



**The Impact of Leadership on organisational
performance at the National Union of Mineworkers
in the Free State Province**

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DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I, Kagiso Darius Tiro, hereby declare that this research work is my work. I further declare that all ideas and quotations from various literature sources as well as contributions to the research have been genuinely recognised, cited, and referenced.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my academic journey and this thesis to my beloved parents, who always provided support, even during trying times.

A sincere thank you to my late mother, who liked and believed in my educational journey.

My fundamental appreciation goes to my pretty and warm wife, Tebello, and my two wonderful children, Naledi and Lesego. I appreciate and thank them for being always obedient. So that this journey becomes successful. One should admit that this master's thesis journey was uphill. Nevertheless, I believed in a principle saying, "What you have started, you should finish it."

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ABSTRACT

The problem addressed in this study centred on the National Union of Mineworker's (NUM) failure to achieve its major objective of increasing its membership. Trade union leadership plays an important role in increasing the membership of their trade unions. NUM has experienced a significant decline in membership, and some members are of the view that the union does not address their needs adequately. This study aimed at exploring the impact of leadership on the organisational performance of NUM considering these critical issues, providing insights and justification for potential interventions to strengthen the union and safeguard the well-being of its members in the mining industry. To achieve this aim, the study employed the quantitative approach. Questionnaires were used to collect data from 200 members of the NUM from two mines in the Free State province, specifically, Beatrix and Masimong. The study used stratified random sampling to ensure a representative sample. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that NUM members had favourable perceptions of the democratic leadership style, suggesting that respondents believed that the democratic leadership style should dominate in managing staff at the NUM. Furthermore, the study found that democratic leadership has a positive impact on organisational performance, whereas autocratic leadership has a negative impact. Laissez-faire leadership has no significant impact. Most importantly, concerning the primary objective of the study, agile leadership was found to have a significant positive impact on organisational performance in the context of the NUM. Based on these results, the study recommends that the NUM should consider adopting agile leadership principles to improve its organisational performance and membership retention. By embracing an agile leadership model, the NUM could better address the needs of its members and adapt to the dynamic challenges of the mining industry, ultimately ensuring the continued strength and relevance of the union.

Keywords: Agile leadership, democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, organisational performance.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AMCU	Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union
GS	General Secretary
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
NUM	National Union of Mineworkers
RC	Regional Committee
VUCA	Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) was formed in 1982 as a union representing black mine workers, founded through efforts of the Council of Unions of South Africa (NUM, 2023). President Cyril Ramaphosa undertook general secretariat leadership as at its inception, James Motlatsi became the first president and Elijah Barayi who became vice president. A collective leadership team administered its prompt progression, positioning bargaining recognition from the Chamber of Mines in 1983. National Union of Mine workers has 11 (eleven) regional offices namely, Carletonville, Eastern Cape, Free State, Highveld, Kwazulu-Natal, Kimberly, Matlosana, North-East, PWV (Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vaal), Rustenburg and Western Cape. During the 1980s, NUM as a struggle class focused on non-racialism, affirmative action and Safety regulations. In 1985, the union became a founding member of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and adopted the Freedom Charter. In 2001, NUM unified the Construction and Allied Workers' Union, and in 2021, it absorbed the Liberated Metalworkers' Union of South Africa, finalising the merger. NUM maintains international affiliation with the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (NUM, 2023).

In this first chapter, the researcher explored the context, rationale, and purpose of the study on the impact of leadership on the organisational performance of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) in Free State Province, South Africa, comprehensively. Moreover, the chapter delves into various aspects such as the background of the study, its primary focus, the underlying rationale, and the problem statement. Additionally, the researcher outlines the objectives and critical research questions that guided the investigation. Furthermore, the chapter outlines the significance of the study in the context of the organisation is discussed, as well the study's delimitations.

Finally, the researcher clarifies and discusses key concepts in order to provide a solid foundation for the subsequent chapters of this research report.

1.2 Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks

1.2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the agile leadership theory. The Agile leadership theory is a management approach that emphasises flexibility, collaboration, and adaptability in leading teams and organisations (Meyer & Meijers, 2017). It is rooted in the agile methodology, which was initially developed for software development but has since been applied to various domains. Agile leadership aims to create an environment that enables quick decision-making, continuous learning, and responsiveness to change (Kivunja, 2018).

The origins of agile leadership can be traced back to the Agile Manifesto, a document created in 2001 by a group of software developers who were seeking an alternative to traditional, rigid project management approaches (Sommer, 2019). The manifesto outlined principles such as valuing individuals and interactions over processes and tools, emphasising working software over comprehensive documentation, and embracing change as a competitive advantage.

Agile leadership gained popularity as organisations recognized the need for more adaptive and collaborative leadership styles to navigate complex and fast-paced business environments (Subramaniam, 2021). It aligns with the broader agile movement, which promotes iterative development, customer-centricity, and cross-functional teams.

Agile leadership theory is instrumental in the study of the impact of leadership on organisational performance as it emphasises adaptive and collaborative approaches to management. By fostering a dynamic and responsive organisational culture, agile leadership theory supports this study by providing a framework that aligns with the fluidity of modern business environments, facilitating the exploration of how leadership practices rooted in agility can enhance overall organisational effectiveness and adaptability. The study contributes to the growing body of knowledge on agile leadership and its application in diverse industries and organisational contexts,

shedding light on its effectiveness within the specific context of the National Union of Mineworkers in the Free State Province of South Africa.

The agile leadership theory can be effectively reflected through the TIPS framework, which encompasses Tools/metrics for differentiation, Ideation to create value, Performance output/human interface, and System thinking (Sommer, 2019). Agile leaders embrace the Tools/metrics aspect of TIPS by leveraging data-driven approaches and utilising innovative tools to achieve differentiation in their decision-making processes (Rosing *et al.*, 2022). They foster Ideation by encouraging and empowering their teams to generate creative ideas and continuously seek opportunities for value creation. Furthermore, agile leaders prioritise Performance output by focusing on the development and well-being of their team members, recognizing that engaged and motivated individuals contribute to overall organizational success (Rosing *et al.*, 2022). Lastly, they adopt System thinking by considering the interconnectedness of various factors and taking a holistic approach to problem-solving, recognizing that changes in one area can have ripple effects throughout the system (Sommer, 2019). By integrating the TIPS framework into their leadership practices, agile leaders can effectively navigate complex and dynamic environments, fostering adaptability, innovation, and sustainable growth.

1.2.2 Conceptual Framework

Agile leaders focus on creating an environment that enables quick decision-making, continuous learning, and responsiveness to change. Organisational performance refers to the overall effectiveness and success of an organisation in achieving its goals (Morgan, 2017). It includes various dimensions such as employee engagement, productivity, innovation, and the ability to respond to dynamic industry conditions.

There seems to be a positive relationship between agile leadership and organisational performance (Meyer, 2016). Agile leaders encourage self-organisation within teams, allowing individuals to take ownership of their work and make decisions collectively (Uyun, 2019). This promotes agility, adaptability, and efficiency, contributing to enhanced organisational performance. Agile leaders embrace change as a competitive advantage and encourage experimentation and continuous improvement.

This enables organisations to adapt quickly to market dynamics, seize opportunities, and achieve better performance outcomes.

There are however some contrasting leadership styles, which are autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership. Autocratic leaders centralize decision-making authority, provide limited autonomy to employees, and focus on control (Batcheller, 2016). This leadership style may hinder employee engagement, innovation, and organisational performance. Democratic leaders involve employees in decision-making processes, promote participation, and value diverse perspectives (Joiner, 2019). This style can enhance employee satisfaction, collaboration, and overall organisational performance. *Laissez-faire* leaders provide minimal guidance and intervention, allowing employees to make decisions independently (Connolly, 2020). While it can foster creativity and autonomy, it may result in a lack of direction, coordination, and reduced performance outcomes.

The conceptual framework proposed in this study explored the relationship between different leadership styles (democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, and agile) and organisational performance. This framework was guided by existing theories and empirical studies on leadership as well as organisational performance, as reviewed in the study. The framework posits that leadership styles, characterised by their approach to decision-making, communication, and employee empowerment, play a crucial role to influence organisational performance.

1.3 Background of the Study

According to Madi Odeh *et al.* (2023), the quality of leadership in any organisation significantly determines its success. This argument highlights the importance of the leadership style adopted by leaders in an organisation. Leadership is often considered as a universal aspect of human societies and profoundly impacts the well-being of individuals (Northouse, 2021). Despite numerous attempts by scholars to define leadership, no universally accepted definition exists. Solomon and Steyn (2017) define leadership as the ability to inspire confidence and garner support among individuals required to achieve organisational goals. Conversely, Kalsoom *et al.* (2018) define leadership as the capability of organisational managers to establish and attain challenging objectives, display agility and decisive action, outperform competitors, and inspire others to excel. One common thread in both definitions is that organisational

leadership plays a crucial role in achieving organisational goals. As noted by Northouse (2021), leadership holds vital significance across all sectors of the economy, be it private, public, or non-profit.

An extension of the leadership concept is agile leadership, characterised by its emphasis on flexibility, collaboration, and adaptability (Meyer, 2016). Originally rooted in software development, agile leaders are perceived as individuals who actively experiment with novel ideas, foster team collaboration, and readily adapt to evolving circumstances. According to Attar and Abdul-Kareem (2020), the current business environment of accelerated complexity, ambiguity, uncertainty and volatility seems not to be settling down soon. Today's business world is consistently bombarded with turmoil and unprecedented change (Subramaniam, 2021). This makes it very difficult for organisations to predict possible future opportunities and threats accurately. To overcome this scenario, organisations need to fully embrace and implement agility in their operations. However, for organisations to develop a considerable level of agility that corresponds to the current hypercompetitive and volatile environment, a premium need to be placed on agile leadership (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020). Agile leaders can set the guiding principles, develop strategies, and build mechanisms that will lead to smooth transition to organisational agility. These leaders provide direction on how to make organisations agile. This is intended to ensure that there is a leadership culture that models and promotes a holistic agility in the organisation is prevalent.

According to Subramaniam (2021), in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environment, non-profit organisations are considered as the most vulnerable among all types of organisations. It is against this backdrop; the researcher selected a trade union as focus area on this study. Specifically, the study focused on the case of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). The NUM is a trade union that primarily organises workers in the South African mining industry. The union's main goals are to recruit and unite all workers employed in the mining sector, with the aim of enhancing their economic and social well-being (NUM, 2023). Additionally, the NUM strives to improve wages, working conditions and social benefits of its members.

The world of work is undergoing significant transformations due to changes in labour markets, technological advancements, digitalisation, climate shifts and globalisation (International Labour Organisation (ILO), 2022). Trade unions, including the NUM,

encounter various challenges, both external and internal. These include violation of trade union rights, shifts in the employment relationship, economic changes and governance issues (Hongchai, Kahl, Kluger, Ruz & Von Wulfen, 2020). The NUM has faced several threats and challenges in its operating environment. This has in turn affected its performance and membership (NUM, 2023).

One significant event was labour unrest organised by the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU) at Sibanye-Stillwater in August 2012. The said labour unrest led to the Marikana massacre. As a result, the NUM experienced substantial decline in NUM in its membership (Blackburn, 2021). The union is grappling with multiple challenges, including a severe decline in membership due to retrenchments, mineshaft closures and employee retirements (NUM, 2023). Poor service to members due to ineffective engagement, inconsistent implementation or reviews of growth strategies, and the emergence of AMCU have also contributed to the challenges confronting NUM (NUM, 2023). Furthermore, another key challenge faced by the NUM is its struggle to ensure the safety of its members due to slow adoption of technology (Blackburn, 2021). The mining sector has witnessed fatalities, with 49 recorded in 2022 and 74 in 2021, leading to concerns among NUM members about the safety of workers and the declining membership of the organisation (NUM, 2023). The union advocates for the use of radar technology in mining to detect potential rock falls underground and prevent accidents.

Furthermore, the NUM has been experiencing a decline in its membership. Its membership figures have declined from 317,000 to 160,000 between 2009 and 2022. This development had a devastating effect on financial status of the union, as well as its overall effectiveness (NUM, 2023)

Organisational agility emphasises that companies should take care for their employees since contented employees lead to improved products, stronger customer relationships, and increased profits (Meyer & Meijers, 2017). In the context of trade unions, the relationship between agile leadership and organisational performance is vital. A well-managed union prioritises the well-being of each member. However, trade unions have encountered conflicts with employers, leading to a decline in trust between the employers and the trade unions (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020). This study aimed at investigating how agile leadership can address these challenges and potentially

improve the performance of the NUM in order to ensure the well-being and safety of its members in the mining industry.

1.4 Focus of the Study

The study focused on analysing the impact of leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers. The study proposed ways in which the NUM could create a leadership model that speaks to stakeholder interests to contribute on the organisational performance.

1.5 Rationale of the Study

The rationale of this study was to assess whether agile leadership influences organisational performance in the context of the NUM. Moreover, the study was conducted to make recommendations which management could consider on how the union could improve its performance. Notably, the continued decline in the membership of the NUM has adversely affected the organisation, hence this study aimed to propose ways to rectify the state of affairs mentioned herein, as well as other underlying challenges that were outlined in the background of this study.

1.6 Problem Statement

The problem addressed in this study centres on the failure of the National Union of Mineworkers to achieve its major objective of increasing its membership to 400 000 by 2020. Some members of the union are of the view that the union is not adequately addressing their needs, hence a decrease in membership (Evans & Sil, 2020).

In 2009, the NUM boasted a membership of over 317,000, but by 2022, this figure had dwindled to 160,000. The union has reportedly also experienced a loss of more than 100,000 members between 2017 and 2022 (NUM, 2023). The decline in membership is most pronounced in regions such as Rustenburg, Welkom, and Carletonville, as well as in Pretoria, Witwatersrand, and Vaal. Moreover, the infiltration of the AMCU, a competitor of the NUM, in mines such as Beatrix and Masimong in Free State Province, has further exacerbated the membership decline.

Another critical challenge faced by the NUM is ensuring the safety of its members, where mining companies' slow adoption of technology has been an issue (NUM, 2023). The union advocates for the use of radar technology to detect potential rock

falls underground and prevent accidents, but the sluggish implementation by mining companies has led to fatal incidents, recording 49 fatalities in 2022 and 74 in 2021 (NUM, 2023).

Given these performance gaps, both in terms of declining membership and safety concerns, the importance of agile leadership comes to the forefront. If adopted at the NUM, agile leadership has the potential to address these challenges effectively, fostering better responsiveness to members' needs, creating strategies for increasing membership, and promoting the adoption of safety-enhancing technologies. However, there is lack of empirical evidence on whether agile leadership could improve organisational performance at the NUM. Therefore, this study sought to explore the impact of leadership on the organisational performance of the NUM in light of these critical issues, thus providing insights and justification for potential interventions to strengthen the union, as well as safeguard the well-being of its members in the mining industry.

1.7 Objectives of the Study

1.7.1 Aim of the Study

The aim of this study was to assess the impact of leadership on organisational performance of the Nation Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa. The study utilised a quantitative research approach, surveying employees at Beatrix and Masimong mines. The study sought to understand how agile leadership could potentially address the challenges faced by the NUM and improve the overall performance of the union in its unique operating context.

1.7.2 Sub-objectives

The sub-objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1.7.2.1 To investigate NUM members' perspectives on the dominant leadership style, among democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire, that they believe should be utilised within the organisation in the Free State region of South Africa.
- 1.7.2.2 To assess the impact of democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles on organizational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa.

- 1.7.2.3 To assess the impact of agile leadership on organisational performance in the context of the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa.
- 1.7.2.4 To propose ways in which NUM could build an agile leadership model that speaks to stakeholder interests to increase and retain membership and enhance organisational performance.

1.8 Research Questions

1.8.1 Main Research Question

The main research question of this study is as follows:

What is the impact of leadership on organisational performance of the National Union of Mineworkers, Free State Province, South Africa?

1.8.2 Sub-research Questions

The following are the sub-research questions of the study:

- 1.8.2.1 What are the perspectives of NUM members on the dominant leadership style, among democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire, that they believe should be utilised within the organisation in the Free State region of South Africa?
- 1.8.2.2 What is the impact of democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa?
- 1.8.2.3 What effect does agile leadership style have on organisational performance in the context of the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa?
- 1.8.2.4 Which measures could be proposed to enable the NUM to develop an agile leadership model that responds to the interest of stakeholder to increase and retain membership and enhance organisational performance?

1.9 Significance of the Study

The study of the impact of leadership on the organisational performance contributes significantly to the body of literature on understanding the critical leadership elements

that influence the performance of labour unions. Thus, the study contributes to literature which could be used by academics and future researchers to further their studies building upon the findings of this study.

The research may contribute towards promoting agility, organisational responsiveness and fostering a learning working environment in workplaces of the NUM. By identifying the impact of leadership, the study seeks to offer valuable insights into how the union can better respond to dynamic challenges, enhance adaptability, and create a culture of continuous learning. This, in turn, can lead to improved member retention strategies, thus ensuring that the NUM remains an attractive and supportive organisation for its members.

Moreover, the study has practical implications for the NUM's leadership decision-making processes. Through pinpointing areas for potential training and development, the research equips the union's leaders with valuable information to enhance their skills and abilities. Additionally, the study highlights opportunities for growing the NUM's membership, an essential aspect for the union's long-term sustainability and influence. Furthermore, the research sheds light on the impact of changes in the labour market, economic pressures, and the fourth industrial revolution on the NUM. This insight enables the union to align itself with the evolving landscape and identify opportunities for sustainable growth and success.

1.10 Delimitations and Scope of the Study

This study was limited only two mines, which are situated in Welkom, Free State: namely Beatrix and Masimong. Consequently, the results of this study may not be generalised, as other mines did not form part of the research.

This research focuses exclusively on the exploration of agile, democratic, autocratic, and *laissez-faire* leadership styles and their impacts on organisational performance in the context of the NUM, omitting the analysis of other leadership theories or models that may have relevance in different contexts.

The study employs a predefined set of survey instruments and self-reported data from employees and leadership within the specified mines in Welkom, Free State.

The literature review primarily encompasses published research and scholarly articles within a specific timeframe, potentially excluding emerging or alternative viewpoints

that could contribute to a broader understanding of the impact of leadership styles on organisational performance in the mining industry.

The study primarily gathers insights from employees and leadership perspectives, potentially overlooking the viewpoints of other stakeholders such as shareholders, community members, or regulatory bodies.

1.11 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy refers to the set of beliefs, assumptions, and principles that guide the researcher's approach to knowledge creation and understanding (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). It provides a framework for understanding the nature of reality, the acquisition of knowledge, and the researcher's role in the research process. In this study, ontology, epistemology and Axiology were observed.

1.11.1 Ontology

Ontology is a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of reality and existence (Kumar, 2018). In the context of research, ontology examines the researcher's beliefs about the nature of the social world and the entities or phenomena being studied. It explores questions such as: What is the nature of reality? Are there objective truths or multiple subjective interpretations? How do researchers perceive the relationship between the researcher and the research subject?

The ontological stance in this study involved the researcher's beliefs about the nature of reality and the social world. For example, the researcher adopted a constructionist ontology, considering reality as socially constructed through interactions and interpretations among the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) members.

The researcher, a member of the NUM, has over 15 years of experience in union leadership roles. He has served as deputy branch secretary, deputy chairperson, and branch chairperson. The researcher is a full-time representative in NUM Free State since 2001. He has often been deployed to other regions to provide representational assistance to NUM constituents.

1.11.2 Epistemology

Epistemology concerns the nature of knowledge and how it can be acquired (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). It examines the researcher's beliefs about how knowledge is obtained, validated, and understood. Epistemological questions revolve around issues like: What is the nature of knowledge? How can knowledge be justified or validated? What are the sources of knowledge?

In this study, the epistemological stance shaped the researcher's beliefs about knowledge acquisition and validation. In this study, the researcher applied a subjective or interpretivist epistemology, recognizing that knowledge is influenced by individual perceptions and subjective interpretations of the NUM members' experiences and organisational performance.

1.11.3 Axiology

Axiology pertains to the values and ethics that influence the research process (Kumar, 2018). It addresses the researcher's stance on the role of values, biases, and ethical considerations in research. Axiological questions include: How do researchers acknowledge and manage their own values and biases? How do they ensure ethical conduct throughout the research process? How are the participants' perspectives and values considered?

Regarding axiology, the researcher considered the ethical implications and values guiding the study. Ethical considerations made included obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality, and addressing any potential power imbalances between the researcher and the NUM members. The researcher strived to acknowledge and manage their own values and biases throughout the study.

Overall, the study applied a constructionist ontology, a subjective or interpretivist epistemology, and an axiology that emphasizes ethical conduct and value awareness. These philosophical perspectives shaped the researcher's understanding of reality, knowledge acquisition, and ethical considerations, providing a foundation for conducting the study on the impact of leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa.

1.12 Research methodology

This study aimed to explore the impact of leadership on the organisational performance of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), considering critical issues related to the union's functioning and the well-being of its members in the mining industry. The study sought to provide insights and justification for potential interventions that could strengthen the union and enhance the overall outcomes for its members.

To achieve the research aim, the study employed a quantitative research approach. The researchers utilised questionnaires as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaires were distributed to 200 members of the NUM, specifically targeting individuals from two mines located in the Free State province, namely Beatrix and Masimong.

To ensure a representative sample, the study employed stratified random sampling. This sampling technique divided the NUM members into distinct groups based on specific characteristics, such as mine location or job position. From each stratum, a proportionate number of participants were randomly selected to participate in the study. This approach aimed to capture a diverse range of perspectives and experiences within the union.

Following data collection, the study utilised descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and present the collected data in a meaningful way. This included measures such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Inferential statistics were then used to draw conclusions and make inferences about the broader NUM population based on the collected sample data. This involved techniques like correlation analysis, regression analysis, or hypothesis testing to examine relationships between variables and test hypotheses.

By employing a quantitative approach, utilising questionnaires, and employing statistical analyses, the study aimed to provide empirical evidence and numerical insights into the relationship between agile leadership and the organisational performance of the NUM. The findings would contribute to the existing body of knowledge on agile leadership in the union context and offer valuable information for

potential interventions and strategies to enhance the union's functioning and the well-being of its members in the mining industry.

1.13 Clarification and Discussion of Key Concepts

Leadership: Leadership is the process of social influence, wherein a person (leader) enlists the aid and support of others (followers) in accomplishing a common task or achieving shared goals in each situation (Reed, Klutts & Mattingly, 2019). Northouse (2021) defines leadership as the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organisations of which they are members. In this study, leadership is the process through which individuals or leaders influence, inspire, and guide members of the NUM towards achieving common objectives and goals.

Leadership styles: Leadership styles refer to the recurring patterns of behaviours exhibited by leaders in their efforts to influence the attitudes and behaviours of followers (Northouse, 2016). Reed *et al.* (2019) defines leadership styles as distinctive approaches used by leaders to interact with subordinates, make decisions, and shape the organisational culture. In this study, leadership styles refer to the specific patterns of behaviours, approaches, and strategies adopted by leaders at the NUM to influence the behaviours and attitudes of union members and enhance organisational performance.

Agile leadership: Agile leadership is a dynamic and flexible approach to leadership that emphasises adaptability, responsiveness, and collaboration in the face of rapidly changing and uncertain environments (Meyer, 2016). Further, agile leadership involves the ability to inspire and guide teams in embracing change, experimenting with new ideas, and rapidly adapting strategies in response to emerging opportunities and challenges (Meyer & Meijers, 2017). Agile leadership, as used in this study, pertains to a dynamic and adaptive leadership approach that emphasises flexibility, collaboration, and responsiveness in addressing challenges faced by the NUM, Free State. It involves empowering leaders to encourage innovation, adapt to changing circumstances, and promote a culture of continuous learning within the union.

Organisational performance: Organisational performance refers to the extent to which an organisation achieves its objectives and goals, in terms of both quantitative outcomes and qualitative effectiveness (Marta, 2018). Hamann, Schiemann, Bellora

and Guenther (2013) define organisational performance is a comprehensive assessment of how well an organisation uses its resources to deliver value to stakeholders and achieve its intended outcomes. Organisational performance, within the context of this study, is the measurable and qualitative assessment of how well the NUM, Free State, achieves its intended objectives and goals, considering factors such as membership growth, safety improvements, and responsiveness to the needs of union members.

1.14 Chapter Organisation

The study is organised as follows:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter discusses why the study was conducted and what it sought to achieve. Therefore, the chapter discusses the research context; problem statement; aim and objectives of the study; research questions; significance of the study; delimitation and scope of the study, and a brief overview of the rest of the chapters of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews literature related to the study. The aim is to assess the contribution of other researchers regarding the effect of agile leadership on organisational performance.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter 3 discusses how the study was conducted. Areas of focus include the research design; research philosophy; population and sampling strategy; data collection instruments; data analysis; pilot study; limitations and the ethical considerations.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter present the findings of the study. These include the primary research findings as well as the secondary findings from the literature.

Chapter 5: Discussion of the findings

In Chapter, the researcher discusses the findings of the study in detail. This includes a discussion of the sections and sub conclusions.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter summarises the findings of the study; provides conclusion; provides a summary of contributions and the areas for future research.

1.15 Chapter Summary

Chapter discussed why the researcher conducted this study and what it sought to achieve. Therefore, the chapter explored the theoretical and conceptual frameworks, background of the study, the focus of the study, the rationale of the study, the problem statement, the objectives, the critical research questions, the significance of the study, delimitations of the study, research philosophy, research methodology, clarification, and a discussion of key concepts. Lastly, the researcher presented an overview of the study. The following chapter reviews literature that is related to the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter serves as a comprehensive literature review of the study. The aim of this chapter is to evaluate existing knowledge, concepts, and practices relevant to the phenomenon under investigation. The main objective of this chapter is to survey and synthesise pertinent literature in the field of leadership, thus paving the way for the subsequent analysis and insights in this study. In the literature review, the researcher presents the theoretical framework underpinning the study. This encompasses deliberations on leadership, agile leadership, trade union leadership, and organisational performance. Furthermore, the researcher examines empirical literature on various leadership styles and their influence on organisational performance.

2.2 Theoretical Framework: Agile Leadership

A theoretical framework serves as a conceptual scaffold that underpins a study. This is achieved by outlining key concepts, relationships, and guiding principles derived from existing theories and literature (Kivunja, 2018). It provides a structured foundation for research design, data collection, and analysis. This enabled the researcher to navigate complexities and make informed decisions. According to Kumar (2018), a robust theoretical framework clarifies the study's objectives, identifies variables, and offers a lens through which to interpret findings. Therefore, a theoretical framework for agile leadership is discussed in this study in line with how this type of leadership influences organisational performance.

Over the years, leadership has been a highly sought-after topic in the business world. This is because organisations are striving to understand the qualities and characteristics that are required for effective and efficient leadership in today's complex and challenging environment (Subramaniam, 2021). The increasing complexity of the world poses significant challenges to organisational survival, necessitating a new breed of leaders who embrace agility to navigate through chaotic

situations and achieve success (Joiner, 2019). Authors refer to this category of leaders as 'agile leaders'. The next sub-section focuses on the origin of agile leadership.

2.2.1 The Origin of and Perspectives on Agile Leadership

The origins of the agile leadership model can be traced back to the Agile Manifesto, which formulated in 2001 by software development practitioners (Coleman, 2016). This manifesto aimed to enhance software development processes by emphasising collaboration, flexibility, iterative development, and customer-centricity. Over time, the principles and practices of agility were adapted and applied beyond the realm of software development to various organisational contexts, thus giving rise to the concept of agile leadership (Meyer, 2016).

Agile leaders have gained popularity due to their demonstrated ability to think quickly, maintain focus, and adapt flexibly by considering various perspectives before making decisions (Parker, Holesgrove & Pathak, 2015). This type of leader prioritises the well-being of their teams. They exhibit empathy, care, and passion, which in turn motivates teams to be more responsible and strive for higher levels of performance (Uyun, 2019). Moreover, agile leaders actively seek and value feedback from all team members, thus recognising the importance input for team member (Meyer & Meijers, 2017). Therefore, agile leaders create a secure work environment and maintain open, as well as transparent communication channels. This in turn ensures leaders share relevant and sufficient information all team members share (Meyer, 2016).

Although agile leadership practices may lead to occasional mistakes or failures, Sommer (2019) argue that agile leaders establish a stable environment that encourages experimentation, risk-taking, and learning from failures without fear of repercussions. This approach fosters a culture of exploration and continuous improvement (Meyer & Meijers, 2017). Additionally, agile leaders prioritise the provision of sufficient training to team members, thus equipping them with the necessary skills and expertise to act independently and efficiently. This ultimately led to the production of high-quality products (Subramaniam, 2021).

On one hand, Parker *et al.* (2015) describes the key principles of agile leadership. These include iteration, incremental development, evolving requirements, evolving solutions, and self-organising teams. Agile leaders are adept at responding quickly to change and delivering high-quality solutions because they involve team members and

customers in the project planning process (Meyer, 2016). They promptly incorporate customer requirements and maintain continuous collaboration with customers throughout the project lifecycle.

The leadership approach described above starkly contrasts with conventional leadership styles that emphasise formal planning processes and documentation. Consequently, agile leaders exhibit confidence, leads with reduced administrative burdens and paperwork, and they possess the authority to implement change without fear of reprisal (Meyer & Meijers, 2017). Conversely, the Agile Business Consortium (2017) characterises agile leaders as individuals who adapt and improve over time. These types of leaders display an ability to formulate and implement key business strategies to ensure the success of their organisations.

Moreover, Subramaniam (2021) highlights agile leaders as possessing a growth-oriented mindset. It entails the application of essential business strategies to achieve success. These leaders stand apart due to their willingness and capability to adapt to change, exhibit resilience during times of uncertainty, and embrace learning from both positive and negative experiences. They are quick to respond to change and seize opportunities presented by the environment. Furthermore, agile leaders inspire others to identify and capitalise on opportunities and encourage agility in their teams. Consequently, they cultivate organisational cultures that embrace and adapt to change swiftly, and they are flexible (Theobald, Prenner, Krieg & Schneider, 2020).

According to Akkaya *et al.* (2022), in today's dynamic business environment, agile leaders have gained prominence due to their ability not only to predict and plan but also to adapt and respond to changing circumstances. They possess the skills to foster organisational agility by overcoming barriers and designing responsive environments (Joiner, 2019) Consequently, leadership style has become a critical factor for organisations to consider because it impacts overall organisational performance significantly.

Meyer (2016) points out that the success or failure of a group, organisation, or even a country, heavily relies on the effectiveness of its leader. Effective leaders must possess the skills and strategies to navigate the increasing turbulence of the external environment (Horney, Pasmore & O'Shea, 2020). Therefore, leaders need to be adequately trained and experienced in leading organisations within the VUCA

environment. The agile leadership approach emphasises concepts such as guiding vision, teamwork, collaboration, and staying current with trends and changes (Aftab, Khalid, Waheed, Aftab & Adnan 2022). This leadership approach also advocates for the implementation of simple rules, open information sharing, minimal control and maintaining agile vigilance (Uyun, 2019).

2.2.2 Agile Leadership Levels and Competencies

In their study, Joiner and Josephs (2007) analysed data from more than 600 managers to identify five distinct levels of agile leadership. These levels follow a hierarchical structure, meaning that as leaders progress to higher levels, the skills acquired at each level contribute to their abilities in the next. Agile leaders must assess the specific circumstances they face and determine which level(s) of agility are most appropriate for the situation (Joiner, 2019).

The insights derived from Joiner and Josephs' (2007) study on agile leadership levels and competencies hold significant relevance for the current research. Identifying and categorizing five distinct levels of agile leadership helps this study to provide a structured framework that informs the understanding of leadership practices within the NUM. These hierarchical levels indicate a progressive development of skills, where competencies acquired at each level build upon and enhance those of the preceding level. The study explores the impact of leadership styles on the NUM's organisational performance.

Extensive comprehension of these agile leadership levels might enable the union to evaluate and adopt workable leadership approaches. Moreover, Joiner's perspective on the situational adaptability of agile leaders resonates with the intricate dynamics of the mining industry, thus offering valuable guidance to leaders in discerning the most suitable level(s) of agility to address specific challenges (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020). This knowledge enriches the study by furnishing a conceptual foundation and practical insights that contribute to a comprehensive analysis of leadership within the NUM, and its ramifications on organisational performance. The next sub-section elaborates the levels of agile leadership.

2.2.2.1 Expert Level

In the first level of agile leadership (expert level), leaders possess strong analytical problem-solving abilities and a tactical orientation (Joiner & Josephs, 2007). This level is most suitable for environments where success can be achieved by enhancing existing strategies. In this capacity, leaders are esteemed for their expertise and organisational position, and their subordinates follow them accordingly (Joiner, 2019). Expert-level leaders actively involve themselves in their subordinates' tasks and provide direct one-on-one feedback. This led to individual development at the expense of cohesive team building.

2.2.2.2 Achiever Level

In the second level of agile leadership (achiever level), leaders demonstrate strategic thinking and a focus on outcomes. They collaborate with their subordinates to devise plans and strategies that align with achieving desired results. These leaders value input and feedback from their subordinates. They motivate their subordinates through challenging and stimulating tasks to enable them to contribute towards organisational goals (Meyer, 2016). Finally, achiever-level leaders understand that power stems not only from expertise and position but also from the ability to inspire and motivate others.

2.2.2.3 Catalyst Level

At the catalyst level of agile leadership, the focus of leaders is on facilitation and vision. These leaders excel in building a participative culture that empowers and inspires others to work towards the vision of the organisation. The catalyst agile leaders engage stakeholders in various issues to enhance the effectiveness of decision-making (Batcheller, 2016). They foster an environment of open discussions and exchange of diverse perspectives. This level of agile leadership is particularly effective in navigating through volatile business situations.

2.2.2.4 Co-Creator Level

In the fourth (Co-creator) level of agile leadership, leaders emphasise common good, interdependence, and collaboration. They establish organisations that prioritise corporate social responsibility as a fundamental practice. These leaders are dedicated to serving the greater benefit of humanity (Joiner & Josephs, 2007). Co-creator leaders form collaborative teams and cultivate strong stakeholder relationships rooted in a

shared sense of purpose. They exhibit emotional stability, engage in open dialogue, and generate creative solutions to unforeseen challenges.

2.2.2.5 Synergist Level

The final (synergist) level of agile leadership involves leaders who are holistically oriented. They possess the ability to adapt between different leadership styles and discern which style is best suited for specific circumstances. Their focus extends beyond leading others towards achieving team objectives; they also transfer leadership experiences to their subordinates (Joiner, 2019). These leaders can alter or enhance the energy of their subordinates in the workplace to produce outcomes that benefit everyone. The present-centred awareness of synergist leaders empowers them to succeed amidst challenging and chaotic conditions (Joiner & Josephs, 2007).

Further, Joiner and Josephs (2007) identified four essential competencies that are exhibited by successful agile leaders, especially in unstable business environments. Moreover, a study by Joiner and Josephs (2007) offers a pertinent connection to the ongoing research. The same study identifies four essential competencies that are displayed by adept agile leaders in turbulent business environments.

These competencies serve as a valuable compass for the current investigation into the influence of agile leadership on the organisational performance of the NUM. Integrating these competencies into the analysis enables the researcher to gain insights into leadership attributes that effectively address the challenges specific to the mining industry.

Below, the researcher provides a brief presentation of these four competencies of agile leadership.

Four Competencies of Agile Leadership

2.2.2.6 Context-Setting Agility

Context-setting agility is a competency that pertains to the ability of an agile leader to adopt a broad perspective, examining both internal and external aspects of the organisation. These leaders can anticipate significant changes that may arise in the short and long term and identify the necessary initiatives that are required to achieve desired outcomes (Meyer, 2016).

2.2.2.7 Stakeholder Agility

Once the context for initiatives is established, the next competency involves the capability of a leader to identify core stakeholders impacted by these initiatives. According to Joiner (2019), agile leaders actively seek the views and support of stakeholders, not only to gain acceptance but also to enhance the effectiveness of the initiatives. Incorporating stakeholders' ideas and input can lead to the formulation of higher-quality strategies.

2.2.2.8 Creative Agility

Creative agility revolves around a leader's capacity to identify innovative opportunities and convert challenging problems into favourable outcomes (Joiner & Josephs, 2007). When faced with a problem, agile leaders analyse it from a broader perspective. They consider underlying assumptions, explore new alternatives, and consider different viewpoints from other stakeholders (Batcheller, 2016).

2.2.2.9 Self-leadership Agility

Agile leaders must possess self-leadership competency to guide subordinates toward the organisational vision effectively (Joiner & Josephs, 2007). Leaders with self-leadership agility can accelerate their personal and professional development. They proactively seek new ideas and consciously decide the type of leaders they aspire to become. Agile leaders use their initiatives as pathways to achieve their leadership goals, thus making the necessary adjustments, and learning from their experiences (Batcheller, 2016).

2.2.3 Utilising Agile Leadership Style in Trade Union Contexts

In the context of trade unions, leadership plays a vital role in representing the interests and welfare of the workers. Connolly (2020) emphasises that trade union leaders must prioritise the well-being of co-workers and work diligently to meet their needs. In this study, the focus is on the ability of the leadership of the trade union (NUM) to influence the organisational performance positively. The said leaders should simultaneously prioritise the interests of mineworkers.

Effective trade union leadership goes beyond mere administration; it involves fostering a high-performance culture that fosters commitment, diligence, and solidarity among members (Hansen & Ledwith, 2012). Members of the union elect leaders. Therefore,

the best interests of their followers should drive the decision-making of the union leaders because their choices affect the well-being of members directly. Trade union leaders have a responsibility to influence and regulate the behaviour, attitudes, and performance of their members (Kirton & Healy, 2013). They should embody qualities that inspire followers to prioritise organisational success over self-interest. By addressing the developmental needs and concerns of their members, trade union leaders can have a profound impact on their followers.

Hansen and Ledwith (2012) view trade union leadership as a complex phenomenon. The leadership of a trade union represent the commitment the union has towards employment equity, a peaceful workplace, and a decent quality of life for workers. Employers and recognised labour are interested in trade unionism and the well-being of union members within the organisation. According to Butler and Tregaskis (2018), leaders need to be well-versed in labour relations tactics and processes to effectively engage with management and secure favourable conditions for workers. Trust is a crucial factor for unions because a lack of trust can hinder social affiliation with them (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020). On the other hand, Uzar (2017) claims that the decline in union membership over the years can be attributed to leader misbehaviour and a loss of faith in leadership. Effective trade union leadership is essential to build trust among union members. This could in turn influence union membership positively (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020).

Agile leadership in the context of trade unions is becoming increasingly crucial due to changes in economic landscapes and work environments. Employers are under pressure to maintain and increase productivity, while minimising fixed costs, leading to significant changes in workforce profiles and a rise in non-permanent employment contracts (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020; Aftab *et al.*, 2022). In navigating these dynamic work environments, labour union leadership must possess inherent abilities to respond effectively to changing circumstances. Meyer (2016) highlights that true agility goes beyond the basic ability to change; it relies on timely and sustainable responses to new situations and opportunities. The management styles that are prevalent in the trade union influence the level of agility in a labour union.

To cultivate agility, learning and development must become focal points for labour unions. Unfortunately, Horney *et al.* (2020) note that education and training have often

been neglected in labour unions' agendas and bargaining processes. Lediju (2016) suggests that as the levels of agility rise, all managers improve their effectiveness. They offer guidance on identifying and mastering different agility levels (expert, achiever, catalyst, co-creator, and synergist) across various leadership positions.

Agility models are presented with various dimensions. However, a leadership agility compass is proposed because it encompasses context setting, stakeholders, creativity, and self-leadership (Lediju, 2016). Sommer (2019) defines the mindset of an agile leader, which includes practices such as fostering a collaborative culture, involving customers in decision-making, and testing ideas at an early stage of development. Therefore, trade unions must embrace agile leadership to respond to the changing demands of the workforce and economic shifts effectively. If trade unions prioritise learning, adopting different agility levels, and implementing agile practices, they can navigate the evolving work environment and effectively represent the interests of their members (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020).

The agile leadership model holds significant theoretical relevance in explaining the organisational performance of trade unions in this study. In the dynamic landscape of labour relations, trade unions face challenges arising from economic shifts, technological advancements, and evolving workforce profiles. The agile leadership model, with its emphasis on flexibility, collaboration, and adaptability, aligns well with the demands placed on trade union leadership to navigate these complexities effectively. Moreover, the focus on learning and development within the agile leadership model is particularly relevant for trade unions, as it enables leaders to improve their effectiveness in addressing the needs of their members continuously. Overall, the agile leadership model provides a valuable theoretical framework to understand how trade union leadership's agility influences organisational performance, thus enabling them to effectively advocate for and represent the interests of their members in the face of evolving labour market challenges.

2.2.4 Organisational performance

Organisational performance is the key variable of analysis in this study. Therefore, it is important to first conceptualise organisational performance and discuss how the researcher measured it before deliberating about how leadership practices influenced it. This comprehensive discussion contributes to a holistic understanding of how

leadership practices shape the operational effectiveness of the NUM. This will later inform recommendations for optimising its performance in a dynamic mining industry landscape.

Organisational performance revolves around both behaviour and results (Yeo, 2013). The performer's actions translate the concept of performance into tangible outcomes. Carton and Hofer (2006) note that performance can be subjective and open to interpretation, thus leading to ambiguity. Hamann *et al.* (2013) describe organisational performance as a complex concept encompassing various dependent criteria, such as effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity, innovation, and profitability, with no clear-cut definitions.

Folan, Browne and Jagdev (2007) noted that factors which influence organisational performance include the objectives of an environment and identifiable features. Conversely, Elena-Iuliana and Maria (2016) assert that performance cannot be detached from the targeted objectives because the achievement of these objectives directly affects the attained performance. The same authors stress that organisational performance should consider all activities and interests within the entity. This renders organisational performance a subjective phenomenon due to the varying and sometimes contradictory objectives.

On the other hand, organisational performance refers to the outcomes or results produced by an organisation. These are in turn, influenced by marketing, operations, human resources, and strategy (Tomal & Jones, 2015). Marta (2018) argues that organisational performance encompasses three key areas, namely, financial performance, product market performance, and shareholder returns. Financial performance entails profits, return on assets, return on investment, and other financial indicators. Whereas product market performance involves sales, market share, and other product or service-related outcomes. Lastly, shareholder returns encompass total shareholder return, economic value added, and other related measures (Hamann *et al.*, 2013). These aspects collectively contribute to a comprehensive understanding of organisational performance.

In the discussion on the measurement of organisational performance, several scholars have highlighted different perspectives and approaches. Carton and Hofer (2006) emphasised that the crucial aspect of performance lies in measuring its effects, which

are the actions the organisation must implement thereafter. The same authors view performance as a multidimensional concept, thus suggesting that its measurement should depend on various factors and clearly defined objectives. However, this concept confronted challenges because there were no appropriate ratings that were developed to measure it. Nevertheless, Carton and Hofer (2006) acknowledge that organisational performance assessment should consider various dimensions and stakeholders' perspectives. Therefore, situational assessment could be useful in this instance because it encompasses both financial and non-financial considerations, while multiple dimensions involve evaluating diverse aspects of performance based on the type of organisation and its objectives.

Yeo (2013) narrowed down performance measurements to two core dimensions, namely, financial versus operational indicators, aiming to enhance the firm's economic value and measure operational efficiency, respectively. Data can be collected from primary or secondary sources for measurement. Similarly, Richard *et al.* (2017) described organisational performance through three distinct areas of outcomes: financial performance, product market performance, and shareholder return. On the other hand, Ivanov and Avasilcăi (2014) emphasised the Balanced Scorecard to manage and control performance. Elements of the Balanced Scorecard include financial, customer, innovation, and internal process outcomes. However, the Balanced Scorecard may not facilitate firm-to-firm comparisons due to its customisation for the requirement of an individual.

In the modern business world, expectations of stakeholders on organisational performance are continuously changing due to disruptions. Investors, financial markets, and boards of directors expect organisations to optimise current business models and continuously seek new ones to match changing conditions (Subramaniam, 2021). Velimirovic *et al.* (2011) highlighted the use of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to evaluate organisational performance. When applying KPIs to measure organisational performance, managers utilise both financial and non-financial indicators to measure the achievement (lack thereof) of organisational goals. KPIs are considered stable indicators that allow organisations to assess past, present, and future performance. Effective communication of KPIs to all stakeholders is essential to achieving the desired organisational outcomes.

The discussion on measuring organisational performance reveals the importance of considering various dimensions, stakeholder perspectives, and the appropriate use of indicators to evaluate an organisational performance accurately. As a result, KPIs have emerged as a valuable tool for quantifiable measurement and aligning performance with organisational vision and strategy. Effective performance measurement is critical for driving success and adapting to changing business conditions. Organisational performance, within the context of this study, is the qualitative assessment of the way the NUM, Free State, achieves its intended objectives and goals, considering factors such as membership growth, safety improvements, and responsiveness to the needs of union members.

2.2.5 Leadership Style

The four leadership styles (Autocratic Leadership, Democratic Leadership, *Laissez-Faire Leadership*, and *Agile Leadership*): under investigation are discussed below.

Autocratic Leadership: Autocratic leadership is characterised by centralised decision-making and limited employee involvement. While it may be effective in situations requiring swift decisions, studies reviewed in this framework suggest that autocratic leadership is generally associated with negative consequences such as increased job stress, higher turnover rates, and reduced task performance among employees.

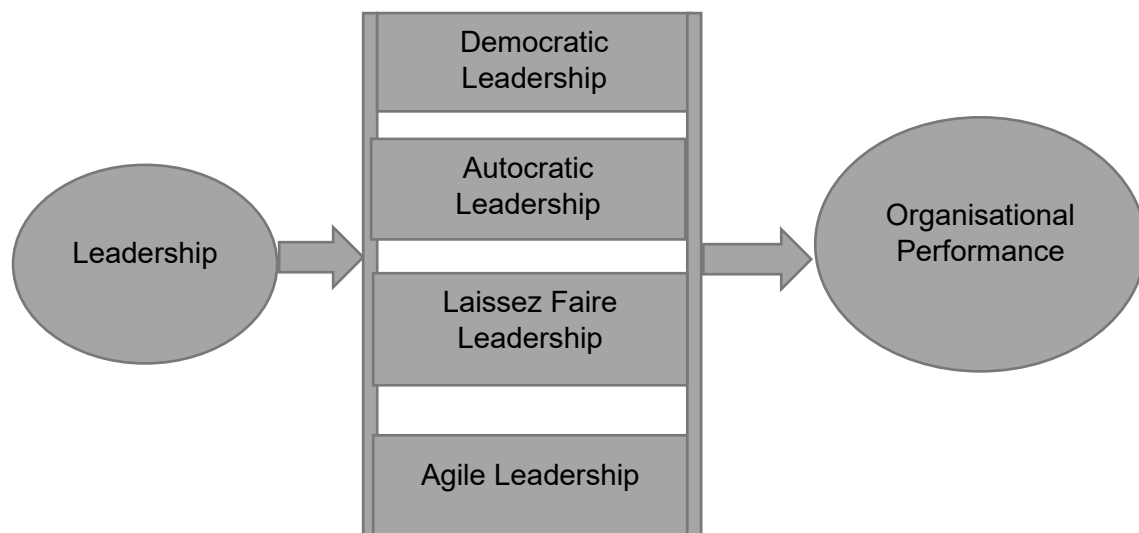
Democratic Leadership: This leadership style emphasises collaboration, shared decision-making, and employee participation in organisational processes. Studies reviewed in the study consistently show that democratic leadership has a positive impact on employee morale, engagement, and overall organisational performance. The open communication and involvement of employees in decision-making foster a sense of ownership and commitment, leading to improved outcomes.

Laissez-Faire Leadership: Laissez-faire leadership involves minimal guidance and control from leaders, giving employees more autonomy in their work. The studies that the researcher reviewed in this framework present mixed findings on the *laissez-faire* leadership style. Some studies argue the negative effect of this leadership style on the perceptions of employees, job satisfaction, and job performance. It is against this backdrop that the *laissez-faire leadership* style is generally considered to be less effective compared to other leadership styles.

Agile Leadership: Agile leadership is characterised by flexibility, adaptability, and a focus on promptly responding to changing environments. The studies that the researcher reviewed consistently highlight the positive effect of agile leadership on organisational performance. The ability of agile leaders to be flexible and align organisations to dynamic conditions contributes to team dynamics, employee well-being, and overall performance significantly.

The conceptual framework of this study proposes that organisational performance is a function of these four leadership styles, with each style influencing performance outcomes differently. Democratic leadership is expected to affect organisational performance positively due to its emphasis on employee engagement and collaboration. On the other hand, autocratic leadership may have some situational effectiveness but is generally associated with negative consequences on employee well-being and turnover. In contrast, *laissez-faire* leadership is arguably expected to have limited positive effects on performance, while agile leadership is predicted to foster resilience, innovation, and adaptability, leading to superior organisational outcomes.

Figure 2.1: Leadership style



Source: Author

2.3 Leadership Styles Used in Managing Staff

In this section, the main leadership styles under consideration are *laissez-faire* leadership, democratic leadership, and autocratic leadership. The study aims to ascertain the specific leadership style that is mostly preferred by members of the NUM. An understanding of the preferred leadership approach at the NUM is crucial because it significantly influences the organisation's performance and its members' safety and well-being.

2.3.1 The *Laissez-Faire* Leadership Style

Al Rahbi, Khalid, and Khan (2017) propose that *laissez-faire* leadership involves a leader who remains uninvolved with followers or subordinates, thus leaving them responsible for solving organisational problems and making decisions. This absence of leadership intervention characterises *laissez-faire* leadership, where the leader refrains from imposing group-related policies and decisions. *Laissez-faire* leaders often delegate tasks, allowing groups to make decisions with minimal interaction with the leader, empowering employees with greater autonomy and freedom (Northouse, 2021). This approach fosters a sense of empowerment among employees and encourages low-level management to embrace innovation in their work, as they operate without micromanagement from leaders.

Furthermore, *laissez-faire*, as a concept of allowing things to be or letting go, is often applied not only in the business world but also in politics and economics (Lundmark, Richter & Tafvelin, 2022). This leadership style does not involve micromanaging, which may result in strained industrial relations. The leader who applies this approach does not actively monitor team members. This might lead to a potential lack of cohesiveness among team members, which might be misconstrued as the leader being indifferent (Northouse, 2021). Overall, this leadership approach has its drawbacks because team members may lack the necessary information and skills to complete tasks and make decisions. The features of *laissez-faire* leadership are summarised in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: The *Laissez-faire* leadership

Leaders	Employees
Little guidance	Ability to make decisions

Constructive criticism	Expected to solve their problems
Take charge when it is necessary.	Access to many resources
Take responsibility for overall actions and decisions.	

Source: Northouse (2021)

The *laissez-faire* leadership style offers several advantages for organisational performance, particularly in terms of higher employee retention. Employees who are given the freedom to make their own decisions and have room to breathe are more likely to stay with the organisation (Robert & Vandenberghe, 2021). This positive effect on retention is attributed to the comfortable work environment created by such autonomy, as pointed out by Franco and Matos (2015). With employees feeling empowered and in control of their work, they are more likely to remain committed to the organisation, reducing the impact of a learning curve that may result from frequent turnover due to employee departures (Lundmark *et al.*, 2022).

Additionally, this leadership style fosters employee development through increased accountability (Alblooshi, Shamsuzzaman & Haridy, 2021). Given that employees are entrusted with decision-making responsibilities, they are compelled to take ownership of their choices and actions. This heightened accountability encourages employees to mature in their decision-making process, knowing that they are responsible for the outcomes. Consequently, employees become more capable and self-reliant in handling their tasks, leading to continuous growth and development within the organisation (Northouse, 2021).

The *laissez-faire* leadership style may contribute positively to the overall performance of the organisation. Empowered and accountable employees are more likely to be motivated, engaged, and productive, leading to improved outcomes and sustained organisational success (Abasilim, Gbervbie & Osibanjo, 2019). However, it is important to strike a balance and ensure that the absence of direct leadership involvement does not result in a lack of support or direction, as proper guidance and resources remain essential for achieving optimal results.

2.3.2 The Democratic Leadership Style

The democratic leadership style is regarded as highly beneficial for both employees and organisations, as highlighted in the study conducted by Dike and Madubueze (2019). This leadership approach is associated with a substantial positive impact on employee performance, emphasising the importance of involving employees in decision-making through consistent consultation (Abasilim *et al.*, 2019). Such engagement fosters a sense of satisfaction and higher motivation among employees, resulting in improved coordination and work output.

The positive relationship between democratic leadership and employee performance suggests that organisations can enhance productivity by adopting this style. Gandolfi and Stone (2018) argue that democratic leadership not only improves employee-employer relations but also leads to increased organisational productivity. By encouraging open discussions and two-way communication between superiors and subordinates, the democratic leadership framework promotes the sharing of ideas and solutions to organisational challenges. This, in turn, fosters creativity and innovation (Northouse, 2021).

However, it is essential to acknowledge that the democratic leadership style may not be practical in all situations due to potential time-consuming debates and delays in decision-making processes (Alblooshi *et al.*, 2021). The inclusivity of this leadership style might also hinder organisational performance (Jony, Alam & Amin, 2019). While democratic leadership has its advantages, it may also have some downsides, particularly when roles and communication channels are unclear (Northouse, 2021). Nonetheless, when implemented effectively, democratic leadership can be applied to various types of organisations. Its application promotes a participatory and engaging work environment. This in turn benefits both employees and the organisation as a whole (Jony, Alam & Amin, 2019).

The democratic leadership style offers valuable opportunities for employee development, satisfaction, and improved performance. While it may require careful balancing of decision-making efficiency, its potential benefits in promoting a culture of shared ideas and collective involvement make it a noteworthy leadership approach in various organisational settings. The advantages and disadvantages of democratic leadership are summarised in the Table 2.2 below:

Table 2.2: Advantages and disadvantages of the Democratic leadership style.

Disadvantages (Cons)	Advantages (Pros)
The opinion of the minority is overridden	Encourages collaboration
Multiple people's involvement can lead to more communication gaps and confusion.	Inclusive of a variety of opinions and ways of thinking
Decision-making can be prolonged.	Leads to higher group engagement and productivity.
The unqualified group can result in more decision-making	Encourages innovative creativity
	Improves job satisfaction

Source: Northouse (2021)

2.3.3 Autocratic Leadership style

Autocratic leadership, also known as authoritarian leadership, is a leadership style in which a single individual holds complete control over all decisions. Such leaders offer little room for the group to have a say, as defined by Danisman, Tosuntas, and Karadag (2015). Autocratic leaders are notorious for making decisions based solely on their views and judgments. Therefore, they rarely seek input from their followers. This leadership approach is characterised by strict control and a lack of employee involvement in decision-making processes (Northouse, 2021). The leader dictates systems and guidelines, determines what needs to be accomplished, and directs and manages all actions without considering the input of employees. Consequently, employees under autocratic leadership have minimal autonomy, and the team's decision-making power is significantly limited (Solihah, Budiawan & Nugraha, 2021).

It is important to note that autocratic leadership may not be a popular choice among organisational employees. This is because the leadership style suppresses individual creativity and input, leading to a lack of motivation and engagement among employees (Luqman *et al.*, 2020). Without opportunities to express their ideas and perspectives, employees may feel undervalued and disempowered, resulting in decreased job satisfaction and overall performance (Rosing, Boer & Buengeler, 2022).

The autocratic leadership style may be suitable in certain situations where quick and decisive action is required, such as during emergencies or crises (Jony *et al.*, 2019). However, in most organisational settings, this style can lead to negative consequences. Employees' abilities and potential may remain untapped, limiting their growth and development within the organisation. Moreover, the lack of employee involvement in decision-making processes may hinder the team's adaptability to changing circumstances and reduce the organisation's capacity to innovate and respond to challenges effectively (Northouse, 2021). Furthermore, autocratic leadership can create a hierarchical and authoritarian work environment, leading to poor communication and limited collaboration between leaders and employees. The lack of open dialogue may contribute to a decline in trust and cooperation among team members. This could potentially hinder overall teamwork and cohesion (Hassnain, 2023).

In contrast to the autocratic leadership style, other leadership approaches such as democratic and agile leadership emphasise participative decision-making, and employee empowerment. The focus of the latter leadership style is on building collaborative and supportive work environments (Northouse, 2021). These alternative leadership styles tend to foster higher employee morale, increased engagement, and a stronger sense of ownership and responsibility among employees, ultimately contributing to improved organisational performance.

Some of the advantages and disadvantages of autocratic leaders are illustrated in Table 2.3 below.

Table 2.3: Advantages and disadvantages of the Autocratic style of Leadership

Characteristics	Benefits	Drawbacks
Allows little input from group members	Provides direct communication	Without consulting team members, employees dislike this type of leadership since they are unable to contribute ideas
Requires leaders to make almost all the decisions	Relieves pressure	
Leaders handle situational crises effectively with processes	Offers structure	
It leaves the group feeling like they are not trusted with decisions or important tasks.		
It tends to create highly structured and very rigid environments.		
Discourages creativity and out-of-the-box thinking		
Establishes rules and tends to be clearly outlined and communicated		

Source: Berberoglu (2018)

2.4 Impact of Different Leadership Styles in Managing an Organisation

The preceding section provided an overview of leadership styles, encompassing their defining characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages. At this stage, the focus will be on empirical evidence concerning the impact of democratic, *laissez-faire*, and

autocratic leadership on organisational performance. The following analysis delves into the real-world effects of these leadership approaches, thus shedding light on their implications within an organisational context.

2.4.1 Impact of Autocratic Leadership on Organisational Performance

The impact of authoritarian leadership on organisational performance has been a subject of considerable research. Northouse (2021) argues that autocratic leadership can be effective in situations requiring swift decision-making. Moreover, this leadership style might be appropriate in instances where there is inadequate time for extensive communication within the organisation. However, most studies on autocratic leadership suggest that subordinates generally dislike managers with this style, leading to increased job stress (Cherian, Gaikar & Ra, 2020). Furthermore, Cherian *et al.* (2020) found that autocratic leaders are associated with higher employee turnover rates in their organisations.

Du, Li and Luo (2020) conducted a study on the effectiveness of authoritarian leadership during organisational change. These authors discovered that the impact of authoritarian leadership depends on two boundary conditions, namely, employees' perceived level of necessity and willingness for change. When employees perceive a high level of necessity and a low level of willingness for change, authoritarian leadership is positively associated with employees' active reactions to organisational change. However, when employees perceive a high level of willingness for change, authoritarian leadership hurts their reactions to organisational change.

Another study by Wang, Liu, and Liu (2019) explored the relationship between authoritarian leadership and subordinates' task performance. They found that authoritarian leadership negatively affects task performance, and this effect is moderated by factors such as leader-member exchange (LMX) and the degree of employee dependence on their leader. In organisations where employees heavily depend on their leaders, the negative impact of authoritarian leadership on LMX and task performance is reduced, although it still negatively affects subordinates' task performance.

Pizzolitto, Verna, and Venditti (2022) conducted a systematic literature review on authoritarian leadership styles' effects on firm and employee performance. The same authors discovered that authoritarian leadership styles hurt employee performance,

but the effect on firm performance is mixed. The review suggests the need for further research to understand the mechanisms through which authoritarian leadership styles influence performance better.

Further, Hassnain (2023) investigated the impact of autocratic and democratic leadership styles on employees' performance and motivation. The study found that autocratic leadership negatively affects employees' performance and motivation, whereas democratic leadership has a positive impact. The findings suggest that organisations should consider adopting democratic leadership styles to enhance employee performance and motivation. Jony *et al.* (2019) conducted a field survey to assess the influence of autocratic, democratic, and *laissez-faire* leadership styles on organisational success. The study found that autocratic leadership negatively influences organisational outcomes, while *laissez-faire* management style does not significantly affect organisational outcomes.

Several studies point to the drawbacks of authoritarian leadership styles, associating them with negative performance, complex leader-follower relationships, and increased intentions of followers to leave (Schaubroeck, Shen & Chong, 2017). Chiang *et al.* (2020) demonstrated that the work climate worsens when authoritarian leaders suppress subordinates' emotions. However, Schaubroeck *et al.* (2017) revealed a direct link between subordinates' disapproval of power distance and the adverse effects of directive leadership on performance. These findings indicate that authoritarian leadership styles may clash with the demands of dynamic and hyper-connected markets in the modern globalised world.

However, some studies have identified specific conditions under which authoritarian leadership styles can have positive effects on workgroup performance. Shen, Chou, and Schaubroeck (2019) found positive outcomes in workgroups characterised by high levels of traditionality in organisations led by authoritarian leaders. Rahmani, Roels, and Karmarkar (2018) showed that directive leadership could lead to favourable results when rewards are low, group size is large, and failure is not excessively costly. Additionally, Karakitapoğlu-Aygün *et al.* (2021) highlighted that authoritarian leadership styles can positively impact communication when authority is not overly emphasised.

Overall, the research on the impact of authoritarian leadership on organisational performance presents mixed findings. While certain studies suggest negative consequences and disapproval from subordinates, other studies highlight contextual factors that can influence the effectiveness of authoritarian leadership. This discrepancy calls for a comprehensive review of the scientific debate on this topic to gain a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics between authoritarian leadership and organisational outcomes.

2.4.2 Impact of Democratic Leadership on Organisational Performance

The studies on the impact of democratic leadership on organisational performance present a seemingly consistent consensus. This highlights the positive influence of this leadership style in different contexts. George *et al.* (2019) posit that a democratic leadership style results in high employee morale and productivity. Moreover, this leadership style reduces the need for control formal rules, and procedures. It contributes towards developing competent subordinates who are willing to give their best. Finally, democratic leadership tends to encourage subordinates to be more independent and seek more responsibilities. In a study that focused on commercial state corporations in Kenya, researchers found that democratic leadership style influenced organisational performance positively (Wachira, Karanja & Iravo, 2018). The same researchers recommended that organisations should adopt this style of leadership to enhance their performance. Similarly, Odumegwu (2019) appraised the relationship between democratic leadership style and organisational performance. The study emphasised that a democratic leadership style plays a crucial role in determining employee performance within an organisation. The ability of leaders to make appropriate decisions, collaborate, and delegate tasks to employees contributed to the positive effect of democratic leadership on organisational performance. The study also recommended the adoption of democratic leadership to improve organisational outcomes (Odumegwu, 2019).

In addition, Akparep, Jengre and Mogre (2018) examined the impact of leadership style on organisational performance at the TumaKavi Development Association in Ghana. They observed that the organisation primarily utilised a democratic leadership style in its operations, leading to a significant positive impact on the organisation's performance. As a result, they suggested that other organisations consider adopting

democratic leadership to enhance their performance. Similarly, Al-Khaled (2020) investigated the effect of various leadership styles on organisational performance. This researcher found that democratic leadership stood out as the most effective style for achieving and enhancing organisational performance. Consequently, the study recommended the adoption of a democratic leadership style to improve overall organisational outcomes.

Overall, these studies consistently demonstrate the positive effects of democratic leadership on organisational performance. By promoting inclusivity, collaboration, and shared decision-making, democratic leadership creates a conducive environment for employees to excel and contribute positively to organisational success. The recurrent recommendation for organisations to adopt democratic leadership indicates its potential as a beneficial approach in diverse settings to foster improved performance.

2.4.3 The Impact of *Laissez-Faire* Leadership on Organisational Performance

The studies on the impact of *laissez-faire* leadership style on organisational performance present a mixed and critical perspective. This highlights both the negative and occasionally nuanced effects of this leadership approach. Similarly, Lundmark, Richter and Tafvelin (2021) investigated the influence of *laissez-faire* leadership on employees' perceptions of the role of ambiguity and excessive workload during organisational restructuring. The study revealed a positive relationship between *laissez-faire* leadership and employees' perceptions about the role of ambiguity and excessive workload during restructuring. Consequently, the study advises organisations to avoid employing *laissez-faire* leadership during restructuring to prevent negative consequences on employees' perceptions of their roles.

Iqbal, Adeel and Khan (2021) explored the relationship between different leadership styles, including *laissez-faire* leadership, and job satisfaction of employees. They found that while all three leadership styles showed a positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction, *laissez-faire* leadership had the weakest association compared to transformational and transactional leadership styles. Subsequently, the study recommends that organisations consider using transformational and transactional leadership styles instead of *laissez-faire* leadership to enhance employees' job satisfaction. Further, Mawoli and Haruna (2018) examined the effect of leadership styles, including *laissez-faire* leadership, on employees' job performance

in the health sector. The study found that *laissez-faire* leadership had either a minor or a negligible impact on health workers' job performance compared to the significant impact of democratic leadership style. Accordingly, the study suggests that organisations should avoid utilising the *laissez-faire* leadership style to improve the job performance of health workers.

Zhang, Wang and Gao (2023) discovered a double-edged sword effect of *laissez-faire* leadership on subordinates' work outcomes. While generally regarded as the least effective leadership style, recent studies have revealed that *laissez-faire* leadership may have modest or even significant positive effects on subordinates' work outcomes. The study cautions organisations to consider the boundary conditions associated with the effects of *laissez-faire* leadership on subordinates' work outcomes.

Thanh and Quang (2022) focused on the relationship between leadership styles, including *laissez-faire* leadership, and employee engagement in Vietnam's public sector. The study found that transformational and transactional leadership styles positively influenced employee engagement, whereas *laissez-faire* leadership had a negative impact. Therefore, the study recommends that organisations should avoid using the *laissez-faire* leadership style to enhance employee engagement in the public sector.

In summary, the studies on *laissez-faire* leadership present a critical evaluation, indicating that this leadership style tends to have adverse effects on employees' perceptions, job satisfaction, job performance, and employee engagement. It is generally considered effective compared to other leadership styles, and organisations are encouraged to be cautious when using *laissez-faire* leadership, especially during organisational restructuring, to avoid negative consequences on employees' well-being and performance.

2.4.4 Summary of the Impact of Leadership Styles on Organisational Performance

The literature on the impact of authoritarian leadership on organisational performance reveals a nuanced relationship. While Northouse (2021) argues that autocratic leadership can be effective in time-sensitive situations, most studies suggest negative outcomes, including increased job stress and higher employee turnover rates (Cherian *et al.*, 2020). Du *et al.* (2020) found that the impact of authoritarian leadership during

organisational change depends on employees' perceived necessity and willingness for change. The negative effects of authoritarian leadership on task performance can be moderated by factors like leader-member exchange and employee dependence on leaders (Wang *et al.*, 2019). Pizzolitto *et al.* (2022) highlight the negative impact of authoritarian leadership on employee performance and suggest the need for further research to understand the underlying mechanisms. Overall, authoritarian leadership styles seem to clash with the demands of modern dynamic markets, leading to complex leader-follower relationships.

In contrast, the studies on democratic leadership consistently show positive effects on organisational performance. Democratic leadership fosters collaboration, employee morale, and productivity (George *et al.*, 2019). Research by Wachira *et al.* (2018) and Odumegwu (2019) reinforces the positive influence of democratic leadership on organisational performance. Al-Khaled (2020) also identifies democratic leadership as the most effective style for enhancing organisational performance. The consensus suggests that organisations should adopt democratic leadership to achieve improved outcomes.

On the other hand, studies on *laissez-faire* leadership style present a more critical perspective. Lundmark *et al.* (2021) find a positive relationship between *laissez-faire* leadership and employees' perceptions of role ambiguity and role overload during organisational restructuring. Iqbal *et al.* (2021) reveal that *laissez-faire* leadership has the weakest association with job satisfaction compared to other leadership styles. Similarly, Mawoli and Haruna (2018) show that *laissez-faire* leadership has minimal impact on job performance in the health sector. Zhang *et al.* (2023) caution organisations to consider the boundary conditions of *laissez-faire* leadership's effects on subordinates' work outcomes. Thanh and Quang (2022) also identify a negative impact of *laissez-faire* leadership on employee engagement in the public sector. The findings suggest that organisations should exercise caution when using *laissez-faire* leadership and consider alternative leadership styles for better organisational outcomes.

Despite extensive research on authoritarian, democratic, and *laissez-faire* leadership, there remains a gap in understanding the specific contextual impacts on specific industry types. There is a dearth of literature in the context of trade unions. This study

sought to address this gap. Addressing this gap will provide valuable insights for organisations seeking to optimise leadership practices to enhance their overall performance.

Based on the review of literature on the impact of authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership on organisational performance, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Democratic leadership style has a positive influence on organisational performance.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Autocratic leadership style has a negative influence on organisational performance.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Laissez-faire leadership style has a positive influence on organisational performance.

2.5 Impact of Agile Leadership on Organisational Performance

Several studies have examined the effect of agile leadership on organisational performance. These studies shed light on the importance of this leadership style in the current business environment. Akkaya and Sever (2022) emphasise that agile leaders possess the ability to think flexibly and adapt organisations to changing environmental conditions. The studies highlight that organisations that have adopted agile leadership are better equipped to respond quickly to change and deliver superior business value. This aligns with the topic of the research, which focuses on the impact of leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers.

Another study by Akkaya, Panait, Apostu and Kaya (2022) explores the relationship between agile leadership, job embeddedness, and career success in healthcare organisations. The findings reveal that agile leadership behaviours positively influence career success, with job embeddedness mediating this relationship. This study provides valuable insights into the impact of agile leadership on individual career development, which ultimately contributes to organisational performance.

Subramaniam (2021) investigates the impact of agile leadership on organisational performance through the mediation of organisational culture. The research emphasises the challenges posed by the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) business environment. It finds a significant relationship between agile

leadership style and organisational performance, with organisational culture playing a mediating role. This study directly relates to the research topic, as it examines the impact of agile leadership on organisational performance within the context of the VUCA world.

Examining the educational sector, Yalçın and Özgenel (2021) focus on the effect of agile leadership characteristics of school principals on the professional development and performance of teachers. The results indicate that teachers perceive agile leadership positively and that these leadership characteristics significantly predict teachers' attitudes towards professional development and their performance. This study highlights the relevance of agile leadership in fostering teacher development and, consequently, improving overall organisational performance.

Furthermore, Jassmy and Katea (2022) explore the impact of agile leadership on organisational innovation through the mediation of higher involvement. Their findings demonstrate that agile leadership positively influences organisational innovation by promoting higher involvement. This study suggests that organisations, including universities and private colleges, should prioritise agile leadership to drive innovation and adapt to the challenges of a rapidly changing business environment.

Aftab *et al.* (2022) investigate the role of agile leadership in managing inter-role conflicts during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their study examines how leadership agility affects work–family and family–work conflicts, consequently affecting job satisfaction and life satisfaction. The findings highlight the significant role of agile leadership in determining job satisfaction and life satisfaction, particularly in times of crisis. This study provides valuable insights into the relevance of agile leadership in promoting employee well-being and performance during challenging circumstances.

Further, Spiegler, Heinecke and Wagner (2021) focused on changing leadership in agile teams and emphasised the significance of shared leadership, a key characteristic of agile leadership, in fostering team effectiveness. This collaborative leadership approach contributes to better team dynamics and performance. Morgan (2018) conducted a meta-analysis and the findings supported the idea that leadership styles, emphasising team empowerment, which aligns with agile leadership characteristics, are significantly correlated with higher performance. Agile leaders empower their

teams, enabling them to adapt swiftly to dynamic business environments and achieve superior outcomes.

In addition, Akkaya and Sever (2022) explored the impact of agile leadership on organisational performance in VUCA environments, characterised by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. The study highlighted the crucial role of agile leadership in managing inter-role conflicts and navigating through the challenges of VUCA conditions. Agile leaders possess the ability to think flexibly and adapt the organisation effectively to changes. By leveraging the strengths of their employees and embracing opportunities while minimizing negative impacts, agile leaders foster resilience and responsiveness within the organisation. Furthermore, organisations that incorporate agile practices through agile leaders are better equipped to respond rapidly to changing circumstances, delivering enhanced value to stakeholders. Agile leadership empowers organisations to detect developments in the business environment quickly, enabling agility even with limited resources.

The literature on the impact of agile leadership on organisational performance provides a compelling argument for the significance of this type of leadership in the current business landscape. Studies conducted by Akkaya and Sever (2022) and Akkaya *et al.* (2022) highlight the flexible thinking and adaptability of agile leaders, making organisations better equipped to respond quickly to change and deliver superior business value. Moreover, studies by Subramaniam (2021), Yalçın and Özgenel (2021), and Jassmy and Katea (2022) reveal the positive impact of agile leadership on organisational culture, professional development of employees, and fostering innovation and higher involvement. Aftab *et al.* (2022) further demonstrate the importance of agile leadership in managing conflicts during crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting its role in promoting employee well-being and job satisfaction.

These studies underscore the crucial role of agile leadership in driving organisational performance by fostering a culture of adaptability, collaboration, innovation, and employee well-being. Agile leaders empower their teams, enabling them to navigate through challenges and seize opportunities in a rapidly changing business environment. The scarcity of studies focused on agile leadership in the context of trade unions highlights a significant gap in the research that warrants further investigation.

It is fundamental to understand the impact of leadership in the context of trade unions, noting that these organisations often operate in dynamic and complex environments, where agility and responsiveness are essential for success. Therefore, further research in this area can provide valuable insights in terms of how agile leadership practices can enhance trade unions' performance and effectiveness. This might ultimately contribute to the overall organisational performance. Noting that trade unions play a central role in representing and advocating for employees' interests, by incorporating agile leadership in their practices could foster better employee engagement, collaboration, and responsiveness to industry changes, thus leading to improved organisational outcomes.

Based on the literature review on agile leadership and organisational performance, the following hypotheses was formulated:

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Agile leadership positively influences organisational performance

2.6. Ways to Build an Agile Leadership Model to Increase and Retain Membership and Enhance Organisational Performance

This section examines different strategies to establish an agile leadership model, to increase membership retention and enhancing organisational performance. The emphasis lies on building trust, communication and fostering collaboration among team members, as well as creating avenues for meaningful connections within the organisation. By implementing these practices, organisations are in a better position to nurture a dynamic and responsive leadership culture, adept at swiftly adapting to changing demands, and effectively retaining members, while optimising overall performance.

2.6.1 Building Trust

Trust, defined as the reliance on the integrity and reliability of individuals or groups, plays a pivotal role in constructing an agile leadership model within a trade union context to improve organisational performance (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020). In the context of trade unions, building trust involves cultivating transparent communication channels, demonstrating consistency in decision-making, and actively involving union members in the decision-making process (Morgan, 2018). This approach fosters an environment where concerns and misperceptions are openly addressed during the

business agility transformation, aligning with the principles of agile leadership (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020). Establishing trust, therefore, becomes a foundational step in nurturing effective collaboration between unions, employees, and business agility teams, contributing to the overall success of the agile leadership model in the trade union setting.

2.6.2 Communication

Communication plays a pivotal role in building an agile leadership model that fosters increased membership retention and enhances organisational performance. According to Hongchai *et al.* (2020), an open and transparent communication channel is vital for effectively disseminating information, sharing goals, and aligning everyone with the organisation's vision. Spiegler *et al.* (2021) recommend that agile leaders must prioritise clear and consistent communication. This ensures that all team members have sufficient information about strategies, objectives, and progress of the organisation. Regular team meetings, one-on-one discussions, and open forums provide opportunities for employees to voice their ideas, concerns, and suggestions. This in turn encourages collaborative and inclusive work environment. Agile leaders can create a sense of ownership and engagement among team members, thus boosting their commitment to the organisation's goals and mission (Batcheller, 2016).

Furthermore, effective communication helps agile leaders build a culture of trust and transparency within the organisation (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020). By being open about challenges, successes, and decision-making processes, leaders can foster trust and confidence among team members. Transparent communication ensures that everyone is on the same page, enabling faster and more efficient decision-making (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020).

Additionally, regular feedback loops and constructive criticism facilitate continuous improvement and learning. This allows an organisation to adapt swiftly to changing circumstances (Morgan, 2018). Moreover, clear communication ensures that the organisation's values and expectations are sufficiently understood by all, leading to a shared sense of purpose and commitment (Horney *et al.*, 2020). In conclusion, effective communication is a cornerstone of an agile leadership model that enhances organisational performance by promoting collaboration, trust, transparency, and

alignment among team members will, ultimately lead to increased membership retention and superior outcomes for the NUM.

2.6.3 Collaboration and Teamwork

Promoting collaboration and teamwork is a cornerstone of an effective agile leadership model, as it fosters a culture of inclusivity and harnesses the collective intelligence of the organisation (Uyun, 2019). Agile leaders understand the value of diverse perspectives and skills, actively encouraging cross-functional teams to work together towards shared goals. Creating an environment where team members can freely share ideas, exchange knowledge, and collaborate on solutions, breaking down silos and promoting open communication are essential components of this approach (Joiner, 2019). This collaborative stance not only enhances problem-solving capabilities but also instils a sense of ownership and commitment among team members, as they feel valued for their contributions.

In addition to promoting collaboration within teams, agile leaders emphasise knowledge sharing across the organisation. Facilitating the exchange of expertise and best practices enables continuous learning and improvement, ensuring that the organisation remains adaptable and responsive to changing market conditions and emerging opportunities (Meyer & Meijers, 2017). Moreover, agile leaders actively involve team members in decision-making processes, seeking their input and feedback to make well-informed choices. Valuing and leveraging the collective intelligence of their teams, agile leaders create a high-trust environment where team members are motivated to work together towards shared success (Akkaya & Sever, 2022).

2.6.4 Encouraging a leadership mindset.

Encouraging a leadership mindset is a fundamental element of an effective agile leadership model. Inspiring employees to take ownership of their work, embrace challenges, and seek opportunities for growth and improvement (Northouse, 2021) can cultivate a culture that values agility, innovation, and adaptability at all levels. This approach encourages individuals to step into leadership roles when needed, fostering a dynamic and responsive organisational culture. Leaders play a significant role in leading by example, demonstrating agility in their decision-making and problem-solving processes, highlighting a willingness to embrace change, and learning from

failures (Meyer, 2016). By doing so, leaders create a culture that encourages experimentation and continuous improvement.

To foster agile leadership, organisations should establish a culture of continuous learning and improvement (Morgan, 2018). Providing opportunities for professional development, training, and skill-building initiatives empowers employees to adapt to changing demands and stay ahead of industry trends. Additionally, creating feedback mechanisms fosters open communication and learning from both successes and failures (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020). This learning-oriented approach enhances individual capabilities and strengthens the collective knowledge and problem-solving capabilities of the organisation (Meyer & Meijers, 2017). In conclusion, encouraging a leadership mindset and fostering a culture of continuous learning are vital components of an Agile Leadership Model. Valuing agility and providing opportunities for growth and improvement allow organisations to cultivate agile leaders who are adaptable, innovative, and capable of driving enhanced organisational performance.

2.7 Chapter Summary

The literature review chapter discussed the theoretical framework of agile leadership and its impact on organisational performance. Various leadership styles, including democratic, autocratic, and *laissez-faire* leadership, were examined about their effects on organisational outcomes. Agile leadership was found to influence organisational performance significantly by promoting flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness to change. The chapter also explored ways to build an agile leadership model, highlighting the importance of trust-building, collaboration, encouraging a leadership mindset, and effective communication. Research gaps were identified, particularly the need for more studies on agile leadership within trade unions. Moreover, the researcher developed a conceptual framework to illustrate the relationship between different leadership styles and organisational performance, based on existing theories and empirical evidence. The next chapter (chapter 3) will present the research methodology. This chapter will present the approach used to investigate the impact of leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers in detail.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed overview of the research design and methodology that the researcher used to execute the study. Therefore, research design and methodology provide a better understanding of how the research unfolded. The chapter discussed the research paradigm, research design, and data collection methods and instruments. Furthermore, the researcher elaborated on the target population, sampling procedures, data analysis, as well as ethical considerations for the study.

3.2 Research Paradigm

Johnson and Christensen (2019) define a research paradigm as a set of commonly held beliefs and assumptions within a research community about ontological, epistemological, and methodological concerns. As a mental model, this paradigm shapes how researchers perceive their field of study and guide their approach to investigating phenomena (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Therefore, a research paradigm is a set of guiding beliefs and ideas that researchers follow in a study. It enables social scientists to understand how things work, how they can know what they know, and how they should investigate a topic. This study followed a positivist paradigm.

Positivism is a philosophical approach that believes in the existence of an objective reality that exists independently of human perception (Saunders *et al.*, 2019). It emphasises the importance of using empirical evidence and sense experience as the foundation of knowledge and research. In positivism, researchers aim to study phenomena objectively and systematically, relying on quantitative data and scientific methods to understand and explain the world (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The researcher preferred positivism as the research paradigm for this study because it aligns to investigate the impact of leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) objectively and rigorously. This study sought to gather quantitative data and empirical evidence to understand the relationship

between agile leadership and organisational performance systematically and scientifically.

In this study, the positivist paradigm was utilised by employing quantitative research methods to collect data on agile leadership practices and organisational performance. The quantitative approach enables the study to test the hypotheses formulated in this study. The researcher utilised surveys, questionnaires, and statistical analysis to gather and analyse numerical data, allowing for objective and measurable insights into the relationship between leadership styles and organisational outcomes. The focus was on identifying patterns and trends in the data. This approach provided a deeper understanding of how agile leadership influences organisational performance at the NUM. The study sought to provide evidence-based and reliable findings that contribute to the existing knowledge on the subject matter.

3.3 Research Design

Johnson and Christensen (2019) allude to the fact that a research design is a plan to answer the research question. Furthermore, a research method is a strategy used to implement the plan. Moreover, research design and methods are different but closely related because good research design normally ensures that the data obtained can help answer the research questions more effectively (Flick, 2018). This study used a descriptive research design.

Descriptive research design is a methodological approach that aims to systematically describe and interpret phenomena as they naturally occur, without manipulating variables (Morgan, 2017). It involves observing, recording, and analysing existing conditions, behaviours, and characteristics within a specific context (Hair *et al.*, 2019). A descriptive research design was appropriate in this study due to its focus on portraying and understanding the current situation within the union. This design facilitated the collection of data to depict the existing leadership styles, organisational performance measures, and their potential relationships, without intervening in the natural dynamics of the NUM.

The researcher employed the descriptive research design by gathering information through surveys (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The researcher administered surveys to leaders and members of the NUM to capture their perceptions of leadership styles and organisational performance. Moreover, the researcher conducted interviews that

made the in-depth exploration of leadership practices and their effects possible. By utilising the descriptive research design, the researcher was able to provide a detailed snapshot of the current state of agile leadership at the NUM, and its potential influence on organisational performance, thus laying a foundation for further analysis and informed decision-making.

3.4 Research Approach

The research approach refers to the overall strategy or plan that guides the researcher's methods and procedures to address the research questions or objectives (Kumar, 2018). It outlines the general framework for data collection, analysis, and interpretation, providing a systematic and organised way to conduct the research (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This study adopted a quantitative research approach.

A quantitative research approach is a methodological approach that involves collecting and analysing numerical data to quantify relationships, patterns, and trends (Walliman, 2021). It aims to obtain objective and measurable information that can be statistically analysed to draw generalizable conclusions. This approach is usually used to test hypotheses, identify cause-and-effect relationships, and provide a clear understanding of the prevalence of certain phenomena within a population (Morgan, 2017).

The researcher preferred the quantitative research approach for this study because it allows for the systematic investigation of the relationship between agile leadership and organisational performance using numerical data. Employing statistical analysis enables the study to establish the strength and direction of the relationships between specific leadership behaviours and organisational outcomes (Field, 2018). This approach provides a rigorous and objective means of exploring the impact of leadership on the National Union of Mineworkers' performance.

In this study, the quantitative research approach was utilised by designing and administering surveys to collect numerical data on agile leadership practices and organisational performance indicators. The survey data were then analysed using statistical techniques, such as correlation analysis and regression analysis, to examine the associations between different aspects of agile leadership and organisational performance outcomes. The approach enabled the researchers to quantify the relationships between variables, identify trends, and draw statistically supported conclusions.

3.5 Target Population

The target population refers to the entire group of individuals who possess specific characteristics, from which the research sample could potentially be drawn (Kumar, 2018). In other words, the target population encompasses the potential participants to whom the research findings could be applied or generalised (Hair *et al.*, 2019). The target population in this study were members of the NUM who were employed at two mines in Free State Province, namely, Beatrix and Masimong mines. The total number of NUM members at Beatrix Mine was 3 810, whereas there were 1 108 at Masimong Mine when the study was conducted.

The members of the NUM that the researcher targeted included regional organisers, Members of the NUM Regional Committee (RC), regional secretaries and regional chairpersons. The above-mentioned members at different levels incorporate personnel that are employed in all relevant components within the organisation. The regional secretaries and chairpersons are responsible for political oversight in the regions, hence guiding the branches of the NUM adhere to the values of the union. The members of the Regional Committee (RC) must ensure that branches adhere to the provisions in the constitution of the union. This is also the case for chairpersons and secretaries of branches of the NUM. Moreover, regional managers should also ensure that all structures of the organisation abide by the constitution of the NUM.

For this study, it is also essential to outline the primary roles of the General Secretary (GS) and the President of the NUM briefly. The GS is regarded as 'the engine' of the entire administration, both politically and in the operations of the NUM. In contrast, the President of the NUM is responsible for political oversight. Moreover, the later national office bearer must ensure the entire organisation is sustainable and serves the members as per the constitution of the union.

The total number of NUM members at the two mines is Beatrix (3810) and Masimong (1108).

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure

Oflazoglu (2017) clarifies that sampling is the process or technique of choosing a sub-group from the population to participate in the study. A sample is a group of people, objects, or items taken from a larger population for measurement (Walliman, 2021).

The sample should be representative of the population to ensure that the researcher can generalise the findings from the research sample to the population. The researcher used probability sampling in this study. As a result, each member of the population had an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study. The key benefit of the probability sampling method is that it guarantees that the sample chosen is representative of the population (Morgan, 2017). Moreover, the researcher employed stratified random sampling in this study. Stratified sampling is a sampling technique where the population is divided into subgroups (strata), and a random sample is chosen from each subgroup (Saunders *et al.*, 2019).

In this study, the researcher selected individuals to represent the larger group from which they were selected, namely different structures of the NUM. Further stratification was done for each mine to ensure a representative sample (50% at Masimong and 50% at Beatrix). The researcher therefore first divided the members into the two mining units (strata) and then derived 100 members from each Mine. Furthermore, the researcher ensured the sample was drawn across the administration and political structures of the NUM. Subsequently, the sample of the study incorporates the General Secretary, the President, the Regional Chairperson, the Regional Secretary, Regional Managers and Regional Organisers. It should be noted that sampling also covered all demographic groups across the two mines, including gender, age, and position.

3.5.2 Sample Size

The researcher used a sample size of 200 respondents in this study. Out of this number (200), 100 members were selected from each of the two mines (Masimong and Beatrix). According to Hair *et al.* (2019), quantitative studies that use primary data achieve highly reliable results with sample sizes of at least 100 respondents. Therefore, this study selected 200 respondents based on Hair *et al.* (2019) argument. The selection of 100 members from each stratum to make a total sample of 200 is justified to ensure adequate representation and precision in the study's findings. By selecting enough participants from each stratum, the sample reflects the diversity and characteristics of the target population more accurately. This approach enables the study to capture variations within each subgroup, leading to more robust and reliable conclusions. Additionally, a larger sample size enhances the statistical power of the

study, allowing for a better assessment of the relationships and patterns between variables. This led to enhanced generalisable results for the entire target population (Field, 2018).

3.6 Research Instrument

Mellinger and Hanson (2016) posit that for data collection, the researcher needs to collect the data himself. Research instruments are simply tools used by researchers to achieve their stated objectives when carrying out a research study. Halperin and Heath (2020) further indicate that a research instrument is a tool used to collect, measure, and analyse data related to the subject. In other words, research instruments are designed tools that aid in the collection of data for analysis. Additionally, a research instrument is a tool used to collect, measure, and analyse data related to the researcher's subject. The research instrument used for this study was a closed-ended questionnaire. A closed-ended questionnaire is a survey instrument that presents respondents with predetermined response options, often in the form of multiple-choice questions or Likert scales (Kumar, 2018). It is appropriate in quantitative research as it enables standardised data collection, simplifies analysis, and enhances data comparability, facilitating statistical measurement and hypothesis testing (Hair *et al.*, 2019).

The questionnaire was chosen as the research instrument to collect data in this study due to its efficiency in gathering responses from a large sample of participants in a structured and standardised manner (Morgan, 2017). As a quantitative research approach was adopted, the questionnaire allows for the collection of numerical data, which can be easily analysed and compared using statistical methods (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Moreover, questionnaires offer anonymity to respondents, encouraging more honest and unbiased responses, especially when addressing sensitive topics (Walliman, 2021).

The design of the questionnaire was carefully constructed to address the research objectives effectively. The questionnaire is attached as Annexure D. It included two main sections: one focused on gathering demographic information about the respondents, such as age, gender, education level, and years of experience within the NUM. This demographic data is crucial for understanding the characteristics of the

sample and ensuring that the findings can be appropriately generalised to the broader membership of the NUM.

The second section of the questionnaire consisted of questions designed to measure the perceptions of NUM members about the various leadership styles (democratic, autocratic, *laissez-faire*, and agile) and their impact on organisational performance. The Leadership Style Questionnaire adopted from Northouse (2021) was used. The agile leadership scale was adopted by Park et al. (2015) and Subramaniam (2021).

The Likert scale was utilised to rate these perceptions, with a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scale allowed for the quantification of respondents' perceptions, making it easier to analyse and compare the data. The use of the Likert scale provided a clear and standardised way for participants to express their opinions on a continuum, enabling the researchers to identify patterns and trends in respondents' perceptions of leadership styles and organisational performance. The questionnaire design aimed to capture a comprehensive view of members of the NUM's attitudes and beliefs, providing valuable insights into the impact of different leadership styles on the union's overall performance. By using a well-structured and carefully designed questionnaire, the study ensured that data collection was consistent, efficient, and suitable for the research objectives.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Before administering the questionnaire to the selected respondents, the researcher sought permission to conduct the study from the organisations that are covered by the study, namely, the region and branches of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). Following the approval, the researcher utilised stratified sampling to ensure a representative sample from different segments of the unionised workforce.

The administration of the questionnaire was organised by the Branch Secretariat of the NUM. These branch leaders arranged special union meetings where they could explain the research objectives and provide context to the members. During these meetings, research assistants (secretariats) distributed the surveys to the members, ensuring the respondents felt comfortable expressing their honest opinions without any potential conflict of interest. This approach was chosen to maintain anonymity and encourage unbiased responses from the participants. The study ensured a systematic

and organised data collection process. The use of union meetings as a platform for questionnaire distribution allowed for the efficient gathering of data from the selected respondents. Overall, this approach facilitated a smooth and successful administration of the questionnaire while respecting the privacy and interests of the participants.

3.8 Data Analysis

Goertzen (2017) describes data analysis as how the researcher influences the purpose and rationality of analysing, explaining the way assembled information can account for dissimilarities in some quality of response. Therefore, once the data was collected, it was interpreted and analysed. Essentially, data analysis is the process of systematically applying statistical and logical techniques to describe, illustrate, condense, recap, and evaluate data.

In this study, the collected data was analysed using the SPSS Version 27, a statistical software widely used for data analysis in research studies. The data analysis process involved several steps to explore the relationships between variables and answer the research questions. First, descriptive statistics were utilised to summarize and describe the main features of the data. This included calculating measures such as mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, and frequency distributions for each variable in the study. Descriptive statistics provide a clear understanding of the central tendencies and variations within the data, allowing researchers to identify patterns and trends (Kumar, 2018).

Next, inferential statistics were applied to test hypotheses and draw conclusions about the population based on the sample data. Specifically, correlation analysis was employed to examine the relationships between the various leadership styles (democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, and agile) and organisational performance. Correlation analysis assessed the strength and direction of the associations between these variables. Furthermore, regression analysis was used to assess the predictive relationships between leadership styles and organisational performance. This analysis helped determine the extent to which the independent variables (leadership styles) influenced the dependent variable (organisational performance) and provided insights into which leadership style had the most significant impact on performance.

These analysis methods were appropriate for the study as they allowed for a comprehensive examination of the relationships between leadership styles and

organisational performance. Descriptive statistics provided a clear overview of the data, while inferential statistics enabled researchers to draw valid conclusions and test hypotheses based on the sample data. Additionally, regression analysis helped identify which leadership style was more influential in predicting organisational performance.

3.9 Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of measurement within a research study (Walliman, 2021). In this context, it ensures that the instruments used to collect data produce consistent results when administered multiple times or across different situations (Hair *et al.*, 2019). To achieve reliability in this study, the researcher employed Cronbach's alpha, a commonly used statistical method, to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales used to measure leadership styles and organisational performance.

Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency that assesses how closely related a set of items in a scale are to each other (Field, 2018). It quantifies the extent to which the items in a scale are measuring the same underlying construct. A high Cronbach's alpha value (usually above 0.70) indicates that the items in the scale are highly correlated and measure the same construct reliably (Field, 2018). In this study, Cronbach's alpha was calculated separately for the scales used to measure each leadership style (democratic, autocratic, laissez-faire, and agile) and organisational performance. The researcher ensured that the items in each scale were coherent and had a strong interrelatedness to ensure the reliability of the measurement instruments. If any item showed a low correlation with the other items in the scale, it would be considered for removal to enhance the scale's internal consistency.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in research involve the adherence to principles and guidelines that prioritize the well-being, rights, and dignity of research participants while ensuring the integrity and transparency of the research process (Kumar, 2018). Hackett (2018) and Litosseti (2018) both concurred on the significance of ethical considerations in a research study. They emphasised that ethical considerations are paramount as they pertain to how human respondents are treated when providing information for the study. Ensuring the ethical treatment of participants is one of the most crucial aspects

of any research, as it upholds their rights, privacy, and well-being throughout the research process.

3.10.1 Ensuring Informed Consent:

Informed consent refers to the process of obtaining voluntary and informed agreement from participants before they participate in a research study (Kumar, 2018). It involves providing clear and comprehensive information about the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, allowing participants to make an informed decision about their participation (Flick, 2018).

In this study, the researcher obtained informed consent from all participants by providing them with a detailed explanation of the research study, namely, its objectives and the data collection process. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any point without facing any consequences. Written consent forms were provided, and participants were given adequate time to review and ask questions before providing their consent.

3.10.2 Ensuring Privacy and Confidentiality

Privacy and confidentiality are crucial ethical considerations to protect the participants' identities and personal information (Hackett, 2018). Participants' data was secured and only accessible to the researcher to maintain anonymity and prevent any potential harm or unintended consequences (Kumar, 2018). In this study, the researcher ensured privacy and confidentiality by using unique identification codes for each participant instead of using their names or any identifiable information. Data were stored securely on password-protected computers accessible only to the research team. Additionally, the researcher removed any identifying information or anonymised the information during the reporting of the study's findings to maintain participants' privacy.

3.10.2 Ensuring No Harm to Participants

Researchers have a responsibility to minimise any potential harm or discomfort to participants during the study (Hackett, 2018). This includes both physical and psychological harm that participants may experience because of their involvement in the research. In this study, steps were taken to ensure no harm to participants by designing the questionnaire and data collection process in a non-intrusive manner.

The survey questions were carefully crafted to avoid sensitive or potentially distressing topics. Participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential, reducing the risk of any negative consequences from their participation.

3.10.4 Obtaining Permission to Conduct the Study

Before commencing the research, researchers must seek permission from relevant parties, such as organisations or institutions, to conduct the study involving their members or employees (Flick, 2018). The study obtained permission to conduct the study from the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and other organisations involved in the research. Formal requests were made, and ethical clearance was obtained from the appropriate authorities before data collection began. This ensured that the study was conducted by the ethical guidelines set by the organisations and that all necessary approvals were obtained. The letter of permission from NUM is attached in Annexure A.

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter discussed how the researcher conducted the study to assess the effect of agile leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers. The chapter deliberated on the research paradigm, research design, research approach, target population, sampling, research instrument, data analysis, reliability and validity, ethical considerations, and limitations.

The next chapter (chapter 4) presents the findings of the current study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This study sought to analyse the impact of leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM). The purpose of this chapter is to analyse data and present the results of the study, as guided by the objectives of the study. In the first section of this chapter, the researcher outlines the characteristics of the sample. This section helps to understand various demographic information of respondents, determining the representativity of the sample. The first section (sample characteristics) is followed by reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha. This is followed an analysis of results, which are presented per each of the outlined objectives of this study.

4.2 Sample Characteristics

The data collection process involved the selection of 200 respondents from the NUM Free State, with 100 respondents each from the Beatrix and Masimong mines, chosen through stratified random sampling. This section primarily focuses on presenting the demographic profiles of the respondents, including variables such as gender, age group, education level, and tenure of employment. The significance of analysing these demographic attributes lies in ensuring the representativeness of the sample.

4.2.1 Age group

Age groups of respondents were collected, and the data is summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Age groups of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 30 years	36	18%
31-40 years	71	35.5%
41-50 years	75	37.5%
Above 50 years	18	9%
Total	200	100%

The age group distribution, as presented in Table 4.1, offers a comprehensive view of the sample composition. The results show that the largest segment of respondents falls within the age group of 41-50 years, constituting 37.5% of the sample. This finding is noteworthy as it aligns closely with the anticipated demographic distribution of NUM Free State members in this age range, indicating a high degree of representativeness for this category. The second-largest group, aged 31-40 years, comprises 35.5% of the sample, again closely resembling the expected distribution within the organisation, further reinforcing the representativeness of the sample in this age bracket. However, the proportion of respondents below 30 years (18%) and those above 50 years (9%) is relatively smaller. The inclusion of these diverse age cohorts is vital for conducting a comprehensive analysis of the impact of leadership on performance, encompassing different career stages at the NUM Free State.

4.2.2 Gender

The sample distribution according to gender is reported in Table 4.2 as shown below:

Table 4.2: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	51	25.5%
Male	149	74.5%
Total	200	100%

The gender distribution of the sample, as presented in Table 4.2, indicates that most of the respondents in the sample are male, accounting for 74.5% of the total. In contrast, females make up 25.5% of the sample. While these percentages suggest a notable gender imbalance within the sample, it is important to note that the sample is representative of the population since the organisation has a predominantly male workforce.

4.2.3 Education level

The sample distribution according to the education qualification of respondents is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Education level

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Matric	71	35.5%
Bachelors/Honours Degree	59	29.5%
Diploma	54	27%
Masters	16	8%
Doctorate	0	0
Total	200	100%

The distribution of respondents based on their highest level of education qualification, as presented in the data, highlights a diverse educational background within the sample. The most common qualification is Matric, representing 35.5% of the sample, followed closely by Bachelor/Honours degree at 29.5%. Diploma holders make up 27% of the sample, while those with master’s degrees constitute 8%. There were no respondents with doctorate degrees. This distribution indicates a balanced representation of different education levels, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the impact of leadership on performance across varying educational backgrounds.

4.2.4 Employment Tenure

The distribution of the sample according to number of years a respondent has worked for their current organisation is illustrated in Table 4.4 below:

Table 4 4: Tenure

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 years	54	27%
5-10 years	56	28%
10-15 years	74	37%
More than 15 years	16	8%
Total	200	100%

The distribution of the sample based on the number of years respondents have worked for their current organisation, as presented in Table 4.4, reflects a diverse range of

tenures among the respondents. The largest group consists of those who have worked for less than 5 years, comprising 27% of the sample. This group represents relatively new entrants to their current organisation and may bring fresh perspectives to the study. The 5-10 years category accounts for 28% of the sample, indicating a significant proportion of mid-career individuals who have accumulated substantial experience within their current roles. The 10-15 years category represents the highest percentage, with 37% of respondents falling into this group. These individuals likely hold key positions within their organisations, having gained extensive experience. Lastly, the "More than 15 years" category, representing 8% of the sample, includes long-serving employees who may provide valuable insights into the organisation's historical context and evolution. Therefore, the distribution of tenure in this sample appears to capture a broad spectrum of work experience, allowing for a comprehensive examination of the impact of agile leadership on performance across different career stages.

4.3 Reliability of measurement scales

Using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the researcher calculated the reliability of each scale as demonstrated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Reliability analysis

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Autocratic leadership	6	0.846
Democratic leadership	5	0.710
Laissez faire leadership	6	0.719
Agile leadership	7	0.716
Organisational performance	5	0.790
Recommendations	4	0.734

The reliability analysis results, as presented in Table 4.5, offer an evaluation of the internal consistency of the scales employed in the study. Firstly, the autocratic leadership scale, consisting of six items, demonstrates a robust level of reliability with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.846. This high score suggests that the scale reliably measures autocratic leadership behaviours, enhancing confidence in the

accuracy of its results. However, in contrast, the democratic leadership scale, composed of five items, reveals a slightly lower Cronbach's alpha of 0.710. While this score is generally acceptable, it indicates a moderate level of internal consistency. Similarly, the laissez-faire leadership scale, comprised of six items, also exhibits a moderate level of internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.719. The agile leadership scale, which encompasses seven items, presents a Cronbach's alpha of 0.716, again indicating a moderate level of internal consistency.

The organisational performance scale, featuring five items, demonstrates a high level of internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.790. This suggests that the scale effectively and reliably measures organisational performance, bolstering confidence in the results related to this construct. Lastly, the recommendations scale, comprising four items, achieves a Cronbach's alpha of 0.734, which falls within an acceptable range for internal consistency. This indicates that the scale consistently captures the intended construct. Overall, all the scales exhibit acceptable levels of internal consistency, and the reliability of these scales contributes to more robust and dependable results in the study.

4.4 Objective 1: To investigate NUM members' perspectives on the dominant leadership style, among democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire, that they believe should be utilised within the organisation in the Free State region of South Africa.

The first objective of this study was to identify the leadership style, from the perspectives of NUM members, which should be used dominantly in the management of staff within the organisation. This was achieved by evaluating how respondents rated different statements that exhibit characteristics of a specific leadership style. Descriptive statistical analysis for items relating to each of the three leadership styles is presented in the following section to determine which leadership style had the highest average response guided by the leadership styles questionnaire.

4.4.1 Autocratic leadership style

The per-item descriptive statistics for the autocratic leadership style are presented in Table 4.6. The table focuses on the mean and standard deviation of the responses.

Table 4.6: Descriptive statistics for autocratic leadership

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees need to be supervised closely, or they are not likely to do their work	2.98	1.105
It is fair to say that most employees in the general population are lazy.	3.31	1.179
As a rule, employees must be rewarded or punished to motivate them to achieve organisational objectives.	3.03	1.352
Most employees feel insecure about their work and need direction.	2.77	1.181
The leader is the chief judge of the achievements of the members of the group	3.42	1.221
Effective leaders give orders and clarify procedures	2.77	1.181
Composite	3.04	1.201

The results presented in Table 4.6 provide valuable insights into the perceptions of respondents regarding autocratic leadership within the context of the study. The standard deviation values accompanying each mean offer an understanding of the degree of dispersion or variability within the responses.

Results show that respondents hold diverse opinions regarding autocratic leadership attributes. For instance, the statement "Employees need to be supervised closely, or they are not likely to do their work" received a mean score of 2.98 with a standard deviation of 1.105. This suggests that while the average response leans slightly toward disagreement, the responses are dispersed, indicating a lack of consensus among respondents on this aspect of autocratic leadership.

Similarly, the statement "It is fair to say that most employees in the general population are lazy" garnered a mean score of 3.31 with a standard deviation of 1.179. This result indicates that respondents are somewhat inclined to agree with the assertion, but the variation in responses is notable, implying that some respondents may strongly agree while others disagree with this notion.

In contrast, the statement "Effective leaders give orders and clarify procedures" received a mean score of 2.77 with a standard deviation of 1.181, reflecting a tendency toward disagreement. Again, the standard deviation suggests that respondents' views on this matter vary considerably.

The composite mean for the entire autocratic leadership construct is 3.04, with a standard deviation of 1.201. This composite mean, slightly above the neutral point of three, implies that respondents' overall stance on autocratic leadership leans toward agreement. However, the relatively high standard deviation underscores the diversity in opinions among respondents.

Overall, the results from this analysis indicate that the perceptions of the respondents about autocratic leadership are mixed and vary widely. While the composite mean suggests a slight leaning towards agreement, the dispersion in responses, as indicated by the standard deviations, reveals a lack of consensus. Therefore, it can be concluded that most respondents provided responses that are closer to 'neutral' based on the composite mean, suggesting that they do not strongly align with or against autocratic leadership practices. This nuanced perspective underscores the complexity of leadership perceptions among the study participants.

The findings of the study regarding perceptions of autocratic leadership align with the literature on this leadership style. The composite mean suggests a slight leaning towards agreement with autocratic leadership practices, but the dispersion in responses, as indicated by the standard deviations, reveals a lack of strong alignment. One possible explanation for this lack of consensus could be the context in which autocratic leadership is applied. As mentioned in the literature, autocratic leadership may be suitable in certain situations, such as emergencies or crises, where quick and decisive action is needed (Jony *et al.*, 2019). Respondents may have varying perceptions of the effectiveness of autocratic leadership based on the specific circumstances they have experienced. Additionally, the literature highlights that autocratic leadership can create a hierarchical and authoritarian work environment, which can lead to poor communication and limited collaboration (Hassnain, 2023). The study's findings of mixed perceptions may reflect the varying degrees to which respondents have experienced these negative aspects of autocratic leadership in their organisations.

4.4.2 Democratic Leadership Style

Table 4.7 depicts the descriptive statistical analysis of the democratic leadership scale. In the table, the mean responses and standard deviations per item are provided.

Table 4 7: Descriptive statistics for democratic leadership style

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees want to be a part of the decision-making process.	3.59	1.122
Guiding without pressure is the key to being a good leader.	3.67	.946
Most workers prefer supportive communication from their leaders	3.56	1.035
It is the leader's job to help subordinates find their "passion."	3.86	1.019
People are competent and if given a task will do a good job.	3.38	1.082
Composite	3.61	1.040

The results presented in Table 4.7 shed light on the perceptions of respondents regarding the democratic leadership style within the context of the NUM. Analysing the individual items, it is evident that respondents generally hold favourable views regarding democratic leadership attributes. The statement "Employees want to be a part of the decision-making process" received a mean score of 3.59 with a standard deviation of 1.122. This result suggests that, on average, respondents lean towards agreement with the idea that employees desire to be involved in decision-making, thus indicating a preference for democratic leadership practices. The relatively moderate standard deviation implies a reasonable level of agreement among respondents on this item.

Likewise, the statement "Guiding without pressure is the key to being a good leader" garnered a mean score of 3.67 with a low standard deviation of 0.946. This outcome indicates a stronger consensus among respondents, with the majority tending to agree that a leadership approach characterised by guidance and minimal pressure is essential for effective leadership.

The statement "Most workers prefer supportive communication from their leaders" received a mean score of 3.56 and a standard deviation of 1.035. This indicates a positive sentiment towards leaders who adopt a supportive communication style, although the standard deviation suggests some variability in respondents' opinions.

Furthermore, the statement "It is the leader's job to help subordinates find their 'passion'" received a mean score of 3.86 with a standard deviation of 1.019. This result signifies a notable agreement among respondents, suggesting that they believe leaders should play a role in nurturing their subordinates' passions and interests.

However, the statement "People are competent, and if given a task will do a good job" received a mean score of 3.38 with a standard deviation of 1.082. This result indicates that while respondents tend to agree with the notion of employees' competence, there is some variability in their perceptions, as indicated by the higher standard deviation.

The composite mean for the entire democratic leadership construct is 3.61, with a standard deviation of 1.040. The composite mean suggests an overall inclination towards agreement with democratic leadership principles. This aligns with the literature, which underscores the benefits of democratic leadership for both employees and organisations, including improved performance, higher motivation, and enhanced creativity and innovation (Dike & Madubueze, 2019; Abasilim *et al.*, 2019; Northouse, 2021). However, the moderate standard deviation suggests some variability in respondents' perceptions within this construct, which may be attributed to the practical challenges of time-consuming debates and decision-making processes associated with democratic leadership (Alblooshi *et al.*, 2021). Despite these potential downsides, when effectively implemented, democratic leadership can create a participatory and engaging work environment that ultimately benefits both employees and the organisation (Jony, Alam & Amin, 2019).

4.4.3 Laissez-Faire leadership style

The following table shows per-item descriptive statistics for respondents' perceptions of the *laissez-faire* leadership style at the NUM.

Table 4.8: Descriptive statistics for Laissez-Faire leadership style

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
In complex situations, leaders should let subordinates work problems out on their own.	3.33	1.071
Leadership requires staying out of the way of subordinates as they do their work.	2.99	1.114
Leaders should give subordinates complete freedom to solve problems on their own	2.86	1.134
In most situations, workers prefer little input from the leader	3.34	1.313
In general, it is best to leave subordinates alone.	3.48	1.371
In most situations, workers prefer little input from the leader.	3.79	1.218
Composite	3.29	1.203

The results presented in Table 4.8 provide insights into the perceptions of respondents regarding the laissez-faire leadership style within the context of the NUM. Analysing the individual items, respondents have mixed views regarding *laissez-faire* leadership attributes. The statement "In complex situations, leaders should let subordinates work problems out on their own" received a mean score of 3.33 with a standard deviation of 1.071. This result suggests that respondents are somewhat inclined to agree with the idea of allowing subordinates to work out complex problems independently, although the standard deviation indicates variability in responses.

On the other hand, the statement "Leadership requires staying out of the way of subordinates as they do their work" received a mean score of 2.99 with a standard deviation of 1.114. This indicates a tendency towards disagreement, with respondents, on average, leaning away from the concept of leaders staying completely out of the way of subordinates. The standard deviation highlights variation in opinions, reflecting diverse perceptions among respondents.

Similarly, the statement "Leaders should give subordinates complete freedom to solve problems on their own" garnered a mean score of 2.86 with a standard deviation of

1.134, further underscoring a leaning towards disagreement and a notable variation in respondents' views on this aspect of *laissez-faire* leadership.

The statement "In most situations, workers prefer little input from the leader" received a mean score of 3.34 with a relatively high standard deviation of 1.313. This indicates a moderate agreement on the preference for minimal leader input, but the wide standard deviation suggests significant diversity in respondents' opinions. Moreover, the statement "In general, it is best to leave subordinates alone" received a mean score of 3.48 with a standard deviation of 1.371. While the mean leans towards agreement, the high standard deviation signifies substantial variation in responses.

The composite mean for the entire *laissez-faire* leadership construct is 3.29, with a standard deviation of 1.203. The composite mean suggests a moderate inclination towards agreement with *laissez-faire* leadership principles. However, the standard deviation, though not extremely high, indicates a notable range of opinions within this construct.

Overall, the results indicate that respondents have diverse and somewhat ambivalent perceptions of *laissez-faire* leadership within the NUM context. While the composite mean suggests a moderate leaning towards agreement with *laissez-faire* principles, the standard deviation underscores the considerable variation in respondents' opinions. Overall, there is no strong consensus among respondents regarding this leadership style, indicating a complex and multifaceted perspective on *laissez-faire* leadership within the studied context. However, the literature highlights that *laissez-faire* leadership is associated with advantages such as higher employee retention and development through increased accountability, which can contribute positively to organisational performance (Robert & Vandenberghe, 2021; Franco and Matos, 2015; Alblooshi, Shamsuzzaman & Haridy, 2021).

4.4.4 Comparing the three leadership styles.

The researcher compared the three leadership styles to identify which one had the highest overall mean rating from the responses received. Total scores for each scale were computed and the average total score was used to rank the leadership styles to identify which of the leadership styles respondents believed should be dominantly used at the NUM. Results are shown in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: Comparing autocratic, democratic and laissez faire leadership styles

Descriptive Statistics			
Leadership style	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Autocratic Leadership	200	18.25	5.43
Democratic Leadership	200	21.55	2.68
Laissez-faire Leadership	200	19.79	2.74

The objective of this analysis was to identify the prevalent leadership style which should be used in managing staff at the NUM in the Free State Province, South Africa. To achieve this, the study compared the three leadership styles (autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire) by calculating the mean scores for each and examining the overall rankings based on the responses received from 200 participants. The mean scores for each leadership style provide valuable insights into the predominant leadership approach within the NUM.

Autocratic Leadership (Mean: 18.25): The mean score for autocratic leadership is the lowest among the three styles. This indicates that, on average, respondents rated autocratic leadership as the least dominant style in the NUM. The score falls below the moderate range, suggesting that it is not commonly perceived as the best leadership style.

Democratic Leadership (Mean: 21.55): The mean score for democratic leadership is the highest among the three styles. This implies that, on average, respondents rated democratic leadership highly, suggesting that the style should be the dominant style within the organisation. The score falls within the high range, indicating that respondents had favourable perceptions of democratic leadership principles.

Laissez-faire Leadership (Mean: 19.79): Laissez-faire leadership falls in between autocratic and democratic leadership, with a mean score that is higher than autocratic but lower than democratic. While it is not rated as highly as democratic leadership, it still falls within the moderate range, suggesting that a significant number of respondents believed that laissez-faire is the ideal style, though it was not as dominant as the democratic style.

Based on these results, it can be concluded that respondents had favourable perceptions of the democratic leadership style, suggesting that respondents believed

that the democratic leadership style should dominate in managing staff at the NUM in the Free State Province, South Africa. This result is consistent with literature which highlights that most organisations of today largely employ democratic principles (Northouse, 2021). Several studies underscore the benefits of democratic leadership for both employees and organisations, including improved performance, higher motivation, and enhanced creativity and innovation (Dike and Madubueze, 2019; Abasilim et al., 2019; Northouse, 2021).

4.5 Objectives 2 and 3: To identify the impact of democratic leadership, autocratic leadership, laissez-faire leadership, and agile leadership on the organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa.

Objectives 2 and 3 were achieved using regression and correlation analysis. Therefore, since a single regression model was estimated, the two objectives were combined for analysis and discussion in this section. The previous sections already discussed per-item descriptive statistics for democratic leadership, autocratic leadership, and *laissez-faire* leadership. Therefore, per-item descriptive statistics for the agile leadership scale and the organisational performance scales are presented and discussed in the following sections before regression and correlation analysis.

4.5.1 Agile leadership

Table 4.10: Descriptive statistics for agile leadership

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
Leaders should be open to change and adapt in dynamic work environments	4.29	.927
Leaders should encourage team members to make decisions independently	3.37	1.020
Leaders should prioritise effective communication within teams	3.66	.846
Leaders should empower team members by providing autonomy and freedom to learn	3.76	.840
Leaders should actively seek feedback from team members and consider their input in decision-making.	3.59	.979
Leaders should promote collaboration and teamwork within teams	3.65	1.041
Leaders should scan the environment according to their awareness of the situation	3.56	.917
Composite	3.69	0.938

The results presented in Table 4.9 provide a comprehensive view of respondents' perceptions regarding agile leadership. These perceptions offer insights into how leaders within the organisation are perceived in terms of their agility, adaptability, and approach to leadership in dynamic work environments.

Firstly, the statement "Leaders should be open to change and adapt in dynamic work environments" received the highest mean rating, indicating a strong consensus among respondents. This suggests that agile leaders are perceived as highly open to change and adaptive in response to dynamic work environments.

However, there are areas within the agile leadership construct where respondents' perceptions are more nuanced. For instance, the statement "Leaders should encourage team members to make decisions independently" received a mean score slightly above the midpoint. While it indicates a level of encouragement for independent decision-making, there is room for improvement in promoting greater

autonomy within teams. Agile leadership principles emphasise empowering team members to take ownership of decisions, and this aspect might need further attention.

Similarly, the statement "Leaders should actively seek feedback from team members and consider their input in decision-making" received a mean score slightly below the midpoint. This suggests that there is potential for agile leaders to enhance their engagement with team members in terms of actively soliciting feedback and incorporating it into decision-making processes. Agile leadership places a strong emphasis on continuous feedback loops and collaboration, and there is an opportunity for leaders to strengthen this aspect of their leadership approach.

Respondents generally perceive that their leaders should prioritise effective communication within the team and promote collaboration and teamwork. These aspects align well with agile leadership principles, which emphasise transparent and open communication channels and a collaborative work environment. The composite mean for the entire agile leadership construct is 3.69, indicating a moderate level of agreement with agile leadership principles. While there are areas where leadership is perceived as agile and adaptable, there are also areas that suggest room for improvement in fully embracing agile leadership practices.

These findings are consistent with the literature on agile leadership, which highlights the importance of adaptability, collaboration, and continuous improvement (Coleman, 2016; Parker *et al.*, 2015; Meyer & Meijers, 2017). Agile leaders are known for their ability to respond quickly to change, involve team members and customers in decision-making, and foster a culture of exploration and learning from failures (Sommer, 2019; Subramaniam, 2021). In today's dynamic business environment, agile leadership has become crucial for organisations to navigate uncertainty and achieve agility (Akkaya *et al.*, 2022). Effective agile leadership involves guiding vision, teamwork, open information sharing, minimal control, and adaptability to change (Aftab *et al.*, 2022).

4.5.2 Organisational performance

The organisational performance scale was analysed using descriptive statistics per item to highlight how participants perceived the performance of their organisation. The following table presents per-item descriptive statistics for the organisational performance construct.

Table 4.11: Descriptive Statistics Organisational performance

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
How satisfied are you with the effectiveness of the National Union of Mineworkers in addressing the needs and concerns of its members?	3.69	.887
To what extent does the National Union of Mineworkers prioritise workplace safety and ensure compliance with health and safety regulations?	3.40	1.037
How would you rate the level of member engagement and participation within the National Union of Mineworkers?	3.64	.987
Please rate the National Union of Mineworkers' ability to negotiate and advocate for favourable working conditions and benefits for its members	3.57	1.145
On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the overall performance of the NUM	3.57	.921
Composite	3.57	0.995

The results presented in Table 4.11 provide a comprehensive view of how participants perceive the organisational performance of the NUM. These perceptions are essential for understanding how members and stakeholders assess the effectiveness of the organisation in meeting their needs and concerns.

The first item, "How satisfied are you with the effectiveness of the National Union of Mineworkers in addressing the needs and concerns of its members?" received a mean rating of 3.69, suggesting a moderate level of satisfaction among participants. This indicates that, on average, participants feel the NUM is reasonably effective in addressing member needs and concerns. The relatively low standard deviation implies a degree of consensus among participants, indicating a shared sentiment of satisfaction in this area.

The second item, "To what extent does the National Union of Mineworkers prioritise workplace safety and ensure compliance with health and safety regulations?" received

a mean rating of 3.40. This suggests that on average, most participants were neutral about the statement.

The third item, "How would you rate the level of member engagement and participation within the National Union of Mineworkers?" received a mean rating of 3.64, indicating that participants generally view member engagement and participation positively. The lower standard deviation suggests a reasonable level of agreement among participants regarding the organisation's performance in this area.

The fourth item, "Please rate the National Union of Mineworkers' ability to negotiate and advocate for favourable working conditions and benefits for its members," received a mean rating of 3.57. Participants perceive the NUM's ability to negotiate and advocate as moderately effective. The standard deviation, while slightly higher, still suggests a reasonable level of consensus among participants regarding the organisation's performance in this crucial aspect of union activity.

The final item used a numerical scale to assess the overall performance of the NUM, and it received a mean rating of 3.57. This suggests a moderate overall performance perception among participants. The low standard deviation indicates that there is a relatively consistent assessment among participants regarding the organisation's overall performance.

The composite mean for the entire organisational performance construct is 3.57, with a standard deviation of 0.995. This composite rating provides an overall assessment of the NUM's performance based on the various aspects measured in the survey. It suggests a moderate level of satisfaction as the mean falls near the midpoint of the scale. However, the composite means also indicate that a significant number of respondents had mixed opinions about the performance of NUM. Therefore, the data shows that the performance of the organisation from the perspectives of the respondents was 'average', suggesting that there is room for improvement.

The relationship between leadership styles, agile leadership and organisational performance was then analysed using correlation and regression analysis as presented in the following sections.

4.5.3 Correlation analysis

This study employed correlation analysis to assess the direction and magnitude of the relationship between leadership variables and organisational performance. Average total scores for each scale were computed and used for further analysis. The Pearson Correlation Matrix was computed, and the results are illustrated in Table 4.12 below:

Table 4.12: Correlation Matrix

		OP	AutL	DL	LFL	AL
OP	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
AutL	Pearson Correlation	.418**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
DL	Pearson Correlation	.391**	.112	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.114			
LFL	Pearson Correlation	.047	.097	.111	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.510	.173	.118		
AL	Pearson Correlation	.835**	.355**	.220**	.096	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.002	.176	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis presented in Table 4.12 offers insights into the relationships between organisational performance (OP) and various leadership variables, including autocratic leadership (AutL), democratic leadership (DL), *laissez-faire* leadership (LFL), and agile leadership (AL).

Autocratic Leadership (AutL): The correlation coefficient between AutL and OP is -0.418, which indicates a negative relationship between autocratic leadership and organisational performance. This means that as the perception of autocratic leadership in the organisation increases (towards a more autocratic style), organisational performance tends to decrease. This relationship is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

Democratic Leadership (DL): The correlation coefficient between DL and OP is 0.391, suggesting a positive relationship between democratic leadership and organisational performance. In other words, as the perception of democratic leadership increases within the organisation (indicating a more democratic leadership style), organisational performance tends to improve. This relationship is statistically significant ($p < 0.01$).

Laissez-Faire Leadership (LFL): The correlation between LFL and OP is weak (0.047) and not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). This suggests that there is no significant linear relationship between laissez-faire leadership and organisational performance in this dataset.

Agile Leadership (AL): The correlation between AL and OP is strong (0.835) and statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). This indicates a highly positive relationship between agile leadership and organisational performance. As the perception of agile leadership within the organisation increases, organisational performance tends to improve substantially. The strong positive correlation between AL and OP underscores the importance of agile leadership in driving organisational performance. This suggests that leaders who embrace adaptability, empowerment, and effective communication tend to lead organisations to higher performance levels.

While correlation analysis helps us understand the strength and direction of relationships between variables, it does not establish causation. Correlation analysis cannot determine whether changes in leadership styles directly cause changes in organisational performance. To establish causal relationships, regression analysis is needed. Therefore, the correlation analysis in this study provides valuable insights into associations but does not prove causation. The following regression analysis can help shed light on the potential causal impact of leadership variables on organisational performance.

4.5.4 Regression analysis

A multiple linear regression model was estimated to determine the influence of agile leadership, democratic leadership, autocratic leadership, and laissez-faire leadership on organisational performance. The aim of this section was to test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Democratic leadership style has a positive influence on organisational performance.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Autocratic leadership style has a negative influence on organisational performance.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Laissez-faire leadership style has a positive influence on organisational performance.

Hypothesis 4 (4): Agile leadership positively influences organisational performance.

To ensure a comprehensive regression model, all four leadership variables were analysed for their impact on organisational performance. The underlying concept was to explore how agile leadership, as an approach, might complement one of the traditional leadership styles to enhance overall organisational effectiveness.

The following table presents the model summary.

Table 4.13: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.872 ^a	.761	.756	.29334
a. Predictors: (Constant), Laissez-faire Leadership, Agile Leadership, Democratic Leadership, Autocratic Leadership				

The R Square value is 0.761, which means that approximately 76.1% of the variance in organisational performance can be explained by the independent variables in the model. This indicates a reasonably good fit for the model. In other words, the leadership variables included in the model collectively account for a significant portion of the variability in organisational performance. The following table presents the analysis of the overall fit of the whole model.

Table 4.14: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	53.150	4	13.288	154.415	.000 ^b
	Residual	16.694	194	.086		
	Total	69.844	198			
a. Dependent Variable: Org_Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Laissez-faire Leadership, Agile Leadership, Democratic Leadership, Autocratic Leadership						

The ANOVA table in Table 4.14 assesses the overall fit of the regression model, which includes the independent variables (leadership variables) in predicting the dependent variable (organisational performance). The key statistic to consider in assessing the overall fit of the model is the F-statistic. The F-statistic is 154.415, and its associated significance level (Sig.) is 0.000 ($p < 0.001$). This indicates that the F-statistic is highly significant. In the context of ANOVA, a significant F-statistic suggests that at least one of the independent variables in the model has a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable. Given the highly significant F-statistic, it can be concluded that the overall fit of the regression model is strong. This means that the combination of the four leadership styles (agile, democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire) included in the model collectively has a significant influence on organisational performance. In other words, the model provides valuable insights into how these leadership styles affect organisational performance. The influence of each variable on organisational performance is reported in the following table:

Table 4.15: Regression coefficients

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.489	.231		-2.121	.035
	Agile Leadership	.823	.042	.747	19.493	.000
	Democratic Leadership	.262	.044	.213	5.897	.000
	Autocratic Leadership	-.112	.031	-.135	-3.577	.000
	Laissez-faire Leadership	-.077	.046	-.059	-1.674	.096
a. Dependent Variable: Org. Performance						

The regression coefficients presented in Table 4.15 provide insights into the influence of each independent variable (leadership style) on organisational performance while considering the sign and magnitude of the Beta coefficient.

Agile Leadership (Beta: 0.747): The coefficient for agile leadership is positive (0.747), indicating a strong positive influence on organisational performance. This means that for every one-unit increase in perceived agile leadership within the organisation, organisational performance is expected to increase by approximately 0.747 units. The high-standardised coefficient suggests that agile leadership has a substantial positive impact on organisational performance. The result suggest that Hypothesis 4 was supported in this study. This aligns with previous findings that agile leadership, characterised by adaptability and effective communication, enhances overall performance (Akkaya & Sever, 2022). Jassmy and Katea (2022) found that agile leadership promotes innovation by encouraging higher involvement.

Democratic Leadership (Beta: 0.213): The coefficient for democratic leadership is also positive (0.213), indicating a positive influence on organisational performance. A one-unit increase in perceived democratic leadership is associated with a 0.213-unit increase in organisational performance. While the standardised coefficient is lower than that of agile leadership, it still signifies a meaningful positive impact on performance. The result implies that there was evidence to support Hypothesis 1, which states that democratic leadership positively influences organisational performance. This supports the idea that involving employees in decision-making processes, a characteristic of democratic leadership, contributes positively to organisational performance (Wachira *et al.*, 2018). George *et al.* (2019) assert that a democratic leadership style fosters high employee morale and productivity.

Autocratic Leadership (Beta: -0.135): Autocratic leadership has a negative Beta coefficient (-0.135), indicating a negative influence on organisational performance. A one-unit increase in perceived autocratic leadership is associated with a decrease of approximately 0.135 units in organisational performance. The negative sign suggests that a more autocratic leadership style, characterised by centralised decision-making and limited employee involvement, is detrimental to performance. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 of this study was supported. Cherian *et al.* (2020) underscore that

subordinate, leading to increased job stress and higher employee turnover rates, often perceive autocratic leaders negatively. Wang *et al.* (2019) study suggests that autocratic leadership negatively affects task performance which has negative implications on the overall performance of an organisation.

Laissez-Faire Leadership (Beta: -0.059): The Beta coefficient for laissez-faire leadership is negative (-0.059), indicating a slight negative influence on organisational performance. While the negative impact is present, it is statistically insignificant ($p > .05$). Therefore, laissez-faire leadership does not significantly predict organisational performance at the NUM. The result suggests that there was no evidence to support Hypothesis 3 which states that laissez faire leadership style has a positive influence on organisational performance.

Overall, the regression results suggest that agile and democratic leadership styles have positive and significant impacts on organisational performance. In contrast, autocratic leadership hurts performance, while the influence of *laissez-faire* leadership is insignificant. These findings emphasise the importance of leadership style in shaping organisational performance. Leaders who embrace agile and democratic approaches, which involve adaptability, effective communication, and employee involvement, are more likely to contribute positively to organisational success (Schaubroeck *et al.*, 2017; Akkaya & Sever, 2022). Conversely, autocratic leadership, characterised by centralized control, may hinder performance.

4.6 Objective 4: To propose ways in which NUM could build an agile leadership model that speaks to stakeholder interests to increase and retain membership and enhance organisational performance.

Lastly, the study sought to analyse respondents’ perceptions of the suggested ways through which agile leadership can be improved at the NUM. The following table provides per-item descriptive statistics for the proposed recommendations.

Table 4.16: Descriptive statistics for the proposed recommendations

Item	Mean	Std. Deviation
Fostering trust among team members is crucial for building agile leadership that drives high organisational performance at NUM	3.96	.867

Effective communication is a significant factor in developing agile leadership that leads to high organisational performance at NUM.	3.57	1.109
Meaningful connections within the organisation play a substantial role in nurturing agile leadership and enhancing overall performance at NUM	3.57	.995
Fostering collaboration among team members significantly contributes to the establishment of agile leadership that drives high organisational performance at NUM.	3.95	.828

The results presented in Table 4.16 shed light on respondents' perceptions regarding the suggested ways to improve agile leadership within the NUM. These recommendations are critical for nurturing agile leadership and enhancing overall organisational performance. The item "Fostering trust among team members is crucial for building agile leadership that drives high organisational performance at NUM" received a high mean rating of 3.96. This indicates that respondents strongly believe that building trust among team members is a crucial factor in developing agile leadership. High levels of trust within teams can foster an environment where agile leadership can thrive. Trust is essential for open communication, risk-taking, and collaboration—all elements of agile leadership.

Further, the item "Effective communication is a significant factor in developing agile leadership that leads to high organisational performance at NUM" received a moderately positive mean rating of 3.57. This suggests that respondents recognize the importance of effective communication in nurturing agile leadership. Effective communication is a cornerstone of agile leadership, enabling the quick flow of information, feedback, and adaptation to changing circumstances.

The statement "Meaningful connections within the organisation play a substantial role in nurturing agile leadership and enhancing overall performance at NUM" also received a mean rating of 3.57. This implies that respondents acknowledge the significance of building meaningful connections within the organisation to foster agile leadership. Such connections can lead to improved collaboration, trust, and information sharing—essential components of agile leadership.

The item "Fostering collaboration among team members significantly contributes to the establishment of agile leadership that drives high organisational performance at NUM" received a high mean rating of 3.95. This indicates strong agreement among respondents regarding the importance of collaboration in nurturing agile leadership. Collaboration is a fundamental aspect of agile leadership, as it encourages teamwork, idea exchange, and collective problem-solving.

Overall, the findings suggest that respondents perceive these recommended practices—fostering trust, effective communication, meaningful connections, and collaboration—as essential for improving agile leadership within the NUM. These practices align with the principles of agile leadership, emphasising adaptability, open communication, and teamwork to enhance organisational performance (Meyer, 2016; Morgan, 2018; Hongchai *et al.*, 2020).

4.7 Chapter Summary

Results from the primary study conducted were analysed and presented in this chapter. The chapter started with a discussion on sample characteristics, assessing the representativity of the sample based on gender, age, education level and tenure. It was revealed that 200 respondents participated in the study and the sample was representative of the population under study. Further, the chapter assessed the reliability of the measurement scales for the variables used in the study. Results of Cronbach's alpha revealed that the measures were all reliable, hence they were used for further analysis in this study. Analysis of results was conducted consistent with the objectives. Results showed that the most common leadership style at the NUM, Free State was democratic leadership. The impact of this leadership style on organisational performance was found to be positive. In addition, the study found that agile leadership positively influences organisational performance. A discussion of these results is provided in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter (Chapter 5) focuses on the discussion of results that were presented in the preceding chapter (chapter 4) section. The central thrust of this chapter revolves around the precise alignment of these results with the articulated research objectives, thereby ensuring a rigorous and consistent analysis. The overarching aim of this endeavour is to integrate the findings derived from the primary research with those emanating from the broader corpus of relevant literature. This approach not only facilitates an understanding of the primary research outcomes but also affords a unique opportunity to juxtapose and critically assess these findings against the backdrop of extant studies within the same academic domain. In doing so, the chapter fosters a comprehensive and scholarly dialogue, contributing to the broader discourse in the field.

5.2 Objective 1: To investigate NUM members' perspectives on the dominant leadership style, among democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire, that they believe should be utilised within the organisation in the Free State region of South Africa.

The first objective of this study was to identify the leadership style, from the perspectives of NUM members, which should be used dominantly in the management of staff within the organisation. This was achieved by evaluating how respondents rated different statements that exhibit characteristics of a specific leadership style. The study found that respondents had favourable perceptions of the democratic leadership style, suggesting that respondents believed that the democratic leadership style should dominate in managing staff at the NUM in the Free State Province, South Africa. This was supported by the highest mean score in the democratic leadership category.

This result aligns with existing literature that underscores the advantages associated with democratic leadership in terms of employee and organisational outcomes. The

democratic leadership style, as recognised by Dike and Madubueze (2019), has been lauded for its substantial positive impact on employee performance. This approach emphasises the importance of involving employees in decision-making through consistent consultation, as highlighted by Abasilim *et al.* (2019). Such involvement fosters employee satisfaction and motivation, ultimately leading to improved coordination and work output. This resonates with Gandolfi and Stone's (2018) argument that democratic leadership not only enhances employee-employer relations but also contributes to increased organisational productivity.

Furthermore, the democratic leadership framework, as discussed by Northouse (2021), encourages open discussions and two-way communication between leaders and subordinates. This communication fosters the sharing of ideas and solutions to organisational challenges, thereby promoting creativity and innovation. This finding suggests that organisations adopting democratic leadership harness the collective intelligence of their workforce to address complex issues effectively.

However, it is essential to acknowledge the potential limitations of democratic leadership, as highlighted by Alblooshi *et al.* (2021). This leadership style may lead to time-consuming debates and decision-making processes, which could be impractical in certain situations. Additionally, Northouse (2021) points out that when roles and communication are unclear, the inclusivity of democratic leadership may result in prolonged decision-making processes and potential hindrances to organisational performance. Therefore, organisations need to consider the context and specific circumstances when applying this leadership style.

Nonetheless, when implemented effectively, as suggested by Jony *et al.* (2019), democratic leadership can be applied to various types of organisations, promoting a participatory and engaging work environment that benefits both employees and the organisation. In summary, the prevalence of democratic leadership within the Free State Province branch of the NUM aligns with the substantial body of literature highlighting its positive impact on employee performance, organisational productivity, and innovation, while also recognising its potential drawbacks in certain situations.

5.3 Objective 2: To assess the impact of democratic, autocratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa.

The second objective sought to ascertain the impact of the leadership styles on the organisational performance of the NUM, Free State. Results from regression analysis showed that democratic leadership style positively influences organisational performance at the NUM. The findings of this study, which highlight the positive influence of democratic leadership on organisational performance within the NUM, resonate with a substantial body of literature. George *et al.* (2019) assert that a democratic leadership style fosters high employee morale and productivity. This leadership approach reduces the need for excessive control and formal rules and procedures, while also cultivating competent individuals who are motivated to perform at their best. Moreover, it encourages subordinates to think independently and actively seek responsibilities. These outcomes align with the enhanced organisational performance observed in the NUM when democratic leadership is employed.

Furthermore, Wachira *et al.* (2018) conducted a study focusing on commercial state corporations in Kenya and found that a democratic leadership style significantly and positively influenced organisational performance. Their recommendation for organisations to adopt this leadership style underscores its potential to enhance overall performance, a principle that holds for the NUM. Odumegwu (2019) further underscores the link between democratic leadership and organisational performance. This study emphasises that the ability of managers to make informed decisions, collaborate effectively with others, and delegate tasks to employees plays a pivotal role in the positive impact of democratic leadership on organisational performance. The recommendation for adopting democratic leadership aligns with the empirical findings from the NUM. Akparep *et al.* (2018) also affirm the significant positive impact of democratic leadership on the organisation's performance and advocate for its adoption by other organisations to enhance their performance.

Additionally, Al-Khaled's (2020) investigation into various leadership styles' impact on organisational performance reinforces the notion that democratic leadership stands out as the most effective style for achieving and enhancing organisational

performance. The recommendation to adopt the democratic leadership style aligns closely with the observed positive outcomes within the NUM.

Overall, the consistent findings from these studies, coupled with the empirical evidence from the NUM, collectively support the assertion that democratic leadership positively influences organisational performance. This underscores the relevance and applicability of democratic leadership as a valuable approach for organisations seeking to enhance their overall outcomes and effectiveness. However, based on descriptive statistical analysis, it is important to acknowledge that some of the respondents indicated that they do not agree with the democratic leadership style. The negative perceptions of the respondents may be attributed to the practical challenges of time-consuming debates and decision-making processes associated with democratic leadership (Alblooshi *et al.*, 2021).

The study also found that autocratic leadership is negatively associated with organisational performance at the NUM. The result suggests that a more autocratic leadership style, characterised by centralised decision-making and limited employee involvement, is detrimental to performance. The findings of the study suggest that the autocratic leadership style negatively influences organisational performance, a result that aligns with the broader literature on this leadership approach. While autocratic leadership may have situational effectiveness in contexts requiring swift decision-making, its overall impact on employee morale, job satisfaction, and organisational performance is generally unfavourable. Research by Cherian *et al.* (2020) underscores that subordinates often perceive autocratic leaders negatively, leading to increased job stress and higher employee turnover rates. This suggests that autocratic leadership can have adverse consequences on employee well-being and retention, which can subsequently affect organisational performance.

Du *et al.* (2020) shed light on the conditional effectiveness of autocratic leadership, emphasising that its impact depends on employees' perceived necessity and willingness for change. When there is a highly perceived necessity for change but low willingness, autocratic leadership may be positively associated with employees' active reactions to organisational change. However, when there is a high willingness for change, autocratic leadership can have a detrimental impact on employees' reactions to change, potentially hampering overall organisational adaptability.

Furthermore, Wang *et al.* (2019) study suggests that autocratic leadership negatively affects task performance. This negative impact can be moderated by factors such as leader-member exchange and the degree of employee dependence on their leader. Pizzolitto *et al.* (2022) systematic literature review reinforces the negative impact of authoritarian leadership styles on employee performance. Although the effect on firm performance is mixed, the review underscores the need for further research to improve an understanding of mechanisms through which authoritarian leadership styles influence organisational performance.

The study by Hassnain (2023) also aligns with the findings at NUM, as it highlights that autocratic leadership negatively affects employees' performance and motivation. In contrast, democratic leadership is associated with positive impacts on both performance and motivation. This further emphasises the potential drawbacks of autocratic leadership for organisational outcomes. Additional studies point to the drawbacks of autocratic leadership, associating it with negative performance, complex leader-follower relationships, and increased intentions of followers to leave (Schaubroeck *et al.*, 2017). Chiang *et al.* (2020) demonstrate the adverse impact of authoritarian leaders suppressing subordinates' emotions, which can worsen the work climate. Moreover, Schaubroeck *et al.* (2017) reveal a direct link between subordinates' disapproval of power distance and the adverse effects of directive leadership on performance, indicating that autocratic leadership styles may not align with the demands of modern, dynamic, and hyper-connected markets. These findings indicate that while autocratic leadership may have situational utility, its widespread application within organisations can hinder overall performance and employee satisfaction.

However, as descriptive statistical analysis revealed, not all perceptions of autocratic leadership are negative. Some employees believe that the autocratic leadership style is the best leadership style for improved organisational performance. Thus, there are varying perceptions. One possible explanation for this difference in perceptions could be the context in which autocratic leadership is applied. As mentioned in the literature, autocratic leadership may be suitable in certain situations, such as emergencies or crises, where quick and decisive action is needed (Jony *et al.*, 2019). Respondents may have varying perceptions of the effectiveness of autocratic leadership based on the specific circumstances they have experienced (Northouse, 2021).

Lastly, on the impact of leadership styles, this study found no evidence to support that the laissez-faire leadership style influences organisational performance. Thus, the impact of this leadership style was found to be insignificant.

5.4. Objective 3: To assess the impact of agile leadership on the organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa.

The main objective of this study was to determine the influence of agile leadership on the performance of the NUM. Results of this study revealed that agile leadership has a significant positive impact on organisational performance. This result aligns with a growing body of literature that underscores the importance of this leadership style in contemporary business environments. Akkaya and Sever (2022) argue that organisations incorporating agile leadership are better equipped to respond quickly to change and deliver superior business value. This aligns with the results of the NUM study, where agile leadership was found to influence organisational performance positively. Similarly, the study by Akkaya *et al.* (2022) highlights the positive influence of agile leadership behaviours on career success. The underlying implication is that agile leadership contributes to the overall performance of the organisation, as successful and engaged employees are more likely to contribute positively to organisational outcomes.

Further, Subramaniam (2021) also found a positive relationship between agile leadership style and organisational performance, with organisational culture playing a mediating role, supporting the idea that agile leadership positively influences the adaptability and effectiveness of organisations in dynamic environments. Yalçın and Özgenel's (2021) study in the educational sector highlights that agile leadership characteristics positively predict teachers' attitudes toward professional development and their performance. This underscores the relevance of agile leadership in fostering employee development and, consequently, improving overall organisational performance.

Furthermore, Jassmy and Katea (2022) found that agile leadership promotes innovation by encouraging higher involvement. This finding indicates that agile leadership practices can drive organisational performance by fostering innovation and adaptability. Aftab *et al.* (2022) highlight the significant role of agile leadership in

determining job satisfaction and life satisfaction, particularly in times of crisis. This suggests that agile leadership contributes to employee well-being, which, in turn, positively influences organisational performance. Spiegler *et al.* (2021) emphasise the importance of shared leadership, a key characteristic of agile leadership, in fostering team effectiveness. Their findings indicate that collaborative leadership contributes to better team dynamics and performance, supporting the idea that agile leadership empowers teams to adapt swiftly to dynamic business environments and achieve superior outcomes.

However, despite evidence from the study that agile leadership is associated with improved organisational performance, it is important to acknowledge that there are aspects of agile leadership which may negatively affect the performance of an organisation if they are not adequately addressed. These insights provide valuable feedback for leadership development and organisational improvement efforts, helping the NUM move towards a more agile and adaptive leadership style.

5.5. Objective 4: To propose ways in which the NUM could build an agile leadership model that speaks to stakeholder interests to increase and retain membership and enhance organisational performance.

This study also aimed to propose ways in which NUM can build an agile leadership model that inspires high organisational performance. Results suggested that respondents perceived these recommended practices thus fostering trust, effective communication, meaningful connections, and collaboration. All these factors are essential for improving agile leadership within the NUM. These practices align with the principles of agile leadership, emphasising adaptability, open communication, and teamwork to enhance organisational performance.

This study found that fostering trust is a fundamental element in establishing an agile leadership model that enhances organisational performance, which aligns with the literature emphasising the importance of trust in agile leadership (Hongchai *et al.*, 2020). The trust serves as the foundation for effective interactions between unions, employees, and business agility teams. It is crucial to address concerns and misperceptions that may arise during the transformation process of business agility. This aligns with the idea that open communication channels and empathy mapping enable employees to voice their doubts and concerns, fostering a safe environment

for dialogue (Morgan, 2018). Ultimately, building trust through trust-building initiatives ensures a successful agile transformation that positively affects organisational performance (Meyer, 2016).

Furthermore, this study underscores the pivotal role of communication in building an agile leadership model that enhances membership retention and organisational performance. Effective communication channels, as advocated by Spiegler *et al.* (2021), are essential for disseminating information, sharing goals, and aligning everyone with the organisation's vision. This aligns with the recommendation that agile leaders prioritize clear and consistent communication, ensuring that all team members are well-informed about the organisation's strategies and objectives (Batcheller, 2016). Transparent communication fosters trust and confidence among team members, as highlighted in the literature, and ensures that everyone is on the same page, enabling efficient decision-making (Morgan, 2018). In addition, regular feedback loops and constructive criticism, as mentioned by Meyer & Meijers (2017), facilitate continuous improvement and learning, contributing to enhanced organisational performance.

Collaboration and teamwork were identified as fundamental components of an effective agile leadership model, consistent with the literature emphasising the value of diverse perspectives and skills (Uyun, 2019). Agile leaders encourage cross-functional teams to work together toward shared goals, enhancing problem-solving capabilities and instilling a sense of ownership among team members (Joiner, 2019). Knowledge sharing across the organisation, as advocated by Meyer & Meijers (2017), enables continuous learning and improvement, ensuring adaptability to changing conditions. Moreover, involving team members in decision-making processes and valuing their input, as discussed by Akkaya & Sever (2022), creates a high-trust environment that motivates collaboration and contributes to enhanced organisational performance.

In addition, encouraging a leadership mindset emerged as a crucial element of an effective agile leadership model, which aligns with the literature emphasising the cultivation of a culture that values agility and adaptability (Northouse, 2021). Thus, leaders should play a pivotal role in leading by example, and creating a culture that encourages experimentation and continuous improvement. Attar & Abdul-Kareem (2020) recommended that to foster agile leadership, organisations should establish a

culture of continuous learning and improvement. This should include providing opportunities for professional development and creating feedback mechanisms which enhance individual capabilities and strengthen collective knowledge and problem-solving capabilities (Meyer & Meijers, 2017).

5.6. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the results of the study were discussed and contextualised within the existing literature. The study found that agile leadership has a positive impact on the performance of the NUM. It was revealed that building trust, effective communication, promoting collaboration and teamwork, and encouraging a leadership mindset are fundamental practices in constructing an agile leadership model that positively influences organisational performance. These results align with prior research emphasising the significance of trust, transparent communication, collaboration, and a culture of adaptability in agile leadership. In the following chapter, these findings will be synthesised to draw comprehensive conclusions from the study, and actionable recommendations will be proposed based on the results, offering valuable insights for enhancing leadership practices within the National Union of Mineworkers and potentially benefiting other organisations seeking to thrive in dynamic and complex environments.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study and provides recommendations for practice. The chapter also suggests areas for further research, guided by the limitations of the current study. The first section presents the conclusions of the study, followed by recommendations. Lastly, the chapter provides suggested areas for further study.

6.2. Conclusions of the study

This study concluded that democratic leadership positively influences organisational performance while autocratic leadership has a negative impact. These results imply that the leadership style employed by the NUM significantly affects how the organisation performs. Democratic leadership, characterised by participative decision-making and employee involvement, leads to improved organisational performance. On the other hand, autocratic leadership, characterised by centralised decision-making and limited employee involvement, hinders organisational performance.

The absence of a significant impact of laissez-faire leadership on organisational performance in the NUM suggests that this leadership style does not strongly influence outcomes within this specific context. However, it is important to note that while laissez-faire leadership may not have a substantial impact on performance, it does not necessarily mean it is an effective leadership style in this context; rather, it may indicate that other factors play a more prominent role in shaping organisational performance within the NUM.

These findings imply that organisations, including the NUM, should consider adopting a democratic leadership approach to enhance their performance. This involves actively involving employees in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility among the workforce, and promoting a collaborative and inclusive work environment. Conversely, organisations should be cautious about relying on autocratic leadership, as it can have adverse effects on employee morale, job satisfaction, and overall organisational performance.

On the impact of agile leadership on organisational performance, based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that agile leadership has a significant positive impact on organisational performance within the NUM. The findings support the idea that agile leadership practices contribute positively to various aspects of organisational performance, such as adaptability, employee engagement, innovation, well-being, and team effectiveness. This conclusion is in line with the broader literature on agile leadership, which consistently underscores its positive influence on organisational outcomes. The study's focus on a trade union context highlights the versatility and applicability of agile leadership practices in diverse organisational settings. Therefore, organisations, including trade unions like the NUM, may benefit from adopting and promoting agile leadership approaches to enhance their overall performance and competitiveness in today's dynamic business environment.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the researcher makes recommendations on stakeholder engagement, leadership development, membership growth and agile decision-making. These recommendations are discussed below:

6.3.1 Integrating agile leadership practices with democratic principles.

The study found that both agile leadership practices and democratic leadership styles positively influence organisational performance. Therefore, to optimise organisational performance at NUM, this study recommends blending agile leadership with democratic leadership principles. This hybrid model leverages the collaborative and participative nature of democratic leadership, encouraging input from NUM members, while incorporating the agility and adaptability inherent in the agile leadership philosophy. Implementation should entail fostering transparent communication channels to ensure inclusivity in decision-making processes, promoting a culture of continuous feedback, and empowering teams to self-organise and respond swiftly to changing circumstances. This integration seeks to capitalize on the strengths of both leadership styles, creating a dynamic and responsive environment that aligns with the unique needs of NUM and enhances overall organisational performance.

6.3.2. Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement is crucial for the success of the NUM. To achieve this, the organisation should implement regular surveys and feedback mechanisms. The responsibility for this initiative primarily lies with the Membership department, working closely with the Communication and Information Technology (IT) teams. Members are the lifeblood of the NUM, and understanding their needs and concerns is paramount. These insights can inform strategic decisions and help in tailoring services and initiatives to meet stakeholders' expectations. The IT department can assist by setting up digital survey tools and platforms, while the Communication team can facilitate the distribution of survey invitations and effectively communicate the results. This proactive approach to stakeholder engagement will improve satisfaction, increase membership retention, and ultimately enhance the NUM's organisational performance.

6.3.3 Leadership development

To build an agile leadership model, the NUM should invest in leadership development programs. This responsibility primarily falls under the purview of the Human Resources department. Effective leaders play a pivotal role in driving change and adapting to evolving circumstances. By offering leadership training programs, the NUM can equip its current and potential leaders with the necessary skills and mindset for agile decision-making. These programs can encompass leadership skills, change management, and strategic thinking. The benefits are twofold: first, it empowers leaders to make agile decisions, and second, it ensures a pipeline of capable leaders for the organisation's future. Strong leadership leads to better adaptability, which, in turn, improves NUM's ability to respond to stakeholder interests and enhance overall organisational performance.

6.3.4 Agile Decision-Making

Agile decision-making is essential in a rapidly changing environment. To facilitate this, the NUM should empower cross-functional teams. The responsibility for this initiative primarily falls on the leadership team in collaboration with department heads. Empowering cross-functional teams involves delegating decision-making authority to these teams, allowing them to respond swiftly to changing circumstances. It encourages decentralised decision-making and fosters a culture of innovation and

problem-solving. Cross-functional teams are in a better position to adapt quickly and make informed decisions that align with stakeholder interests. By distributing decision-making across the organisation, the NUM can capitalise on the diverse expertise of its members and improve its ability to react effectively to evolving stakeholder needs, ultimately enhancing organisational performance.

6.4. Contribution to the study

This study contributes significantly to the body of literature on understanding the critical leadership elements that influence the performance of labour unions. The application of agile leadership theory in the context of trade unions provides insights into the efficacy of agile leadership practices, thus shedding light on potential strategies for optimising organisational performance and adaptability within labour unions. The research may also help in promoting agility, organisational responsiveness, and fostering a learning working environment within workplaces of the NUM. This, in turn, can lead to improved member retention strategies to ensure that the union remains an attractive and supportive organisation for its members.

Moreover, the study has practical implications for the NUM's leadership decision-making processes. Through pinpointing areas for potential training and development, the research equips the union's leaders with valuable information to enhance their skills and abilities. Additionally, the study highlights opportunities for growing membership of the NUM, which is an essential aspect of the union's long-term sustainability and influence. Furthermore, the research sheds light on the impact of changes in the labour market, economic pressures, and the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) on the NUM. This insight enables the union to align itself with the evolving landscape and identify opportunities for sustainable growth and success.

6.5 Limitations of the study

This study was not without its limitations. The following were the limitations of this study:

A quantitative research approach was utilised in this study, which relies on predetermined and closed-ended responses. Thus, the approach fails to capture the depth and richness of qualitative data, limiting the exploration of complex, context-specific phenomena (Flick, 2018). In addition, this study focused only on two

organisations in the Free State province. The findings may not be easily generalised to other industries, organisations, or geographical locations due to the unique context and characteristics of the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province.

Lastly, the study used a cross-sectional design, which may not capture changes or developments in the relationship between agile leadership and organisational performance over time. A longitudinal study design might provide a more comprehensive perspective.

6.6. Areas for further research

A qualitative study could delve deeper into leadership styles, including agile leadership, by conducting interviews or focus group discussions with the NUM leaders and members. This approach can provide a richer understanding of leadership dynamics, allowing for the exploration of nuances and contextual factors that may influence organisational performance.

Furthermore, a longitudinal study could track the impact of agile leadership over time within the NUM, allowing for the examination of trends and changes in organisational performance. This approach could reveal whether the effects of agile leadership are sustained, or have evolved over the years, thus providing a more comprehensive perspective.

Lastly, comparative studies could explore how different leadership models, not just agile leadership, influence the organisational performance of the NUM. A comparison between agile leadership and other leadership styles could provide valuable insights into which approach is most effective in the specific context of the NUM in the Free State Province.

6.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter concluded the study on the impact of leadership on the performance of the NUM, Free State Province. The chapter provided conclusions based on the results. It was concluded that agile leadership is key to the success of the NUM. The chapter also provided recommendations to the management of the union. In addition, contributions of the study were outlined, together with areas that could be further researched, taking into consideration, the limitations of the current study.

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ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A: PERMISSION LETTER



Thursday, 16 September 2021

The Da Vinci Institute

16 Park Ave

Modderfontein

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR MR KAGISO TIRO TO CONDUCT RESEARCH (NUM) (STUDENT NO. 7385)

This is to certify that the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has granted Mr Kagiso Tiro (Student no.7385) permission to conduct a research into the Impact of leadership styles on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers for the purposes of fulfilling the requirements of his Masters in Management (MIM) study.

Let me take this opportunity to wish the student well with his study programme, and for any queries please don't hesitate to contact our offices.

Yours faithfully,

William Mabapa
Acting General Secretary

ANNEXURE B: LETTER OF INFORMATION

7 July 2023

Dear Participant

I, Tiro Kagiso Darius, am Da Vinci Institute student, completing a master's in management (MIM) degree am conducting research into the effect of agile leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers. I sincerely request your participation in the study.

The study aims to analyse the effect of agile leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers. Therefore, this study will propose ways in which NUM could build a leadership model that speaks to stakeholder interests to contribute to increased membership and retaining efforts. Kindly note that, it will take about the 15 minutes of your time.

Participation in this project is voluntary and participants will not receive any form of reward for participating ;participants may withdraw at any stage for any reason without notice, participants `s personal identities' are not required, results will be used strictly for academic purposes and such shall be published in the form of a mini-dissertation , and there is no right or wrong answer .Should you have any questions ,please feel free to ask so that you make a decision that is best for you .All information provided through your participation in this study will be kept confidential. You will not be identified in the dissertation or any report of this research. The data collected on this study will be kept for a period of 5 years in a secure location, after which it will be destroyed.

In conclusion, the significance of this study lies in advancing knowledge on the effect of agile leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers, so make the significant contribution to the overall success of an organisation.

Thank you in advance for your co-operation in my research.

Yours Sincerely,

Tiro Kagiso Darius

Cell: 0727979087

Email Address: TiroK@eskom.co.za and tirok2015@gmail.com

For further information, please contact my supervisor on:

Name: Dr Alfred Modise

Cell: 0827036686

Email Address: mamodise@cut.ac.za

ANNEXURE C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, _____ (participant name), confirm that the person asking my consent to take part in this research has told me about the nature, procedure, potential benefits and anticipated inconvenience of participation.

I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the study as explained in the information sheet.

I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the study.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).

I am aware that the findings of this study will be processed into a research report but that my participation will be kept confidential unless otherwise specified.

I agree to the completion of the questionnaire.

I have received a signed copy of the informed consent agreement.

Participant Name & Surname (please print)

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher's Name & Surname (please print)

Researcher's signature

Date

ANNEXURE D: QUESTIONNAIRE

The effect of agile leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers.

Dear Participant,

I would like to invite you to participate in a research project for my master's degree programme. The aim of this questionnaire is to gather insights from experts like you on the effect of agile leadership on the performance of the National Union of Mineworkers.

Your participation in this study is highly appreciated. Please be assured that all information provided will be kept confidential, and no identifiable information will be shared or published. You may choose to complete the questionnaire anonymously.

The questionnaire is designed to take no more than 15 minutes to complete. Your input will be invaluable to the success of this research project.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and time.

Sincerely,

Kagiso Darius Tiro

SECTION A: Demographic Data

- 1.1. Please indicate your age group by marking the appropriate box with a cross(x)**

Age	Cross
Below 30 years	
31-40 years	
41-50 years	
Above 50 years	

- 1.2 Please indicate your gender by marking the appropriate box with a cross(x)**

Gender	Cross
Female	
Male	
Prefer not to say	

1.3 How long have you been affiliated with the union?

Please mark the appropriate box with a cross(x)

Years	Cross
Less than 5 years	
5-10 years	
10-15 years	
More than 15 years	

1.4 Educational qualifications

Please indicate your highest level of education by marking the appropriate box with a cross

Years	Cross
Matric	
Bachelors/Honours Degree	
Diploma	
Masters	
Doctorate	

SECTION B: Leadership styles utilised in managing staff at mineworkers.

Adopted from: Peter G Northouse

Purpose: To examine leadership style perceptions

Directions

1. For each of the statements below, circle the number that indicates the degree to which you agree or disagree.
2. Give your immediate impressions. There are no right or wrong answers.

Statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

1. Employees need to be supervised closely, or they are not likely to do their work.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Employees want to be a part of the decision-making process.	1	2	3	4	5
3. In complex situations, leaders should let subordinates work problems out on their own.	1	2	3	4	5
4. It is fair to say that most employees in the general population are lazy.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Providing guidance without pressure is the key to being a good leader.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Leadership requires staying out of the way of subordinates as they do their work.	1	2	3	4	5
7. As a rule, employees must be given rewards or punishments in order to motivate them to achieve organisational objectives.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Most workers prefer supportive communication from their leaders.	1	2	3	4	5
9. As a rule, leaders should allow subordinates to appraise their own work.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Most employees feel insecure about their work and need direction.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Leaders need to help subordinates accept responsibility for completing their work.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Leaders should give subordinates complete freedom to solve problems on their own.	1	2	3	4	5
13. The leader is the chief judge of the achievements of the members of the group.	1	2	3	4	5
14. It is the leader's job to help subordinates find their "passion."	1	2	3	4	5
15. In most situations, workers prefer little input from the leader.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Effective leaders give orders and clarify procedures.	1	2	3	4	5
17. People are basically competent and if given a task will do a good job.	1	2	3	4	5
18. In general, it is best to leave subordinates alone.	1	2	3	4	5
15. In most situations, workers prefer little input from the leader.	1	2	3	4	5

Scoring

1. Sum the responses on items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, and 16 (authoritarian leadership).
2. Sum the responses on items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, and 17 (democratic leadership).
3. Sum the responses on items 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18 (laissez-faire leadership).

Total Scores

Authoritarian Leadership _____

Democratic Leadership _____

Laissez-Faire Leadership _____

Scoring Interpretation

This questionnaire is designed to measure three common styles of leadership: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire. By comparing your scores, you can determine which styles are most dominant and least dominant in your own style of leadership.

If your score is 26–30, you are in the very high range. If your score is 21–25, you are in the high range.

If your score is 16–20, you are in the moderate range. If your score is 11–15, you are in the low range.

If your score is 6–10, you are in the very low range

SECTION C: Impact of different leadership styles in managing an organisation.

In this case, perceptions of different leadership styles above are then assessed in terms of their relationship with perceived organisational performance. The organisational performance scale is given in the section below.

SECTION D: Impact of agile leadership on the organisational performance

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following as they relate to agile leadership within your organisation (Agile leadership scale adapted from Park *et al.* (2015) and Subramaniam (2021).

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Leader should open to change and adapt in dynamic work environments					
Leader should encourage team members to make decisions independently					
Leaders should prioritise effective communication within teams					
Leaders should empower team members by providing autonomy and freedom to learn					
Leader should actively seek feedback from team members and consider their input in decision-making.					

Leaders should promote collaboration and teamwork within teams					
Leaders should scan the environment according to the awareness of the situation					

The following relates to aspects that measure organisational performance in the context of NUM. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the various measures of your organisation's performance.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
How satisfied are you with the effectiveness of the National Union of Mineworkers in addressing the needs and concerns of its members?	Not satisfied at all	Not satisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied
To what extent does the National Union of Mineworkers prioritise workplace safety and ensure compliance with health and safety regulations?	Not a priority at all	Not a priority	Neutral	Priority	Top priority
How would you rate the level of member engagement and participation within the National Union of Mineworkers?	Very low	low	Average	High	Very High
Please rate the National Union of Mineworkers' ability to negotiate and advocate for favourable working conditions and benefits for its members	Not effective	Somewhat effective	effective	Very effective	Extremely effective
On a scale of 1 to 5, please rate the overall performance of the NUM	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent

SECTION E: Ways to build an agile leadership model to increase and retain membership and enhance organisational performance.

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following as they relate to ways of building an agile leadership model within your organisation.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Fostering trust among team members is crucial for building agile leadership that drives high organisational performance at NUM					
Effective communication is a significant factor in developing agile leadership that leads to high organisational performance at NUM.					
Meaningful connections within the organisation play a substantial role in nurturing agile leadership and enhancing overall performance at NUM					
Fostering collaboration among team members significantly contributes to the establishment of agile leadership that drives high organisational performance at NUM.					

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!

ANNEXURE E: ETHICAL APPROVAL LETTER

The Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management (Pty) Ltd
PO Box 185, Modderfontein, 1645, South Africa
Tel + 27 11 608 1331 Fax +27 11 608 1380
www.davinci.ac.za



Reference: 02921
Date: 10 November 2021

Ethical Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the Masters Research of the student named below has received ethical clearance from The Da Vinci Institute Ethics Committee. The student and supervisor will be expected to continue to uphold the Da Vinci Institute's Research Ethics Policy as indicated during the application.

Proposed Title: The effect of agile leadership styles on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers

Student Name: Tiro Kagiso Darius

Student number: 7385

Supervisor: Dr Mario Landman

Co-Supervisor: N/A

Period: Ethics approval is granted from 2021/11/10 to 2023/10/01

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Klepper', written over a horizontal line.

Chairperson: Research & Ethics Committee

ANNEXURE F: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

RLGM LANGUAGE SERVICES

Declaration of Professional Language Editing

This serves to confirm that I (Ramolobi LG Matlala) have copy edited and formatted the master's dissertation titled:

The impact of leadership on organisational performance at the National Union of Mineworkers in Free State Province, South Africa, compiled by Mr Kagiso Darius Tiro (author).

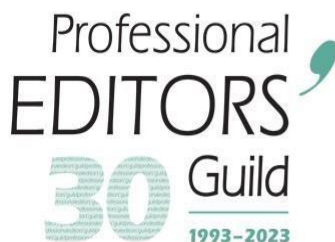
As a copy editor, my role was limited to checking language usage and spelling, completeness and consistency, referencing style and formatting of headings, captions and the Table of Contents. I hereby declare that did not re-write the content of the document.

I have used track changes, and made suggestions to the author to improve grammar, the style and the readability of the text further.

The author had to accept and/or reject the suggested changes and attend to other editorial suggestions that I have communicated to him.

Kind regards,

R. MATLALA



Promoting excellence in editing

Ramolobi LG Matlala

Full Member

Membership number: MAT01
Membership year: March 2023 to February 2024

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12/10/2023