

#### **4.4.3.3. The concept of *Ubuntu* in Ephesians 4:12-13**

The third strategy to augment the missional paradigm is the philosophical concept of "*Ubuntu*". The term "*Ubuntu*" is derived from the Zulu language (Ajitoni, 2024:1). The Xhosa language, among others, employs a term that can be roughly translated as "humanity towards others. The Democratic Republic of Congo uses the terms *bomoto* or *bantu* (Mugumbate *et al.*, 2023:1124; Lumumba *et al.*, 2023:2; Kupangwa, 2024:2).

"The primary concept underlying the notion of *Ubuntu* is behaving in a manner that benefits others and the community. In this way, *Ubuntu* represents a collection of knowledge, values, and practices that Black people of Africa view as making people more human (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2019; Mugumbate *et al.*, 2023:1124; Ajitoni, 2024:3). Virtues Furthermore, "universal brotherhood for Africans" is a core value that guides how individuals interact. It emphasises the importance of treating and respecting others as human beings to maintain harmony and cohesion within the community. The term "society" describes the collective of people who live in a particular area or community (Louw, 2002:17).

The communal emphasis of *Ubuntu* can be understood in light of traditional African thought, which posits that human beings are born into a human society. In this view, African personhood is defined as the community, conceived as an organic relationship between individuals. Thus, the *Ubuntu* philosophical framework is characterised by the

interconnectedness of all things and beings, the spiritual nature of people, their collective/individual identity and the collective/inclusive nature of family structure (Mayaka & Truell, 2021:3 Chingangaidze *et al.*, 2022: 320). This relationship is characterised by mutual responsiveness to each other's needs. *Ubuntu's* cooperative and ethical aspects underscore the concept of African collective belonging and group membership. The ethos of *Ubuntu* can be defined as follows: "I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am" (Edozie, 2017:81, 88-91).

The *Ubuntu* concept and its associated philosophy represent an appropriate mindset that should prevail in the Christian leadership process. The concept of *Ubuntu* is consistent with Paul's objectives as outlined in Ephesians 4:12-13. Equipping the saints aims to foster communal unity in faith and knowledge of the Son of God. This is the missional aspect of *Ubuntu*, which establishes the individual's existence as rooted in the communal one (1 Cor.12:27; Rom.12:5).

#### **4.5. The Missional Church Leadership**

The analysis of Paul's ministry, as presented in the two epistles to Titus and Ephesians, reveals that its success was contingent upon his missional leadership mindset and skill. He deliberately appointed leaders to whom he imparted missional directives for implementation. In this way, he ensured that the designated leaders carried out the instructions he had provided.

##### **4.5.1. The missional definition of the Church**

The term "church" is referenced on over 115 occasions within the New Testament. This term is translated from the Greek word "*ekklesia*," which is commonly defined as "an assembly" and "the called-out ones"(Bullinger, 1995:72; Towns, 1995:45-47). In the context of Greco-Roman civilization, the term "*ekklesia*" refers to an assembly or congregation. It is not solely a Christian term, as evidenced by its usage in Acts 19:32, 35, 39, and 41 (NIV).

The concept of a "missional church" is based on the premise that each church is responsible for actively engaging in the full scope of God's mission to the world. In a more expansive sense, the term "missional" denotes a dedication to the salvific mission of God for all of creation. This implies that the organisation is defined by its purpose of serving God through its practices or products. In this way, the term "missional" is inextricably linked to the very nature of the Church, which is understood as being sent forth by God into the world (Balía & Kim, 2010:120; Van Aarde, 2017; McConnell, 2018:9-11).

In essence, a missional church is a community of God's people that defines itself and organises its life around its fundamental purpose of serving as an agent of God's mission to the world (Hirsch, 2007:82). This definition underscores the fact that an authentic missional Church is organised according with the principle of God's mission, which is commonly referred to as "*missio Dei*." It is incumbent upon the Church to extend God's mission. The mission of God is conveyed directly to every believer and every community of faith that adheres to Jesus. Consequently, the missional church is not concerned with introducing novel techniques or programs for the church. In essence, the missional church is a congregational environment in which God is the primary focus of discourse and the driving force behind the actions and endeavours of the people (West, 2007:1-2).

The principal meaning of the missional church is that the entire body of Christ is called to participate in God's mission and purposes (Van Aarde, 2017:2-4). Consequently, the necessity for missionary activity is obviated by the concept of missionality, which entails the presence and incarnate representation of Christ in the local community. Furthermore, it concerns the universal priesthood of all believers, or every Christian, concerning their respective neighbourhoods. Taylor and Cho (2010: 314) observed:

The paradigm shift from the Church's mission to God's mission, and from a mission to 'those far away' to 'those who are near', implies a renewed focus upon local context and the primary role of the local church in mission. The local church is always the actual expression of the worldwide church, the people of God in their local context.

The foundation of the missional church is the priesthood of the believers in the local church, as outlined in Ephesians 4:1–16 and 1 Peter 2:9.

#### **4.5.2. Importance of the missional church leadership**

There are numerous reasons why missional church leadership is of significant importance. Firstly, the fundamental role of the "enabler" is of significant importance to the Church's missional leadership. Indeed, the fundamental role of missional leadership is to serve as an enabling process that assists every faith-based organization in implementing the priesthood of all believers (Elkington *et al.*, 2015:6). Although all followers of Christ are disciples, the disciples' community requires leaders who serve as a ministerial priesthood, providing nourishment, sustenance, guidance, and support for this priestly work (Niemandt, 2019:72).

Secondly, missional leadership is responsible for deploying appropriate strategies and tactics that facilitate individual and communal transformation within the community. The objective is to cultivate sent communities of witnesses by facilitating transformation within the community and releasing the priesthood of all believers. This priesthood can discern the Spirit's movement in an appropriate context and commit themselves to the task of missions. Furthermore, they are to be missional, actively and intentionally witnessing to Christ in their local context (Doornenbal, 2012:261; Niemandt, 2019:109).

### **4.5.3. Key elements of missional Church leadership**

The distinctive feature of missional church leadership is its emphasis on the mission, spirituality, context, environment, and theology that shape its approach. These domains must diverge from the Christendom model of the church.

#### **4.5.3.1.1. The mission of the missional leader**

Missional leadership aims to invigorate missional communities, ensuring that all constituents embody the missional ethos in their everyday actions. The fundamental responsibilities of missional leaders are to serve as facilitators and transformative agents who discern the actions of the Holy Spirit and then guide the congregation in aligning with God's mission.

Consequently, the initial step of missional leadership is cultivating a vision per God's intentions and mission within the specific context while inspiring others to engage. In conclusion, the mission of missional leadership entails cultivating a culture of missional engagement within the ecclesiastical context. This involves providing resources and encouraging individuals to apply their faith daily.

#### **4.5.3.1.2. Spirituality**

Spirituality can be defined as the feelings, thoughts, experiences, and behaviours that arise from an individual's search for the sacred. Regardless of its source, spirituality encompasses the fundamental values and meanings that inform human existence (Fry, 2003:694-95; Ledbetter *et al.*, 2017:43-44; Elias *et al.*, 2018:6; Sema Polatci, 2020:235).

In the missional paradigm, spirituality and mission are considered two aspects of a single entity, with spirituality regarded as the primary or foundational aspect. Missional spirituality is a form of spirituality that is rooted in the Trinity and serves to sustain the church in its mission. (Niemandt, 2015a:7). It can be argued that spirituality should be the central focus and the

driving force behind any mission, given that the Holy Spirit is considered to be the primary agent of God's mission in the world (Ross & Ma, 2013:225; 2011:22; Niemandt, 2019:85, 99).

Missional spirituality is oriented toward a specific mission. It allows leaders to discern and identify the appropriate course of action. Discernment represents the initial stage of the mission, whereby a sense of direction is identified, and the trajectory of the Spirit's guidance is established. Only through a union with the Spirit can one embark on a mission in the service of God. The guidance of the Spirit enables participants to discern the work of the Spirit and to embrace the conviction that the Spirit is at the vanguard of God's church, already at work in every place where His people can be sent (Branson, 2007:114; Mpinga, 2014:85; Niemandt, 2019:91,107,112,158).

#### **4.5.3.1.3. Environment: the missional church**

The concept of missional leadership is operationalised within the context of the church. The church provides an optimal environment for effectively integrating spirituality and discipleship. Indeed, the objective of missional leadership is to transform the conceptualization and ongoing management of the church from a Christendom-centric approach to one that is more aligned with a community-centric expression. Moreover, the role of the missional leader is to guide the laity in fulfilling their role as part of a global priesthood, with the guidance of the Holy Ghost, in furthering the mission of God.

#### **4.5.3.1.4. The Context of globalization (global culture) and technological advances acceleration**

The influence and impact of globalization, facilitated by technological advances, have been evident for decades. The context of leadership is of great concern regarding the individual and societal impacts of opportunities and challenges and the acceleration of changes occurring at an increasingly rapid pace. The accelerating pace of scientific and technological innovations is challenging the human ability to adapt. The velocity of transformation exceeds the ability of human beings and social institutions to adapt and accommodate it (Friedman, 2016:29-33).

In contrast, the missional leadership style is incredibly effective and well-suited to navigating the complexities and accelerated pace of the modern era. It integrates a spirituality manifested in daily life, which shapes and sustains the mission (Niemandt, 2019:82-85, 158-59; Wynen & Niemandt, 2020:8).

The challenge for leaders in the age of acceleration is to develop a more nuanced understanding of how people and society operate. To this end, it will be necessary to identify strategies for

accelerating the adaptability and evolution of institutions, including churches, organizations, and society at large (Friedman, 2016: 200).

As a relational organisation, the church is profoundly reliant on social technologies and the capacity of its members to adapt and thrive in an evolving social landscape. In response to these challenges, missional leadership prioritizes the Spirit-led transformation of individuals and institutions by establishing meaningful relationships to enable participation in God's mission. This form of leadership is oriented towards facilitating change and transformation in the context of increasing complexity and acceleration. Mpinga (2014, p. 184) asserts that missional leadership is responsible for discerning, disclosing, teaching, exposing, and developing missional identity (Niemandt, 2019:151).

#### **4.5.3.1.5. Missional theology (ecclesiology and pneumatology)**

All theological disciplines are of significance in the nurturing of the missional paradigm. Nevertheless, ecclesiology and pneumatology warrant particular attention due to their role in defining the functional dimension of the missional conversation.

Indeed, theology is wholly contextual. The objective of theological discourse is to illustrate the capacity to articulate novel perspectives on evolving matters within the context of the Scriptures (Waigi Ng'ang'a, 2017:25). This entails reframing existing ideas in a manner that is both responsive to contemporary concerns and aligned with the tenets of Scripture (Combrink, 2007:1). The following section will address the core issues about pneumatology and ecclesiology in the context of missional theology.

Pneumatology is paramount in forming the missional concept, with missional leadership representing the Spirit-led transformation of individuals and institutions by establishing meaningful relations, thereby enabling participation in God's mission (Niemandt, 2019:151). The ultimate missional role of the Holy Spirit is to disseminate knowledge of Jesus Christ and his saving power through his death and resurrection to the global population. The Holy Spirit is Christ's enduring presence and instrument for completing the mission (Newbigin 1978:31, 66. White & Niemandt, 2015:3).

The missional theology and ecclesiology acknowledge the significance of the Holy Spirit in the establishment, development, transformation, and guidance of both leaders and the community. The essence of mission is life in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit serves as the "agent" of the Trinitarian mission, and the Spirit's era coincides with the Church's era (Niemandt, 2015:3).

The Church's identity is shaped by its engagement with the activity of the Holy Spirit (Bosch, 1991:517; Peterson, 2013:6; Niemandt, 2019:24).

The discipline of ecclesiology is concerned with studying the nature and structure of the church as a theological institution. Ecclesiology, from Greek *ekklesia* (church) and *logos* (discourse), is the analytical and constructive study of the (self-) understanding of the Christian Church in its varieties of forms and practices (Brodd, 2013). Every ecclesiological perspective is predicated on a specific understanding of the church's nature. The church's internal structure and organization are contingent upon its self-description because the church does what it is and then organises what it does (Niemandt, 2012).

There are several descriptions of the church. The initial description of the church pertains to the concept of *koinonia*, which can be translated as "community." (Acts 2:42-47). The term "*koinonia*" has its etymological roots in the Greek word "*koinon*," which signifies "in common" or "communal." In other words, "*koinonia*" signifies a shared possession or interest from which all can benefit and participate.<sup>37</sup>(Kariatlis, 2012:53) In addition, it signifies an affiliation characterized by intimate and active participation, which can be defined as a "close association or fellowship"(Zaluchu, 2021:3)<sup>38</sup> . In conclusion, "fellowship" is a close association between individuals, characterised by mutual trust and involvement (Horan, 2010:231-232; Osei-Bonsu, 2011:58, 70). The concept of communion, which is implicit in this context, manifests in the values of sharing and participation in an enduring interrelationship between God, humanity, and the rest of creation.

Additionally, the church is referred to as "*ekklesia*," which translates to "assembly" in Matthew 16:18. The usage and understanding of the biblical concept of *ekklesia* and the modern

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<sup>37</sup> In his 2012 work, *Affirming Koinonia Ecclesiology: An Orthodox Perspective*, Philip Kariatlis (p. 53) emphasizes that the New Testament concept of *koinonia* is rooted in participation in or fellowship with the person and life of Jesus Christ. As evidenced in 1 Corinthians 1:9, this is made possible through fellowship with the Spirit of God (cf. 2 Corinthians 13:13). In consequence, the term "*koinonia*" is understood to signify the church's intimate unity with God the Father, which is mediated through Christ and the Holy Spirit. Moreover, this most intimate participation in the life of the Trinity, signified by *koinonia*, also establishes an indissoluble relationship between human beings. This communion has both a vertical and a horizontal dimension. It is these horizontal and vertical aspects that serve to define the biblical concept of *koinonia* in its essential form.

<sup>38</sup> The practice of fellowship in the early Christian church entailed collective engagement in Sunday spiritual activities. These activities included prayer, singing, the interpretation of God's commandments, and the celebration of a communal meal. This concept subsequently evolved into one of the principal forms of Christian epistemology, elucidating the genesis of Christian congregations whose members are unified by a common purpose and shared faith and belief through worship. In light of this understanding, "fellowship" is ultimately linked to Christian worship. However, "fellowship" has a more expansive connotation than merely congregating for worship, encompassing any spiritual activities undertaken within Christian rituals (Zaluchu, S.Z. 2021:3).

phenomenon of the "C/church" have significant implications for the development of missional ecclesiology (de Beer, 2018:72).

The term "*ekklesia*" has its etymological roots in two Greek words, "*Ek*" and "*Kaleo*." The term "*ek*" is defined as "out of" or "from." Additionally, the term "*ek*" can indicate a separation. The term "*Kaleo*" is derived from the Greek language and translates to mean "to call" or "to invite." Together, these elements form the word *ekklesia*, commonly translated from its roots as "those called out." The term "*ekklesia*" is frequently rendered as "an assembly called out" or "an assembly."

In Greek *ekklesia* and biblical *ekklesia*, the populace is summoned by the town herald and Christ, respectively. The two concepts are analogous in that they both entail a call to a specific group, albeit by different sources. Christ has called all people to himself, and those who accept the call of salvation are members of the Assembly of God, regardless of their affiliation with any particular religious group or building. In conclusion, the *ekklesia* is an assembly of individuals who have been called to respond and are obliged to seek the common good on behalf of others, acting as an establishment of God's kingdom on earth (Newbigin, 1980:19; Caudle, 2020:1, 5-6).

Therefore, "*koinonia*" and "*ekklesia*" encompass community, assembly, and participation. These dynamic and practical concepts shape the evolution of the Church and imbue any assembly convened in God's name with an appropriate character (Tara, 2020)<sup>39</sup>. The terms "*koinonia*" and "*ekklesia*" are connected by their communal connotations. The church is a Christian community of people who gather and are headed by God in Jesus Christ (Kariatlis, 2012:56).

The third description of the church is the body of Christ, which describes the church as one body with many members, not having the same function but interlinked as members of each other. Each body member plays a part in bringing about the signs of the Kingdom. Equipment of the whole body becomes a fixed item on the church agenda (Schoeman, 2012).<sup>40</sup>

Once again, the concept of the body of Christ is exemplified by the ideas of community, communion, and relationship, expressed through Christ's lordship when all body members live

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<sup>39</sup> Caudle, Tara. 2020. "The *Ekklesia* as an Assembly that Invokes Response," Liberty University Journal of Statesmanship & Public Policy: 1(1).12, pp.1

<sup>40</sup> Schoeman. 2012. The unified body of Christ is a biblical metaphor for being a church. *Acta Theologica* 2012 Suppl 16: 161-173. Pp 166

an open *koinonia* as *Ekklesia* under the minister of the Holy Spirit. The concept of communion is, first and foremost, an inner Trinitarian reality. Through their baptism, Christians are incorporated into the Body of Christ and thus become partakers in the Triune communion through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.<sup>41</sup>

Fourthly, the church can be defined as a complex adaptive system. (CAS). A complex system is defined as one comprising a variety of parts that interact in ways that are not easily predictable. Similarly, an organization can be considered a complex system comprising several interdependent agents whose functions are not always clearly delineated. Complex adaptive systems are composed of individual actors acting in an interdependent and autonomous manner, intending to achieve common goals<sup>42</sup> (Schneider & Somers, 2006:356; Nel, 2009:2; Turner *et al.*, 2019:9).

The term "complexity" describes the concept of diverse yet interconnected living elements, each affecting the others in an open, interactive, and iterative process that is not susceptible to control or complete prediction (Chan, 2001:1).

The Christian church and its adherents respond to the CAS description because they are a community of believers who have come together around a shared commitment to Christ's lordship and willingness to follow him in discipleship.

The primary concern regarding CAS pertains to the optimal leadership model for its advancement. Elkington *et al.* (2015) posit that missional leadership serves as an enabling function, aligning more closely with the proposed model and reflecting the contemporary context of heightened complexity. This approach underscores the value of a system's overall strength rather than the mere functionality of its components (Schneider & Somers, 2006:356; Elkington, 2013:10; Elkington *et al.*, 2015:1-4,6; Turner *et al.*, 2019:3, 6,20).

In addition, the church serves as an environment conducive to hermeneutical and interpretive inquiry. It can be reasonably argued that hermeneutics are of great importance in the context of the church as a community. The study of hermeneutics is of significant value within the context of the church as a community.<sup>43</sup> It is, therefore, the responsibility of the Church to provide a

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<sup>41</sup> Miika Ahola.2023. Churches Growing, In *Koinonia* Unity and Communion in 'The Church: Towards a Common Vision' Pp 6.

<sup>42</sup> Turner *et al.* 2019. *Complex Adaptive Team Systems* (CATS), pp 6-8

<sup>43</sup> Heidebrecht.2020. In "*Community Hermeneutics in Practice: Following the Interpretive Path Together*", pp 123/1, The rationale behind the church's practice of gathering is to engage in the hermeneutical task of discerning how to apply the message of the Bible in a manner that is relevant to their context. This involves interpreting the

community in which believers can learn to listen to Scripture as the Word of God, to understand it, and to live in obedience to God. Through these practices, members will develop the capacity for discernment, enabling them to identify strategies for engaging with their communities in alignment with their respective callings<sup>44</sup> (Burger, 2019:1; Niemandt, 2019: 108).

The act of hearing and reading the Bible is an inherently communal phenomenon. The conceptual framework of each community serves to mediate the readings following the specific worldview and sociocultural context of that culture. It offers direction and structure for exegetical methodology and reading practice, functioning as a framework for interpreting the text. The interpretation and understanding of written texts is a process that is shaped by the cultural context in which it occurs (Newbigin, 1980:19; Padilla, 1981:22-23; Spawn & Wright, 2012:15; Niemandt, 2019:164; Sang-An, 2022).

The discipline of hermeneutics plays an essential role in spiritual edification, providing a foundation for a robust and coherent theological framework. The success or failure of any given theological framework is contingent upon its hermeneutic approach. Conversely, the efficacy of a hermeneutic is contingent upon its underlying theological framework. Theological interpretations within a religious context are susceptible to hermeneutical influences, which the surrounding environment can shape. Indeed, the discipline of hermeneutics enhances interpreters' capacity for discerning the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive elements within Scripture. The descriptive refers to a mere narration of an event as it occurred, whereas the prescriptive describes what is scripturally normative for all times and ages (Padilla, 1981:18; Packer, 1992:325; Couch, 2000:42; Osborne, 2006:20; Enyinnaya, 2008:148-150; Adewale, 2020:6-10).

Biblical interpretation also serves as a means of identifying and refuting heretical interpretations. Without the requisite interpretative tools, there is a risk of being susceptible to the influence of heretical interpretations. Biblical interpretation is a means of identifying and exposing heretical interpretations. This is the apologetic function of hermeneutics concerning

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Bible and understanding its implications for the congregation. Therefore, hermeneutics is a subject that requires discussion and analysis within a community setting. The aforementioned issue requires further examination. The text is incomplete and, therefore, meaningless. The text is incomplete. The church, as a discerning community, should strive to achieve consensus on the appropriate response to the teachings of the Bible, guided by the Holy Spirit and the leadership of local clergy.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* Niemandt (2019, p. 116) emphasizes that the identity of the missional church is inextricably linked to its role as a witness to God's actions in Christ, a hermeneutic of the gospel, and a reflection of its calling in all aspects of its life. The missional community is seen as a hermeneutic of the gospel, shaping the Bible's interpretation and application.

the apostles and the church fathers, who wrote for their respective churches and against their opponents. This was done to defend the Christian faith further, as interpreted by these authors (Dockery, 1992:15; Marbaniang, 2014).

Numerous hermeneutical trends have significantly impacted the interpretation of the Bible and have also shaped the evolution of the Church in the global context, particularly in Africa. For example, a variety of hermeneutical approaches can be observed within Pentecostalism. These include pneumatic or Spirit-based hermeneutics, contextual hermeneutics, evangelical hermeneutics, and African biblical hermeneutics.

African biblical hermeneutics represents a methodological approach that situates African social and cultural contexts at the centre of the interpretative process. The objective of African biblical hermeneutics is to establish a connection between the academic study of the Bible and the existential situation of the people, as both the contributions of readers and interpreters are essential to the communities. There are several distinct approaches to African hermeneutics, including liberation hermeneutics, feminist hermeneutics, deliverance hermeneutics, and black hermeneutics. Nevertheless, the fundamental differences between these groups lie in the ontological and epistemological presuppositions that underpin their respective doctrines.<sup>45</sup>

In the final description of the church provided for this study, the church is seen as conducive to discernment. The term "discernment" is derived from the Latin "*discerno*," which means "to separate" or "to set apart." The Latin root of the term "discernment" signifies the act of "separating" or "setting apart." In the context of Christian living, discernment can be defined as the capacity to distinguish between that which is morally good and that which is morally reprehensible, between what is true and what is false, and between what is wise and what is foolish (MacArthur, 2021:1-3; Connors, 2021:1). Consequently, discernment can be defined as the capacity to assess circumstances and select courses of action while maintaining an awareness of the moral implications inherent to each option. It evaluates all stimuli to distinguish between true and false, good and bad, or right and wrong.

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<sup>45</sup> The term "presupposition" describes the number of beliefs that are accepted without the support of other beliefs, arguments, or evidence. These presuppositions exert a significant influence on the faithful interpretation of the Bible. This occurs at the three levels of interpretation: the macro, the meso, and the micro. Macro-level presuppositions pertain to the fundamental principles that inform the conceptual framework utilized by interpreters in their interpretive endeavours. These principles often remain unconscious to the interpreters themselves. Meso-level presuppositions assume the form of doctrines that are formulated within the limits set by the interpreter's conceptual framework, which is based on the interpreter's determinations regarding ontology and epistemology. At the micro level, presuppositions control individual texts or pericopes, though this is not a standalone phenomenon. Instead, it is shaped by the interplay between micro-level presuppositions and those at the macro and meso levels. Please refer to Donkor (2020, pp. 15–18) for further details.

The ability to discern has consistently been a pivotal and unavoidable aspect of the church's evolution, particularly when ambiguity is prevalent and opposing perspectives are in conflict. In such contexts, where absolute truths are frequently rejected, absolute truth becomes relative. Spiritual discernment is not a quality that the believer can eschew; instead, it is a fundamental necessity for the church, as it is the sole means of acquiring the capacity to distinguish between divine truth and error (1 Thess. 5:21–22; Eph 5:10–11; Bengel, 2021:1-2; 2022:1-3; Sichone, 2021:1-5).

Discernment is a fundamental tenet of the Christian faith, as evidenced by the following sources: Niemandt (2019:162), Tettey & Nel (2021:5), Schoeman (2015a:76; 2015b:106). It precludes the possibility of ambiguity in doctrinal interpretation. This has resulted in a contemporary tendency to utilize theological language somewhat laxly, a tolerance of erroneous teachings of all kinds, and a dearth of efforts to identify and refute errors. The dilution of biblical doctrine has conditioned the contemporary church to prioritize only those aspects of doctrine that align with its existing beliefs and preferences. As a result of the prioritization of experiential and emotional aspects over divine revelation, a considerable number of individuals who identify as Christians lack a biblical foundation for their actions.

The concepts of discernment and sound hermeneutics are inextricably linked, forming an inseparable duality. The concept of discernment is inextricably linked to a normative frame of reference, encompassing one's orientation in life, values, worldview, and religious beliefs (Miller, 2020:373).

#### **4.5.3.2. The Mission of the Missional Church**

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the Western church viewed mission as a core tenet of its identity. To enhance its efficacy, the church entrusted the management of its missionary endeavours to specialized agencies. Such entities are often referred to in the plural as "missions," which may include specialized Christian organizations, missionary societies, or denominational missions (McConnell, 2018:12; Chan, 2019:5).

Meanwhile, for decades, this line of thinking has been resurgent. Two fundamental elements serve to define the mission. Firstly, the source of the mission is the Triune God and the Church serves the mission of God, referred to as the *missio Dei* (Van Aarde, 2016:285).

The final tenet is that undertaking a mission is not a process that occurs in isolation. It is situated within, derived from particular contexts, and expressed through the Trinity's life.

Mission in the manner of Christ is located within a certain context, addressing the specific challenges inherent to that context. In this way, mission is regarded as a process whereby the divine and the secular are brought closer to one another. The Church is viewed as an instrument for the fulfilment of this mission. The Trinitarian nature of mission implies an essential role for the Church.

The Church's fundamental objective is to support the *missio Dei*. The very existence of Church structures is predicated on their ability to serve the community and help it pursue its mission (Balía & Kim, 2010:12).

#### **4.5.3.3. The Missional Church Characteristics**

The missional church is discernible through essential characteristics, including its nature, mission, theology (or ecclesiology), and functions. The nature of the missional, in turn, determines what the church is. The nature of the church determines its activities. It is only when the fundamental nature and character of the church are clearly defined that one can begin to consider the purpose of the church and the direction and scope of its ministries (Niemandt, 2019:12). The initial objective is to ascertain the fundamental nature of the church, which should be established as a prerequisite to any consideration of its activities. The nature and vocation of the church must be regarded as essentially missional. The church was established to engage in a divinely appointed mission, wherein the church itself serves as a means to an end rather than an end in itself. It follows that a church without a mission is as contradictory as a mission without the church, given the intrinsic relationship between the two (Gonçalves, 2014:86).

The second defining feature of the missional church is its mission. The missional discourse effectively transferred the agency of mission from the church to God. The mission can be understood as an extension and amplification of God's very being, as the Trinity is a fundamental aspect of the divine nature. Furthermore, the mission can be understood as a form of participation in the divine life of God (Wright, 2010:211; Niemandt, 2012a:2). The mission of a missional church is both incarnational and relational as a result of its Trinitarian origin. In addition, the mission is incarnational due to the translatability of the Word of God. The gospel is fundamentally missionary, with a universal scope and the capacity to be translated into a particular context.

The third characteristic of a missional church pertains to its functions. The role of the missional church is to serve as an incarnational presence within the community. The second function of

the missional church is to serve as a priesthood of believers. The priesthood of all believers has historically been a core tenet of the Christian church. Consequently, a missional church needs to function as a missional community.

The final characteristic of a missional church is its theology and ecclesiology. Missional ecclesiology is a distinct field of study that examines the doctrine or understanding of the church from a missiological perspective. Missional ecclesiology offers a different perspective on the nature of the Church. Rather than viewing it as a physical structure or an organisational entity, it perceives the Church as a community of witnesses, called forth by God and equipped for service, sent into the world to witness and engage in Christ's mission. In this way, missional ecclesiology situates the Church about the world as an instrument of God's mission and a contributor to God's narrative (Hooker, 2008:1, 2; Goheen, 2011:5, 8).

In summary, missional theology encompasses foundational theological convictions about God's missional character and activity. In contrast, missional ecclesiology focuses on the local church and its mission. Like all theological systems, missional theology emphasises the local community and the surrounding neighbourhood as the immediate context (Abioje, 2007:308).

#### **4.5.3.4. Missional Church Leadership and the shift from Christendom to missional church**

It is widely acknowledged that the Church in Africa's sub-Saharan region represents the epicentre of global Christianity. This study underscores the prominence of the DRC within this context (Deressa, 2020:363). For further details, please refer to point 1.2.3.1. To maintain the appeal of this transition, which is primarily based on numerical growth, the Church in Africa and the DRC must transition to a missional paradigm, as described in this chapter. This will resolve and shift the critical factor that eases the church's numerical growth in Africa from natural birth to missional growth strategies. Therefore, for Christians in the Global South to assume a prominent role in the future of global Christianity, they must transition their emphasis from numerical growth (quantity) to a more comprehensive approach to discipleship and church health (Deressa, 2020:365-366,372).

Transitioning from traditional Christian practices to focusing on mission-oriented needs entails rethinking church policies and organisational structures. The initial phase of this process involves inculcating a missional mindset and proficiency through meticulous training in discipleship. The second step entails implementing the three missional essential elements or activities: mission, worship, and community (Langmead, 2012:10-11). The transition from

Christendom to a missional church paradigm is not merely a slogan but about engagement. The transition from the traditional Christian model to the contemporary missional church paradigm is not simply a matter of rhetoric but an active engagement process.

#### **4.5.3.4.1. Missional church engages in leadership training**

The primary function of church leadership is to provide the faithful with the tools necessary for effective service and mission. Ephesians 4:1-16 presents the corporate community as "the priesthood of believers" to equip them for service and fulfil their missional vocation and calling. Considering the passage above, the priesthood of all believers is the consequence of a collective empowerment of believers by those who have been bestowed with sure gifts. The aforementioned gifted individuals function in the gifts bestowed upon the Church to equip believers to engage in missional activities. It is incumbent upon every believer to contribute to the collective development of the Church through their ministry.

This constitutes the nurturing imperative of the missional church. The missional church movement faces the critical challenge of nurturing a missional vocation and calling among all believers. This is to be achieved through the priesthood of believers so every believer may be involved in the mission and become "the initiators of the mission" (Sunquist, 2013: 309). Training enables missional leaders to facilitate the transformation of traditional beliefs and instil a missional mindset within the routines and practices of the Christian life, aligned with a mission-oriented approach (Roxburgh & Romanuk, 2006: 34).

To facilitate this change toward a missional leadership paradigm, leaders must adopt certain attitudes:

- a. The development of a missional leadership paradigm begins with forming a perceptual and conceptual framework that views the church as a dynamic entity, a complex adaptive system. Adopting a systems perspective that views the church as a living organism enables leadership to evolve into a systems-sensitive, enabling style. This system or "church as organism" perspective is crucial for allowing leadership in the context of the missional paradigm. It challenges the traditional perception of the church as static and emphasises its dynamic and healthy nature (Van Aarde, 2017: 5).

From a system perspective, the leader emphasises the mutual interaction between the parts to maintain the system. The New Testament, in numerous passages such as Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 2:19–22; 4:1–16, Philippians 1:27–30, and

Colossians 1:18, emphasises that it is the interactions between the various parts of the local church that ensure the system's self-maintenance. When the system operates healthily and effectively, it fulfils the *missio Dei* (Elkington *et al.*, 2015:8).

- b. Furthermore, leadership must foster the concept of community, which should be the foundation of mentoring methodology. In this way, missional leaders serve as enablers of the community, emphasising the health and strength of the system and its capacity for self-maintenance and mission-oriented functioning. These qualities are more reliable indicators of successful leadership than traditional measures of size and wealth (Elkington *et al.*, 2015:6).
- c. In a complex adaptive system, collaboration is the primary mode of operation, superseding the traditional concept of cooperation. Cooperation can ultimately prove detrimental to the entity in question when taken to an extreme extreme. Conversely, collaboration allows for the freedom of contribution from all constituent parts of the organism, which, in turn, contributes to the overall health and well-being. The local church's leadership supports the local church's ministry, strengthening and supporting the health of each believer, constituting a component of the complex adaptive system that forms the local church. When each system element functions as intended, the result should be the optimal health and strength of the entire system (Elkington, 2011:10; Elkington *et al.*, 2015:7).

#### **4.5.3.4.2. Missional church engages in mission activities**

The mission issue, in general, and with specific reference to the mission of the Church, represents a fundamental tenet of the missional paradigm from which all missional tenets have been derived. It is not merely the comprehension of the concept that is of consequence; it is also how the mission should be implemented. The fundamental tenet of the missional church is that the concept of "mission" cannot be reduced to a mere function or program within the context of a church. It represents the fundamental essence and nature of the church, as well as the source of its influence. For those aware of their relationship with the divine, the mission is an unassailable tenet (Leeman, 2010:2; Verster, 2022:1). The concept of "missional" is intrinsic to the identity and purpose of the Church. It entails assuming a role in God's narrative within the context of a particular culture and participating in God's mission to the world. In other words, characterising the church as "missional" entails defining the entire Christian community as a body dispatched to the world and existing not for its own sake but to disseminate the good news to the world (Goheen, 2011:3-4).

The church is inextricably linked to its mission; therefore, its identity is contingent upon that mission. Mission is the fundamental driving force behind the establishment and continued existence of the church. It is impossible to conceive of a church without a mission and to envisage one without the church. An understanding of the nature of the church is incomplete without consideration of its relationship with its mission. To gain a complete understanding of the nature of the church, it is necessary to consider its relationship with its mission (Niemandt, 2019:13-14-16).

The missional church views the mission as the definitive part of what the church is because the church is a product of and participant in God's mission. It exists to meaningfully share in the triune God's creative, reconciling, healing, and restoring movement in the world. All its members are missionaries through baptism, not just a select few. Local churches are central to God's mission as they discern God's movement in particular times and places and join up with it (Zscheile, 2012:6).

To ensure efficacy, the mission should be developed as a lifestyle to generate a mission-style or missional lifestyle. As Chester (2018) posits, a mission or missional lifestyle is one in which the entirety of one's existence is oriented towards the mission. The mission is more comprehensive than evangelistic events, activities, or courses, although these may be included as appropriate. Instead, all aspects of life are conducted with a conscious and deliberate focus on the mission at hand. Developing a missional lifestyle facilitates cultivating a missional identity, which may be conceptualised as a missionary activity.

#### **4.5.3.4.3. Missional church engages in worship**

A missional church is defined as a worshipping community that illustrates the reality and presence of God's gracious reign in Christ. Worship and mission are inextricably linked; one cannot exist without another. They are two aspects of a single phenomenon. The assembly does not merely conclude with the conclusion of the worship service. We are commissioned in the name of Christ to disseminate and exemplify the tenets and practices observed during the worship service. Worship is a participation in the redeeming love and grace of God. Through this participation, the work of the mission is rehearsed. It is of the utmost importance to engage the entire assembly in worship, both for the efficacy of worship itself and for the effectiveness of the mission (The Lutheran World Federation, 2004:46; Meyers, 2014:1).

#### **4.5.3.4.4. Shift in Evangelism mindset and practices**

The concept of evangelism should be reoriented from its current status as an occasional event to a more pervasive and integrated aspect of the church's identity and practice.

The objective is to attract individuals to the church and empower them with the tools and resources necessary to engage actively within the church community. The church's ability to attract members is undermined when its focus shifts from welcoming newcomers to engaging with the community.

1. An attractional church strives to engage with the surrounding culture and draw people into the church by designing its services and programs to appeal to potential attendees.
2. Missional churches engage with the world in a more proactive than reactive manner. Their overarching objective is not merely evangelism but the formation of disciples (i.e., people who emulate Christ's teachings and example).

Another activity within evangelism pertains to providing resources to all church members to facilitate a transformation in their mindset. Training may be formal or informal, and it should underscore the church's missionary role and each member's obligation. One of the defining characteristics of a missional church, as evidenced in the literature on the subject, is its emphasis on 'outward' orientation rather than mere 'inward focus'.

#### **4.5.3.4.5. Missional church is a shift from institution to community**

The concept of community represents a pivotal consideration in the evolution of a missional church. It constitutes a crucial element of the missional paradigm, serving many purposes. The church is, first and foremost, an intentional and disciplined community that bears witness to the power and presence of God's reign (Roxburgh, 2004:6). The missional church is a community of individuals who utilise their spiritual gifts (*charismata*) to bear witness to the Holy Spirit's presence and activity. As stated in 1 Corinthians 12, it is through these gifts that the church is endowed with spiritual gifts for the strengthening of communion/fellowship (*koinonia*), for the proclamation of the gospel (*kerygma*), and service and healing (*diakonia*). A church engaged in mission is a congregation endowed with gifts of the Spirit and thus capable of affecting transformation, reconciliation, and empowerment during its mission. As a witnessing community, the church cannot authentically engage in God's mission without these gifts, as this would render the mission a mere human enterprise (The Lutheran World Federation, 2004:46).

The church is, in essence, a community of disciples, a missional community whose existence, identity, and purpose are rooted in the Trinity and, consequently, in the mission of God. As

previously stated, the missional church is neither an attractional nor an extractional church. The former seeks to attract individuals into the church. In contrast, the latter endeavours to extract non-Christians from their cultural contexts. It is recommended that churches prioritise a “missional” approach (moving outward) and an “incarnational” approach (moving deeper into the culture) (Leeman, 2010:2; Msebi, 2022:231). The missional faith community perceives itself as a missionary within a dynamic mission field.

The emphasis on the missional faith community prompts an examination of the priesthood of believers as a pivotal aspect of the "missional church" paradigm. Growth is gauged in terms of the degree of maturity and completeness attained. Implementing the priesthood for all believers entails a commitment from all church members to engage in missionary activities and act as mission agents, actively and intentionally witnessing Christ in their local context (Niemandt, 2019:109). The church's role is to provide all believers with the tools and resources to interpret the Word of God and to facilitate the transition from a formalistic relationship with the institutional and organic church structure to a more liberating one (van Aarde, 2017: 5, 6).

#### **4.6. The missional church leadership and implementation strategies and tactics**

The efficacy of the leadership process is contingent upon the implementation of strategic and tactical measures. The capacity to think strategically enables leaders to formulate a prospective plan of action to attain objectives. Strategies assist in the definition of the objective of this paper, which is to present a framework for the formulation of long-term goals. Furthermore, an analysis of the methodology employed to attain these objectives is warranted.

As evidenced in the epistles to Titus and Ephesians, Paul's leadership effectiveness was contingent upon his capacity to implement efficacious strategies for confronting the challenges he had accurately identified (see 4.3.3).

Once objectives and a vision have been established, leaders must cultivate strategic proficiency to ensure accurate implementation within the organisation. Implementing strategic initiatives enables leaders to articulate and align the corporate strategy across all levels of the organisation. This alignment is of paramount importance for translating strategic visions into tangible outcomes. The organisation's role in strategy implementation is to collaborate to facilitate strategic change and propel the organisation toward its objectives (Lastiri, 2023; Shreya, 2024; Jackson, 2024).

Although leadership is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, its importance is self-evident in any setting, regardless of size or nature. Effective leadership is a fundamental determinant of success in any organisational context (Bennis & Nanus, 1985:4, 20; Van Wart, 2003; Bennis, 2009). It offers a sense of direction and vision, facilitates alignment with the external environment, fosters innovation and creativity, and serves as a catalyst for reinvigorating organisational culture.

Furthermore, leadership is the sole factor influencing the three primary domains: vision, strategy, and values. Values provide insight into the organisation's historical context, while vision—considered the central element—offers a perspective on the future. An organisation's strategy constitutes an essential element of the context within which a leader operates. It provides direction for the translation of the vision into action. It serves as the foundation for the development of specific mechanisms to assist the organisation in achieving its goals (Wang *et al.*, 2002:151; Hasbi, 2012:21; Zasa & Buganza, 2023:416; Pádua & Moreira, 2023:2; Sharma *et al.*, 2024:1-2, 5-6).

The most notable instances of leadership success have been significantly emphasised in the context of the ascendance and accelerated expansion of AICs across Africa, globally, and notably within the DRC. Western and African scholars acknowledge this reality, albeit with some nuances. From an African perspective, the African leadership's opposition to missionary attitudes has been identified as a significant contributing factor to this phenomenon (Chitando, 2004:119-120; Ositelu, 2002:3; Martinus, 1987:72).

Consequently, as Western missionaries assert, this phenomenon represents a positive outcome of their missionary activities in Africa (Chitando, 2004:119). To a certain extent, the leadership of the AICs can be attributed to the influence of Western missions. The majority of African leaders who emerged on the continent received their education from missionary institutions, which have been responsible for the development of all educational systems since the colonial period (Nunn, 2010:147; Schmidt, 2015:8). Nunn (2011:5) put forth the argument that “Education was so central to the conversion strategy of missionaries that education was almost exclusively provided by missions even during the colonial period”.

For the implementation of strategies to be effective, it is essential to understand some prerequisites. First, it is essential to provide an overview of the fundamental principles of leadership to facilitate a clear distinction between Christian and missional leadership. Subsequently, a critical examination of these two concepts is necessary to distinguish between

them. Once the areas of difference have been established, strategies that enhance missional leadership in a given context can be implemented more accurately.

#### **4.6.1. Definition of leadership**

The concept of leadership lacks a consensual definition, mainly due to the vast quantity of literature on the subject (Grint et al., 2017: 1-10; Harrison, 2018:2; Northouse, 2016:2; Setley & Gautsch, 2015:15 and Lussier & Achua, 2010:5). It is typical for each researcher, according to the rationale behind their research, to develop and promote their definition. The concept of leadership has been the subject of considerable debate and analysis, with numerous individuals attempting to define it in various ways (Yukl, 2013:2; Bickes & Yilmaz, 2020:4; Benmira & Agboola, 2021:1; Hadziahmetovic, Tandir & Dzambić, 2023:189).

In the context of this study, the term "leadership" is defined as follows: "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal"<sup>46</sup> (Yukl, 2013:7). Notwithstanding the controversies and divergences above, this definition encompasses several fundamental components that have been ubiquitous across leadership theories throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These include the processes of leadership, the capacity to influence, the role of groups, and the pursuit of goals (Northouse, 2016:5).

#### **4.6.2. Key elements of leadership**

Despite the lack of consensus in the field, each attempt to define the concept of leadership emphasises one or another core element that determines its success.<sup>47</sup> (Northouse, 2016: 3–5). The influence of leaders on followers is contingent upon several factors, including the follower's level, context, culture, and the leadership style employed.

##### **4.6.2.1. Levels of leadership**

The concept of levels is paramount to the effectiveness of leadership. It facilitates comprehension of fundamental leadership-related concepts, such as culture and context (Alvesson, 2002: 94). Meanwhile, the literature has developed this concept relatively ad hoc, according to the author's understanding (Parry, 2011:54; Maxwell, 2011; Miller, 2022).

The study employs a mixture of level terminologies for convenience and in light of the divergences among scholars. The terms above, micro, meso, macro, and global, will be applied to all leadership-related problems, including those concerning culture and context. In light of

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<sup>46</sup> Peter Guy Northouse, 2016, *Leadership: theory and practice*, 7ed. London: Sage, p.6

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp 3-5

the above definitions, the study will address the following aspects of context and leadership: macro, meso, and micro. It will also examine macro context, meso context, and micro context. The overarching objective of addressing the leadership issue is to engender change and facilitate growth within these disparate organisational contexts (Maxwell, 2011; Osborn *et al.*, 2014:9-10; Moir, 2017:1-3).

#### **4.6.2.1.1. Micro-individual level- Self-leadership**

At the micro level, leadership transactions are oriented towards the factors influencing the individual or the self. This encompasses both self-leadership and the organisation's representation at the municipal level. Leadership can be defined as a transactional process through which leaders and followers influence one another. Self-leadership is “the processes through which people influence themselves to achieve the self-direction and self-motivation needed to perform” (Bligh *et al.*, 2006:297).

The initial stage in the leadership process is self-leadership at the micro level (Hannah & Leste, 2009: 34). Self-leadership represents the fundamental basis for all organisational development. One can only effectively lead another if they have developed the capacity to lead themselves (Senge, 2006:124-127; Bennis, 2009:51, 58-59). Furthermore, self-leadership facilitates authenticity and equips individuals with the capacity to navigate challenges and complexities, such as those inherent in the VUCA environment (Pearce & Manz, 2005:133; Bligh *et al.*, 2006:305, Nandram & Bindlish, 2017:4; Maxwell, 2018:15-16, 22).

The second level of analysis is the micro-level, which encompasses individual organizations operating within a small unit, such as a city, town, or urban area (Ritzer, 2011:503; Turner, 2012:3; Serpa & Ferreira, 2019:121). For effective leadership, leaders must understand the opportunities and threats of urbanisation and globalisation. This enables them to adopt and adapt appropriate leadership skills to navigate these complex issues. The phenomenon of migration has generated a plethora of novel data sets that have transformed how the mission should be conducted. In the early 19th century, only 3% of the global population resided in urban areas. By 2050, this figure is projected to range between 68-80%. By 2100, it is estimated that 90% of the world's population will be urban (Smith, 2019:118; Goheen, 2014:21,370-74).

#### **4.6.2.1.2. Meso-level**

The meso level represents the application of both team leadership and shared leadership. At the meso level, the focus is on advancing teams within the organisational structure. The Meso-level stage offers insights into the formation of groups and teams and the subsequent dynamics of

group and team behaviour. Ashkanasy (Alana, 2017: 10). In both profit and non-profit organisations, the objective at this stage is to cultivate a team leadership structure that fosters performance and productivity through a dynamic and interactive influence process among individuals within groups (Bligh *et al.*, 2006:297; Buengeler *et al.*, 2021:261).

#### **4.6.2.1.3. Macro level- Organizational level**

The macro/systems leadership level is strategic, focusing on the organisation at the national level. The responsibility for realising the potential of an entire organisation falls upon its leaders (Hannah & Leste, 2009:34-44; Wigston, 2017; Neal & Alana, 2017:16; Sethuraman, 2019).

The aim at the macro level is to effect a transformational change in the organisation using meticulous monitoring of its external and internal environment. The leader develops a long-term strategy by envisioning and anticipating shifts in the external environment and implementing structural changes in the organisation's internal environment to align with these external changes. To be effective in this transformational role, the leader must identify opportunities, innovate, and, when necessary, adjust the organisation's vision, mission, and objectives (Gosling *et al.*, 2012; LekshmiPriya, 2018: 99-100).

At the macro level, the leader's actions and behaviours align with the prevailing macro-cultural norms and values. This implies that the influence of higher-level contextual factors, such as the primary languages, concepts, and values, on phenomena at lower levels of the system is significant (Erez & Gati, 2004:590; Dimitrov, 2012:110-111; Schein & Schein, 2017:66, 88; Robertson, 2020:13).

The country is an important factor in determining the success or failure of leadership. The degree of openness and the nature of the political system significantly influence the potential trajectory of leadership in secular and religious spheres. The role of leadership has historically been subject to scrutiny in response to the prevailing political, philosophical, or religious trends within a given country. Those in leadership positions must adapt their strategies and styles to align with the specific national realities of the country in which they operate. In the context of this study, the macro/national level represents the national representation of the AICs.

#### **4.6.2.1.4. Global level- world/intercontinental**

The global context of leadership encompasses the significant variables that emerge from interacting with the external environment. In the current era, leaders must navigate the complexities of globalisation and capitalise on its opportunities. Globalisation is unavoidable;

commodification of culture and practice is a universal phenomenon in any locality. Globalisation is at the core of contemporary culture, while cultural practices are at the core of globalisation (Mridha, 2021:167; Kerubo, 2024:58, 61). Globalisation and technological advances have produced several significant factors over the decades, including urbanisation, relativism, mass media dependence, and migration. These factors have a dual impact on all sectors of human life, exerting both positive and negative influences. Perhaps most significantly, the accelerating change has resulted in a situation described as Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous (VUCA). The VUCA context requires a novel approach to leadership (Goheen, 2014:21; Barentsen & Kok, 2017:7–10; Van den Broeck & Jordaan, 2018: 12; Salicru, 2017:1).

The forces of globalisation pose challenges to leaders across all sectors of society, including the church. This phenomenon gives rise to crucial inquiries regarding the fundamental competencies that leaders must possess, such as discernment, the capacity to establish suitable missions and visions, and the ability to construct teams capable of effecting institutional and community transformation (Center for the Study of Global Christianity, 2013; Garrow & Varney, 2015; Forsythe, Kuhla & Rice, 2018; Niemandt, 2019: 3-4; Van Wynen & Niemandt, 2020:1-2; Nurbantoro, 2021:1; Karanmiana, 2022:1).

Consequently, leadership's efficacy hinges on its capacity to navigate the prospects and obstacles inherent to global culture. Organizational leaders must cultivate a global mindset (Dimitrov, 2012:111; Robertson, 2020:13-14; Taptiani *et al.*, 2024:92-93).

#### **4.6.2.1.4.1. Context of the African continent**

All religions have their roots in a specific cultural context, and leadership cannot take place in a vacuum (Ositelu, 2002:14-15; Warren, 2009: xxx; Castillo, Sánchez & Dueñas-Ocampo, 2020:344). Therefore, Africans should be free to practice Christianity under their cultural traditions, provided that such practices follow the teachings of the Holy Bible (2 Corinthians 3: 17 NKJV).

It is now widely acknowledged that Africa represents a particularly fertile ground for the growth of Christianity, with the continent serving as a critical locus of expansion (Zurlo *et al.*, 2020: 9-10; 2021). The growth of Christianity in sub-Saharan Africa and the Asia-Pacific region has been considerable, with the number of Christians in these regions at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century relatively insignificant.

The proportion of the population in sub-Saharan Africa adhering to the Christian faith increased from 9% in 1910 to 63% in 2010. In the Asia-Pacific region, the corresponding figures were 3% and 7%, respectively. In contrast to the situation a century ago, Christianity Today can now be considered a truly global faith. This trend is anticipated to persist (Deressa, 2020: 365–66; Centre for the Study of Global Christianity, 2013). Zurlo and Johnson put forth the argument that:

The shrinking of the Global North and the shifting to the Global South is the essence of World Christianity's characteristics at the start of the 21st century. Like the rest of the world, Christianity is also becoming increasingly urban, with the rise of cities in the Global South with large Christian populations, like Lagos and Kinshasa... The Democratic Republic of the Congo is the most profound, rising from 1 per cent to 95 per cent over that same period (Zurlo & Johnson, 2021:5-6).

The most significant phenomenon of Christianity in contemporary Africa is the proliferation of independent churches. At present, it is estimated that between 40 and 60 per cent of Christians in Africa are affiliated with these Indigenous churches. The countries with the highest concentration of members are, in descending order, South Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Nigeria (Ositelu, 2002; Zurlo & Johnson, 2021:5-6).

The advent of globalisation has had a dual impact on cultural identities in African countries, simultaneously fostering enrichment and posing challenges. Globalization has facilitated the exchange of cultural practices and ideas across the continent and beyond, thereby engendering the creation of new cultural expressions.

However, globalization also raises concerns about safeguarding cultural traditions. The pervasive influence of global media and consumer culture has the potential to render local traditions obsolete, thereby contributing to cultural homogenisation (Kerubo, 2024:63).

#### **4.6.2.2. Contexts of leadership**

A second crucial factor for effective leadership is the context in which it is exercised. The term "context" is derived from the Latin words "con," meaning "together," and "texture," meaning "to weave." In essence, context can be defined as "weaving together" (Wan, 2009, p. 33). Context is co-defined with leadership and catalyses the emergence of distinct leadership attributes and the efficacy of varying leadership dimensions (Osborn et al., 2014: 9–10). Leadership is context-sensitive; an effective leader in one era may exhibit stark contrasts to their effectiveness in another.

In the context of leadership, it is paramount to consider the surrounding circumstances. As Moir (2017: 1) asserts, “To fully understand the underpinnings of effective leadership behaviour, we must understand the contextual nature of influence, recognizing that all environments have unique characteristics that mediate how we experience the social phenomena known as leadership.”

Context plays a multifaceted role in the leadership process, offering distinctive and particular features and frames for each leadership process. It is important to recognise that leadership cannot occur in isolation but within a broader organisational and social context among individuals (Klenke, 2018:10-11; Salicru, 2017:15-16; Church Publishing, 2021:19).

Secondly, the context in which leadership occurs influences the process itself. Context is a fundamental aspect of leadership at all levels, including individual, group, organizational, and societal contexts. Contextual constraints influence the mission, purpose, and rationale for assuming a leadership role in various settings, such as within families, organizations, and religious institutions. Consequently, the appropriate course of action for a leader is contingent upon the specific circumstances or context in which they find themselves. Contextual factors exert a significant influence on the performance of the leader (Klenke, 2018:10-11; Osborn *et al.*, 2014:22; Burak, 2018:218-220; Schulze & Pinkow, 2020:1-3; Samuel, 2022:4-6).

Context is an inherently flexible concept contingent upon the specific field in question. Many factors, including business, politics, technology, sports, media, and religion, generate contextual factors. These factors set the boundaries within which leaders and followers interact (Klenke, 1996; 2018:10-11). In the contemporary era, the prevailing context is significantly shaped by technological advancements, which profoundly impact the VUCA landscape.<sup>48</sup> This phenomenon is observed across a diverse range of organisational structures. To successfully navigate the context, leaders must develop contextual and cultural intelligence.

#### **4.6.2.2.1. Contextual intelligence**

The term "intelligence" is derived from a conjunction of the two Latin words "inter" and "legere." The first element, "inter," signifies "between," while the second, "legere," denotes "to choose" or "to read" (De Spiegeleire & Sweijts, 2017:26).

Intelligence is “the ability to learn, reasoning well, solving and dealing effectively with novel problems— often unpredictable—that confront one in daily life.” (Nickerson, 2020:205).

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<sup>48</sup> Johann Kornelsen .2019. The Quest to Lead (with) Millennials in a VUCA-World: Bridging the Gap Between Generations. In Jacobus (Kobus) Kok & Steven C. van den Heuvel, eds. Leading in a VUCA World.SpringerOpen, pp28

Intelligence can be defined as the capacity to contribute meaningfully to any given situation. Accordingly, an intelligent act is the ability to choose correctly between two or more viable options. Intelligence may be defined as the property and ability of an agent to interact successfully with an environment.

To be contextually efficient, leaders must develop contextual intelligence (CI) and cultural intelligence (CQ) in an organizational environment. This necessitates using hindsight, insight, and foresight (Salicru, 2017:15-16).

In light of the pivotal role, context plays in leadership, leaders must be able to discern the nuances of a shifting environment and subsequently adapt their leadership style and conduct to ensure efficacy in the new context. The capacity of leaders to transfer their competencies across contexts is contingent upon their possession of contextual intelligence (Klenke, 2018:13). The contemporary organisational context is characterised by dynamism, turbulence, and continuous evolution, necessitating innovative leadership approaches.

Contextual intelligence is defined as a specific skill set that enables an individual to effectively diagnose their context and intentionally adjust their behaviour to exert appropriate influence in that context (Kutz, 2008:23). To operate effectively in such an environment, leaders must be able to draw on a range of cognitive skills, including hindsight, insight, and foresight.

#### **4.6.2.2.1.1. Hindsight**

Hindsight enables the use of past experiences, whether positive or negative, to inform current decision-making. It comprehends an occurrence or circumstance after its occurrence (Pruett, 2017). This can be contextualised within the historical context, and the contemporary leadership situation is at least a product of what has gone before (Wren, 1995: 247).

#### **4.6.2.2.1.2. Insight**

Insight can be defined as the process of gathering a comprehensive understanding of a subject matter, whether from internal or external sources. It is the capacity to observe and reason with excellent acuity, discernment, penetration, and perception. Insight can be defined as a comprehensive examination or observation of an object or concept, often involving a process of introspection and analysis. The term is frequently used with the preposition "into," indicating a penetrating and thorough investigation. Insight enhances one's capacity to gain an accurate and profound intuitive understanding of a person or thing. Its function is to identify potential avenues for improvement within existing organisational structures of any size through the application of analytical techniques and the utilisation of people, delegation and an aptitude for

efficiency (Washington, 2023: 2-7). Following Wren's model, this degree of context is associated with the contemporary and immediate contexts (Wren & Swatez, 1995:248-50).

#### **4.6.2.2.1.3. Foresight**

Foresight can be defined as the process of clearly articulating one's desired future state and identifying the actions required to achieve it. By drawing on the insights gained from hindsight and the inspiration derived from foresight, individuals can develop the clarity and understanding necessary to make informed decisions (Washington, 2023: 4).. It is the capacity to anticipate future occurrences (Salicru, 2017:15-16; Pruett, 2017).

#### **4.6.2.2.2. Cultural intelligence (CQ)**

Cultural intelligence (CQ) is the capacity to discern the universal aspects of human behaviour, the distinctive characteristics of a particular individual or group, and the nuances that are neither universal nor idiosyncratic (Mai Moua, 2010, p. 59). It establishes a novel framework for interpreting the subject's experiences and observations. Consequently, cultural intelligence can be defined as an individual's capacity to function and manage effectively in culturally diverse settings.

An intelligent leader demonstrates proficiency and adaptability in comprehending cultural nuances. He gradually and wisely modifies his cognitive processes and behavioural patterns in a manner conducive to effective interaction with individuals from the culture in question. As Mai Moua notes, those who aspire to be culturally intelligent leaders must adopt a strategic approach to aligning the culture of their organizations with the individuals who comprise their workforce (Mai Moua, 2010:15-16).

Cultural intelligence is an invaluable asset for any leader. He will eschew simplistic and pejorative generalizations regarding cultural phenomena, experiences, or examples. Stereotypes are negative statements and interpretations that categorise and limit individuals based on group membership. In contrast, generalizations of cultures are broad statements based on facts, experiences, examples, or logic. There are two types of generalizations: valid and invalid. It is the responsibility of the reader to determine which generalisations are supported by evidence and which are not (Mai Moua, 2010:32; Brooks, 2004:25).

In light of the definition of general intelligence, cultural intelligence (CQ) is conceptualised as a distinct form of intelligence, focusing on an individual's capacity to comprehend and reason effectively in contexts characterised by cultural diversity. Those with high behavioural CQ

demonstrate flexibility and the capacity to adapt their behaviours to the nuances of each cultural interaction (Soon Ang & Van Dyne, 2008:3-4, 7; Wawrosz & Miroslav, 2021:2).

#### **4.6.2.2.3. Levels of context**

Context, at a fundamental level, includes the environments, circumstances, and conditions within which leadership and followership occur (Klenke, 2018:16). Therefore, requirements and demands for leadership differ depending on contextual dynamics and boundaries. Thus, the macro context of leadership intervenes when factors and forces that influence the process originate in the global environment. The study adopts world- and African-continental environments as global or macro contexts. The meso-level context concerns the influence of the DRC. The micro context pertains to the issues arising from the local AIC church in the town, as detailed in point 4.6.2.1.

#### **4.6.2.3. Types and styles of leadership**

The types and styles of leadership applied also influence the leadership process. Leadership styles are about how leaders behave and interact with their teams. The types of leadership refer to the contexts or roles a leader may occupy within an organization. Thus, the leadership can be strategic, operational, team-based, change-orientated, and project-based. Understanding both concepts can help individuals identify effective leadership approaches suitable for different situations and objectives (Bwalya, 2023:181).

However, individuals often use these two concepts interchangeably. For instance, Manasa Ramakrishnan (2024) identifies visionary, transactional, charismatic, transformational, autocratic, bureaucratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles as types rather than leadership styles. Leadership style influences organisational culture, which in turn influences organisational performance (Tang, 2019:11; Nayak et al., 2018:1; Kparep et al., 2019:2; Smyth, 2021:2; Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014:57).

#### **4.6.2.4. Leadership and culture**

Culture is another issue that plays a significant role in the leadership process. Coupled with the context, leadership remains a culture-context-sensitive process. The role of culture cannot be underestimated. Every leadership process is cultural and context-sensitive.

##### **4.6.2.4.1. Definition of culture**

Northouse (2016:428) defines culture as the learned beliefs, values, rules, norms, symbols, and traditions common to a group of people. Learning over time aids the group in resolving

two primary sets of issues. The first set of problems pertains to the group's survival in an external environment, encompassing survival, growth, and adaptation. The latter group of problems deals with its internal integration that permits daily functioning and the ability to adapt and learn (Erez & Gati, 2004:585; Schein, 2010:18 Schein & Schein, 2017:5, 127).

#### **4.6.2.4.2.Importance of culture in leadership**

Culture and leadership are integral aspects of each other. Culture sets the social context for leadership processes and provides the meanings and interpretations of actions and words. Outside the cultural setting, all leadership phenomena are meaningless and incomprehensible (Alvesson, 2002:94; 2011:152-155). So, the cultural dimension of leadership is central in all aspects of organisational life, even in those where cultural issues receive little explicit attention. We must understand leadership within a cultural context, where the interpretation of those involved in the social processes that express leaders, followers, and leadership acts shapes its consequences (Alvesson, 2011:155).

Culture in an organization helps govern the system's daily life. It promotes unity and cohesion and stimulates employees' enthusiasm and innovation for efficiency. In an organisation, culture is a framework of shared assumptions, values, and beliefs that dictate how the organization treats individuals. These shared beliefs strongly affect the people in the company and control how they dress, behave, and perform their jobs (Bamidele, 2022:6; Galli, 2022:2). So, cultural intelligence enables leaders to understand how people from different cultures view them and interpret their actions.

Culture also determines both the criteria for leadership and, thus, who will or will not be a leader in a particular context, as well as what is acceptable or unacceptable, important or unimportant, right or wrong, and workable or unworkable (Schein, 2010:22).

Thus, culture works like a powerful filter through which we perceive and experience reality. It determines how people 'do things around here.' It is the glue that holds societies together. Leadership beliefs, expectations, and practices are not readily portable from one culture to another (Salicru, 2017:48). Changes in the context require changes to the organisational practices, including strengthening core practices, adding new initiatives, and discontinuing practices that are no longer effective.

#### **4.6.2.4.3.Levels of culture**

The level of the culture eases its understanding and its analysis within society. As a sociological issue, we must analyse culture into three units: a minimum unit (micro) and a

maximum unit (macro), and, in between these extremes, we can conceptualise several other intermediate levels (meso). Schein defines culture as the degree to which the cultural phenomenon is visible to the observer. The most external level is the visible and audible behavioural patterns and the constructed physical and social environment (Schein, 2010:23-24).

Despite the divergences in the spectrum of each level, most scholars agree with this previous identification, which this study also adopts. For convenience, the study adopts the labelling of global, macro, meso, and micro as levels of culture (Moran et al., 2007; Schein, 2010:55; Turner, 2012; Dimitrov, 2012; Schein & Schein, 2017:103; Serpa & Ferreira, 2019:121; Robertson, 2020:11-14). (See details, pt. 4.6.2.1.)

### **4.6.3. Spirituality and leadership**

In the recent literature on leadership, spirituality connected to leadership and organization remains an important concept (Fry & Cohen, 2008:269–70; Elias et al., 2018:2; Fry & Egel, 2017:5). Spirituality is the set of feelings, thoughts, experiences, and behaviours that arise from a search for the sacred. Whatever the source, spirituality embraces the deepest values and meanings by which people live (Ledbetter *et al.*, 2017:43-44).

Spiritual leadership, by definition, includes values, attitudes, and behaviours necessary to intrinsically motivate oneself and others to have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership. Spiritual issues in the leadership process enable organisational members to satisfy spiritual needs instead of physical, mental, and emotional ones (Fry, 2003:694–95; Elias et al., 2018:6).

Through his decisions and practices, a spiritual leader prepares an atmosphere suitable for the spiritual needs of his followers in an organisation. Therefore, one can identify a person as spiritual if they consistently express their feelings through their actions and maintain a balance between their inner and outer worlds.

A spiritual leader helps others in the organization maintain their inner lives and consider their differing needs so that all members can have genuine care, concern, and appreciation for themselves and others (Kaya, 2015:599).

The purpose of spiritual leadership is to address the fundamental needs of both leader and follower for spiritual well-being through calling and membership so that creativity and growth can naturally occur permanently (Fry & Cohen, 2008:266).

#### **4.6.3.1. Sources of spirituality in leadership**

There are three opposing trends regarding the origins of spirituality in leadership. The first trend acknowledges “spirituality” as a broad term that includes religion and many connected concepts ( Duignan, 2025). Since spirituality involves pursuing and adhering to the ultimate goal in life, its meaning varies among individuals (Fry, 2003:706-708; Kaya, 2015:598; Barentsen, 2017:260-61).

The second trend involves scholars distancing spirituality from religious sources, arguing that while all spirituality is not religious, all religions promote a unique spirituality. In this case, spirituality only reflects the presence of a relationship with a higher power or being that affects how one operates in the world (Fry, 2003:705-709; Ledbetter *et al.*, 2017:43). What matters is the ethics and values that leaders need to motivate and impact on the entire organization (Spoelstra, 2017:326).

The last trend asserts that spirituality and religiosity are integral to religious life for various reasons. Spiritual leadership deals with people’s spiritual aspects at work. Therefore, it is a faith-oriented approach that tackles existential issues found in the Bible. Christian spirituality emphasizes biblical studies and describes it as an attempt to obey the gospel (Loba-Mkole, 2007:7-8; Karadağ, 2009:1392–93; Masuku, 2021:5).

Furthermore, most leadership styles, such as charismatic, spiritual, and servant leadership, today have explicit or not religious roots. Even the etymological explanation of the term "religion," which means "to establish a bond," allows for drawing parallels with contemporary understandings of leaders and leadership (Spoelstra, 2017:319; Fernando, 2011:483).

#### **4.6.3.2. Advantages of spirituality in leadership**

Spiritual leadership has positive effects. It enhances motivation. Spiritual leadership possesses the ability to intrinsically motivate and inspire group members through hope and faith in a transcendent vision while also fostering a corporate culture based on altruistic values to satisfy universal needs (Fry, 2016:2; Fry, Fry & Egel, 2017:5; Woolley, 2022). Effective spiritual leadership not only enhances self- or individual and communal development but also intrinsically motivates followers to carry out their purpose and adopt fresh ideas in the process of growth possibilities (Elrehail et al., 2021; Khaddam et al., 2021; Alzghoul et al., 2022; Khaddam *et al.*, 2023:2-4).

Secondly, workplace spirituality increases positive human health and psychological well-being, improves member commitment and productivity, and reduces absenteeism and

turnover. People who experience more spirituality in the group are more productive, more flexible, and more creative because the fundamental needs of both leader and follower have been aligned (Fry, 2003:694-95,703-705; Karadağ, 2009:1392-93; Kaya, 2015:598-599; Fry, Fry & Egel, 2017:4). The emphasis is on the holistic dimension of human existence that encompasses the mind, body, and soul. Spiritual leadership deals with people's spiritual aspects at the workplace through spiritual discernment, faith formation, and discipleship (Fry, 2016:1-2; Niemandt, 2019:159; Polatci, 2020:236-38; Makkar & Singh, 2020:2).

#### **4.6.4. Christian leadership**

The insights on leadership provided above will help clarify the concept of Christian or church leadership. Church leadership is one of the most pressing issues confronting the Christian community. As the church's leadership evolves, so does the church itself. The quality of leadership determines everything. So, just as in any other organization, the church depends on its leadership for strength, health, productivity, and fruitfulness (Helpers, 2000:55–56; Danbaba, 2016:4).

##### **4.6.4.1. Definition of Christian leadership**

"A person who follows Christ and whom other persons follow" describes a Christian leader. Christian leadership means the leadership process Christians perform within a Christian organization and the church. So, Christian leadership can occur in the context of a church or any other faith-based organization founded on a biblical worldview (Kessler & Kretschmar, 2015:1–2; Tamunomiebi et al., 2018:48; McConnell, 2018:7). Therefore, Christian leadership is the ability to positively influence others by setting an ethical, moral, and practical example. The critical factor in Christian leadership is the implementation of Christian values through change and transformation (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15).

##### **4.6.4.2. Key features of Christian leadership**

Christian leadership incorporates the essential elements discussed in the previous section. Despite these commonalities with secular leadership, Christian leadership possesses numerous distinctive traits that set it apart. There should be differences between secular and faith-based leadership to prevent and preserve confusion (Mark 10:35-44; Luke 22:24-27). Jesus, the master leader, declares firmly that the apostles' leadership should differ from secular leaders.

#### **4.6.4.3. Differences between secular and Christian leadership**

Despite the commonalities between secular and church leadership, they are distant and distinct from one another on many fronts. These include the empowering and inspiring source, the vision and mission, the goals, objectives, and purpose, as well as the methods, strategies, tactics, and values.

The source of empowerment is the first domain of difference. Christian leadership differs from secular leadership due to God's active involvement. Leadership from a Christian perspective involves the realization that the very essence of God's being creates the rationale for all human behaviour and enterprises (Ruffner, 2016:1–2; Patterson, 2016:1). Furthermore, the motivational factors for Christian leadership are love of God and obedience to Him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The source of influence and motivation is not secular or selfish, but God, His word, and His Kingdom.

Mission and vision represent yet another area of distinction. While mission and vision play an important role in both leadership processes, they should be distinct from those of the secular world. Jesus models Christian leadership, directing his influence to promote the extension of God's kingdom in the world (Thomas, 2018:107-108).

Furthermore, the leadership of Christian organisations (churches and faith-based organisations) is missional. Every Christian organisation and the church actively participate in God's mission to the world, embracing uncertainty and complexity through their purpose and practices (McConnell, 2018:9-11, 17). Being missional also requires carefully considering the changing worlds around us for addressing appropriate cultural and context challenges both at local and global levels (Bawany, 2018:3; Niemandt, N., 2019:3-4; Krawczyńska-Zauchka, 2019:223; Wynen & Niemandt, 2020:1-2; and Nurbantoro, 2021:1-6).

Goals and objectives play a non-negotiable role in leadership success. They formulate the essential components, develop the roadmap, and establish achievable milestones to accomplish the mission. They also make the vision a reality. Christian leadership goals and objectives are to demarcate from the secular and to be in line with those of God (Grusenmeyer, 2009:5; Tamunomiebi *et al.*, 2018:50-52).

Methods, strategies, and tactics matter greatly in Christian leadership. The church's tools for church development should be completely distinct from those used by secular leadership. Divergences often arise due to differences in definition, mission, and vision.

Strategies define long-term goals and plans to achieve them. In other words, the strategy gives the path needed toward achieving one's organization's mission. Often, tactics focus on smaller steps and a shorter time frame in the process. They involve best practices, specific plans, and resources. They are also called “initiatives.” (Messineo, 2024:1).

Values are also crucial in the leadership process. Core values are the principles and standards at the very heart of our character. Values and beliefs form our attitudes and guide our behaviour. Our behaviours are what people around us see, along with our skills and actions. Values are a foundation for establishing a sound and meaningful mission, vision, and goals in our personal and professional lives (Grusenmeyer, 2009:2).

#### **4.6.4.4. Christian leadership and culture**

Christian leadership, like all leadership processes, is essentially culture-orientated. Culture is a common challenge in leadership. Leaders today face a tremendous challenge in the increasing influence of the cultures that surround organizations (Ruffner, 2016:3; McConnell, 2018:xiii). Christian leadership must enculturate in a specific environment to incarnate God in a concrete context, as it cannot escape this rule.

Christianity is a generational process, an ongoing dialogue with culture. Understanding mission and culture better will assist leaders of Christian organisations in shaping, catalysing, and advancing our organizations' mission (McConnell, 2018:2, 9).

Indeed, the gospel must transform and transcend each culture to make God's kingdom visible. Hence, it is the responsibility of Christian leaders to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to reach today's culture with the gospel and according to the specific context (Irvin, 2009:177; Stükelberger, 2014:22). The noticeable example is the rise and the rapid expansion of the AICs inward and outward in Africa (Henry, 2016: 4; Game & Afta, 2005: 322-24). Mwaura asserts that "by closely relating to African culture and emphasising spiritual gifts and powers, these churches (AICs) transformed the face of Christianity in Africa" (Mwaura, 2008:164). Therefore, given their continued success, African Christian leaders must carefully blend the two essential components of Christianity and African culture, promoting their goals without diminishing their African heritage and avoiding syncretism (Ndlovu, 2016:70).

Christian leaders have a primary duty to mould the culture of their congregations, as culture significantly influences our perceptions and expectations. We are all biased by the cultures

that shape our worldview. Christian leaders must interpret new situations and events to integrate them into the existing cultural repertoire (Barentsen, 2016:271; McConnell, 2018:7).

#### **4.6.5. Missional leadership**

The term "missional" and its associated issues, such as "missional church," have become commonplace in theological discourse. The popularisation of a missional church has spurred interest in missional ecclesiology (Guder, 2015:116).

##### **4.6.5.1. Definition of missional leadership**

The missionary church recognises the importance of leadership in envisioning, shaping, and facilitating missional transformation (Niemandt, 2019:151). The process of envisioning, cultural and spiritual formation, and structuring within a Christian community enables individual participants, groups, and the community as a whole to respond to challenging situations and engage in transformative changes necessary to align with God's mission in the local context (Doornenbal, 2012:200). Missional leaders help in shaping, catalysing, and propelling organisations forward missionally. The focus is on missional decisions, beginning with what it means to think missiologically about God's mission (McConnell, 2018:2).

##### **4.6.5.2. Importance of missional leadership**

The missional church requires a missional ministry and leadership system. For the most part, the Christendom Church obscured the need for a full-fledged missional leadership system because its self-understanding became fundamentally non-missional (Hirsch, 2007:169).

The fundamental role of missional leadership is to serve as an enabling process that helps the church and every faith-based organisation implement the priesthood for all believers. While all followers of Christ are disciples, the community of disciples requires leaders who embody a ministerial priesthood—serving, nourishing, sustaining, and guiding this priestly work. There is no conflict between the participation of all believers and the concept of leaders who, with discernment, lead, equip, organize, and send out the entire community of believers (Niemandt, 2019:72; Van Aarde, 2017:2).

Missional leadership is crucial in transforming the Christendom-orientated church and its ecclesiology towards a missional life. Leadership should understand the church's related missional ecclesiology to express better and serve its missional nature. Serving the church's missional nature implies assisting the church in staying true to its missionary nature and participating in God's mission (Niemandt, 2019:15).

In practical terms, we can summarise the responsibilities of missional leadership as follows: Firstly, the missional leader implements a missional strategy aimed at forming communities of witnesses and facilitating community transformation. Second, through the discernment of the Spirit movement, the missional leader's task is to equip the whole congregation to understand and fulfil their various roles in the mission in their daily work so the congregation can join God's mission (Niemandt, 2019:71–73). Thirdly, a missional leader serves as a transforming agent, enabling people and institutions to participate in God's mission through meaningful relationships and the power of the Spirit.

Leadership models and structures change according to changing circumstances and emerging worldviews. While contextualising leadership and interpreting the signs of the times, a missional leader must distinguish between continuous and discontinuous change (Niemandt, 2016b:86; Niemandt, 2019:75). Finally, a missional leader has the vocation of implementing missional spirituality (Doornenbal, 2012:261; Niemandt, 2019:109). The goal is to liberate the priesthood of all believers and fulfil the mission of the Trinitarian God by transitioning from a Christendom- and denominational mindset to a missional one (Van Aarde, 2017:2).

#### **4.6.5.3. Key elements of missional leadership**

Several issues illuminate the understanding of missional leadership. Spirituality, environment, mission, context, and theology are substantial elements.

##### **4.6.5.3.1. Spirituality**

Spirituality is the set of feelings, thoughts, experiences, and behaviours that arise from a search for the sacred. Spirituality, whatever the source, embraces the deepest values and meanings by which people live (Fry, 2003:694-95; Ledbetter *et al.*, 2017:43-44; Elias *et al.*, 2018:6; Polatci, 2020:235).

In the missional paradigm, spirituality and mission are twins, with spirituality as the firstborn. According to Niemandt (2015a:7), missional spirituality relies on the Trinity to sustain the church in its mission. Hence, spirituality in the mission should be at the centre and the motivating source because the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of God's mission in the world (Ross & Ma, 2013:225; 2011:22; Niemandt, 2019:85, 99).

Missional spirituality is mission-orientated and equips leaders with discernment. Discernment is the initial step in the mission to identify a sense of direction and determine where the Spirit is guiding us. We can only follow God's mission when we join in with the Spirit. Under the guidance of the Spirit, individuals hone their sensitivity to the Spirit's work and cultivate a

profound belief that the Spirit leads God's church and actively operates in every location where God can dispatch his people. A missional church without life-giving and inspiring spirituality is impossible (Branson, 2007:114; Mpinga, 2014:85; Niemandt, 2019: 91,107,112,158).

Niemandt firmly argues that if deeply embedded in a missional spirituality, missional leadership can facilitate transformation and guide church members to a flourishing life in a new age of complexity and acceleration. In the age of complexity and acceleration, spirituality is the most appropriate leadership feature embodied in daily life that forms and feeds missions (Niemandt, 2019:158–59; Wynen & Niemandt, 2020:8).

#### **4.6.5.3.2.Environment: the missional church**

The church exercises missional leadership. The church offers an optimal environment for efficiently applying spirituality and discipleship. Indeed, missional leadership aims to transform the church concept and its ongoing management from Christendom to community expression. Moreover, missional leaders focus their ministry on church members, encouraging them to participate in God's global priesthood under the guidance of the Holy Ghost.

#### **4.6.5.3.3.The mission of the missional leader**

Missional leadership's mission is to enhance the dynamism of missional communities so that all components incarnate the missional mindset in their daily life (see section 4.5.1.2.1.).

#### **4.6.5.3.4.Context (VUCA)**

Commonly, missional leaders are transforming agents into a continuously and discontinuously changing world (Niemandt, 2019:82-85). The acceleration rate and its impact are more important than the change itself. Friedman emphasises that the increasing pace of change challenges human adaptability, primarily due to the rapid advancements in science and technology. This speed of change outpaces the capacity of human beings and societal structures to adapt and absorb them. Furthermore, the pace of change had not only quickened but was now happening globally (Friedman, 2016:29-33).

The leadership challenge in the age of such acceleration is to reimagine and reinvent social technologies. Friedman (2016: 200) argues that we will need a better understanding of how people and society operate, and we will need to find ways to accelerate the adaptability and evolution of institutions (certainly including churches), organisations, and society at large. To be effective, missional leadership should question how to participate in God's missional

praxis as a critical, constructive dialogue or correlation between their interpretations of the realities of the global and local context and the faith resources at their disposal.

Missional leadership responds to these challenges by focusing on the Spirit-led transformation of people and institutions through meaningful relationships so they can participate in God's mission. This leadership style facilitates changes and transformation, particularly in the face of complexity and acceleration. Mpinga (2014:184) states that missional leadership must discern, disclose, teach, expose, and develop missional identity (Niemandt, 2019:151-).

#### **4.6.5.3.5. Missional theology (ecclesiology and pneumatology)**

Ecclesiology grows out of missiology and, at the same time, forms a dimension of missiology. Ecclesiology is a theological discipline that seeks to understand and define the church. Accordingly, missional ecclesiology describes the church as a community of witnesses called into being, equipped by God, and sent into the world to testify to and participate in Christ's work (Niemandt, 2012a:1-2).

Missional theology and ecclesiology will also focus on contextual praxis, that is, on reflective engagement as faith communities worldwide. Instead of claiming to have final answers as to the exact nature of God, missional theology shall always be able to witness what it believes. This ecclesiology will never attempt to provide a blueprint for what it means to be a church. Still, it will offer a methodology for understanding how to engage in the missional praxis of the Triune God and, consequently, how to become what God desires for his people (Hendriks, 2007:1002).

Missional theology believes that it is about discernment. It is a correlational and hermeneutically active dialogue of knowing God, discerning his will and guidance, and seeking his understanding. Therefore, the missional focus is on global, local, and specific issues, intending to address the reality and problems that society is currently facing. God is a triune, missional God (Hendriks, 2007:1005, 1013).

Missional theology is approached from the perspective of a steward, drawing inspiration from Jesus Christ Himself and avoiding ecclesial hierarchies that aim to maintain uniform programs and institutional designs for the sake of good order (Hendriks, 2007:1009).

Starting with missional leadership, defined as the Spirit-led transformation of people and institutions using meaningful relations to participate in God's mission (Niemandt, 2019:151), pneumatology plays a vital role in shaping the missional concept. The ultimate missional role of the Holy Spirit is to make Jesus Christ known to the world and his saving power through

his death and resurrection. According to White & Niemandt (2015:3), the Holy Spirit serves as Christ's ongoing presence and agent in fulfilling his mission.

#### **4.6.5.4.Missional leadership effectiveness**

According to the above explication of leadership effectiveness, missional leadership is effective when it matches the critical criteria related to its mission and vision. A missional leader must address the following issues to be effective and successful in this process. These issues include implementing missional spirituality, the commitment of all church members, the shift in church programs, and adaptability to the context.

##### **4.6.5.4.1.Implementing missional spirituality**

Missional spirituality is “lived in and fuelled by awareness of the *missio Dei*” as the Holy Spirit animates it and the church's theological reflection, regardless of spiritual disciplines and habits. It calls for a renewed commitment to discipleship open to the working of the Holy Spirit (Franklin, 2018:22-27).

Missional spirituality should emerge from applying the Great Commandments, enabling the church to recognise the necessity for a hermeneutic that allows us to apply our spiritual realities collectively. The church cannot fulfil the Great Commission if it never departs from where it is; if its spirituality remains segregated in private times, it is not spiritually missional (Sanger, 2020:2-4, 9). So, missional spirituality grows through personal devotion, prayer, and holiness.

Following are the spiritual values that should be implemented.

1. Relationship with Christ and reliance upon God’s Word: Practice personal devotion through prayer and guidance from the Bible to discern God’s will in all contexts.
2. Christ is the ultimate leadership example: Lead as a “first follower” of Christ—willing to lead in and from “unconventional and unfamiliar” ways. 23
3. Align with God’s missional plan: Understand God’s missional heart as one faithfully uses his/her spiritual gifts in leadership.
4. Commit to spiritual transformation: Live a spiritually intimate life in Christ based upon personal holiness, integrity, spiritual renewal, and guidance from the Holy Spirit. (Franklin, 2018:27).

#### **4.6.5.4.2. Transformation of the entire church members to participation**

The essence of missional leadership stems from its capability of transforming people and institutions to participate, through meaningful relations and in the power of the Spirit, in God's mission (Niemandt, 2016:1, 4; 2019:144). Missional transformation is only possible when the community of disciples can imagine God's future by finding themselves in a new narrative. There is no missional transformation without a new missional language; forming a missional language is one of the most critical factors in creating a missional culture (Cordier, 2014:200).

Indeed, a missional church is transformational. It transforms the community that it serves. It is about faith communities engaging with God and each other to become a redemptive presence in the worlds they inhabit. Meanwhile, God's word does not simply inhabit cultures; it transforms them (Billings, 2010: 1629). Unless the church engages in the world around it, Christians with this passion will not be able to resolve their immense challenges (Breedt & Niemandt, 2013: 1)

Hence, missional leadership's key responsibility relates to its ability to equip all church members for a joint engagement with the church's priesthood. There is no other way of evaluating missional leadership besides each member's involvement in the mission of God in daily life. The intentionality of such commitment demonstrates the degree of engagement. The goal is to produce many devoted church members who will contribute to the church's growth.

#### **4.6.5.4.3. Adaptability to the contexts**

This study overstates the role and importance of different contexts in the leadership process. In the fast-changing contextual environment framework, leaders need to develop awareness, appropriate contextual intelligence, and adaptive capacity for the context (Sweet, 2009:49). Any successful individual in one setting would not naturally be successful in a new one.

Therefore, leaders, particularly Christian leaders, can adapt and decide how to participate in God's missional praxis, mainly through discernment and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit (The Lutheran World Federation, 2004:10; Ngomedje, 2012:119; Breedt & Niemandt, 2013: 9).

Contextual adaptability requires that missional leaders develop discernment as the core practice for them and the community. The church is a hermeneutical space of listening and discerning. It is only through discernment that the leader can correctly read the times and signs, also address the context, and accurately discover God's involvement in it (Matthey,

2010:251, Roxburgh, 2011:51). The skill of discerning is the door to transformation and the starting point of the renewal of faith communities and the world. Missional leadership cultivates the practice of indwelling Scripture and discovering places for experimentation and risk as people find that the Spirit of God's life-giving future in Jesus is amongst them (West, 2007:1).

#### **4.6.5.4.4. Succession**

Succession is a critical issue that determines leadership success and effectiveness. Leadership succession should happen smoothly and naturally. After Moses' death, Joshua was his natural successor instead of his grand brother Aaron (Jos 1:1-2). Joshua was Moses' key, faithful, and active disciple. He constantly and practically demonstrated his confidence in God even at the expense of his life (Exodus 17:9-14; 33:11; Nb. 11:28; 13:8-10; 14:6-).

#### **4.7. Conclusion**

This chapter focused on the missional church concept as one key issue of this study. Four aspects were discussed: the context of the missional church, the missional church model, the leadership of the missional church, and the implementation of the missional church.

Paul's letters to Titus and Ephesians provided an analysis of two contexts. Paul referred to the ministry of Jesus, who distributed qualified and gifted individuals through his ascension and descent for the benefit of the entire church. In his letter, Paul instructed Titus to choose leaders who would serve as ministers in each city of Crete. So, selecting and equipping were Paul's common strategies and tactics for ministry.

This analysis has delineated the model of a missional church and missional leadership. Based on the commonalities between traditional leadership and church-key issues, the areas of difference between these concepts have been elaborated. For example, the source of empowerment and inspiration for spirituality and the mission, vision, strategies, and tactics vary among Christian, secular, and missional contexts.

Following an examination of the missional leadership guidelines outlined in Pauline's Letters to Titus and the Ephesians, the subsequent chapter will focus on the presentation of the research methodology and the empirical findings of the role of the AIC missional leadership.

**CHAPTER FIVE**  
**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**  
**PRESENTATION OF THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS OF THE ROLE OF THE AIC**  
**MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP**

**5.1. Introduction**

The preceding chapter sets forth the principles of missional leadership as exemplified by Paul's ministry, as reflected in his letters to Titus and Ephesians. This chapter aims to delineate the methodology employed to ascertain the role of the AIC leadership process in the DRC. The objective is to determine the empirical research findings about the role of missional leadership in the AIC.

This study aims to examine the role of leadership in the growth of the AICs in the DRC. This requires a qualitative approach. The methodology employed for the collection and analysis of data, including the sampling technique, is also addressed. The method employed, the geographic location of the research, and the target population must be considered.

Numerous reasons have contributed to the success of this method. Firstly, this evaluative study employed a qualitative method and its associated techniques and instruments due to the method's fluid and flexible nature. Due to its data-driven and context-sensitive features, the qualitative method is appropriate for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Secondly, the qualitative method is advantageous because it focuses on interpreting phenomena in their natural settings, facilitating an understanding of the meanings people bring to these settings. Qualitative data is gathered through various means, including interviews, questionnaires, document analysis, and observation. Thirdly, the research process entails the emergence of new questions and procedures, the collection of data in the participants' natural setting, the analysis of data inductively, whereby particulars are built up into general themes, and the interpretation of the data by the researcher (Creswell, 2014:4; Walliman, 2011:8-12).

Additionally, the descriptive approach facilitated the collection of essential information about the churches that fall within the AICs categorisation (Kumar, 2011:157; Elliston, 2011:67, 76-77). The data-gathering instrument employed a threefold combination of closed-ended questions, open-ended questions, and structured and unstructured interviews. The utilisation of

these research materials was of paramount importance for the successful completion of this study. The researchers were thus able to construct conclusions and recommendations.

## **5.2.Methods description**

The term "research" has its etymological roots in two distinct terms. The word "research" is composed of two terms: "re" and "search." The prefix "re" signifies "again" or "back," whereas the root "search" denotes the act of seeking to find something. Consequently, "research" denotes continuously studying or observing a subject from multiple perspectives (Nurhayati, 2020:1).

In everyday usage, the term "research" is understood to signify a pursuit of knowledge and information. Furthermore, research can be defined as a scientific and systematic search for pertinent information on a specific topic. Research can be defined as the art of scientific investigation. As a field of scientific inquiry, research methodology is concerned with studying the principles and practices underpinning the scientific investigation process. It is a systematic approach to solving research problems and logically adopts various steps. Accordingly, methodology facilitates comprehension of both the products of scientific inquiry and the process itself (Patel & Patel, 2019: 48). Furthermore, research is defined as a systematic and practical pursuit of pertinent data on a particular subject matter. Research can be defined as the art of technical exploration. It comprises the theoretical examination of the methodologies and ethical considerations associated with a specific field of inquiry. It encompasses a variety of phases and techniques, including quantitative and qualitative approaches (Swarooprani, 2022:537).

### **5.2.1. Research questions**

The main research question guiding this study is: To what extent are leaders of the African-initiated churches in the DRC missional in fostering the church's growth? To address this main question, the following sub-questions will be discussed.

- What are the origin, developments, context, and challenges of AIC leadership in the DRC?
- What is the scope and impact of urbanisation, migration, and globalisation on AIC leadership?
- What are the missional leadership guidelines from the Pauline letters to Titus and the Ephesians?

- What are the empirical research findings regarding the role of missional leadership in the AIC?
- How do the missional leadership guidelines apply to the AICs' leadership in the DRC?

The additional questions were incorporated into the questionnaire for the sake of efficiency. The following section provides a detailed description of each question.

- What are the origin, developments, context, and challenges of AIC leadership in the DRC?

Numerous factors provided the impetus for establishing the AIC in the DRC. Most causal factors facilitating their initial ascendance continue to drive their expansion and proliferation within the countries. These factors encompass a range of political, economic, and social aspects, among others. The ascendance and evolution of the AICs have been markedly shaped by the forces of globalisation and its attendant consequences, as will be further elucidated in the following section. In the context of the predominance of globalisation, the leadership of the AICs is evolving rapidly in response to the influence of media communication. The hermeneutic process considers the impact of poverty and unemployment. Most churches in the AIC espouse the prosperity message and address all related doctrinal issues.

- What is the impact of urbanisation and globalisation on the development of AIC in the DRC?

Answering this question offers insights into the influence of urbanisation and globalisation on the rapid expansion of the AICs/ERC in the DRC. Globalisation and urbanisation impact every aspect of global life, and the church is not immune to their influence. A church's efficacy is contingent upon its existential motivation.

- What are the missional leadership guidelines from the Pauline letters to Titus and the Ephesians?

An analysis of Paul's epistles to Titus and Ephesians reveals that his success in the ministry was predicated on a paradigm of mission. This was evident in the strategies and tactics he selected and assiduously implemented in the mission fields.

- What are the empirical research findings regarding the role of missional leadership in the AIC? What contextual and missional strategies are AIC leaders intentionally implementing in the DRC?

The missionality of a leadership process is discernible through the mission mindset exhibited by the leader. In addition, a leader may serve as an enabler, furnishing the requisite tools for the entire community to engage in God's mission in daily life in an active and meaningful manner. The responses to this question provide insight into the current leadership's comprehension of the missional paradigm.

- How do the missional leadership guidelines apply to the AICs' leadership in the DRC? What concrete and contextual actions must the AIC's leadership implement to enhance their missionary efforts?

In light of the insights gleaned from the extant literature, the researcher's observations, and the study's findings, this final step offers meaningful guidelines for churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to enhance and rectify their approach to becoming effectively missional. Accordingly, the basis for church growth in the DRC will be founded upon the principles of missional churches and church growth within urban areas that have been demonstrated to be effective.

### **5.2.2. Research instruments**

Researchers employ research instruments to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and the development of understanding. They facilitate the collection of empirical data and its interpretation, thereby enabling the construction of a comprehensive representation of the world around us and our internal reality. Appropriate research tools facilitate the reliable collection of data, thereby ensuring the validity and reliability of the study (Elliston, 2011: 80). To achieve this objective, some researchers utilise evaluative tools, including surveys, questionnaires, and interviews (Walliman, 2011: 94–97).

The researcher used questionnaires and interviews to collect the requisite data for this study. Smith (2008: 161) defines a questionnaire as "a sequence of written questions that a researcher supplies to subjects, requesting their response." In contrast, an interview can be defined as "a set of questions that a researcher addresses personally to respondents" (Smith, 2008: 161). The qualities—flexibility, ease, convenience, appropriateness, and usefulness for respondents—make questionnaires and interviews particularly well-suited for collecting qualitative data.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections for this study to facilitate analysis and comparison. The initial section examined the impact of urbanisation and globalisation on the development of AICs. The second section focused on the intentionality of AIC leadership in implementing contextual and missional strategies for church growth. The third section delineated the specific actions that these leaders must undertake to become more missional.

A pilot test was conducted using the questionnaire. Before administering the research instruments, particularly the questionnaire, in the field, a preliminary test was conducted to assess its meaningfulness and effectiveness. Any necessary revisions, corrections, and adjustments were implemented for improvement (Smith, 2008: 235–236). To guarantee the questionnaire's dependability, the researcher conducted a pilot study with a sample of acquaintances, colleagues, and 60 respondents who were not included in the main study. The pilot test was conducted with 50 individuals, comprising the researcher's acquaintances. The researcher selected respondents from the group of pastors and church leaders. Following the pilot test, the researcher implemented the necessary modifications to the instrument to finalise it. The internal consistency of this questionnaire is contingent upon the assumption that all respondents uniformly interpreted the questions. Subsequently, the researcher distributed the questionnaires to the designated population via the appointed facilitator.

The second instrument was face-to-face interviews, which entail a guided conversation in which the researcher carefully discerns the meaning of the information (Warren, 2014: 4). The interview may be conducted informally, guided, or in a standardised open-ended format (Edwards & Holland, 2013: 2–3). The interview for this research was semi-structured and comprised three questions—the initial category of four inquiries focused on the historical development of the church under examination. The objective was to ascertain the relationship between past and present and determine the rationale behind the church leader's decision to establish the church.

The historical development of AICs offers insight into the influence of urbanisation and globalisation on their emergence (Schudson, 2002: 175-177). What contextual and missional strategies are the leaders of AICs intentionally implementing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo? The second category is comprised of four questions. The objective of these questions was to examine the intentionality of the leaders of the AICs/ERC in the context of developing the church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Missional strategies were considered to achieve this. The examination of intentionality in implementing missional

strategies offers insight into the degree of missionality demonstrated by the church and its leaders. The objective of the final category of questions was to ascertain the rationale behind the church's selection of a particular strategy for disseminating the gospel and fostering discipleship. The objective was to ascertain whether the decision was driven by a desire to align with the prevailing worldview or to engage the entire church in God's mission.

### **5.2.3. The population**

In the context of this research, a population can be defined as a sample from which the abstract concept of a large group of multiple cases is derived and which results from the sample are generalised. In this sense, a population represents the total quantity of things (or cases) in question, encompassing a range of objects, organisations, individuals, or events (Neuman, 2014:246; Walliman, 2011:94-97). In the context of descriptive research, it is essential to exercise caution when selecting this population, ensuring it is clearly defined and precisely delimited. This approach allows for establishing precise parameters that guarantee the discreteness of the population (Smith, 2008:227-228).

Three critical areas of focus guided this research: the effectiveness of missional leadership, the principles of effective church mission, and growth in the urban context. Firstly, a missional leadership mindset and strategies for church growth represent essential elements of God's mission (*missio Dei*) through the church. This mindset is evident in the church's objectives, planning processes, and operational practices. Effective missional leadership equips individuals to adopt and internalise the *mission Dei* mindset and practices so that the entire church can embrace and operationalise these values. The objective is to facilitate a balanced approach to church growth driven by all members' involvement rather than relying on the efforts of a select few. This approach to church growth begins with equipping all church community members rather than focusing on numerical growth alone. It is the responsibility of those in leadership roles to address this issue, as they are more likely to grasp the nuances involved than members of the congregation.

### **5.2.4. The Target population**

Neuman (2014: 248-249) defines a target population as "the concretely specified large group of many cases from which a researcher draws a sample, and to which results from the sample are generalised." It represents the specific set of elements subjected to study.

The present study focused on five churches founded entirely and exclusively by Congolese individuals. These churches are widely represented in the country and worldwide, with a

powerful presence in the West. Notwithstanding the considerable number of AICs in the country, most of which operate under the auspices of the ERC, these churches are more doctrinally diverse and divided. Indeed, most churches were unavailable for various reasons, including key personnel. The appointment was repeatedly postponed for reasons that remain unclear. Some congregation members expressed reservations about the research being conducted in their places of worship. Some clergy members voiced concerns about implementing research within their places of worship.

Available people were held to less accountability than church members. To assess the efficacy of leadership strategies, it is imperative to consider the perspectives of the team leaders and members directly engaged in the church's daily operations. Nevertheless, insights can also be gathered from church members, as they are the subjects of the leadership process within the church. This is why interviews were conducted with church leaders, and church members completed questionnaires. The sampling process enabled the selection of respondents for both the interview and the questionnaire (see Annex B, items 1 and 2).

#### **5.2.5. Description of the population**

The RDC is home to many churches initiated by Congolese individuals and communities. The continued establishment of these churches can be attributed to several significant underlying factors, including urbanisation, migration, the social conditions of the population, and a lack of adherence to legal frameworks. Regrettably, most of these churches are inaccessible for study purposes, and the reasons for this are unclear. The study selected a sample comprising individuals with a high level of representation at the national level and who were open to participation in the study.

##### **5.2.5.1. The Community “La présence de Dieu”**

The Evangelical Community of the Presence of God (CEPD) is a Christian church founded by Reverend Don Yves KISUKULU. The representative is situated at Nguma Avenue, Villa 13, in the commune of Ngaliema/Kinshasa–Macampagne. Don Yves Kisukulu K. is a theology researcher at the Protestant University of Congo (U.P.C.) and the legal representative of the Evangelical Community, the Presence of God (C.E.P.D.).

The CEPD was established in 2002. Indeed, the church has a strong presence in major cities throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), including Lubumbashi and Kinshasa. Consequently, the CEPD has a significant reach both within the DRC and beyond.

#### **5.2.5.1.1. Church missiological objectives and organisation**

Missiological objectives align with God's divine vision in all church activities, including evangelism, discipleship, training, and sending. They facilitate the church's alignment with God's vision and conduct a missional evaluation. These objectives must be evaluated in both qualitative and quantitative terms. The CEPD's missiological objectives are to disseminate the Gospel and facilitate the conversion of individuals who have not yet accepted the Christian faith.

#### **5.2.5.1.2. Evangelism and discipleship strategies and tactics**

The CEPD cannot develop and implement effective evangelism and discipleship strategies and tactics. Concurrently, the church utilises social media as the primary medium for mobilising its members and other targeted individuals to attend significant church events.

#### **5.2.5.1.3. Church Media**

The CEPD cannot employ conventional media tools, such as television and radio, in its communications strategy. In the interim period, the CEPD has established a robust presence on social media platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp, which it utilises to disseminate information and promote significant church events. Moreover, the church employs social media platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp, to disseminate information and encourage substantial events.

### **5.2.5.2. The Church “Communauté Évangélique Péniel Victoire”**

#### **5.2.5.2.1. Presentation**

The church « Communauté Évangélique Péniel Victoire (CEPV), (the Evangelical Community Peniel Victory) » is headquartered in Lubumbashi at 317, Av. Des Plaines. The most prominent figure within the organisation is Bishop Jean Kabasele. The church was established in 2005. The CEPV has established 11 local churches in five provinces of the DRC.

The church is structured around a central figure, the leader. He has appointed team leaders to the roles of deacons and elders. Additionally, numerous departmental leaders oversee the activities of the various committees within the church.

#### **5.2.5.2.2. Church missiological objectives and organisation**

The missiological objectives of the CEPV are not clearly defined. The church clearly and unequivocally states that evangelism represents the institution's fundamental mission. There is a lack of clarity and misunderstanding regarding the church's objectives.

#### **5.2.5.2.3. Evangelism and discipleship strategies and tactics**

The most efficacious tools for discipleship and evangelism are social media and mobilization for the principal events of the church. Facebook and WhatsApp are the most commonly used platforms for disseminating information regarding church services and events.

#### **5.2.5.2.4. Church Media**

The CEPV does not use traditional media tools like radio and television to disseminate information. In contrast, as previously stated, the church utilizes social media to disseminate information about its primary events, weekly services, and Sunday worship.

### **5.2.5.3. The Church “Assemblée Chrétienne de Kinshasa: (ACK)”**

#### **5.2.5.3.1. Presentation**

The church “Assemblée Chrétienne de Kinshasa (ACK) was inaugurated in 1987 by Bishop Mukuna. The legal representative's headquarters are situated at 6179 Avenue. Mavungu, Moalart/Bandalungwa/Kinshasa.

The ACK has established approximately 200 churches within the RDC and surrounding areas. Each church is overseen by an appointed pastor, who coordinates a team of subordinate leaders. The structure above is typical of most churches.

#### **5.2.5.3.2. Church missiological objectives and organisation**

The church "ACK" does not clearly articulate its missiological objectives. The mission of the church is to emancipate the Congolese people, with a particular focus on those residing in the provincial city of Kinshasa, from the bondage of demonic servitude, which is a source of bewitchment. Accordingly, any affliction, hardship, or distress to the faithful within his Church is attributed to evil, demonic influences, which the Lord has tasked him to conquer. Moreover, the Lord appointed him a prophet to speak to these people.

The theology of this Church is based on a foundation of "the theology of prosperity," which approaches the theology of seed, glory, sacredness, deliverance, healing, and miracles. Consequently, the interpretation of the word of God in the Bible is more closely aligned with the current existential needs of its believers.

### 5.2.5.3.3. Evangelism and discipleship strategies and tactics

The Church of the Brethren has yet to develop comprehensive strategies and tactics for evangelism and discipleship. As most churches in the DRC possess radio and television equipment, they tend to utilise these resources as the primary instruments for evangelism and discipleship. However, the most significant challenge lies in the strategies and tactics employed. Usually, these conventional instruments are employed to disseminate church services and promote their principal events. The fundamental training and discipleship materials these entities utilise are sermons delivered from traditional and social media platforms.

### 5.2.5.3.4. Church Media

The church “Assemblée Chrétienne de Kinshasa” (the Christian Assembly of Kinshasa) (ACK) employs a range of media tools. The ACK church media outlets that are most accessible to the general public are RTACK, a radio and television station based in Kinshasa, and Facebook and YouTube. Through observation, the editorial stance of RTACK can be discerned, as illustrated in the following table, which delineates the timing and occurrence of these programs. This explanation facilitates a comprehensive understanding of the operational mechanisms of these programs.

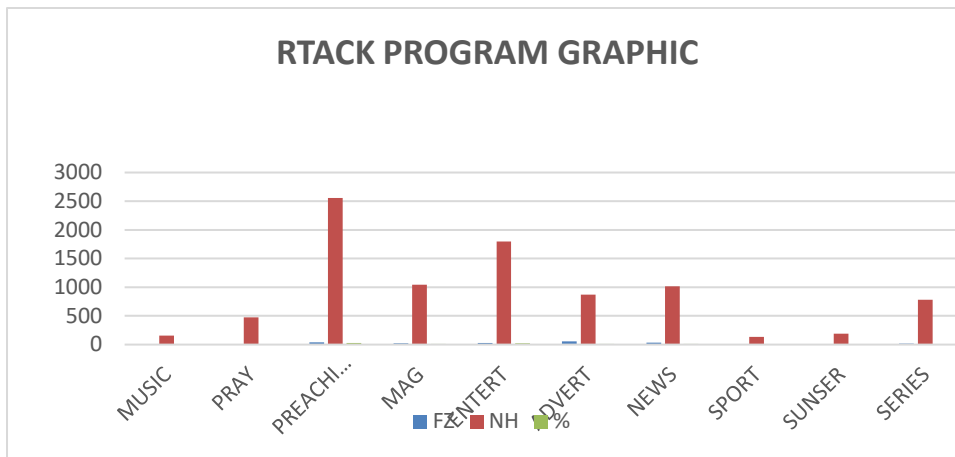
**Table 5- 1: RTACK programs table summary**

Program	PROGRAM RTACK										
	MUSIC	PRAY	PREACH ING	MAG	ENTERT	ADVERT	NEWS	SPORT	SUNSER	SERIES	
FZ	4	7	42	21	30	56	32	2	2	19	215
NH	159	476	2559	1045	1797	873	1015	135	188	783	9030
%	1,761	5,27	28,33	11,57	19,9	9,668	11,24	1,49	2,08	8,67	100

**Source: the study**

To facilitate the most comprehensive understanding and subsequent interpretation of the data, the researcher transformed the table into the graphic representation depicted in Figure.

**Graphic 5- 1: RTACK programs graphic**



**Source: the study**

The following legend is provided for reference purposes. The letter FZ denotes the occurrence of the program. This figure represents the scheduled times for the program daily and weekly.

The abbreviation "NH" represents the total time the program is scheduled to consume daily and weekly. To ensure precision, the study employed the unit of measurement "minutes" instead of "hours."

The percentage sign (%) indicates the proportion of the program that is used for optimal comprehension.

The analysis results are presented in tabular form, and the graphic for the first program illustrates the following: Subsequently, the analysis above is transformed into tabular form. The resulting graphic, which depicts the data above, is as follows:

Programs commence between 4:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Television and radio stations operate for 22 hours per day, equating to 1,320 minutes per day and 9,240 minutes per week. The ministry's senior leader is the channel's principal provider and partner.

#### **5.2.5.4.The Church “Prince de Paix”**

##### **5.2.5.4.1. History and presentation**

The church « Eglise Internationale Prince de Paix (EIPP) was established in 2007. Currently, the legal and national coordinator is Rev. NZUZI MBALA MUKAWA. The organisation's headquarters are at 27 Avenue Yangambi, Kinshasa/Kalamu. The EIPP has established 11 local churches in five provinces of the DRC.

The church is structured around a central figure, the leader. He has appointed team leaders to the roles of deacons and elders. Additionally, numerous departmental leaders oversee the various committees within the church.

#### **5.2.5.4.2. Church missiological objectives and organisation**

The church's missiological objectives are articulated around evangelism and disciple-making.

#### **5.2.5.4.3. Evangelism and discipleship strategies and tactics**

The EIPP church has developed its training materials, which members utilise in conjunction with other resources, including the "Four Spiritual Laws," the "Spirit-Filled Life," and other follow-up items from the CCC. The EIPP has developed the training materials, which its members are utilising in conjunction with other materials, including the "Four Spiritual Laws," the "Spirit-Filled Life," and other follow-up items from the CCC.

#### **5.2.5.4.4. Church Media**

The church "Prince de Paix" does not use conventional media tools like radio or television to communicate. Concurrently, she exploits the opportunity provided by Maajabu Television to advertise and transmit Sunday service sermons. The Prince de Paix church also employs social media platforms, including Facebook and YouTube, for its digital outreach.

### **5.2.5.5. The Church "La Louange"**

#### **5.2.5.5.1. Presentation and vision**

The church "la Louange" was inaugurated on May 1, 1994, by its founder, Rev. Dr. Abraham NGALASI. The church, La Louange (The Worship Church), is a Christian community whose headquarters are located at 65, 66, 67, 68, 70, and 72 Avenue Kanda Kanda, Salongo, Commune of Kasa-Vubu in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo. She is an influential member of the Charismatic Renewal in Congo (RCC), a platform and an ASBL in the DRC that brings together many Revival Churches. The La Louange church has 307 cells distributed across the globe, with 383 ordained pastors.

#### **5.2.5.5.2. Church missiological objectives and organisation**

The church implantation policy demonstrates that the Church of La Louange has specific missiological objectives. With approximately 350 churches distributed throughout the country, the Church La Louange has achieved a significant degree of institutionalisation.

Concurrently, the church must reiterate its missiological declaration to align with God's mission and objectives.

**5.2.5.5.3. Evangelism and discipleship strategies and tactics**

In its formative years, the church "La Louange" utilised materials from Campus Crusade for Christ for evangelism and discipleship. The church has developed its materials collectively called "Tomes." There are approximately seven Tomes, which are utilised for discipleship and various forms of training. The texts are utilised for discipleship and multiple forms of training.

**5.2.5.5.4. Church Media**

Regarding media tools, the church "La Louange" has a traditional radio and television station, Radio Television La Louange (RTL), and social media accounts on Facebook and YouTube. The following list provides an overview of the programs broadcast on RTL: This allows for identifying the editorial stance taken by the source. The following table illustrates the timing and occurrence of these programs.

The table below provides a detailed overview of these programs' timing and occurrence. This explanation facilitates a comprehensive understanding of their operational mechanisms. To provide an accurate interpretation, a graphic will be generated from Tables 5-2.

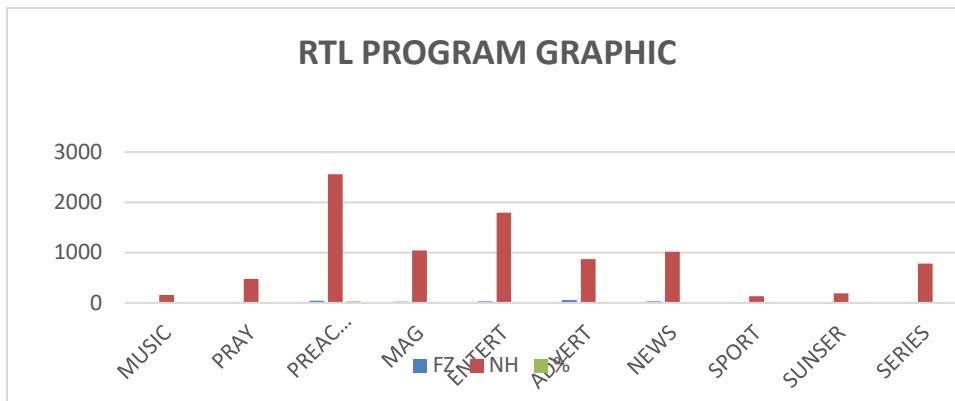
**Table 5- 2: RTL programs table summary**

Program	PROGRAM TV RTP										
	MUSIC	PRAY	PREACH ING	MAG	ENTERT	ADVERT	NEWS	SPORT	SUNSER	SERIES	
FZ	4	7	42	21	30	56	32	2	2	19	215
NH	159	476	2559	1045	1797	873	1015	135	188	783	9030
%	1,761	5,27	28,33	11,57	19,9	9,668	11,24	1,49	2,08	8,67	100

**Source: the study**

To facilitate optimal comprehension and subsequent data analysis, the researcher transformed the table into the graphic representation depicted in Figure 5-2.

**Graphic 5- 2: RTL programs graphic**



**Source: the study**

Legend: FZ represents the occurrence of the program. This is the number of times the program is scheduled daily and weekly.

NH: represents the time consumed by the program, both daily and weekly. For accuracy, the study uses « minutes instead of hours »

%: represents the percentage of the program used for the best understanding.

The analysis is converted into a table and the graphic of the first program shows that:

Programs start from 5:00 am to 1:00. The TV and Radio operate for 22 hours, which represents a total of 1200 minutes a day and 8400 minutes for a week. The principal provider and partner of the channel is the top leader of the ministry.

The following legend is provided for reference: FZ signifies the occurrence of the program.

This figure represents the times the program is scheduled daily and weekly.

The abbreviation "NH" represents the total time the program consumes daily and weekly. To ensure precision, the study employs the unit of measurement "minutes" in place of "hours."

The percentage sign (%) represents the proportion of the program utilised for optimal comprehension.

The results of the analysis are presented in tabular form, and the graphic for the first program illustrates the following: The analysis above is presented in tabular form, with the accompanying graphic illustrating the following:

The programs commence between 5:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. The television and radio stations operate for 22 hours per day, equating to 1,200 minutes per day and 8,400 minutes per week. The channel's principal provider and partner is the ministry's most senior figure.

### **5.2.5.6. The Church “Centre Évangélique la Résurrection (CER)”**

#### **5.2.5.6.1. Presentation and vision**

The founder of the Centre Évangélique la Résurrection (CER) is the Reverend Dominique Ngoy Kabuya, who has held this position since 1991. The Centre Évangélique la Résurrection is situated at 02, avenue de l'Echangeur/Lemba/Kinshasa. The location is situated at 02, avenue de l'Echangeur/Lemba/Kinshasa.

#### **5.2.5.6.2. Church missiological objectives and organisation**

The respondents' answers revealed that the church had developed some coherent and pertinent objectives relating to the mission of God. Evangelism and discipleship occupy a significant place in the church. Meanwhile, the Christendom mindset still exists. Less effort is made to promote the formation and the implication of the entire church to the mission of God. The evangelism department provides training and organizes evangelism activities in a Christendom mindset.

#### **5.2.5.6.3. Evangelism and discipleship strategies and tactics**

The CER has devised a series of evangelism and discipleship strategies and tactics. In addition to its strategies, the CER employs the training and discipleship strategies and tools developed by Campus Crusade for Christ. In addition to the materials, the CER has developed its own training and follow-up modules.

#### **5.2.5.6.4. Church Media**

The CER does not use traditional media tools like radio and television in its communication strategy. Concurrently, the church utilizes social media platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, WhatsApp, and others, to disseminate sermons and promote major church events. In conclusion, the observations demonstrate that the church in question employs social media effectively to transmit sermons and advertise church events.

### **5.2.5.7. The Church “Centre Évangélique Salem (CES)”**

#### **5.2.5.7.1. Presentation and vision**

The Centre Évangélique Salem (CES) was established in 1985 by Dr. Israel MBAMBI, who continues to serve as its founder. The Centre Évangélique Salem (CES) is at the intersection of Avenue By-Pass and Lemba in Kinshasa.

#### **5.2.5.7.2. Church missiological objectives and organization**

The missiological objectives of the CES are centred on evangelism and the establishment of the Church within the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and beyond. Without a precise formulation of these objectives under the divine realm, there is no basis for determining whether they have been achieved. The organisational structure of the church is hierarchical. The founder is the team leader to whom all departmental coordinators are accountable.

#### **5.2.5.7.3. Evangelism and discipleship strategies and tactics**

The CES has developed strategies and tactics for evangelism and discipleship. In addition to their strategies, the CES exploits the training and discipleship strategies and tools developed by Campus Crusade for Christ. The materials are utilised as pedagogical instruments for both discipleship and ministry training.

#### **5.2.5.7.4. Church media**

The CES does not utilise traditional media tools such as radio and television. Concurrently, the church utilises social media platforms, including Facebook, YouTube, and WhatsApp, to disseminate sermons and promote major church events. In conclusion, it can be stated that the observations demonstrate that the church in question employs social media effectively to transmit sermons and advertise church events.

#### **5.2.6. Sampling method**

The sampling process is significant in all research procedures, serving two distinct purposes. It assists in determining the quality of inferences that researchers make and influences the extent to which findings can be generalised to other individuals, groups, or contexts (Viswanath Venkatesh et *al.*, 2016:444-46).

Accordingly, a sample can be defined as "a small set of cases selected by a researcher from a larger pool and used to make inferences about the population as a whole." A sample represents a subset of the population under investigation (Neuman, 2014: 246). Teddlie and Fen Yu (2007: 85) elucidate that the sample size in qualitative research should be sufficient to achieve information saturation. Tongco (2007:154) acknowledges that:

However, data collected from purposive sampling may still be valid for certain studies. When a sample is representative, it becomes valid over the realm it represents, providing

external validity. When a sample is measured correctly, it becomes valid for the sample, thus providing internal validity. Non-probability methods contribute more to internal validity than external validity.

Validity, particularly internal validity, denotes the capacity to quantify the variables intended to be quantified. It indicates how the research's data collection and analysis accurately reflect the reality being studied. Internal validity pertains to the extent to which the manipulation of the independent variable reflects the reality of the dependent variable (Kaya, 2015: 111).

In this study, purposive sampling was deemed an appropriate methodology. In qualitative research, saturation is the criterion most proposed for determining the richness of a sufficient sample size (Kumar, 2011: 176). Accordingly, the size of the sample is variable and contingent upon several factors, including the objective, the nature of the research problem, the principal data collection strategy, the availability of information-rich cases, and the analytical capabilities of the researcher concerning the sample size (Asiamah et al., 2017: 1613-1615).

#### **5.2.7. Sample size**

Several factors influence the selection of an appropriate sample size. Firstly, determining a suitable sample size is contingent upon a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies, intricacy, variability, and context of the phenomenon under investigation and thoroughly examining its circumstances (Gentles et al., 2015:1782-83). The sample size is variable and contingent upon several factors, including the purpose of the study, the research problem, the primary data collection strategy, the availability of information-rich cases, and the analytical abilities of the researcher concerning the sample size.

Regarding the research problem of this study, the purpose and strategy for collecting data, and the necessity for knowledgeable individuals with expertise in missional leadership, church mission, and church growth in the cities of the DRC of the selected church, the sample was composed of five large churches, with approximately fifteen leadership team members and fifty church members identified as participants in the study.

#### **5.2.8. Sample techniques**

Sandelowski (2000:246-249) observes that qualitative research frequently employs purposeful sampling to facilitate the identification of information-rich cases, thereby enhancing the depth and richness of the research findings. Accordingly, the study employed a purposeful sampling

strategy, open-ended data collection, unstructured and structured interviews, and questionnaires.

This study employed a qualitative methodology with open-ended questions (Taylor et al., 2016: 136). The decision to employ a qualitative methodology for the investigation of the role of missional leadership in the AICs/ERC in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) proved advantageous in terms of encompassing the vast expanse of the DRC. Purposive sampling was employed to select Kinshasa and Lubumbashi as study sites, as they are home to most AICs/ERC church representation offices and church expansion initiatives in the DRC. The selection of the church should be based on two criteria: The selected church must meet two criteria: first, it must be classified under either the Eglise de Réveil au Congo (ERC) or the African Independent Church (AICs), and second, it must be available for research and agree to allow the study to be conducted. The variables that inform this choice are church leadership, missionary work in urban areas, and church growth strategies.

This study employs a targeted approach to selecting respondents and participants, with three distinct groups identified. First, the researcher seeks information from the church's most senior leaders regarding the institution's history, missionary objectives, and growth strategies. Second, the church leaders and collaborators are responsible for evangelism and discipleship.

In conclusion, any selected members of the church in general. This category of participants served as a reflection of and consequence of the church's management and vision. Responding to the inquiry gave valuable insight into how the church had addressed mission and church growth.

Qualitative research is primarily an interactive process that employs various techniques to engage with selected individuals in their natural environments. The researcher conducted face-to-face interviews with the leaders in their respective offices or places of worship.

### **5.2.9. The location of the study**

The research was conducted in two geographic locations: Kinshasa and Lubumbashi. The choice was purposeful because of the representativeness of all the AICs/ERC in these two principal cities of the country. Furthermore, Kinshasa and Lubumbashi are the primary destinations for migration, with some individuals moving there for economic reasons, while civil wars influence others. These two cities are characterised by high levels of urbanisation

and rapid demographic growth among their populations. These cities offered significant insights into the subject matter under investigation.

In effect, the DRC contains twenty-four provinces. The churches generally operate from Kinshasa, where their legal representations are located. Purposeful sampling enables the determination of the target groups of churches—the independent and renewal churches—as essential subgroups of the study. Finally, purposive sampling allows the selection of a sample according to its information-rich cases for an in-depth study. Participants have been selected based on their knowledge.

#### **5.2.10. Variables**

According to Kumar (2011: 71; Creswell, 2012: 52-53, 163-169), a variable is a specific image, concept, characteristic, or attribute of an individual or an organisation that enables measurement and can take on different values within the people or organisation under study. There are various kinds of variables. Firstly, a quantitative variable is numerically measurable. A qualitative variable expresses only a qualitative attribute without generating a numerical value. A variable can also be dependent or independent. A dependent variable serves as an explanatory factor for an independent variable. An independent variable is an explanatory variable assumed to be the cause of variation in another explanatory variable. It is also called a treatment, manipulated, antecedent, or predictor variable because it precedes and describes what was done to influence the dependent variable (Kumar, 2011: 75). Technically, Creswell (2014: 147) suggests that it is helpful in the method section to relate the variables to the specific questions or hypotheses on the instrument. This study had three variables. Two of them were dependent variables, and one was independent. Leadership and church growth are dependent variables because their values change with the influence of church missionality. The evaluation of this study focused on how the missional nature of church leadership in the AICs/ERC, a qualitative variable, influences both numerical church growth (a quantitative dependent variable) and qualitative church growth (a qualitative independent variable).

The research is missiological, thereby affording the advantage of employing qualitative methods for elucidating phenomena and delegating the manipulation of the independent variable to descriptive research (Elliston, 2011: 69, 74). This study employed church growth as the dependent variable, while church leadership constituted the independent variable.

1. The study's dependent variable is church growth, represented by the letter "G." It quantifies the impact of a specific leadership style on the church's evolution, as

evidenced by the responses to the questionnaires completed by church members. The variable G assesses the quality of spiritual maturity (GQL) and the quantity of numerical increase (GQT) within the church.

a. GQL is a qualitative measure of growth derived from questionnaires completed by church members. It is a discrete variable with a maximum of three possible values. The symbol may be a plus, a minus, or a plus or minus sign.

+: An affirmative response indicates that the individual has undergone meaningful growth, such as transforming their life and developing discipleship.

-: The absence of change indicates a negative outcome.

±: A change is observed, though it is not statistically significant.

b. The GQT quantitatively measures the numerical growth observed in church leader interviews. An increase in the number of members or the establishment of new churches may be regarded as a positive indicator of meaningful growth.

A decline in the number of members or the closure of old churches is not evidenced.

±: While change has occurred, it has not been significant. The church has maintained a consistent average number of members or churches within the community.

2. In this study, the qualitative and independent variable is the church leadership, which we designated CL. CL can exist in one of two distinct statuses. The church may be either missional (Ms) or non-missional (Ns).

The degree of leadership status is reflected in the church's organization, vision, and mission, as well as in the extent to which all members are equipped and involved in fulfilling God's mission.

3. Leadership missionality (Ms) represents the extent to which missional traits and characteristics are manifested throughout the leadership process. This degree is reflected in the mission and vision of the church organisation.

**Table 5- 3: Table of variables**

N°	Name	Type	Role	Observations
1	G	<b>Dependent</b>	Indicate the evolution of church growth	
2	GQL		Indicates that the qualitative growth of the church	The qualitative church growth is reflected through church members' participation in the

				mission of God
	GQL +		Indicate a positive qualitative growth of the	The GQL is + when the majority of respondents have been exposed to church development material and are committed to it.
	GQL-		Indicate a negative qualitative church development.	The GQL is – when the number of members that are exposed to church development material and church growth is minus.
3	GQT+		Indicate the positive quantitative or numerical growth of the church	The GQT is + when there is an increase in church members and/or an increase in the number of new churches launched through the participation of every church member.
	GQT-		Indicate a negative quantitative or numerical growth of the church	The GQT is - when there is a decrease or a stagnation of church members and/or new churches
4	CL	<b>Independent</b>	Indicate or reflect the type of leadership style	Leadership style is seen through the organisation of the church, its vision and mission, and objectives.
5	CLMs		Indicate that the style is missional.	Leadership style is missional, as respondents are being exposed to church development material for participation in the mission of God.
6	CLNs		Indicate that the style is not missional.	Leadership style is not missional as respondents have not been exposed to church development material for participation in the mission of God.

**Source:** The study

The answers to different sub-questions to research questions 1, 2 and 4 for leaders and church members' interviews have greatly provided meaningful insights, as indicated through the following table of respondents' answers.

### **5.2.11. Data analysis**

The qualitative nature of this study necessitated the use of non-numerical analytical techniques. Triangulation in data analysis enabled the researcher to obtain a response rate for each item within the overall sample size (Smith, 2008: 241-42). To prevent any potential data alteration, the researcher coded, organised, and discussed the results generated by the descriptive and verbose qualitative strands. Subsequently, the researcher discussed the results, offered commentary, and drew accurate conclusions by comparing them to the principles found in the literature.

### **5.2.12. Ethical considerations**

Neuman (2014:145) defines ethical issues as the concerns, dilemmas, and conflicts arising from the proper research method. Ethics establishes what constitutes legitimate conduct and what constitutes a "moral" research procedure. Hence, ethical conduct depends on the integrity and values of individual researchers, even when research participants are unaware of or unconcerned about ethics. Ethics governs the predicament of the participant and the researcher. It prevents eventual moral consequences when the participant and researcher interact during data collection in a qualitative study. The institution had to recommend the researcher for acceptance. AICs Kinshasa provided a request for a research letter. Before beginning the study, the researcher submitted this letter to the targeted church leader offices for authorisation.

The researcher contacted the interviewees the day before to inform them of their upcoming interview. He conducted the interview and the questionnaire in French. Their roles and other details are included in this report because they consented. In the significant cases, the researcher interviewed the identified leaders (media managers, secretaries, and evangelists, among others). All selected interview leaders were cooperative and excited to participate in the study. The presence of the recommended leader during the study led to no suspicion among the participants. All respondents answered with confidence and felt secure.

The researcher also used the questionnaire with church members. The pragmatic option was to assign one leader responsible for selecting the respondents, directing the process, and collecting the results afterwards. Respondents were recommended to identify themselves or write their names on the questionnaire to ensure the validity of the results. However, they were assured that all results would be codified for anonymity. Respondents wrote what they knew about the questions.

### **5.3. Findings**

This section will present the research study's findings following the presentation of the methodology employed for collecting information and data.

#### **5.3.1. Introduction**

This section presents the general findings gathered from a literature and church documentation synthesis, direct observation through participation in the selected churches, and the results of questionnaires and interviews. Quantitative data are presented as percentages, while qualitative data have been coded and reorganised. As previously stated, the study was guided by five research questions outlined in section 1.4 of the research statement. Meanwhile, the three elements above were incorporated into the questionnaire utilised in this study. The categories above are as follows:

- What are the origin, development, context, and challenges of AIC leadership in the DRC?
- What is the impact of urbanisation, migration, and globalisation on the development of AICs in the DRC?
- What are the missional leadership guidelines from the Pauline letters to Titus and the Ephesians?

The findings addressed the two remaining questions that were related to one another. The questions above were addressed, and the following conclusions were reached:

- What are the empirical research findings regarding the role of missional leadership in the AIC?
- How are the missional leadership guidelines applicable to the AICs' leadership in the DRC?

The results of insights collected from these sources above are interpreted and pertain to important themes related to the research sub-questions:

- The origin, development, and challenges of the AIC leadership in the DRC are discussed.
- The impact of urbanisation and globalisation on the development of the AICs is a significant issue.

- The missional strategies leadership guidelines are from Pauline's letters to Titus and the Ephesians.
- the empirical research findings of the role of missional leadership in the DRC;
- The application of the missional leadership guidelines to the AICs' leadership in the DRC is being discussed.

### 5.3.2. Presentation of findings and interpretation

The methodology employed in this study is as follows: This chapter presents the insights gleaned from the survey, readings, and worship service attendance. As previously stated, participant observation constituted the primary data collection method. At the same time, documentary research, questionnaires, and interviews were employed as supplementary techniques. The researcher conducted participant observations at the five selected churches: La Presence de Dieu-Lubumbashi, Péniel Vainqueur-Lubumbashi, Prince de Paix-Kinshasa, ACK-Kinshasa, and La Louange-Kinshasa. The documentary data were gathered from Prince de Paix and La Louange. All five churches participated in the data collection by administering questionnaires and conducting interviews.

### 5.3.3. Table of codification of churches

**Table 5- 4:** Table of codification of churches

N°	NAME OF THE CHURCH		CODIFICATION
1	Centre Evangélique Présence de Dieu	<b>CEPD</b>	<b>CEPD/1-L</b>
			<b>CEPD/2-CM</b>
2	Communauté Evangélique Peniel Victoire	<b>CEPV</b>	<b>CEPV/1-L</b>
			<b>CEPV/2-CM</b>
3	Assemblée Chretienne de Kinshasa	<b>ACK</b>	<b>ACK/1-L</b>
			<b>ACK/2-CM</b>
4	Prince de Paix	<b>EIPP</b>	<b>EIPP/1-L</b>
			<b>EIPP/2-CM</b>
5	Centre Evangélique La Resurrection	<b>CER</b>	<b>CER/1-L</b>
			<b>CER/2-CM</b>
6	Communauté Evangélique Salem	<b>CES</b>	<b>CES1-L</b>
			<b>CES/2-CM</b>
7	Eglise La Louange	<b>EL</b>	<b>EL/1-L</b>
			<b>EL/2-CM</b>

**Source:** the study November 2024

### **5.3.3.1. The origin, development and challenges of the AICs leadership in the DRC**

The initial research question examined the genesis, evolution, and obstacles encountered by the AIC's leadership in the DRC. Additional sub-questions were incorporated into this initial inquiry (see Annexes A-1 and A-2).

Multiple motivations drove the founders of the independent church in the DRC. The initial cohort of leaders established the churches based on their perceived divine calling. There was no secession from the mother church. Instead, they proceeded to establish the church under the auspices of the former leadership. This applies to the churches designated as "La Louange," "Salem," CER, and Prince de Paix. In other instances, the impetus for this shift in leadership was a form of secession from the previous authority structure.

In addition to the growth above, the Democratic Republic of Congo's context presents many challenges to the leadership of AICs in the region. The study identified three primary challenges and nearly six additional challenges that the leadership of the AICs is facing (see section 2.3).

#### *Interpretations*

The AICs in the DRC exhibit a high degree of autonomy, with leaders displaying a proclivity for independent action rather than collective decision-making. The implementation's causative factors evidence this.

The research findings indicate that the development of AICs is characterised by a lack of order in establishing churches. In this context, "proliferation" is more appropriate than "growth." Growth is a process or phenomenon that can be controlled, whereas proliferation is the antithesis of this.

The observations collectively highlight the inherent challenges that leaders encounter daily. Without discernment, clear objectives, missional abilities, and vision, the message's content is oriented towards resolving members' existential issues rather than promoting Christian ethics and values through transformative action. Consequently, the church places a higher value on member sensitivity and attraction than on incarnational teachings.

### **5.3.3.2. The impact of urbanisation and globalisation on the development of the AICs**

The second research question was to ascertain the impact of urbanisation and globalisation on the development of AICs in the DRC. Urbanisation and globalisation are interrelated and have exerted a discernible influence on all aspects of society. The former (urbanisation) is a

consequence of the latter (globalisation). Indeed, the world's boundaries are becoming increasingly permeable due to the pervasive influence of media technologies. The migration of individuals from rural to urban areas has accelerated the pace of urbanisation, which has become a central factor in determining the quality of life of those who live in cities. In Chapter 5, Section 2.1, the term "urbanisation" is defined as the increase in the proportion of the population residing in urban areas. The term also describes population concentration, which refers to the proportion of individuals living in urban areas within a particular region, country, or continent.

Concurrently, urbanisation represents a process whereby individuals relocate from rural areas or the countryside to cities to establish permanent residences or engage in temporary business activities. More than half of the world's population resides in urban areas. An increase in urban populations characterises the global urban trend. Nevertheless, urban areas are anticipated to accommodate most of the projected global population growth. By 2050, 68% of the global population will reside in urban areas. It is estimated that 96% of urban growth will occur in the less developed regions of East Asia, South Asia, and Africa.

Since the post-colonial era, Africa has experienced the fastest urbanisation in the world. By 2050, Africa will have almost 15 megacities with more than 10 million inhabitants and house nearly 1.5 billion people, 60% of the region's projected population. To date, Kinshasa in the DR Congo is one of the ten African megacities of the time (see 5.2.3).

The population of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has undergone rapid growth through urbanisation. Today, it is the second largest country in Africa after Algeria in terms of territory and the third most populous country after Nigeria and Ethiopia. By 2045, the total population of the DR Congo will double and overtake Ethiopia, and from 2050, the DR Congo will become the second most populous country in Africa after Nigeria. Kinshasa will be the most populated in Africa, ahead of Cairo and Lagos. Unfortunately, rapid urbanisation in sub-Saharan Africa and the DR Congo has become virtually synonymous with the city's deterioration, leading to the loss of open spaces, poverty, and the growth of slums (see Section 5.2.5).

The most prevalent causes of urbanization are the push factors of conflict and inadequate rural services rather than the pull factors of better job opportunities and city living. While this prospect presents an opportunity, it also poses a threat. In the absence of effective urban management strategies that address the issue of urban exclusion and marginalization, there is a significant risk that Kinshasa could become the largest slum in Africa (see Section 5.2.5).

The effects of urbanisation and globalisation on societal evolution are numerous and complex. The urban individual establishes a novel identity by exploring diverse realities through many relational associations and circumstances. Furthermore, the city is where many interactions occur between individuals who may be considered saints and sinners, wealthy and impoverished, and those with and without literacy skills (see Section 5.3.2).

Considering the definitions above and explanations of urbanisation and globalisation, the research questionnaire was designed to include two specific questions, the objective of which was to elicit further reactions from respondents. The initial question posed to the respondents was, "When did the church first emerge?" What are the church's objectives, vision, and mission? What are the historical origins and development of the church? What forms of media do you utilise, and to what extent do they contribute to the church's growth? Please indicate the number of cities worldwide where you have established a church.

These inquiries were directed to the most senior leaders and team leaders, who provided more precise responses regarding the historical issues. Most respondents offered details regarding the precise moment of the church's inception and comprehensive insights into its genesis. However, most respondents found themselves at a loss when asked to provide detailed responses regarding the objectives and missions of the church. Most responses to these questions did not address the topic of God's mission. Some posit that the mission of the Church is to construct a devout and formidable army of God. In contrast, others argue that the Church's mission is to engage in evangelism. Please refer to the Annexure for further details.

### *Interpretation*

At this stage of the research process, various churches typically establish their objectives and perceive them as their calling. There is a misunderstanding of the biblical mission of the church as set forth by Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:18-20. There is a lack of clarity and understanding concerning the missiological objectives of the Church. A review of the description of their evangelism department reveals a focus on teaching management rather than on the resolution of concrete evangelical issues and the achievement of defined outcomes. There is no discernible correlation between the mission of God and the church's involvement. Conversely, some other objectives appear straightforward but are presented as opaque and confusing.

The findings of the study indicated that some church leaders could not clearly define the goals and objectives of the church. Most leaders appear to conflate the church's goals with its

mission. The mission of the Church is inextricably linked to the divine nature of its mission. As the initial manifestation of God in the world, the church's mission pertains to its involvement in this phenomenon. The two aspects of this mission are evangelism, which is concerned with numerical growth, and discipleship, which is focused on spiritual growth (see section).

### **5.3.3.3. What are the missional leadership guidelines from Pauline's letters to Titus and the Ephesians?**

The third research question sought to ascertain the strategies that AIC leaders might adopt through the lens of Paul's ministry in Ephesus and Crete. The study identified Paul's three strategies: selecting and equipping, delegating, and Ubuntu. These are discussed in sections 4.4.3.1, 4.4.3.2, and 4.4.3.3.

To address this central third question, the research incorporated sub-questions about these tools in the specific context of the church under study. Regrettably, most churches lacked an intentional missional mindset and strategies. The few churches that espouse this attitude tend to prioritize the visionary's strategy over the approach exemplified by Paul during his ministry among the Ephesians and Cretans. Paul's strategy and tactics were designed to address the challenges inherent in maintaining unity within a diverse body. The churches in Ephesus and Crete were confronted with false doctrine and organizational issues. It was important to recognize that disunity indicated a lack of maturity. The cornerstone of maturity is an unwavering belief in principles that align with the truth. Deeds and practices exemplify this truth, or sound doctrine, as detailed in sections 4.2.3 and 4.4.3.1.

#### *Interpretations*

Notwithstanding their significance at the global and African levels, the AICs in the DRC lack a unified structure. Teaching in the name of Jesus Christ is not the sole criterion by which a sound doctrine's nature can be determined. Practice and values are of consequence concerning transformation and identity. The Christian faith is primarily concerned with establishing and maintaining an individual's identity rather than with material blessings. The adversary employs the name of Jesus Christ to advance its agenda surreptitiously, even within the ecclesiastical institution (Matt. 24:24). For further details, please refer to sections 1.2.3.1, 1.5, 2.2.2.1.3, and 3.3.5.

Consequently, through observation and church understudy attendance, the study has discerned that the AICs in the DRC are deliberately and unwaveringly spirit- and member-oriented, underscoring the prosperity message. Local material developed by churches such as "La Louange," "Centre Evangélique Salem," and "ACK" demonstrates this distinctive trait by placing an undue emphasis on deliverance. The practice of deliverance is an indispensable component of individual development and a prerequisite for all church members.

Moreover, the study traced the AICs' provenance to the pre-colonial Kongo kingdom era. The events of each period have shaped the history of African Christianity, particularly within the context of the DRC, and have imbued it with distinctive characteristics. Each epoch furnished its mission, motivations, and strategies. The state of the AIC church in the DRC evinces many traits reflective of pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial mindsets. An African's ancestral worldview offers an interpretive framework for understanding the influences and consequences of globalisation.

To address the question of the contextual and missional strategies that the leadership of AICs has deliberately implemented to facilitate the church's growth in the DRC, the research questionnaire included three sub-questions. The formulation of these sub-questions enabled respondents to gain a more profound comprehension of the subject matter. "Please describe the frequency and duration of your attendance at the church." Please describe the resources (follow-up, discipleship, and training) you have encountered since joining the church. "Please describe the process of sharing the Gospel with another individual."

The responses to this inquiry indicated that the youngest member is five years of age, with the oldest being older than the church itself. This information significantly contributes to a comprehensive understanding of the lifespan and longevity of church members. Most church leaders are appointed to their roles based on their long-standing membership. Such individuals have the requisite training and resources to fulfil these tasks. Most services within the church are related to flight attendants or other standard departmental services within the context of the church. The most prevalent method of accessing the church is through direct, individual contact with long-standing and newly affiliated members. A mere fraction of the population has connected with the church through the media.

Furthermore, the literature indicates that evangelism and discipleship are two of God's missions and constitute the church's fundamental essence. The church must prioritise these activities, which are essential to its identity and purpose. Moreover, the church should

implement initiatives that facilitate members' spiritual growth, enabling them to assess their progress more easily (see 2.7).

According to the church growth paradigm, most churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) depend on transferring members from one local church to another. Many individuals have moved from one religious institution to another to affiliate with a well-known megachurch that effectively addresses their existential needs. The church de-emphasizes evangelism and discipleship as fundamental means of growth. Additionally, the AICs/ERC utilise faith-based branding and marketing strategies to attract individuals to their respective churches. Furthermore, data collection has corroborated these trends, as evidenced in sections 5.4.5 to 5.4.8.

#### **5.3.3.4. What are the empirical research findings on the role of missional leadership in the AIC?**

The objective of the fourth research question was to assess the specific impact of missional leadership on the AIC tangibly. A review of the literature, documents, and responses to the primary inquiry and its sub-questions reveals a significant reduction in the outcomes. The primary function of missional leadership is to establish an accurate vision and mission for the church. This necessitates a mindset aligned with the concept of *missio Dei*. The second level pertains to the objectives and strategies of the church, which are the responsibility of the leaders to implement. The fundamental aim of the church is to engage in a divine mission. Consequently, the principal function of missional leadership is to act as an enabler, thereby empowering all church members to actively participate in God's mission (for further details, please refer to section 4.5.1.1).

The responses to these related research questions indicate that some AIC leaders and their respective churches have developed a missional mindset and implemented missional practices. However, the level of commitment to this endeavour is insufficient. The churches "La Louange," "Prince de Paix," and "CER" serve as illustrative examples. Each of these churches has its own follow-up and training program, as detailed in sections 5.2.5.4.3 and 5.2.5.5.3.

#### *Interpretations*

According to the tenets of the missional paradigm, the AIC leadership is called upon to assume a prominent role. Despite the efforts above, a considerable shortfall persists in the missional mindset and practices. The prevailing circumstances about the attitudes and visions of those in leadership positions, particularly the strategies and tactics they espouse, need to be

revised. The primary threat is the decline of remote churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), as detailed in sections 3.3.3.2 and 3.3.4.3.

### **5.3.3.5. How are the missional leadership guidelines applicable to the AICs' leadership in the DRC?**

The fifth research question sought to identify how church AICs/ERC in the DRC can become more missional as they facilitate church growth. To address the question of how church AICs/ERCs in the DRC can become more missional when growing the church, the research questionnaire included three questions that allowed respondents to provide a more detailed account of their understanding of the issue. "Please describe the church's vision and mission." "Please describe how the church disseminates these resources to its members." Please elucidate the missiological objectives of the church.

Indeed, the birth rate is a significant factor influencing the global population landscape. Consequently, the growth of Muslim and Christian communities in sub-Saharan Africa will vary according to birth rates. This situation indicates that the AICs utilize missional strategies and tactics for the training, equipping, and delegating of church members to the mission of God.

Such an approach will effectively reverse the reliance on a natural birth rate to facilitate church growth. The active contribution of each church member to the advancement of God's mission will enhance and stabilize the rate of numerical church development.

Secondly, besides focusing on strategic and tactical elements, AIC leaders must prioritize spiritual growth over numerical growth. They must fulfil both the apostolic and the prophetic roles. The apostolic function is concerned with transmitting sound doctrine, which maintains unity in both content and spirit. It is incumbent upon the church to provide its members with the tools and resources necessary to fulfil their role in God's mission in their daily lives. Indeed, as church members progress in their spiritual development, their commitment to God's mission and Kingdom will correspondingly increase (see section 4.6.5.4.2).

The prophetic dimension allows leaders to present the forthcoming eternal dimension of the Christian call to church members. Furthermore, the prophetic role of missional leadership is oriented towards the spiritual and infinite dimensions of Christian calling instead of focusing on temporal and believers' existential needs. Christian life's spiritual and eternal dimensions have more significant consequences than temporal ones. Christianity is inherently

eschatological. Once the spiritual and the eternal have been adequately addressed, they can be utilised to address temporal realities and existential needs pragmatically.

### *Interpretations*

To obviate such a situation in the future, it is recommended that a shift be made to a missional paradigm. The missional paradigm represents the optimal, most suitable, and most efficacious approach to sustaining, if not accelerating, the trajectory of church growth and contextualizing church activities in alignment with the *missio Dei*.

Indeed, chapter four (sections 4.6.5.1.) develops and defines "missional leadership" as the process of envisioning, shaping, and facilitating missional transformation within a Christian community. This enables individual participants, groups, and the community to respond to challenging situations and engage in transformative changes necessary to become, or remain, oriented to God's mission in the local context. Missional leaders facilitate the advancement of organizations along missional trajectories.

The fundamental role of missional leadership is to serve as an enabling process that facilitates the implementation of the priesthood of all believers within the context of the church and other faith-based organizations. Although all followers of Christ are disciples, the community of disciples requires leaders who exemplify a ministerial priesthood, serving, nourishing, sustaining, and guiding this priestly work. Missional leadership is of great consequence in transforming the Christendom-oriented church and its ecclesiology towards a missional orientation. Serving the church's missional nature entails facilitating its fidelity to its missionary identity and enabling its active engagement in God's mission.

The "missional church" is a community of God's people that defines itself and organizes its life around its real purpose of being an agent of God's mission to the world. An authentic church is organised according to the principle of God's mission, known as "*missio Dei*." It is incumbent upon the Church to disseminate the mission of God. The mission of God is conveyed directly to every believer and every community of faith that adheres to Jesus (see section 4.6.4.3).

The term "contextualisation" denotes adapting the Gospel in a culturally pertinent manner, encompassing the adaptation of its forms and expressions to align with the conventions of another culture and overcoming obstacles to its dissemination.

#### **5.4. Summary of the findings**

This chapter outlines the methodology employed and presents the findings in response to the research questions. The data were derived from three principal sources: documentary analysis, interviews, and questionnaires. The study commenced with the formulation of five research questions. The study examined the genesis, evolution, contextual factors, and challenges facing the AIC leadership in the DRC. In this regard, the responses of those in appointed leadership roles offer valuable insights. The impact of urbanization and globalization on the development of AICs in the DRC represents a significant topic of discussion in academic circles. The team leaders who addressed this issue also provided valuable insights. Pauline's epistles to Titus and the Ephesians offer insight into the nature of missional leadership. The literature highlighted particular leadership practices that Paul deliberately employed throughout his ministry.

Empirical research demonstrates the importance of missional leadership in the AIC. In response to this question, the participants offered somewhat restrained responses. The responses indicated that some leaders and their churches had developed follow-up and training materials for discipleship. The deployment of these materials also suggests a lack of missional orientation, as reflected in the intentionality of their practices. (5) The final inquiry pertained to the missional leadership directives pertinent to the AICs' leadership in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This pertains to the specific, contextual actions that the AICs' leadership must undertake to enhance their missional approach. This final question was not fully addressed in this research section, as it is discussed in greater detail in the recommendation section of the seventh chapter.

A literature review reveals a notable increase in churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This evidence is exaggerated and has been highlighted across all spheres of Christianity. Throughout the three significant periods of its history (pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial), the DR Congo's church has been recognized on the global stage as one of the most fertile grounds for the growth of Christianity. Currently, the country is the third most populous Christian nation in Africa and is among the top ten in the world.

In addition, the study identified several factors that have facilitated the growth and proliferation of the AICs/ERC in the DR Congo. These factors encompass a range of domains, including religious, political, social, and economic considerations. The dominant factors are the globalization of the economy and the rapid, unplanned urbanization of the country. In addition to the significant global impact of the shift towards Christianity, the adaptability of

local leadership has played a crucial role in the growth and proliferation of AICs in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This can be considered an inward factor.

Nevertheless, an analysis of the questionnaire responses and interviews with respondents revealed that the church currently relies more on the natural birth rate, the transfer of members from other local churches, and the switch from other religions. This presents a challenge, as the birth rate in Christianity is lower than that of religions where polygamy is the norm. A significant number of the churches under investigation have not adopted a missional mindset. Most churches adhere to traditional Christian practices, with evangelism assigned to a department of appointed members.

The expansion of the AICs/ERC in DR Congo is more closely associated with ecclesiastical organization (polity), leadership management, and charisma than with the collective involvement of the entire church. The findings of the analysis indicate that a limited number of church members in the AICs possess a missional mindset and are actively engaged in God's mission in their daily lives. This is primarily due to shortcomings on the part of the leadership in fulfilling its enabling role.

After examining the research methodology and presenting the empirical findings on the role of AIC missionary leadership in the previous chapter, the following chapter will deal with the guidelines for missionary leadership proposed to the AIC leadership in the DRC.

**Table 5- 5: Summary of the findings according to the variables**

<b>Church</b>	<b>Name of variable</b>	<b>Answers</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
<b>CPD</b>	GQL-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There exists no church development material</li> <li>- The lack of discipleship and church member commitment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The lack of missiological objectives and poor vision and mission statement.</li> </ul>
	GQT+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The church is large, with 50 churches abroad disseminated in the major cities of the DRC.</li> <li>- The use of technology advances and media for the expansion of the church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The type of leadership is more classical or traditional. The top leader's charisma.</li> <li>- The leadership is more participative and collaborative.</li> </ul>
	CLNs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The missionality is minus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The missionality is minus despite the number of church members and the number of churches around the country.</li> </ul>
	GQL-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There exists no church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The lack of missiological</li> </ul>

<b>CPV</b>		<p>development material</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The lack of discipleship and church member commitment.</li> </ul>	<p>objectives and poor vision and mission statement.</p>
	GQT+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The church is large, with 25 churches abroad disseminated in the major cities of the DRC.</li> <li>- The use of technology advances and media for church activities and advertisement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This type of leadership is more participative and collaborative.</li> </ul>
	CLNs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The missionality is minus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The missionality is minus despite the number of church members and the number of churches around the country.</li> </ul>
<b>LL</b>	GQL-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There exist materials for church development “Tomes”</li> <li>- And discipleship and church members’ commitment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The lack of missiological objectives and poor vision and mission statement.</li> </ul>
	GQT+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The church is large, with 350 churches abroad disseminated in the major cities of the DRC.</li> <li>- The use of technology advances and media for the expansion of the church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The type of leadership is more classical or traditional. The top leader’s charisma.</li> <li>- The leadership is more participative and collaborative.</li> </ul>
	CLNs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The missionality is +-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The missionality is plus and minus despite the material they dispose of.</li> <li>- Church members are informed about the importance of participating in the mission of God. But there is no challenge to their inherent commitment.</li> </ul>
<b>EIPP</b>	GQL-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There exists no church development material</li> <li>- The lack of discipleship and church member commitment.</li> <li>- They rely on CCC strategies and materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The lack of missiological objectives and poor vision and mission statement.</li> </ul>
	GQT+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The church is large, with 35 churches disseminated in the major cities of the DRC and abroad.</li> <li>- The use of technology advances and media for the expansion of the church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The type of leadership is more classical or traditional, relying on the top leader’s charisma.</li> <li>- The leadership style is more participative,</li> </ul>

			collaborative and servant.
	CLNs	- The missionality is minus.	- The missionality is minus despite the number of church members and the number of churches around the country. Church members are not challenged to daily participation in the mission of God.
<b>CAACK</b>	GQL-	- There exists no church development material - The lack of discipleship and church member commitment.	- The lack of missiological objectives and poor vision and mission statement.
	GQT+	- The church is large, 250 churches in the major cities of the DRC and abroad; - They use technological advances and media for the expansion of the church	- The type of leadership is more traditional, authoritarian, participative and collaborative
	CLNs	- The missionality is minus.	- The missionality is minus despite the number of church members (more than 100.000) and the number of churches around the country.
<b>CER</b>	GQL-	- There exists no church development material - There exists a nucleus of discipleship and church members committed to evangelism. - The use of CCC discipleship materials and others	- The lack of missiological objectives and poor vision and mission statement.
	GQT+	- The church is large, disseminated in the DRC - The use of technology advances and media for the expansion of the church	- The type of leadership is classical, relying on the top leader's charisma and managerial skills. - The leadership is more participative and collaborative.
	CLNs	- The missionality is minus	- The missionality is minus despite the number of church members.
	GQL-	- There exists no church development material	- The lack of missiological objectives and poor

<b>CES</b>		- The lack of discipleship and church member commitment.	vision and mission statement.
	GQT+	- The church is large, 50 in the DRC and abroad - The use of technology advances and media for the expansion of the church	- The type of leadership is charismatic, participative and collaborative
	CLNs	- The missionality is minus.	- The missionality is minus despite the number of church members and the number of churches around the country.

## CHAPTER SIX

### DISCUSSION

#### THE MISSIONAL LEADERSHIP GUIDELINES PROPOSALS TO THE AICS' LEADERSHIP IN THE DRC

##### 6.1. Introduction

In the preceding chapter, the study focused on the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data. The empirical investigation has yielded some meaningful indications regarding the initial observation that prompted this study. The observed reality of the AICs/ERC in the Democratic Republic of Congo is that of the leadership's missional role in fostering the church's growth and equipping the body of Christ to engage in God's mission. The assumption was that the role of the AIC leaders in the church needed to be reimagined to become more missional and enable every church member to be equipped and actively involved in *missio Dei* through priesthood ministry. Accordingly, the objective of this study was to gain a deeper insight into the extent to which the leadership of the AICs in DR Congo demonstrates a missional approach when fostering the church's growth in an urban setting. The central question was, "To what extent are leaders of the African Initiated Churches in the DRC missional in fostering the growth of the church?"

This chapter builds on the findings of the preceding chapters (two to five) to present a theoretical analysis of how leadership in AICs in the DRC demonstrates a missional mindset and practices in the context of urban church growth. This missiological reflection examines the underlying causes of the current missional behaviours observed in the church leadership process, the circumstances surrounding church growth, and the context of the church mission in urban settings. The causes of current behaviours in church leadership in the AICs can be attributed to an analysis of the findings of the empirical investigation. The situation of church growth indicates what genuine church growth should reflect. Furthermore, the urban mission strategies of the church in DR Congo convey the idea of a systematic reflection on urbanisation and the mission derived from globalisation. This chapter aims to reflect on the research problem and establish a foundation for future research. Encarta (2007) defines reflection as "careful thought, especially the process of reconsidering previous actions, events, or decisions." Consequently, references will be made to either the findings of the preceding chapters (1–6) or any valuable missiological insights and inputs from other scholars and authors.

## **6.2. Discussion of the findings**

The study evaluates the issue based on the findings and their interpretation in the previous chapter. This is achieved in two stages: firstly, an examination of the current state of leadership and the factors that have led to it, and secondly, the formulation of strategies for implementing solutions and improvements to address the identified issues. The subsequent section will present the current situation of leadership and its underlying causes. This will be followed by analysing the actions that can be taken to address and improve the issues above.

### **6.2.1. The situation of leadership and church growth in the urban of the DR Congo**

The literature review examined the scholarly and ancillary issues related to leadership and church growth, as detailed in sections 3.3, 4.5, and 4.6.1. Considering the factors that lead to church decline, it is possible to identify effective strategies for growing the church in urban areas (3.3.4.3). The following section presents a synthesis of the positive and negative key elements of the current state of the AIC's leadership and church development in the DRC, as evidenced by the findings.

#### **6.2.1.1. Current situation of the AICs leadership in the DRC**

The study has identified AIC's leadership in the DRC as exhibiting several noteworthy positive attributes. The initial and fundamental issue is the initiative. While establishing a church may appear to be a relatively straightforward process, the practicalities of its daily management can prove to be a significant challenge. Despite the considerable number of leaders who have initiated new churches, many have failed, resulting in the aborted inception of numerous churches. Without their initiative, the church in the DRC will never occupy its privileged position (see sections 1.2.3.3.1; 2.2.2.1; 3.3.7 and 5.4).

A second positive element is utilising media and technological advances due to globalisation. A considerable number of AICs possess both traditional and media tools. They utilize a variety of digital platforms, including radio and television, social media such as Facebook and YouTube, and messaging applications like Whatsapp (see section 5.2.5).

It is regrettable that the study also identified some negative aspects. The initial issue pertains to the absence of unity. The majority of leaders of the AICs operate relatively isolatedly. They are members of the AIC/ERC platform and are solely responsible for accessing official documents. Furthermore, this disunity is reflected in the organization's doctrinal and managerial structures.

A lack of consensus on fundamental doctrinal and managerial matters further compounds the issues above.

Additionally, contextual and cultural intelligence is deficient. The absence of these crucial leadership competencies has resulted in leaders of AICs exhibiting diminished innovativeness and a proclivity towards stereotypical approaches in their ministry. This is evidenced by how global spirit-led, faith-branding, secular marketing strategies, and the proliferation of the prosperity gospel without discernment are shaping the church. The solution to the existential issues of the members was derived from a generalization of African cosmology, which posits that the spiritual realm is the primary source of suffering. The issues above were addressed to provide a solution to the members' existential issues. This solution was derived from a generalization of African cosmology, which posits that the spirits' world is the principal cause of pain. The following section will address the misuse of urbanization, globalization opportunities, and media tools.

Regrettably, the Church did not innovate its approach to urban missions. In contrast, it merely corresponds with contemporary media content in a secular manner. The study indicates that the church did not use mass media to grow and expand. Instead, mass media served a more limited role, primarily facilitating mass gatherings and events and mobilising many people. Mass media, particularly television and radio, are usually mobilisation tools. Most of these institutions' primary objective was to disseminate the Gospel's teachings to a vast audience, particularly to significant events within the Church. The mass media tool also facilitated communication of ordinary seminaries and weekly church services. Subsequently, the most frequently employed media theories are agenda-setting and priming. According to the theory of church development, the rate of expansion of the AIC is so rapid that it is numerically more significant than spiritually. The church's growth is contingent upon several factors, including the spiritual gifts of the leader, the transfer process, members switching, and the natural birth rate. These factors are more influential than the organizational leadership of the church itself. Media tools have been found to facilitate growth in churches by transferring members rather than through conversion (Vermeer & Scheepers, 2021: 48).

### **6.2.2. The causes of the current behaviours in the AIC leadership and church growth**

The preceding point delineated the favourable and unfavourable aspects of the present situation about the AIC leadership and the church's growth. The interpretation and analysis of the findings related to these themes have revealed that the AIC leadership's current methods to

facilitate church growth in urban areas require further examination to promote a missional mindset and strategies. Based on this study's theoretical and empirical findings, a meta-analysis of the reality above reveals three key factors influencing attitudes towards the missional paradigm. Firstly, there is a prevalent misunderstanding of the mission and nature of the church. Secondly, there is a dearth of practical strategies and the misapplication of technological tools for urban church growth. Thirdly, there is a lack of leadership intelligence, which is comprised of contextual and cultural awareness, skills, and knowledge in missional leadership.

#### **6.2.2.1. The misunderstanding of the mission and the nature of the church**

The study revealed that the religious leaders and congregations surveyed provided responses that were not aligned with the established understanding of the mission and nature of the church. The initial group of respondents defined the church's mission according to the Christendom mindset, wherein the mission is perceived as belonging to the church and encompasses concepts such as deliverance, evangelism, outreach, winning souls, and guiding them towards the church. The prevailing perspective is that the church is more attractive than the incarnational. The respondents indicated that, in their view, the church is primarily entrepreneurial. This perspective suggests that marketing is a viable strategy for branding faith through leadership publications.

According to the nature of the church, most respondents perceive the church from an entrepreneurial standpoint, wherein marketing is regarded as a viable strategy for branding the faith through disseminating leadership publications.

#### **6.2.2.2. The lack of appropriate missional strategies and the misuse of technological tools for church growth in the urban**

The churches under study lack systematic strategies for church growth, except for the church "La Louange," which has developed follow-up materials (tomes). The church "Prince de Paix" has adopted the follow-up and training materials for evangelism and discipleship developed by Campus Crusade for Christ. Furthermore, the study indicated that leaders of the AICs in the DRC rely more heavily on radio and television as traditional media outlets and on Facebook and YouTube as social media platforms. No inquiries were made regarding this affordance. Some individuals are the proprietors of these media outlets. In other instances, church programs are broadcast from a rented media space. The primary motivation for utilizing the media is to enhance visibility rather than to foster discipleship.

The content of the transmitted programs is a combination of traditional and religious material. Most church media outlets operate as general media outlets rather than thematic ones.<sup>49</sup>The distinction is further evidenced by the differing frequencies and times allotted to these television and radio programs. The distinction can be observed in the frequencies and durations allocated to these television and radio programs. The frequencies and times allotted to the presentation of the gospel in the media serve as key indicators of the extent to which the gospel is contextualized within that medium.

The content of church media is consistent with that of general media. The content is anticipated to align with the five categories established by the CSAC. The categories are as follows: The initial category is as follows: The organization's activities are classified into the following categories: 1. The organization's activities are grouped into the following categories:

1. Information and magazines;
2. Education, promotion of gender, youth, health, and environment;
3. Culture, sport, and entertainment;
4. Economy and development;
5. Research and technology. Accordingly, to elucidate the religious characteristics, the church media must select an appropriate media theory (e.g., agenda setting, priming, and framing) and adhere to its tenets. The agenda-setting theory, as proposed by McCombs and Reynolds (2002), posits the capacity of the news media to influence the prominence of issues on the public agenda. In agenda-setting theory, the frequency or repetition of a program is used to ascribe it to a high degree of importance. Individuals exposed to a particular message on repeated occasions through the mass media are more likely to perceive that message as being of greater significance than other similar messages. It is the principal instrument for influencing public opinion on any given issue. It can be argued that the media do not accurately reflect the reality of a situation. The media filters and shapes the reality of events in a manner that aligns with the beliefs and expectations of the general public. The agenda-setting theory comprises three variables or components: the public, the media, and policy (Walgrave & Van Aelst, 2006; 2011). The church media under study employed two of the variables above. The initial variable delineates how public opinion can impact the program setting. This phenomenon has been

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<sup>49</sup> According to Congolese media law, a television and radio broadcasting have only to choose between general and thematic as category in which they will operate. In general media the content can be mixed but thematic media have to remain on the thematic line they primarily have chosen.

observed in select television and radio programs, including series and films. The second variable indicates that the church media manager has exerted influence over the content of other programs. The media tools are utilised to facilitate the continuation of the leader's ministry.

Additionally, the media employed framing techniques. In contrast to agenda setting, which employs issue prioritization through the frequency of coverage, framing emphasizes the context in which an issue is situated to influence public decision-making. The framing process entails deliberately selecting issues to be emphasised over others. The success of framing is contingent upon human nature, which tends to eschew the arduous process of critical thinking and instead gravitates towards expedient methods of information processing. This phenomenon is evident in the content of select media programs, including news and periodicals. The framing of shapes is a deliberate act that shapes social perception and interpretation of the phenomenon. Ultimately, the media allocates time and space to issues through the priming process, fostering receptivity and alertness among the audience.

#### **6.2.2.3. The lack of leadership intelligence (contextual and cultural), skill, and knowledge about missional leadership**

Contextual and cultural intelligence plays a pivotal role in fostering leadership ability by facilitating the consideration of pivotal environmental data. The study notes that many churches deliberately disregard the historical and contemporary contexts of the AICs in the DRC in pursuit of efficient church management. Notably, the insight related to the exemplary management of the church is not a priority for the AIC leaders, as this information is deliberately withheld.

#### **6.2.3. What actions does the AIC leadership need to concretely and contextually actualise to become more missional than before?**

As previously indicated in the preceding chapters and as evidenced by the findings of the data collection process, there are specific actions that the AICs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo must address. The fundamental actions entail transitioning from a Christendom paradigm to a missional mindset, either as a discrete shift or a series of progressive adaptations. This shift pertains to several key areas, including leadership, the comprehension of the mission of God, the management of the church's activities, and its polity.

### **6.2.3.1. Leadership training (as an enabler function)**

The field of leadership is the primary area needing transformation and the implementation of tangible measures to enhance its efficacy and facilitate robust church growth. The Christendom paradigm focuses more on the secular quality of leadership development than on spirituality. For the most part, the Christendom church failed to recognize the necessity for a comprehensive missional leadership system due to its evolving self-understanding, which became increasingly detached from its missional roots. A missional church necessitates a missional ministry and leadership system. Nevertheless, those engaged in missional leadership maintain that it is their responsibility to facilitate mobilization efforts on behalf of the community. It is the responsibility of leaders to facilitate the advancement of organizations in a missional capacity.

The training of leaders represents a fundamental tenet of the missional church paradigm. Training is conducted according to the recommendation set forth by Paul in Ephesians 4:11-16. In alignment with this passage, developing leadership skills within the church context can comprise two distinct stages. The initial phase pertains to the specialized leaders collaborating with the five ministers. In contrast, the subsequent phase encompasses the collective leadership of the entire church and all its members. The initial stage pertains to the designated leaders, who bear the responsibility of overseeing the five ministers. The subsequent phase encompasses the collective leadership of the entire church and its members.

In Chapters Two and Three, several insights have been presented regarding the significance and function of missional leadership. Missional leadership has been defined as the process of envisioning, cultural and spiritual formation, and structuring within a Christian community so that individual participants, groups, and the community are enabled to respond to challenging situations and engage in transformative changes necessary to become or remain oriented to God's mission in the local context. For further details, please refer to section 2.2.1.

Accordingly, in the context of the missional church, it is the fundamental responsibility of leadership to facilitate the implementation of the priesthood of all believers within the church and other faith-based organisations. Although all followers of Christ are disciples, the disciple's community requires leaders who serve as a ministerial priesthood, providing nourishment, sustenance, and guidance to facilitate the priestly work. The participation of all believers is not in conflict with the concept of leaders who discern, equip, organise, and send out the whole community of believers.

In summary, the responsibilities of missional leadership include deploying missional strategies that enable sent communities of witnesses to facilitate transformation within their respective communities. This is achieved through the discernment of spiritual movements. The missional leader's objective is to provide the entire congregation with the tools necessary to comprehend and fulfil their respective roles in their daily activities, thereby enabling the congregation to participate in God's mission. The prevailing models and structures of leadership are subject to alteration according to the vicissitudes of circumstances and the advent of novel worldviews. It is important to highlight the significance of a missional leader while contextualizing leadership and interpreting the indications of the contemporary era to differentiate between continuous and discontinuous change.

Finally, a missional leader is called to implement a missional spirituality, thereby releasing the priesthood of all believers and fulfilling the task entrusted to the Trinitarian God. This implies that all church members are expected to dedicate themselves to their mission and embody a missional approach by actively and intentionally bearing witness to Christ in their local context.

A significant challenge inherent to the missional paradigm is its potential to result in a disconnection from the traditions and institutions of established denominational churches. Despite the initial separation, it is preferable to transition from a traditional denominational mindset to a missional one. In contrast to the classical leadership paradigm, which relies on specific skills and leadership styles, missional leadership should prioritise the cultivation of a robust spirituality.

#### **6.2.3.2. Spirituality**

In the missional paradigm, spirituality and mission are considered two aspects of a single entity, with spirituality regarded as the primary or initial aspect. Missional spirituality is a form of spirituality rooted in the Trinity and sustains the church in its mission. It emphasises the role of the Holy Spirit as the motivating source and principal agent of God's mission in the world. In conclusion, missional spirituality is missional. It provides leaders with the capacity for discernment.

The initial step in the discernment process is to identify a sense of direction, which enables the establishment of the Spirit's guidance. Only through joining with the Spirit can we pursue a mission in alignment with God's will. By following the guidance of the Spirit, participants become attuned to the work of the Spirit and develop a profound conviction that the Spirit is guiding God's church and is already at work in every place where His people can be sent.

Spirituality empowers the leader as an enabler to establish and embody a missional mindset within the practices and habits of Christian life based on mission (See section 3.3.1).

### **6.2.3.3. The shift from Christendom to a missional church**

The organisation and polity of the church have consistently been conducted according to its intrinsic nature. Understanding the church's nature provides valuable insights for improving its organisation. By this understanding, the missional paradigm begins with the cultivation of an understanding of the church as a dynamic entity analogous to a complex adaptive system such as the human body. Adopting a systems perspective that views the church as a living organism allows for the evolution of leadership into a systems-sensitive, enabling style. This system or "church as organism" perspective is fundamental to the "enabling function" type of leadership. The church is conceptualised as a dynamic entity rather than a static one. The conceptualisation of the church as a system elucidates the mutual interaction between the constituent parts that collectively maintain the system.

In a complex adaptive system, collaboration is the primary operational mode, superseding the traditional concept of cooperation. The local church leadership supports the ministry by strengthening and supporting the health of each believer, who together comprise a complex adaptive system that forms the local church. When each system component is functioning as intended, the result should be the optimal health and strength of the entire system.

In light of conceptualising the church as a complex adaptive system, an additional tenet of the missional church is the comprehension of God's and the church's missions. This represents a significant point of contention between Christendom and missional paradigms. In the former case, it falls upon the Church to organise its mission. In contrast, the latter is based on the premise that mission is an inherent quality of God's nature. The Church is the principal institution through which this mission is carried out. Its mission is to participate in this mission in an incarnational manner. For further details, please refer to section 3.1.1.

In consequence, the missional church is engaged in mission activities. The primary reason is that the mission issue generally represents the foundation of the missional paradigm, from which all missional tenets have been developed. In the missional church paradigm, the concept of "mission" is not merely one among many functions or programs of a church; instead, it is the foundation upon which all other functions and programs are built. It represents the fundamental essence of the church and the welfare of its influence. For those aware of a higher power, the mission is an obligation that is not open to question. The concept of "missional" is an integral

aspect of the identity and purpose of the Church. This entails assuming a role in God's narrative within the context of a particular culture and participating in God's mission to the world. In other words, characterising the church as "missional" entails defining the entire Christian community as a body dispatched to the world and existing not for its own sake but to disseminate the good news to the world.

The church is inextricably linked to its mission; thus, its identity is contingent upon that mission. The church's mission is the fundamental driving force behind its establishment and continued existence. It is inconceivable to consider a church without a mission and equally implausible to envision a mission without the church. An understanding of the nature of the church is incomplete without consideration of its relationship with its mission. The church's mission represents a fundamental aspect of its identity and operational framework. It is an overarching principle informing the church's actions and interactions within its community.

To guarantee efficacy, the mission must be developed into a way of life. The mission of a missional lifestyle is a way of life in which the entirety of one's existence is oriented towards the mission, with all aspects of life aligned with the mission's core values and objectives. The mission is not confined to evangelistic events, activities, or courses; however, these may be incorporated as appropriate. In contrast, a missional approach is pervasive in all aspects of life. Developing a missional lifestyle enables cultivating a missional identity, which may be conceptualised as a missionary activity. For further details, please refer to section 3.1.1.

#### **6.2.3.3.1. Shift in Evangelism mindset and practices**

The domain of evangelism represents another crucial area in which the implementation of novel strategies is paramount. The concept of evangelism should evolve from being regarded as a discrete event to being viewed as an integral aspect of the church's way of life. The objective is to attract individuals to the church and empower them with the tools and resources necessary to engage actively within the church community. The capacity of the church to attract members is eroded when its attention shifts from welcoming newcomers to engaging with the broader community.

Another activity within the evangelism domain pertains to providing resources to all church members to facilitate a transformation in their mindset. Training may be formal or informal, and it should underscore the church's missionary role and each member's obligation. One of the

defining characteristics of a missional church, as evidenced in the literature on the subject, is its emphasis on an outward orientation rather than a mere inward focus.

#### **6.2.3.3.2. Shift from institution to community**

The concept of community is also a pivotal consideration in the evolution of a missional church. It constitutes a fundamental element of the missional paradigm. This fundamental perspective is the foundation for subsequent actions to enhance operational effectiveness. Through the deliberate demonstration and guidance of discipleship within the community, the church responds to its missional identity.

Indeed, the missional church is a community of individuals who utilise their spiritual gifts (charismata) according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. A church in mission is a church that has been gifted with charismatic qualities and is thus capable of undertaking a transformative, reconciling, and empowering mission. It is, therefore, evident that a church cannot participate faithfully in God's mission without these gifts, as the mission would otherwise become a mere human enterprise.

Consequently, it is necessary to implement actions that will facilitate the practical growth of spiritual awareness among members, enabling the Holy Spirit to distribute spiritual gifts to everyone within the church. Spiritual maturity is a prerequisite for the acquisition of spiritual gifts. The focus should be on developing church members to create a strong witness community that is more incarnational, less attractional, and less extraction. The missional faith community perceives itself as a missionary within a dynamic mission field.

Furthermore, a missional church can be defined as a messenger community with both an apostolic and prophetic mission. The apostolic mission entails both the delivery of the message entrusted to it and the maintenance of its integrity. The prophetic aspect of the missional church manifests in its condemnation of oppressive, hierarchical, and patriarchal structures, destructive, violent systems, and sinful interpersonal relations. The prophetic wing of the missional community is responsible for announcing the message, analysing it, and naming the context to ensure the continued effectiveness of the gospel's communication in word and deed. The messenger community employs various communication strategies and techniques to disseminate the gospel. It thus falls upon the church to re-examine the conventional forms and channels of communication.

Consequently, actions should also be taken regarding media utilisation for disseminating the gospel. The focus should be on the two principal aspects of the mission: evangelism and

discipleship. The sophisticated technical capabilities of contemporary media platforms, such as television and decoders, present opportunities for localised broadcasting. The recently introduced TNT set is based on the DVB (Digital Video Broadcasting) standard. Such devices can be effectively utilised as instruments for evangelism and discipleship concerning smaller and medium-sized groups.

#### **6.2.3.3.3. Shift from mission for specialised to the priesthood of believers.**

The emphasis on the missional faith community leads to considering the priesthood of believers as central to the function of the 'missional church' paradigm. Growth is measured in terms of maturity and fullness. Implementing the priesthood for all believers means that all church members commit themselves to the mission task and be missional by actively and intentionally witnessing Christ in their local context. The church's task is to equip and empower all believers to interpret the Word of God and liberate the community from a formalistic relation of the institutional and organic church structure.

Two key actions are recommended: equipping the church in the interpreting or hermeneutics domain. The training in hermeneutics will enhance church members' ability to discern false teachings. Since the emphasis on discipleship is stressed, appropriate interpretation tools are required for building sound follow-up materials.

The priesthood is also a vocation that implies that Christians see themselves as part of a community. The Christian priesthood is not the sum of individual priests. However, it is a communal identity through which individual Christians derive their identity as priests. Understanding the calling as priesthood drives Christians to seek community and build strong and loving relationships with each other and others.

Another key action to be implemented to become missional is worshipping. Worship is a mission, and mission is worship. Worship practices enable the community's members to share and enact the very things they have experienced. Worship is participating in God's redeeming love and grace, and we rehearse the work of mission. Engaging the whole assembly in worship is vital to an effective worship life and a practical missional life. Missional worship is not a set of techniques but rather an approach to worship and congregational life in which God's mission permeates every aspect of what the church does.

### **6.3. Missiological implications**

In his 2018 work, Fohle defines missiology as "a scientific and applied study based on the word of God and other disciplines of the social sciences to understand the conceptualisation, the teaching and the practice of God's global and holistic mission entrusted to the church." Fohle posits that missiology is founded upon the Word of God yet draws upon the insights of other social sciences.

Following the discussion of the findings and the collation of pertinent information, the study proceeds to present the implications of these findings in the context of the mission field. The objective is to ascertain the missiological implications of these findings and the information collected.

As Fohle has previously stated, missiology is a scientific and applied discipline. It is based on the teachings of the Bible and draws on insights from other social sciences. Furthermore, missiology guides the direction of the mission. The missiological dimension of this study is shaped by three key issues: the focus on the role of leadership, the church's growth, and the mission in the urban context. The issue of leadership has been explored from both secular and church perspectives. Information on leadership and urbanism was obtained from secular literature. At the same time, insights on church growth were derived from church literature and investigations in AICs in the country.

As previously stated, this is the study's missiological evaluation. This evaluation is based on the findings of the questionnaire, interview, document analysis, and biblical analysis. The implications above are developed into three paradigms: (1) the significance of missiological objectives for the leadership of AICs, (2) the missiological implications for church growth, and (3) the effective church growth strategy in the context of urbanisation in the DRC.

#### **6.3.1. The importance of missiological objectives of church leadership of the AICs**

Establishing objectives determines and selects the most appropriate forms and strategies for attaining the assigned goals. According to God's mission, the objective is to place God at the centre of the mission, and the Church is to be regarded as the principal instrument of this mission. The Church represents the initial manifestation of God's mission, and its active involvement serves as the primary conduit for disseminating this mission globally.

The study's missiological objectives provide a theological framework for evaluating all leadership activities (evangelism, discipleship, training, and sending) of the AICs in the DRC.

Accordingly, any necessary corrections or improvements can be made. These objectives must be both qualitative and quantitative.

The role of leadership in the context of the AICs in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been a prominent feature throughout the historical period, from the pre-colonial era to the post-colonial era. It can be argued that the AICs would not have existed in the country without the influence of leadership. Most of these organisations have benefited from the global shift in the leadership centre of Christianity from the global north to the global south, the general influence of globalisation and urbanisation, and the local opportunities presented by politics, economics, and society for the establishment of churches in the country's main cities.

The same factors and motivations that led to their emergence also contribute to the accelerated growth of the AICs in the DRC. These factors encompass a range of elements, including colonial legacies, political, economic, social, and urbanisation, and the absence of political organisation within the field. Therefore, rather than being a consequence of each church member's spiritual or qualitative development, the expansion of these churches is more numerical than spiritual. Moreover, the AICs emphasise leadership charisma, the transfer of members from one church to another, the natural birth rate and migration, and less on conversion as strategies for church development.

Furthermore, the study indicates that media tools are not employed optimally. In most instances, they are employed as mobilising instruments for church-related events and disseminating leaders' sermons. This is evidenced by the content of the church's television and radio programmes.

The church concept has been defined per the church metaphor, giving rise to a specific model and set of growth principles. The most valuable images from the literature study are the body of Christ, the complex and adaptive environment, the interpretive (hermeneutic) environment, and the discernment environment. This image portrays the church as a living organism. This complex and adaptive system requires the collaboration of all its constituent parts to achieve optimal development.

The sound development of a system and complex organism is contingent upon fulfilling defined objectives and attaining a delineated mission. Each component of the system and organisation must contribute effectively to fulfilling the system's mission and objectives. It is of paramount importance to have clearly defined objectives to ensure the smooth functioning of an organisation. All systems employ them for continuous assessment and incremental realignment.

Furthermore, the system's success is contingent upon attaining its objectives. It is common for Jesus Christ to have retreated from performing certain tasks that did not align with his intended agenda (Matt. 12: 38-40). Objectives are established at the mission's outset and guide all subsequent activities. Failure to plan and set goals and objectives is an inevitable outcome.

Furthermore, spiritual objectives assist in modifying attitudes and behaviours that are conducive to the mission's success, as outlined in Luke 5:30-32. In response to criticism, Jesus Christ justifies his actions and motives regarding his mission objectives (1 Cor. 5:14-15). Jesus's death allowed individuals to establish objectives, broadly defined as living for him and doing everything for his glory.

Furthermore, the literature emphasised the significance of objectives for the church as an organisation and system. Goals are indispensable for a living organism to engage in meaningful activities. The relevance of activities to the mission is contingent upon their capacity to facilitate the accomplishment of pre-established objectives. A clear vision and defined objectives are essential to enable growth in a health context. Leadership, in and of itself, constitutes the process of allowing individual and collective endeavours to achieve shared objectives. For further details, please refer to sections 1.1 and 2.1.3.1.

It can be argued that God's mission for the Church is a subset of His work in the world rather than an entity with an independent existence. The mission of the Church is to serve as the initial manifestation of God's intention and a conduit through which God's intention is actualised. Consequently, the Church should exemplify Christ's reign, manifesting how humanity may live under Christ's dominion. For further insight, see Chapter 3, Section 3.1.3. The objectives of every local church must be founded upon logical reasoning, in alignment with the principles of the principal medium (tool) and according to the initial mission of God.

Regrettably, most churches that use the media as a tool for their ministry fail to assess their missional objectives in general and even those regarding their media. Consequently, those in leadership positions cannot effectively oversee the church according to God's mission. "Christian media" is only applied to media outlets when a specific programme or event can be identified as Christian.

### **6.3.2. Missiological implications on church growth**

The concept of church growth is a biblical one. It is according to God's will, as evidenced by the main idea expressed in Genesis 1:28, which states, "Be fruitful and multiply." According to the teachings of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew (28:19), the intention of

God for the Church is to make disciples of all nations. The concept of discipleship emphasises that, according to the teachings of the Lord, the growth of the Church should be the consequence of an ongoing process of discipleship. Following the Pentecost, the Church initially resisted the expansion of its boundaries beyond Jerusalem. However, this was ultimately forced upon it through persecution at the hands of God. This illustrated that, from God's perspective, the expansion and growth of the church is not a matter of preference. In Ephesians 4:12-13, the apostle Paul emphasises that the fundamental objective of the church's ministries is the balanced growth of the church, which is to reflect Christ and experience both spiritual and numerical development (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:41, 47).

One of the primary objectives of God is to facilitate the growth of the Church. The literature provided a substantial amount of valuable information on the subject matter. The church employs metaphorical language to describe its structure and function. The most prevalent metaphor is that of the body of Christ. In addition, this image implies that growth occurs analogous to a living organism and a complex system, whereby the system's development depends on each component's contribution. Thus, the church leadership must equip all members with the requisite tools to fulfil their responsibilities. This concept is also evident in scriptural passages about spiritual gifts and ministries, as exemplified in Ephesians 4:11-16 and Corinthians 12. These passages elucidate the notion of leadership in the context of church development. Therefore, it can be concluded that God's vision of church growth is reflected in these scriptures, and Matthew 28:18-20 suggests that each member should play an active role in the process. The divine plan and strategy are designed to facilitate balanced church growth as a result of the collective input of all members rather than being driven by the actions of a single leader. Church leadership aims to equip and provide workers with the skills to construct a healthy church.

### **6.3.3. Releasing a missional leadership critically contextualised in the DRC urban.**

The efficacy of Jesus and the apostles in disseminating the gospel can be attributed to their efforts to contextualise the message to align with the target audience's specific cultural and social nuances. Paul elucidates his deliberate efforts to adapt his approach to align with the nuances of diverse cultural and social contexts, intending to reach the largest possible audience. While maintaining the integrity of the content, they were attuned to the audience's receptivity. The objective was to reach and win all nations, regardless of cultural and linguistic differences. The meaningful experience of contextualisation is revealed in the Book of Acts 2:8, "And how to hear we every man in our tongue, wherein we were born?" In situations of great

consequence, Paul could adapt his communication of the Gospel prudently, aligning his approach with the needs of the audience and the context in which he found himself. In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul addresses the issue of his conduct about the gospel. The text does not provide a clear indication as to whether the author is male or female. The number 21 is represented here, A. The number 23 is worthy of further examination. In Acts 17:16–34, 21:24. When individuals expressed opposition to him due to a Jewish custom associated with head shaving, he requested that the followers make the necessary adaptations to ensure the preservation of the gospel's integrity. Contextualisation represents a key concept in biblical interpretation, offering insights that enhance the communication of the gospel.

The analysis of church polity, strategies, and media (including the frequencies and time allocation of TV and radio programs) revealed disparate rates of missionality within the urban context. Firstly, the church's polity and strategies for maintaining the growth of the church appear to be no longer effective. In addition to the questionable utilisation of media as an advanced tool for addressing the masses, the church has demonstrated an inability to produce face-to-face materials. It has not made efforts to adapt media for individual equipment. This ultimately results in the absence of essential feedback, which is crucial for effectively utilising media. Feedback enables the assessment of the efficacy of the communication process through media.

Consequently, as the number of members increases, the quality or spirituality of the members remains uncertain. The efficacy of equipped church members in terms of follow-up and training is inadequate and, in some cases, non-existent. The deficiencies above in the effectiveness of equipped church members for follow-up and training are further compounded by the lack of sufficient resources and support.

Second, church media in the DRC operate at a common and secular level because of maintenance and personal support. The DRC registers them as general, and their content blends Christian and classical themes. The only way to find Christianity is through the frequency and time allocation of different religious programs. People increasingly use the media to promote church events and leaders.

In light of the observations above, the missionality of the AICs/ERC leadership is too poor. The ongoing church management lacks intelligence, sustainability, and missional objectives. Certain topics in the series of movies do not align with a Christian perspective. The primary motivation behind the selection process is to expand the audience. This is a kind of syncretism

when postmodernism traits prevail in the church media. The church, engaged in a missional context, is a hermeneutical bridge that connects the basics of the Christian faith with the challenges and questions of the modern world. Therefore, the church must constantly adapt and reinvent itself to new situations, cultures, and questions within specific contexts to be missional.

As the church evolves in an urban context such as the DRC, it is imperative to consider the cultural and social threat of pluralism, relativism, multiculturalism, and tolerance, which can lead to syncretism. Globalisation and mass media have flattened various boundaries between people around the world. They created a consumer society of goods, cultural values, and information that can be harmful if absorbed without discernment and caution. Globalisation, urbanisation, and mass media promote various worldviews through the prevalence of mass culture.

The gospel records countless histories of contextualisation. The incarnation of the Lord is obvious. He agreed to take on the form of a human to communicate effectively and understandably with humankind (Heb. 2: 14-17). The success of Jesus Christ's mission toward humans depended on his incarnation, which eased communication and interaction. His participation in the human flesh or nature gave him advantages over his adversary.

Furthermore, through his incarnation, he effectively communicated the gospel through the lens of Jewish culture. In John 4:20–24, Jesus Christ addresses the culture issue with the Samaritan lady. At the beginning, he identified himself as Jewish. We know who we adore. Nevertheless, during his discourse, he distanced himself from Jewish culture by identifying himself with the third and supra culture of the Father. In verse 23, he said, “Time is already coming, and the Father will be adored, not on a Jewish neither a Samaritan Mountain; instead in truth and spirit”.

#### **6.4. Recommendations**

Before proceeding to the conclusion, the study provides recommendations on the missionality of leadership about the development of AICs within the urban context of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

##### **6.4.1. Improve the content of leadership training.**

The AICs in the DRC constantly organise seminar events and training throughout the year. These trends demonstrate their mobilising capabilities. Meanwhile, the concern is about

the content of these events. The most pertinent theme of these events is the “supernatural and the miracle.” There are numerous methods to address this deficiency in content. The Bible said that before his death and after his resurrection, Jesus Christ's message content remained the same: “the kingdom of God” (Act. 1:1-5).

The AICs should focus on leadership training and equipment on a missional basis. The first shift in the missional conversation should be training. Appropriate leadership sustains the missional conversation, understanding all fundamental missional issues such as the church's mission, the role of leadership as an enabler, the church's description as a complex and adaptable system, a community, a hermeneutic and discernment environment, and more. Training and equipment will also provide cultural and contextual intelligence to AIC leaders. These skills are indispensable tools for a better understanding of church organisation and its management.

Leadership training is crucial for church managers to cultivate behaviours that enhance their spirituality. A leader's spirituality provides behaviours and values that they need to influence the community according to God's objectives. It is the spirituality that constitutes the basis for a leader's influence over the organisation or community. Every leader should develop an appropriate and sound spirituality.

As enablers, missional leaders should have the tools necessary to prepare the entire community for each church member's priesthood, enabling them to participate actively in God's mission in incarnational ways.

#### **6.4.2. Improving the Urban Mission**

The AICs should reassess their strategies for implementing the mission in urban areas. There are too many divided churches disseminated in all cities of the country. The coordinating office and the government regulatory structure in church matters have significantly failed. No plans exist to expand the church in DR Congo's cities. It is time for the Religious Regulatory Office (ERC) and the state regulatory agency to regulate this sector.

The AICs/ERC also need to balance their growth strategies according to the influence of ongoing urbanization. We should prioritize the spiritual development of the entire church membership to equip them to participate actively in the church's growth. Church leaders should study church growth methods and strategies that accelerate the rate of both population increase and urbanization, given the rapid pace of global and local urbanization. The study has highlighted that most of the world's population will live in cities, particularly in the global

south and Africa. Reassessing urban mission strategies is a non-negotiable issue for Africa, and the DR Congo will be the most populous country in Africa before Nigeria and Ethiopia.

### **6.4.3. Improving the use of media tools**

Congolese church leaders afford media tools. Most typically own or regularly use media tools to promote their ministries, spread propaganda, and mobilise large crowds during major events.

They also heavily rely on media theories prioritising positive propaganda while emphasising education and information. Church media should wisely apply media theories like framing, priming, and agenda setting. This could potentially lead to the development of sound doctrine.

Media and human communication are based on signs, symbols, and codes. Therefore, church media should thoroughly understand all the symbols and images they utilise. It is wise to avoid confusing images. The author's intended meaning must align with the codes and images. There are many reasons church leaders should improve the use of the media.

Firstly, due to limited income, Congolese people, particularly Christians, must rely on outdated TV and radio technologies, restricting the TV set and program receivers. In the meantime, these traditional methods leverage Internet Protocol Television (IPTV) or web television to facilitate the reception of their content via the Internet. IPTV is one of the Internet television technology standards for television broadcasters.

In contrast to new media technologies like smart TVs (STVs), which harness the benefits of internet (Web 2.0) technologies to leverage social platforms for interaction, these devices often remain underutilized. Indeed, as elucidated by Shin and Kim (2013:673), STVs facilitate the live navigation of programs and empower users to engage in many online activities, including Internet browsing, tweeting, online social networking, chatting, and more. Broadening and broadcasting technologies for STVs have enhanced this.

Focusing primarily on online interactive media based on Web 2.0 and Internet TV, STVs foster a home broadcasting environment. Thus, new technologies of television assets are relevant for discipleship ministry and efficient evangelism—the two key concepts needed for balanced church growth. They provide an appropriate social platform for follow-up and training sessions.

Secondly, to develop media literacy, church members must possess communication and mass media literacy skills, enabling them to critically analyse media messages, even if they

consume them passively (Ciurel, 2016:13). Media literacy involves our ability to critique and analyze the media's potential impact. In contrast, media literacy is concerned with developing critical thinking and listening skills, which have been explored in detail throughout this book. Media literacy skills are important because media outlets are “culture makers,” meaning they reflect much of current society and reshape and influence sociocultural reality and real-life practices.

Mastering digital technologies and data, church leaders improve the quality of biblical text and messages, making them more concrete, visual, and easier to understand. The capabilities of text editing, eased by digitalization, open countless possibilities for creativity and imagination when using social media and STV platforms.

Thirdly, the media's contextualization should be critical and in phase with the culture. Each culture is valuable because of the values that compose it. Mass media and new technology have created a global village, a consumerist society. Postmodernist worldviews challenge internal cultural values by promoting the pluralism of truth and cultural values. The multiplicity of values is truth. However, not all values are culturally valued in or for each culture.

#### **6.4.4. Avoiding the promotion of transfer growth**

The AICs in the DRC should avoid church growth principles that promote transfer and other tendencies that lead to cloning any church. Most church leaders with media tools can afford masses and televangelism without implementing concrete follow-up processes.

Using social media effectively is crucial. These media platforms facilitate feedback, which is crucial for effectiveness, especially in follow-up. The process can occur both online and through face-to-face interaction. Without feedback, it is not easy to measure the gospel's impact. According to Kraft (1979:147-50), the communicator must present their message with an appropriate degree of impact to influence the receptor(s). The most impactful communication results from person-to-person interaction”.

The absence of these tools prompted church leaders to utilise church members solely to promote their main events rather than focusing on discipleship. It is a fact that ministering in the postmodern church necessitates mastering the digital world, where images and imagination dominate.

#### **6.4.5. Efficient use of social media**

New media (social media and STVs) possess enormous benefits. First, evangelically, new media enable reaching even people living in closed countries and provide an effective result. Hiebert observes that sharing the gospel should lead to a threefold conversion, which includes changing one's beliefs, behaviour, and worldview. The lack of transformation of the worldview will result in syncretistic Christo paganism, which is apparent in Christianity. Christianity should be, in essence.

Social media also provides an updatable platform for making disciples in interactive contexts. Rolland A. Samson (2018) notices the importance of being alert toward digital stuff as a component of the postmodern context.

The study recommends forming collaborative partnerships between interchurches, churches, and para-churches to leverage social media to enhance their growth and profitability. Such collaboration will also facilitate the implementation of a data collection system and effective follow-up management.

The study observed that not all churches had a data-collecting system that could assist in monitoring key aspects of church growth, such as evangelism and discipleship, as evidenced in the early church in Acts 2:41; 4:4. The numbering system was particularly noteworthy in the early church. The leaders could ascertain with precision the number of new converts and disciples.

This collaboration allows churches to identify and enhance their weaker areas of evangelism and discipleship by learning from one another. To illustrate, Campus Crusade for Christ has devised an effective discipleship program that employs digital media. A considerable number of churches employ social media for the dissemination of sermons (e.g., YouTube) and the announcement of church events (e.g., Facebook and WhatsApp). Concurrently, there is a plethora of potential for leveraging the media capabilities of these novel technologies, both in the digital domain and at the local level. The use of digital and social media allows for the facilitation of interaction and feedback in communication.

Ultimately, the study effectively addresses the postmodern worldview, noting that postmodernism is a pervasive worldview and philosophical orientation that exerts influence across all cultures globally. Accordingly, Gonçalves (2014:86) proposes that the Church be mindful of and responsive to this phenomenon to prevent the uncritical acceptance of postmodern concepts and syncretism. Post modernism must be addressed as a contextual issue

related to the communication of the Gospel. It is the responsibility of the Church to facilitate discipleship through the utilisation of effective communication strategies that are pertinent to the postmodern context. An individual's worldview influences their ideas, emotions, and values.

The conversion to Christianity must encompass all three levels: behavioural, ritualistic, doctrinal, and worldview. Those who adhere to the Christian faith should endeavour to conduct themselves according to the tenets of their religion. However, suppose their behaviour is primarily based on tradition rather than Christian beliefs. In that case, it can result in the formation of a meaningless ritual. Conversion must entail a transformation of beliefs; however, if it is merely a change of beliefs, it constitutes false faith. Conversion may entail a shift in beliefs and behaviours. Nevertheless, the worldview remains unaltered to prevent Christo-paganism syncretism, which is merely a superficial form of Christianity.

#### **6.4.6. Use of Campus Crusade MC<sup>2</sup> and media tools**

Campus for Christ is a para-church organisation.<sup>50</sup> Its mission is to facilitate the growth and development of the denominational church. In contrast to denominations, para-church agencies were the driving force behind adapting cultural norms and introducing innovative evangelistic techniques, significantly contributing to the church's global expansion. The influence of Campus Crusade for Christ can be attributed to its unwavering dedication to the growth of the Church, manifested in the development of practical tools and strategies tailored to the specific context. Consequently, over several decades, Crusade has become the world's largest non-profit evangelical para-church organisation. By the early twenty-first century, the Crusade staff members worldwide numbered nearly thirty thousand (Turner, J.G., 2008: 3, 5, 59).

Additionally, they serve as manipulative and transmittable training tools for cells and communities. A concise delineation of these two instruments is as follows: The MC2 and Jesus film tools (God tool) benefit the researcher.

##### **6.4.6.1. Jesus film tools**

The Jesus Film represents a significant initiative within the broader context of Campus Crusade for Christ, serving as a key resource for evangelism and subsequent follow-up activities.

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<sup>50</sup> As John G. Turner (2008) notes, "parachurch" is not included in most dictionaries. It describes organisations that exist alongside the institutional church, defined as denominations and congregations in the Greek word "para," meaning "beside." Parachurch groups represent a religious organisation that operates independently of traditional institutional structures.

Notwithstanding the objections of some commentators, the Jesus Film and the related media tools of the Jesus Film Project have been translated into over 1,300 languages and have reportedly resulted in more conversions than any other evangelistic tool in history. The film produced by Campus Crusade represents the most prominent test case for the vernacular principle in this regard. A more significant number of individuals have observed it. It is purported to have resulted in more conversions than any other evangelistic tool in history (Yuckman, 2016:34,36).

Notwithstanding the controversies surrounding the technical aspects of the Crusade's Jesus film, most researchers attest to its efficacy in evangelism, church planting, and discipleship training (Yuckman, 2016: 38-39, 44).<sup>51</sup>

#### **6.4.6.2. MC2: a Global Church Movement tool**

MC2 is a tool Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC) developed to facilitate the winning, building, and sending of Christ-centered disciples who can launch spiritual movements. MC2 is an appropriate tool for the Global Church Movement (GCM), a strategy of the CCC that contributes to the fulfilment of this mission by helping to establish vital, multiplying, and sustainable churches and faith communities, one for every thousand people in every rural village, suburban neighbourhood, urban high-rise, and digital community. This would encompass all ethnic groups, as referenced in Revelation 7:9.

Global Church Movements collaborates with church leaders to develop a strategy encompassing three key elements: win, build, and send. This strategy is designed to equip church members with the skills and knowledge necessary to become effective disciples through teaching, training, and coaching in evangelism and discipleship. The organisation collaborates with churches on a non-denominational basis, providing training, discipleship, church planting, ministry materials, and other resources. The fundamental contribution of GCM is its role in facilitating the fulfilment of the Great Commission through establishing networks of proliferating churches and communities of disciples.

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<sup>51</sup> Yuckman (2016: 44) asserts that, as a tool of cross-cultural evangelism, the JESUS "film, despite claims to the contrary, is largely a product of Western sensibilities and traditions, particularly those associated with late 20th-century evangelicalism. Concerning the question of indigenisation, it is more accurate to consider the film as speaking from a North American context than from an international one. It is acknowledged that several supplementary films have been released to complement the JESUS film. These include movie shorts such as "Walking with Jesus in Africa" and "Following Jesus." The "Follow-Up Film for India" employs an indigenous cast to illustrate the practice of discipleship in action. Nevertheless, their very existence indicates the shortcomings of the JESUS film itself. It would be beneficial to examine alternative evangelistic films that may circumvent some of the shortcomings of the JESUS film.

Logically, CCC should evolve in a missional manner, focusing on establishing networks of churches and communities of disciples. Those in leadership positions require innovative and adaptive skills and a corresponding mindset. The CCC training materials are designed to be utilised in a communal training and follow-up setting. The above materials for training are designed for use in communal training sessions and subsequent follow-ups.

## **6.5. Conclusion**

Chapter Six presents the research findings. The data collection and subsequent analysis have yielded significant insights. This chapter aims to reflect on the research problem and propose missional leadership guidelines for the AIC leadership in the DRC.

The findings have identified three key factors underlying the current attitudes towards the missional paradigm. These are (1) a lack of clarity regarding the mission and nature of the church, (2) the absence of practical strategies and the inappropriate use of digital tools for church growth in urban contexts, and (3) a dearth of leadership expertise, including contextual and cultural awareness, skills and knowledge in missional leadership.

Globalisation, mainly as manifested in urbanisation and migration, has precipitated a shift in the centre of gravity of world Christianity. The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is among the ten countries where this expansion of Christianity is most pronounced.

As the population continues to urbanise and migrate, the growth of Christianity will be outpaced by the need for appropriate and contextualised leadership styles. Church leaders lack the strategic and tactical tools to maintain and enhance their organisations' development. The strategies currently employed by church leaders are not sufficiently effective in maintaining and improving church development.

Therefore, it is evident that the AICs must alter their approach to church development, moving away from reliance on transfer and natural birth as strategies. Instead, there is a need to shift the mindset and understanding of the church's vision, mission, and development strategies.

Consequently, the training and equipping of the entire church based on the communal priesthood of all believers should become the cornerstone of the church's approach. This requires that the enabling role of church leadership be emphasised.

Moreover, the utilization of church media must be modernised. It would be more beneficial for traditional and social media for training and discipleship rather than to advertise single church events.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### GENERAL CONCLUSION

#### 7.1. Introduction

This descriptive study sought to examine the role of missional leadership in the growth of African-initiated churches in urban areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo. The preceding chapter, Chapter Six, presents the research project's findings. It provides a comprehensive overview of the methodology employed and the results obtained from three distinct sources: the surveys conducted by the research team, the literature review, and direct observation. The data were then subjected to analysis.

The initial observation is the ongoing expansion and proliferation of the AICs in the DRC. The AICs have capitalised on the opportunities presented by the confluence of internal and external forces, including economic, political, and social dynamics, as well as the external forces of globalisation, urbanisation, and migration. This has resulted in the AICs establishing a robust presence in the urban or diverse cities of the DRC. As a consequence of these factors, the centre of Christianity has shifted to the Global South, with the DRC occupying a significant position within this region.

The most apparent consequence of these forces is the relocation of the epicentre of Christianity to the Global South, where the DRC occupies a notable position. It is regrettable that, while capitalising on the numerous opportunities that facilitate their inception and rapid growth, the AICs present a leadership challenge concerning the development of the Church in the DRC. There is a notable deficit in the cultural and contextual intelligence exhibited by the leadership above.

The research questions were thus formulated to elucidate the concrete state of the leadership of the AICs in the DRC in terms of strategies and tactics on the one hand and to shed light on the leadership types and styles that are applied for developing the AICs on the other.

The central research question for this study is: This study aims to ascertain the extent to which leaders of African Initiated Churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) engage in missional activities to foster the growth of their respective churches. To address this central question, the following sub-questions were discussed to gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

1. What are the origins, developments, context, and challenges of the AIC leadership in the DRC?
2. What is the extent and influence of urbanization, migration, and globalization on AIC leadership?
3. What are the missional leadership guidelines outlined in the Pauline epistles to Titus and the Ephesians?
4. What are empirical research findings on the role of missional leadership in the AIC?
5. To what extent can the missional leadership guidelines be applied to the leadership of AICs in the Democratic Republic of Congo?

Once the research questions were established, various methods were employed to obtain the requisite data. These included discussions with the church's heads, their appointed representatives, and other relevant parties, as well as further consultations to gain additional insights into the responses to the research questions.

Ultimately, a framework was constructed to elucidate the process through which this topic might be illuminated and to delineate an approach that the Church might adopt to uphold the standard of her gospel.

## **7.2. Results from the research process<sup>52</sup>**

This section provides a summary of the survey data pertinent to the five research questions, following the presentation of the research process and its results.

### **7.2.1. Results of the origin, developments, context and challenges of the AIC leadership in the DRC surveys**

This study's initial findings focus on examining the historical trajectory of AIC's leadership, its evolution, and the obstacles it has encountered. These have been described and analysed in previous studies. This investigation aimed to ascertain the following: What are the origins, subsequent developments, contextual factors, and challenges associated with the AIC leadership in the DRC?

To gain a deeper understanding of this central question, the researcher formulated three additional sub-questions. At what point in time does the church's operational activity begin? What are the stated objectives, vision, and mission of the church? "Please provide a historical account of the church, including an analysis of the circumstances that motivated its

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<sup>52</sup> The expression 'research process' here means all that has been done to acquire information: interviews, readings, services attendance, etc.

establishment." Please describe the types of media utilised and their impact on the evolution of the church. To what extent has the church been established in other cities worldwide?

The initial research question sought to identify the factors that motivated AIC leaders' decision to establish these AICs, gain insight into their subsequent development, and identify the challenges they are currently facing within the context of the DRC. The following section comprehensively examines the responses to the questions mentioned above.

These inquiries were directed to the most senior figures and team leaders, who provided more precise responses regarding these historical matters. Most respondents furnished comprehensive data concerning the establishment of the church. The motivation for establishing the AICs is complex and multifaceted. In some cases, the decision to pursue a vocation in ministry represents the primary motivating factor. Another group of churches posited that seceding from the mother church constituted an additional motivating factor for initiating an AIC.

Regarding the questions about the church's development, most responses focused on the numerical rather than the qualitative dimension of growth. Most leaders appear to be primarily concerned with maintaining a stable number of members.

Unfortunately, most churches under study lacked the necessary strategies for fostering growth in urban areas in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

### **7.2.2. Results of impact of globalisation, urbanisation and migration surveys**

The second data set addressed the influence of urbanisation and globalisation on the development of the AICs. These have been described and analysed. The question to be answered was: What is the impact of urbanisation and globalisation on the development of the AICs in the DRC?

To answer this main question, two sub-questions were added: "What kinds of media do you use, and what is their influence on the development of the church?" and "In how many cities around the world is the church planted?"

The second research question sought to ascertain the impact of globalisation, urbanisation, and migration on the AIC leaders. These inquiries were also posed to the top and team leaders. The responses provided by the AIC leaders in the DRC have had a significant impact on them in three distinct ways. Firstly, these forces have facilitated the establishment of the church throughout the country, enabling the movement of people and disseminating information. Secondly, the utilisation and accessibility of media and technology have provided a conduit for

enhanced visibility, reinforcing their influence to a previously unanticipated degree. Indeed, most churches today have some form of media presence, whether through television channels or social media platforms, utilised for promoting their leaders and disseminating information about their services. In conclusion, the phenomenon of migration has led to an increase in the number of people living in urban areas classified as belonging to the lower socioeconomic classes.

Ultimately, migration has led to an increase in the density of the low-class population in urban areas. Based on the economic and social motivations driving this migration, these individuals represent an appropriate target for a prosperity message. It can be reasonably deduced that the demographic above constitutes a suitable target for prosperity messages.

### **7.2.3. Results of the missional leadership guidelines from Pauline's letters to Titus and the Ephesians surveys**

The third central research question to be addressed was: What are the missional leadership guidelines outlined in the Pauline letters to Titus and the Ephesians?

This research question was included in the survey. Instead, it was examined as a foundational element within a biblical framework of missional leadership. The objective was to identify the biblical model of missional leadership by investigating Paul's practical ministry in two distinct contexts. The case studies focused on Ephesus and Crete.

The beneficial outcomes indicated that Paul frequently and deliberately employed training as a means of equipping. Additionally, he delegated responsibility in a manner consistent with the Ubuntu mindset, enabling each believer to live a life in alignment with the teachings of Christ and to engage in the mission of God daily through individual ministries.

### **7.2.4. Results of the empirical research findings of the role of missional leadership in the AIC**

The primary objective was to ascertain the empirical research findings about the role of missional leadership in the AIC. This inquiry aimed to determine the specific role of missional leadership within the context of the AIC. Two supplementary inquiries were posed to address this question: The question was posed as to what the church's vision might be. Thus, the question arises as to whether the church has missiological objectives.

Most respondents provided responses that were not entirely accurate concerning these two sub-questions. The respondents' responses demonstrate a fundamental misunderstanding of the

concept of missiology, which has led to a conflation of vision and objectives. The issues mentioned above result from a basic misunderstanding of the concept of missiology.

### **7.2.5. Results of the AICs leadership missional actions surveys**

The fifth research question sought to identify the concrete ways the church AICs/ERC in the DRC can become more missional as they facilitate church growth. The primary objective was to ascertain how the missional leadership guidelines can effectively apply to the AICs' leadership in the DRC.

To ensure clarity, the following sub-question was posed: What concrete and contextual actions must the AIC leadership undertake to become more missional than they were previously?

In response to this question, respondents provided suggestions regarding specific items and attitudes that should be adopted. However, the suggestions lacked specificity. The respondents proposed training, evangelism, and follow-up as the primary items. In the case of the church, with the material mentioned above, the recommendation was to alter the prevailing mindset and adopt a more deliberate and purposeful approach.

### **7.3. Summary of the answers to the research questions**

Finally, the following section summarises the findings related to the four research questions that were the focus of this study. The following section presents the findings of the study, organised according to the four research questions that guided the investigation.

#### **7.3.1. Answers to the main research question**

What are the origins, developments, context, and challenges of the AIC leadership in the Democratic Republic of the Congo?

This inquiry permitted the researcher to ascertain how leaders established their respective churches within the context of the DRC. Furthermore, it illuminates the obstacles encountered in the process of church development.

The study has revealed that the rationale behind forming the AIC in the RDC is multifaceted. For some, the appeal to the minister represents a crucial step. For some, it entailed a secession from a mother church, accompanied by criticism of certain leadership attitudes. The responses also indicated that the leaders of these churches demonstrated a significant deficiency in their comprehension of the fundamental tenets of God's mission and vision for the church.

Regrettably, the responses also demonstrated a significant deficiency in understanding the fundamental tenets of God's mission and vision for the church among the leaders of these religious institutions. Furthermore, the utilisation of media tools is a significant issue.

### **7.3.2. Answers to the second research questions**

This study aimed to investigate the impact of urbanisation and globalisation on the development of the AICs in the DRC.

This inquiry permitted the researcher to ascertain how globalisation and its associated effects have influenced leaders' approach in guiding the development of AICs in the DRC. The study has identified that these forces have benefited the establishment and accelerated growth of most AICs within and beyond the country's borders. Transport facilities were employed to facilitate access to remote areas of the country. Rapid urbanisation and migration have resulted in a notable increase in urban population density, promoting the development of mega-churches. In the contemporary era, most religious institutions could utilise traditional media outlets or gain access to such platforms. It can be stated that every church and its leaders possess at least one social media account.

It is regrettable that the responses also demonstrated a significant deficiency in understanding the fundamental tenets of God's mission and vision for the church among the leaders of these churches. Furthermore, the utilisation of media tools is a significant issue.

### **7.3.3. Answers to the third research questions**

What missional leadership guidelines are outlined in the Pauline letters to Titus and the Ephesians?

The responses to this inquiry were predominantly derived from textual analysis rather than the survey. The strategies and tactics employed by Paul, as identified through this analysis, training, and delegation process, which are guided by an *Ubuntu* mindset, serve as a model for this study.

### **7.3.4. Answers to the fourth research questions**

What are the empirical findings of the research on the role of missional leadership in the AIC?

The responses to this inquiry were primarily derived from a review of pertinent literature.

### **7.3.5. Answers to the fifth research questions**

This study aims to determine the extent to which the missional leadership guidelines can be applied to the leadership of the AICs in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The responses to the primary and subordinate questions indicated that numerous churches have devised strategies and tactics for advancing their institutions. The church's establishment and structure globally have become evident. Conversely, a significant proportion of churches have been unsuccessful in this regard.

Moreover, in addition to the absence of these strategic and tactical instruments, there is a significant deficiency in utilising media resources. The media are not optimally used to transmit church sermons and disseminate information regarding significant church events. The above observations conclude that the media are not being used efficiently.

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## ANNEXURES

### ANNEXURE A- 1: QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEW TEAM LEADER

**Name and Post-name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of the church:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Seniority in the church** \_\_\_\_\_

My name is MPOLO MASWAKU Jean Romain, PhD student at North-West University in South Africa. I am conducting a study that seeks to discover and evaluate the role of missional leadership in the growth of African-led churches in urban areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Several non-African and African authors have written several books and articles on this subject according to their context. However, the Congolese have not yet invested in the subject despite the reality. That's why I decided to bring it up.

I ask that you participate in this research by answering the following questions as sincerely as possible so that we can achieve our goals. The information you provide will be kept with a high degree of confidentiality.

1. What is the context of AIC in the DRC in terms of urbanization and factors of globalization?
  - ✓ Can you give us his history?
    - a. The name of the visionary or initiator and his nationality.  
\_\_\_\_\_
    - b. Was he a member of another church before he started this one? Yes\_ No\_\_\_\_  
If yes, which ? \_\_\_\_\_
    - c. What were the reasons for the initiation of the church?
      - a. Personal Appeal and Conviction
      - b. My Leadership Opposition \_\_\_\_\_
      - c. Blessing of my former framers\_\_\_\_\_.
    - d. In how many cities in the DRC is your church/community located?
      - a. Is there leadership in place? Yes\_\_\_\_\_ No\_\_\_\_\_
      - b. These leaders come from the mother church or are raised on the spot?  
\_\_\_\_\_
      - c. What communication tools do you use with his churches?  
\_\_\_\_\_
      - d. What external/media contributions have accelerated the establishment and growth of the church?
        - Social Media\_\_\_\_\_
        - Radio-TV\_\_\_\_\_

- Other \_\_\_\_\_

1. How long does your church/community/ministry exist?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. How can you describe its expansion across the DRC and around the world:
  - a. Number of churches in DRC: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. In how many provinces: \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Number of Churches in the World: \_\_\_\_\_
2. How the vision of the AIC is communicated to the members of their Church?
  1. What is the main vision and mission of the church in one sentence each?  
Vision: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mission: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. How does this vision distinguish and complement you from other churches?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  3. What strategies does the church use to communicate this vision?
    - a. Regular Leadership Team Meetings, \_\_\_\_\_
    - b. Teachings \_\_\_\_\_
    - c. Other means \_\_\_\_\_
3. How are the missiological objectives of AIC leaders achieved in and outside the DRC?
  - a. What are the missiological objectives that the church has set for itself?  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. To what extent are AIC implementing mission leadership strategies in the DRC and beyond?
  - a. What is the best description of the church?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. What are the strategies to win and strengthen the lost?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. What is the vision of the church for each member?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - d. What is the church's vision for the nearby community?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Kinshasa, the \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2

**ANNEXURE A- 2: QUESTIONNAIRE -CHURCH MEMBERS**

Code

CM \_\_\_\_ 22

**Name and Post-name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position in the church:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Seniority in the church:** \_\_\_\_\_

My name is MPOLO MASWAKU Jean Romain, a PhD student at North West University in South Africa. I am conducting a study that seeks to discover and evaluate the role of missional leadership in the growth of African-initiated churches in urban areas in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Several non-African and African authors have written several books and articles on this subject according to their context. However, the Congolese have not yet invested in the subject despite the reality. This is why I decided to address the subject.

I ask you to participate in this research by answering the following questions as honestly as possible so that we can achieve our goals. The information you provide us will be kept with a high degree of confidentiality.

1. What is the context of AICs in the DRC in terms of urbanization and globalization factors?

a. How did you know about this church and come to be there?

- ✓ Individual contact
- ✓ Contact on social media
- ✓ Other means

b. Do you know your church's vision? If Yes, state it.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How are the missiological objectives of the AIC leaders being achieved in the DRC and outside?

a. What level of strengthening and training have you received?

\_\_\_\_\_

b. How many people in your community/school/work know that you are a Christian? \_

c. Are you able to share your faith with another person? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

d. How many people have you shared your faith with? \_\_\_\_\_

d. In your neighborhood \_\_\_\_\_

e. In your work or school \_\_\_\_\_

3. To what extent do AICs apply missional leadership strategies in the DRC and beyond?

a. Are you an active member of a department? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. What growth and training materials have you been exposed to?

\_\_\_\_\_

Done in Kinshasa, on \_\_\_\_\_

Code

CL \_\_\_\_ 22

### ANNEXURE A- 3: QUESTIONNAIRE INTERVIEW LEADER/FRENCH

Nom et Post-nom : \_\_\_\_\_

Position : \_\_\_\_\_

Ancienneté dans l'église \_\_\_\_\_

Je m'appelle MPOLO MASWAKU Jean Romain, étudiant en Doctorat à North West University d'Afrique du Sud. Je conduis une étude qui cherche à découvrir et à évaluer Le rôle du leadership missionnel dans la croissance des églises d'initiative africaine en milieu urbain en République Démocratique du Congo. Plusieurs auteurs non africains et africains ont écrit plusieurs livres et articles sur ce sujet selon leur contexte. Cependant, les congolais ne se sont pas encore investis sur le sujet malgré la réalité. C'est pourquoi j'ai décidé d'aborder le sujet.

Je vous demande de participer à cette recherche en répondant aux questions suivantes de manière la plus sincère possible afin que nous puissions atteindre nos objectifs. Les informations que vous nous fournirez seront conservées avec un haut degré de confidentialité.

1. Quel est le contexte des AIC en RDC en termes d'urbanisation et de facteurs de mondialisation ?

✓ Pouvez-vous nous donner son historique ?

a. Le nom du visionnaire ou initiateur et sa nationalité. \_\_\_\_\_

b. Etait-il membre d'une autre église avant de commencer celle-ci ?

Oui \_\_\_\_\_ Non \_\_\_\_\_ Si oui, laquelle ? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Quelles furent les motifs de l'initiation de l'église ?

a. Appel ou conviction personnel(le) \_\_\_\_\_

b. Opposition de leadership de mes anciens encadreurs \_\_\_\_\_

c. Bénédiction de mes anciens encadreurs \_\_\_\_\_.

d. Dans combien de villes de la RDC votre église/communauté est implantée ?

a. Existe-t-il un leadership en place ? Oui \_\_\_\_\_ Non \_\_\_\_\_

b. Ces dirigeants viennent de l'église-mère ou sont suscités sur place ? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Quels outils de communication utilisez-vous avec ses églises ?

\_\_\_\_\_

e. Quelles sont les apports extérieurs/média qui ont accéléré l'implantation et la croissance de l'église ?

- Media sociaux \_\_\_\_\_

- Radio-TV \_\_\_\_\_

- Autres \_\_\_\_\_

2. Combien de temps votre église/communauté/ministère existe-t-elle ? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Comment pouvez-vous décrire son expansion à travers la RDC et dans le monde :
- Nombre d'églises en RDC : \_\_\_\_\_ et nombre de membres \_\_\_\_\_
  - Dans combien de province : \_\_\_\_\_
  - Nbre d'églises dans le monde : \_\_\_\_\_ nbre de mbres \_\_\_\_\_ nbre de pays \_\_\_\_\_
3. Comment la vision de 1 Cor.14:8-9 des dirigeants de l'AIC est-elle communiquée aux membres de leur Église ?
4. Quelle sont la vision et la mission principale de l'église en une phrase chacune ?
- Vision : \_\_\_\_\_
- Mission : \_\_\_\_\_
5. Comment cette vision vous distingue-t-elle et complète des autres églises ?
- \_\_\_\_\_
6. Quelles sont les stratégies que l'église utilise pour communiquer cette vision ?
- Réunions ordinaires de l'équipe du leadership, \_\_\_\_\_
  - Enseignements \_\_\_\_\_
  - Autres moyens \_\_\_\_\_
7. Comment les objectifs missiologiques des dirigeants de l'AIC sont-ils réalisés en RDC et en dehors ?
- Quels sont les objectifs missiologiques que l'église s'est assigné ?
- \_\_\_\_\_
8. Dans quelle mesure les AIC appliquent-ils des stratégies de leadership missionnel en RDC et au-delà ?
- Quelle est la meilleure description de l'église ? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Quelles sont les stratégies pour gagner et affermir les perdus ?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Quelle est la vision de l'église pour chaque membre ?
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Quelle est la vision de l'église pour la communauté proche ?
- \_\_\_\_\_

Fait à Kinshasa, le \_\_\_/\_\_\_/2024

Code
CM____22

## ANNEXURE A- 4:QUESTIONNAIRE-CHURCH MEMBER/French

Nom et Post-nom : \_\_\_\_\_

Position dans l'église: \_\_\_\_\_ Ancienneté dans l'église: \_\_\_\_\_

Je m'appelle MPOLO MASWAKU Jean Romain, étudiant en Doctorat à North West University d'Afrique du Sud. Je conduis une étude qui cherche à découvrir et à évaluer Le rôle du leadership missionnel dans la croissance des églises d'initiative africaine en milieu urbain en République Démocratique du Congo. Plusieurs auteurs non africains et africains ont écrit plusieurs livres et articles sur ce sujet selon leur contexte. Cependant, les congolais ne se sont pas encore investis sur le sujet malgré la réalité. C'est pourquoi j'ai décidé d'aborder le sujet.

Je vous demande de participer à cette recherche en répondant aux questions suivantes de manière la plus sincère possible afin que nous puissions atteindre nos objectifs. Les informations que vous nous fournirez seront conservées avec un haut degré de confidentialité.

4. Quel est le contexte des AIC en RDC en termes d'urbanisation et de facteurs de mondialisation ?

a. Comment connaissez-vous cette église et y êtes-vous devenu?

- ✓ Contact individuel
- ✓ Contact sur media sociaux
- ✓ Autres moyens

b. Connaissez-vous la vision de votre église ? Si oui, énoncez-la.

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Comment les objectifs missiologiques des dirigeants de l'AIC sont-ils réalisés en RDC et en dehors ?

a. Quel niveau d'affermissement et de formation avez-vous suivi ?

\_\_\_\_\_

b. Combien de gens de votre entourage/école/travail savent que vous êtes chrétien ?\_\_\_\_\_

c. Etes-vous capable de partager votre foi à une autre personne ? Oui\_\_\_\_\_Non\_\_\_\_\_

d. A combien de personnes avez-vous déjà partagé votre foi ? \_\_\_\_\_

a. Dans votre quartier\_\_\_\_\_

b. Dans votre travail ou école\_\_\_\_\_

6. Dans quelle mesure les AIC appliquent-ils des stratégies de leadership missionnel en RDC et delà ?

a. Etes-vous membre actif dans un département ? Oui\_\_\_\_\_ Non\_\_\_\_\_

b. A quels matériels de croissance et formation avez-vous été exposés ?

\_\_\_\_\_

Fait à Kinshasa, le \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



## **ANNEXURE B- 1: INFORMED CONSENT FOR INTERVIEWS/LEADER**

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY:** The role of missional leadership in the growth of urban African Initiated Churches in the DRC.

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain

**POST GRADUATE STUDENT:** MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain

**ADDRESS:** mpolomjr@yahoo.fr

**CONTACT NUMBER:** +243 850603114

Dear participant,

You are being invited to take part in a **research study** that forms part of my dissertation in the discipline of theology, the field of missiology at the North-West University in Potchefstroom, South Africa. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this study. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied, and that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to say no to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part now.

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of Ethics research Ethics: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH, 2015) and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or other relevant people to inspect the research records.

### **Information about the research**

This study will be conducted by Rev MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain, PhD student at North-West University, under the supervision of Dr Fohle Lygunda li-M, in the discipline of

theology, department of missiology. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the role of missional leadership in the growth of the urban African Initiated Church (AICs) in the DRC.

To achieve this purpose, this study involves anonymous in-depth interviews, as well as questionnaires and documentary research, to collect useful data (views, perceptions, and opinions). Therefore, selected people are requested to take part in a one-hour interview. For effective and accurate recording, an audio recording will be made and field notes taken during the interviews. Selected people will be allowed to check the transcript for accuracy, and make appropriate additions or changes.

### **Reason for selecting you**

You have been invited to be part of this research because you are one of the former or current top leaders of the Church which own and daily use media. We are sure you have awareness of the research topic, and somehow shaped or still shape its perception of church objectives in general and for media particularly.

### **Expectation about the participant's contribution**

You are thereby expected to take part in a one-hour interview that will take place in your office, or another location of your convenience that would be most comfortable for you, with as few distractions as possible. Also, you are expected to answer questions as completely and honestly as possible.

### **Benefits**

If you take part in this study, you need to be aware that there is no guaranteed benefit. However, it is possible that you will enjoy sharing your answers to the questions or that you will find the conversation meaningful.

### **Risks**

There are no known and anticipated risks associated with your participation in this study.

### **Confidentiality**

Your name will not appear in the interview protocol or the reporting or writing related to this study. While taking field notes, pseudonyms (made-up names) will be used for all research participants, except if you specify in writing you wish to be identified by name. Yet, your answers (views, perceptions, opinions) will be kept strictly confidential. This researcher will be the only person present for the interview and to listen to the recording. Data will be deleted from the recorders as soon as they have been transcribed.

### **Sharing findings**

The findings of this research will only be used for this study. They may be presented at a conference and published in an academic journal or a book. In this event, the researcher will continue to use pseudonyms and may alter some identifying details to further protect your anonymity. At your request, the researcher will provide you with a summary of the findings.

### **About payment and costs for your participation**

You will not be paid, and there will be no costs involved for you if you take part in this study.

### **What you should know or do else**

For further questions or any problems, you can contact my research supervisor Dr Fohle Lygunga li-M at +243 81 860 0614 or [flygunda50@gmail.com](mailto:flygunda50@gmail.com) You can also contact the Health Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Carolien van Zyl at +27 18 299 1206 or [carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za](mailto:carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za) if you have any concerns that were not answered about the research or if you have complaints about the research.

### **Before you sign**

By signing below, you declare that you have read and understand the information provided above, and so you give your consent to participate in this study voluntarily.

**Participant's signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Names** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher's signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Names** \_\_\_\_\_



## **ANNEXURE B- 2: INFORMED CONSENT FOR QUESTIONNAIRE/MEMBER**

**TITLE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY:** The role of missional leadership in the growth of urban African Initiated Churches in the DRC.

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain

**POST GRADUATE STUDENT:** MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain

**ADDRESS:** mpolomjr@yahoo.fr

**CONTACT NUMBER:** +243 850603114

Dear participant,

You are being invited to take part in a **research study** that forms part of my dissertation in the discipline of theology, the field of missiology at the North-West University. Please take some time to read the information presented here, which will explain the details of this study. Please ask the researcher any questions about any part of this study that you do not fully understand. It is very important that you are fully satisfied, and that you clearly understand what this research is about and how you might be involved. Also, your participation is **entirely voluntary** and you are free to say no to participate. If you say no, this will not affect you negatively in any way whatsoever. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point, even if you do agree to take part now.

This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at the North-West University and will be conducted according to the ethical guidelines and principles of Ethics research Ethics: Principles, Processes and Structures (DoH, 2015) and other international ethical guidelines applicable to this study. It might be necessary for the research ethics committee members or other relevant people to inspect the research records.

### **Information about the research**

This study will be conducted by Rev MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain, PhD student at North-West University, under the supervision of Dr Fohle Lygunda li-M, in the discipline of

theology, department of missiology. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the role of missional leadership in the growth the urban African Initiated Churches (AICs) in the DRC.

To achieve this purpose, this study involves a collection of useful data (information) through a questionnaire, as well as documents and interviews. Therefore, selected people are requested to complete the questionnaire in anonymity.

### **Reason for selecting you**

You have been invited to be part of this research because you are one of the persons or members of influence of your Church/para-church who have an awareness of the research topic.

### **Expectation about the participant's contribution**

You are thereby expected to provide, as completely and honestly as possible, your answers through a questionnaire. Your name will not appear in the questionnaire, and your answers will be kept strictly confidential.

### **Benefits**

If you take part in this study, you need to be aware that there is no guaranteed benefit. However, it is possible that you will enjoy sharing your answers to the questions or that you will find your contribution meaningful.

### **Risks**

There are no known and anticipated risks associated with your participation in this study.

### **Confidentiality**

Your name will not appear in the reporting or writing related to this study. Pseudonyms (made-up names) will be used for all research participants, except if you specify in writing you wish to be identified by name. However, your answers (views, perceptions, opinions) will be kept strictly confidential.

### **Sharing findings**

The findings of this research will only be used for this study. They may be presented at a conference and published in an academic journal or a book. In this event, the researcher will continue to use pseudonyms and may alter some identifying details to further protect your anonymity. At your request, the researcher will provide you with a summary of the findings.

**About payment and costs for your participation**

You will not be paid, and there will be no costs involved for you if you take part in this study.

**What you should know or do else**

For further questions or any problems, you can contact my research supervisor Dr Fohle Lygunga li-M at +243 81 8600614 or [flygunda50@gmail.com](mailto:flygunda50@gmail.com) You can also contact the Health Research Ethics Committee via Mrs Carolien van Zyl at 018 299 1206 or [carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za](mailto:carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za) if you have any concerns that were not answered about the research or if you have complaints about the research.

**Before you sign**

By signing below, you declare that you have read and understand the information provided above, and so you give your consent to participate in this study voluntarily.

Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Names \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Names \_\_\_\_\_



**ANNEXURE B- 3: CONSENTEMENT INFORME DES ENTREVUES/LEADER/Fr**

**TITRE DE L'ÉTUDE DE RECHERCHE:** Le rôle d'un leadership missionnel dans la croissance des églises indépendantes urbaines en RDC.

**ENQUÊTEUR PRINCIPAL:** MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain

**ÉTUDIANT POST DIPLÔMÉ :** MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain

**ADRESSE:** mpolomjr@yahoo.fr

**NUMÉRO DE CONTACT:** +243 850603114

Cher participant,

Vous êtes invité à participer à une **étude de recherche** qui fait partie de ma thèse dans le domaine de la théologie, domaine de la missiologie, à North-West University à Potchefstroom, en Afrique du Sud. Veuillez prendre le temps de lire les informations présentées ici, qui expliqueront les détails de cette étude. Veuillez poser au chercheur toute question sur une partie de cette étude que vous ne comprenez pas bien. Il est très important que vous soyez pleinement satisfait, que vous compreniez clairement en quoi consiste cette recherche et comment vous pourriez être impliqué. De plus, votre participation est **entièrement volontaire** et vous êtes libre de dire non à votre participation. Si vous dites non, cela ne vous affectera en aucune manière. Vous êtes également libre de vous retirer de l'étude à tout moment, même si vous acceptez d'y participer maintenant.

Cette étude a été approuvée par le **Comité d'éthique de la recherche de North-West University** et sera menée conformément aux lignes directrices et les principes éthiques de l'éthique de la recherche : principes, processus et structures (DOH, 2015) et d'autres directives éthiques internationales applicables à cette étude. Il peut être nécessaire que les membres du comité d'éthique de la recherche ou d'autres personnes compétentes inspectent les dossiers de la recherche.

### **Informations sur la recherche**

Cette étude sera menée par le révérend MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain, étudiant en doctorat à North-West University, sous la supervision du Dr Fohle Lygunda li-M , dans la discipline de la théologie au département de missiologie. Le but de cette recherche est d'évaluer le rôle du leadership missionnel dans le croissance des églises indépendantes urbaines en RDC.

Pour atteindre cet objectif, cette étude implique des entretiens anonymes approfondis, ainsi que des questionnaires et recherches documentaire afin de collecter des données utiles (points de vue, perceptions et opinions). Par conséquent, les personnes sélectionnées sont invitées à participer à un entretien d'une heure. Pour un enregistrement efficace et précis, un enregistrement audio sera fait et des notes de terrain seront prises lors des entretiens. Les personnes sélectionnées seront autorisées à vérifier l'exactitude de la transcription et à effectuer les ajouts ou les modifications appropriées.

### **Raison pour vous choisir**

Vous avez été invité à participer à cette recherche parce que vous êtes l'un des principaux dirigeants de l'Église, anciens ou actuels, qui possèdent et utilisent quotidiennement des médias. Nous sommes sûrs que vous êtes au courant du sujet de la recherche et que vous façonnez encore la perception des objectifs de l'église en général et des médias en particulier.

### **Attente concernant la contribution du participant**

Vous êtes donc censé participer à une interview d'une heure qui aura lieu dans votre bureau ou dans un autre lieu de votre confort qui vous conviendrait le mieux, avec le moins de distractions possible. En outre, vous êtes censé répondre aux questions de la manière la plus simple et la plus honnête possible.

### **Avantages**

Si vous participez à cette étude, vous devez savoir qu'il n'y a pas de bénéfice garanti. Cependant, il est possible que vous aimiez partager vos réponses aux questions ou que la conversation soit significative.

### **Des risques**

Votre participation à cette étude ne comporte aucun risque connu.

### **Confidentialité**

Votre nom n'apparaîtra pas dans le protocole de l'entretien ni dans les rapports ou les écritures liés à cette étude. Lors de la prise de notes sur terrain, des pseudonymes (noms

composés) seront utilisés pour tous les participants à la recherche, sauf si vous indiquez par écrit que vous souhaitez être identifié par un nom. Cependant, vos réponses (opinions, perceptions, opinions) resteront strictement confidentielles. Ce chercheur sera la seule personne présente à l'entretien et à l'écoute de l'enregistrement. Les données seront supprimées des enregistreurs dès qu'elles auront été transcrites.

### **Partage des résultats**

Les résultats de cette recherche ne seront utilisés que pour cette étude. Ils peuvent être présentés lors d'une conférence et publiés dans une revue scientifique ou un livre. Dans ce cas, le chercheur continuera à utiliser des pseudonymes et pourra modifier certains détails permettant d'identifier votre anonymat. Sur votre demande, le chercheur vous fournira un résumé des résultats.

### **À propos du paiement et des coûts de votre participation**

Vous ne serez pas payé et votre participation à cette étude ne vous occasionnera aucun coût.

### **Ce que vous devez savoir ou faire autrement**

Pour toute autre question ou tout problème, vous pouvez contacter mon directeur de recherche Dr Fohle Lygunga li-M au +243 81 860 0614 ou [flygunda50@gmail.com](mailto:flygunda50@gmail.com) Vous pouvez également contacter le Comité d'éthique de la recherche en santé via Mme Carolien van Zyl à +27 18 299 1206 ou [carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za](mailto:carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za) si vous avez des préoccupations auxquelles il n'a pas été répondu à propos de la recherche ou si vous vous plaignez à ce sujet.

### **Avant de signer**

En signant ci-dessous, vous déclarez avoir lu et compris les informations fournies ci-dessus, et vous consentez donc à participer à cette étude à titre volontaire.

**Signature du participant** \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Nom \_\_\_\_\_

Signature du chercheur \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Nom \_\_\_\_\_



**ANNEXURE B- 4: CONSENTEMENT INFORME AU QUESTIONNAIRE/Member**

**TITRE DE L'ÉTUDE DE LA RECHERCHE:** Le rôle d'un leadership missionnel dans la croissance des églises indépendantes urbaines en RDC.

**ENQUÊTEUR PRINCIPAL:** MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain

**ÉTUDIANT POST DIPLÔMÉ :** MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain

**ADRESSE:** mpolomjr@yahoo.fr

**NUMÉRO DE CONTACT:** +243 850603114

Cher participant,

Vous êtes invité à participer à une **étude de recherche** qui fait partie de ma thèse dans le domaine de la théologie, domaine de la missiologie, à North-West University à Potchefstroom, en Afrique du Sud. Veuillez prendre le temps de lire les informations présentées ici, qui expliqueront les détails de cette étude. Veuillez poser au chercheur toute question sur une partie de cette étude que vous ne comprenez pas bien. Il est très important que vous soyez pleinement satisfait, que vous compreniez clairement en quoi consiste cette recherche et comment vous pourriez être impliqué. De plus, votre participation est **entièrement volontaire** et vous êtes libre de dire non à votre participation. Si vous dites non, cela ne vous affectera en aucune manière. Vous êtes également libre de vous retirer de l'étude à tout moment, même si vous acceptez d'y participer maintenant.

Cette étude a été approuvée par le **Comité d'éthique de la recherche de North-West University** et sera menée conformément aux lignes directrices et les principes éthiques de l'éthique de la recherche : principes, processus et structures (DOH, 2015) et d'autres directives éthiques internationales applicables à cette étude. Il peut être nécessaire que les membres du comité d'éthique de la recherche ou d'autres personnes compétentes inspectent les dossiers de la recherche.

**Informations sur la recherche**

Cette étude sera menée par le révérend MPOLO Maswaku Jean Romain, étudiant en doctorat à North-West University, sous la supervision du Dr Fohle Lygunda li-M , dans la discipline de la théologie au département de missiologie. Le but de cette recherche est d'évaluer le rôle du leadership missionnel dans le croissance des églises indépendantes urbaines en RDC.

Pour atteindre cet objectif, cette étude implique des entretiens anonymes approfondis, ainsi que des questionnaires et recherches documentaire afin de collecter des données utiles (points de vue, perceptions et opinions). Par conséquent, les personnes sélectionnées sont invitées à participer à un entretien d'une heure. Pour un enregistrement efficace et précis, un enregistrement audio sera fait et des notes de terrain seront prises lors des entretiens. Les personnes sélectionnées seront autorisées à vérifier l'exactitude de la transcription et à effectuer les ajouts ou les modifications appropriées.

### **Raison pour vous choisir**

Vous avez été invité à participer à cette recherche parce que vous êtes l'un des principaux dirigeants de l'Église, anciens ou actuels, qui possèdent et utilisent quotidiennement des médias. Nous sommes sûrs que vous êtes au courant du sujet de la recherche et que vous façonnez encore la perception des objectifs de l'église en général et des médias en particulier.

### **Attente concernant la contribution du participant**

Vous êtes donc censé participer à une interview d'une heure qui aura lieu dans votre bureau ou dans un autre lieu de votre confort qui vous conviendrait le mieux, avec le moins de distractions possible. En outre, vous êtes censé répondre aux questions de la manière la plus simple et la plus honnête possible.

### **Avantages**

Si vous participez à cette étude, vous devez savoir qu'il n'y a pas de bénéfice garanti. Cependant, il est possible que vous aimiez partager vos réponses aux questions ou que la conversation soit significative.

### **Des risques**

Votre participation à cette étude ne comporte aucun risque connu.

### **Confidentialité**

Votre nom n'apparaîtra pas dans le protocole de l'entretien ni dans les rapports ou les écritures liés à cette étude. Lors de la prise de notes sur terrain, des pseudonymes (noms composés) seront utilisés pour tous les participants à la recherche, sauf si vous indiquez

par écrit que vous souhaitez être identifié par un nom. Cependant, vos réponses (opinions, perceptions, opinions) resteront strictement confidentielles. Ce chercheur sera la seule personne présente à l'entretien et à l'écoute de l'enregistrement. Les données seront supprimées des enregistreurs dès qu'elles auront été transcrites.

### **Partage des résultats**

Les résultats de cette recherche ne seront utilisés que pour cette étude. Ils peuvent être présentés lors d'une conférence et publiés dans une revue scientifique ou un livre. Dans ce cas, le chercheur continuera à utiliser des pseudonymes et pourra modifier certains détails permettant d'identifier votre anonymat. Sur votre demande, le chercheur vous fournira un résumé des résultats.

### **À propos du paiement et des coûts de votre participation**

Vous ne serez pas payé et votre participation à cette étude ne vous occasionnera aucun coût.

### **Ce que vous devez savoir ou faire autrement**

Pour toute autre question ou tout problème, vous pouvez contacter mon directeur de recherche Dr Fohle Lygunga li-M au +243 81 860 0614 ou [flygunda50@gmail.com](mailto:flygunda50@gmail.com) Vous pouvez également contacter le Comité d'éthique de la recherche en santé via Mme Carolien van Zyl à +27 18 299 1206 ou [carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za](mailto:carolien.vanzyl@nwu.ac.za) si vous avez des préoccupations auxquelles il n'a pas été répondu à propos de la recherche ou si vous vous plaignez à ce sujet.

### **Avant de signer**

En signant ci-dessous, vous déclarez avoir lu et compris les informations fournies ci-dessus, et vous consentez donc à participer à cette étude à titre volontaire.

**Signature du participant** \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

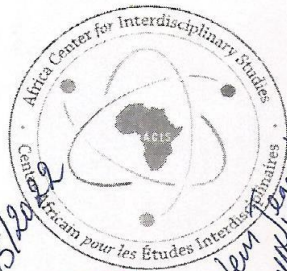
Des noms \_\_\_\_\_

Signature du chercheur \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Des noms \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNEXURE C- 1: SAMPLE OF RESEARCH REQUEST



Africa Center for Interdisciplinary Studies

BP 9834 Kinshasa 1, RDC  
14<sup>e</sup> Rue Limete Poids Lourd 12  
Quartier Kingabwa, Limete, Kinshasa

*Pas d'innovation sans recherche rigoureuse*

Kinshasa, le 19 octobre 2021

Reçu le 3/05/2021  
à l'attention de Monsieur Jean Romain MPOLO  
Réf: 004/DE/ACIS/2021

**Objet :** Lettre de recommandation pour une recherche scientifique

Je soussigné Dr Fohle Lygunda li-M (DMin, PhD), Directeur Exécutif de Africa Center for Interdisciplinary Studies basé à Kinshasa, RD Congo, et Chercheur Extraordinaire à la Faculté de Théologie de North-West University, Campus de Potchefstroom, basé en Afrique du Sud, atteste par la présente que Monsieur Jean-Romain MPOLO est régulièrement inscrit à North-West University au numéro 31570097 dans un programme de Doctorat.

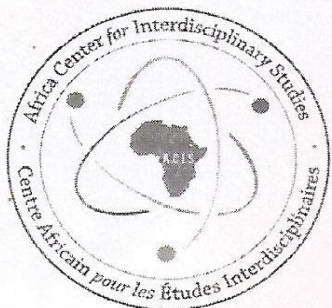
Pour produire sa thèse, l'étudiant ci-haut identifié conduit une étude très intéressante intitulée **"The role of missional leadership in the growth of urban African Initiated Churches in the Democratic Republic of Congo"** (Le rôle du leadership missionnel dans la croissance des églises d'initiative africaine en milieu urbain en République Démocratique du Congo).

Pour récolter les données, l'étudiant est recommandé de consulter les archives de ces églises ainsi que certaines bibliothèques disposant de documents essentiels à sa recherche, et d'organiser des entrevues avec quelques personnalités au sein et en dehors de ces églises.

A cet effet, cette lettre est délivrée pour lui faciliter la tâche dans sa recherche.

Dr Fohle Lygunda li-M (DMin, PhD)

Professeur de Missiologie et Directeur Exécutif



## Africa Center for Interdisciplinary Studies

BP 9834 Kinshasa 1, RDC  
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Kinshasa, le 19 octobre 2021

Réf : 004 /DE/ACIS/2021

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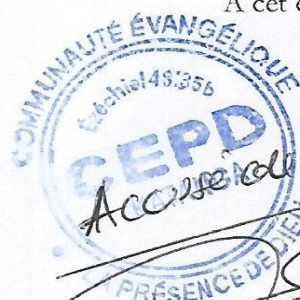
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Dr Fohle Lygunda li-M (DMin, PhD)

Professeur de Missiologie et Directeur Exécutif



Gérard KAMBEMBO K.  
Pasteur Principal  
CEPD / KAT.  
06/05/2022.



## Africa Center for Interdisciplinary Studies

BP 9834 Kinshasa 1, RDC  
14<sup>e</sup> Rue Limete Poids Lourd 12  
Quartier Kingabwa, Limete, Kinshasa

*Pas d'innovation sans recherche rigoureuse*

*Réceptionné  
Ce mardi 30 NOV 2021  
J. Asec.*

Kinshasa, le 19 octobre 2021

**Réf :** 004 /DE/ACIS/2021

**Objet :** Lettre de recommandation pour une recherche scientifique

Je soussigné Dr Fohle Lygunda li-M (DMin, PhD), Directeur Exécutif de Africa Center for Interdisciplinary Studies basé à Kinshasa, RD Congo, et Chercheur Extraordinaire à la Faculté de Théologie de North-West University, Campus de Potchefstroom, basé en Afrique du Sud, atteste par la présente que Monsieur Jean-Romain MPOLO est régulièrement inscrit à North-West University au numéro 31570097 dans un programme de Doctorat.

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Dr Fohle Lygunda li-M (DMin, PhD)

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