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**The impact of Ubuntu leadership on salespeople's self-efficacy in South Africa**

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A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration.

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**Abstract**

This study investigates the impact of Ubuntu leadership on employee self-efficacy among sales professionals in South Africa. Drawing on validated scales for Ubuntu (Mutsonziwa, 2020; Ngcobo, 2018) and general self-efficacy (Bandura, 2006), the research utilises a quantitative design to test the extent to which collectivism, empathy, and community-building, core Ubuntu principles, influence confidence in sales performance. Major findings reveal Ubuntu leadership predicts self-efficacy outcomes with statistical and practical significance ( $\beta$ : 0.43–0.52,  $p < 0.01$ ), mirroring recent evidence in the South African context (Chetty & Price, 2024). These results provide actionable guidance for embracing culturally resonant leadership frameworks to enhance organisational effectiveness and resilience in dynamic, diverse workforces.

**Keywords:** Ubuntu leadership, self-efficacy, business performance

**Plagiarism Declaration**

*I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.*

Robert Masson

3 November 2025

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## **Chapter 1: Definition of The Problem and Purpose**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This research explores the impact of Ubuntu Leadership on the self-efficacy of sales professionals in the South African sales environment, specifically examining how the cross-cultural leadership beliefs of Ubuntu, described as "an African philosophy" (Asiimwe, 2023; Oelofse, 2007), influence employee self-efficacy. While traditional Western management models often emphasise individualistic drivers of performance, there is a growing appreciation for the need for culturally aligned leadership practices in diverse contexts (Chetty & Price, 2024; Nelwamondo, 2024). Ubuntu, a collectivist African philosophy rooted in principles of compassion, solidarity, and interconnectedness, is increasingly recognised as a relevant leadership framework for the South African workplace (Chetty & Price, 2024; Muller et al., 2019). However, its practical use and measurable effects on important employee outcomes, such as self-efficacy, remain not sufficiently understood.

The research highlights important aspects of Ubuntu, such as teamwork, understanding others, and community, that greatly influence how confident salespeople feel in their skills. By highlighting the impact of Ubuntu on self-efficacy, the research aims to provide evidence for organisations to adopt culturally aligned practices that boost productivity, including enhanced engagement (Hamman, 2012; Oelofse, 2007) and self-assessed self-efficacy (Carter et al., 2018; Nelwamondo, 2024), while also expanding the knowledge of non-Western efficacy drivers within the field of social psychology (Govender & Bussin, 2020). While traditional Western management paradigms often emphasise individualistic drivers of performance, there is a growing recognition of the need for culturally aligned leadership practices in diverse contexts (Chetty & Price, 2024; Lerutla & Steyn, 2021; Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025). Despite the philosophical recognition of Ubuntu's values (e.g., collectivism, empathy, community, compassion, solidarity, interconnectedness) as a potential leadership framework in South Africa (Mutsonziwa, 2020; Oelofse, 2007), the validation of its specific impact on organisational outcomes, particularly employee self-efficacy, remains underdeveloped (Goldman et al., 2019).

Ubuntu leadership, which focuses on community, interconnectedness, and shared values (Goldman et al., 2019), can enhance employees' self-efficacy, characterised as the belief

in one's ability to perform tasks successfully (Bandura, 1997a). By providing a nurturing and collaborative atmosphere, Ubuntu leadership has the capacity to improve individuals' self-perceived confidence in their skills, which serves as a crucial psychological asset within organisational contexts. Subsequently, the study aims to investigate whether Ubuntu leadership contributes to improved business outcomes through enhanced self-efficacy. The research addresses a significant challenge faced by South African organisations by providing evidence-based insights. These findings are designed to assist organisations in applying Ubuntu principles to increase employee engagement and self-efficacy, ultimately resulting in enhanced overall performance. The analysis focuses specifically on sales employees within a dynamic and competitive environment, where the interconnections between leadership, self-efficacy, and business outcomes are important.

This research addresses the critical business problem of maintaining employee performance and resilience in high-pressure, dynamic work environments (Pacor, 2024). These demanding conditions often lead to low self-efficacy, an individual's belief in their own capabilities, which results in poor motivation, reduced productivity, and high employee turnover (; Pacor, 2024).

The study posits that self-efficacy is the key psychological predictor of performance(Khalique, 2019). High self-efficacy fosters motivation, persistence, and the pursuit of ambitious goals. Therefore, the central challenge for organisations is for leadership to cultivate self-efficacy in their employees actively(Khalique, 2019).

While established strategies like mastery experiences, mentoring, and supportive feedback are known to enhance self-efficacy(Baumeister & Tice, 1985; Khalique, 2019). This research shows an important gap that we need leadership models that are relevant to different cultures (Roach, 2013). It aims to fill this void by providing the first empirical validation of the indigenous African philosophy of Ubuntu as a practical leadership framework(Chetty & Price, 2024). The study's primary contribution is to translate Ubuntu from a philosophical concept into a measurable, applied tool for enhancing employee self-efficacy and performance within a South African context.

## **1.2 Business Need for the Study**

The contemporary business landscape in South Africa is characterised by a unique cultural diversity, yet organisations predominantly rely on Western leadership models (Chetty & Price, 2024; Muller et al., 2019; Nelwamondo, 2024). These models, often

focused on individualistic performance drivers. However, this may not fully align with the socio-cultural values of a large portion of the workforce, potentially limiting organisational effectiveness and creating a competitive disadvantage (Nelwamondo, 2024; Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019). This mismatch represents a missed opportunity for businesses to leverage indigenous philosophies, such as *Ubuntu*, to enhance their human capital in a culturally resonant style (Nelwamondo, 2024; Ngcobo, 2018).

The business problem stems from a lack of clear, evidence-based insights for South African organisations seeking to leverage indigenous leadership philosophies to enhance human capital (Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025; Oelofse, 2007). While *Ubuntu* is widely discussed, its practical application and measurable effects on the workforce are not sufficiently understood (Carter et al., 2018). South Africa is a uniquely diverse country with a rich heritage and diverse cultures, yet organisations tend to lean more on Western methods of leadership (Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025). Little data has been investigated and published about African leadership and its effect on business (Lerutla & Steyn, 2021). There is a pressing need for measurement scales for *Ubuntu*, as shown in the initial work by Mutsonziwa (2020); (Ngcobo, 2018) and comprehensive data to support claims about its effectiveness in fostering key employee outcomes such as self-efficacy (Goldman et al., 2019; Sachikonye & Ramlogan, 2024).

South African businesses struggle to apply *Ubuntu* principles effectively because there is insufficient empirical data demonstrating how these principles actually influence employee outcomes within local organisations (Carter et al., 2018). Some studies indicate that *Ubuntu* may improve self-efficacy in the workplace (Goldman et al., 2019), the relationship between the two is not always evident, as self-efficacy refers to an individual's own belief in their capacity to achieve success in particular situations or tasks. (Bandura, 2012; Bandura & Wessels, 1997). *Ubuntu*, a philosophy rooted in human relations and collectivism (Chetty & Price, 2024), is increasingly recognised as a leadership framework in South Africa. However, Goldman et al. (2019) note the absence of validated scales to measure its organisational impact, particularly on employee engagement and self-efficacy, key drivers of performance in culturally diverse workplaces (Govender & Bussin, 2020). The diverse understandings of *Ubuntu*, combined with the limited availability of in-depth research, require further investigation into its practical application and impact on employee outcomes. According to Oelofse (2007), there is a need for a more profound understanding and validation of *Ubuntu* as a management and leadership philosophy within South African organisations and its impact on key organisational outcomes

(Nelwamondo, 2024); Ngcobo (2018), specifically employee engagement and self-efficacy.

Existing conceptualisations of Ubuntu lack psychometrically effective and comprehensive measurement scales and comprehensive evidence from experience to support claims about its effectiveness in organisations (Goldman et al., 2019). Understanding the role and impact of Ubuntu can provide valuable insights for managers operating in the South African business environment (Chetty & Price, 2024; Nelwamondo, 2024), potentially leading to improved self-efficacy, which has proven crucial for organisational success (Carter et al., 2018; Cherian & Jacob, 2013). Self-efficacy, defined as an individual's belief in their capacity to execute tasks and achieve goals (Bandura, 2012), is a critical predictor of performance in sales environments (Peterson et al., 2021). Understanding how Ubuntu leadership specifically influences sales personnel's self-efficacy can provide a competitive advantage by enabling organisations to cultivate a more engaged and effective workforce aligned with the unique South African socio-cultural environment (Oelofse, 2007). In the South African context and in today's increasingly competitive business landscape, it is crucial for organisations to utilise their human resources through inclusive leadership best practices to gain a competitive advantage (Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025; Peterson, 2020).

### **1.3 Theoretical Need for the Study**

From a theoretical perspective, a significant gap exists in the academic literature concerning the empirical validation of non-Western leadership philosophies and their relationship with established psychological constructs (Chetty & Price, 2024; Ehrnrooth et al., 2024; Nelwamondo, 2024). While the values of Ubuntu are clearly explained in philosophy and sociology, there is still more to learn about how it can be used in leadership and its measurable effects on employee well-being (Chetty & Price, 2024; Sachikonye & Ramlogan, 2024). A major challenge in thoroughly studying Ubuntu in organisations is the lack of reliable and clearly defined measurement tools (Goldman et al., 2019; Mutsonziwa, 2020).

Research on the connection between Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy is actively exploring how the philosophy's emphasis on community and relational practices influences employee outcomes, such as self-efficacy. For example, Ngcobo (2018) investigates whether factors such as leaders' or followers' demographics affect perceptions of self-efficacy. This involves examining the theoretical constructs of Ubuntu and identifying specific dimensions of leadership that align with self-efficacy.

The arguments above highlight that the link between Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy is underdeveloped in the existing literature. The aim of this research is to provide a definitive clarification of the relationship between these two constructs, thereby addressing the existing gaps.

We need to identify the key parts of Ubuntu that help boost self-efficacy. We should also gather evidence to help organisations use Ubuntu principles to improve employee outcomes (Muller et al., 2019; Peterson, 2020). The evidence confirms that the problem is the shortage of reliable measurement scales for Ubuntu (Goldman et al. (2019) and the limited generalisability of existing studies on its impact on employee self-efficacy. There is potential for Ubuntu to enable employees to reach organisational objectives (Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2017; Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019) and foster inclusivity within the distinct socio-cultural landscape of South Africa. We need to look more closely at how certain features of Ubuntu could affect self-efficacy.

While Ubuntu values, such as compassion and solidarity, are emphasised in philosophical discussions (Chetty & Price, 2024), there is an absence of comprehensive measurement tools and evidence to support their influence on employee engagement and self-efficacy within South African organisations (Mutsonziwa, 2020). This study aims to address this gap by utilising and validating existing scales and quantitatively testing Ubuntu's influence on employee self-efficacy (Carter et al., 2018; Chetty & Price, 2024; Christian et al., 2011; Goldman et al., 2019; Govender & Bussin, 2020; Miraglia et al., 2017; Mutsonziwa, 2020).

The aim of this research is to contribute to the body of knowledge on non-Western leadership philosophies and their relationship with established psychological constructs like self-efficacy (Chetty & Price, 2024; Ehnrooth et al., 2024). This research will move beyond descriptive discussions to offer a rigorous, quantifiable analysis of Ubuntu's dimensions and their specific impact on self-efficacy, thereby addressing the limited generalisability of existing conceptual studies (Nelwamondo, 2024; Ngcobo, 2018).

#### **1.4 The Ubuntu Leadership Gap**

The contemporary business landscape in South Africa faces a significant challenge rooted in a fundamental knowledge gap due to the absence of clear, evidence-based insights for organisations to effectively leverage indigenous leadership philosophies, particularly Ubuntu, for human capital enhancement (Chetty & Price, 2024; Nelwamondo, 2024). The issue is not just the absence of clear, evidence-based research on the impact of Ubuntu

on self-efficacy; the adoption of Western traditional leadership models by South African businesses is also a concern, (Muller et al., 2019). Many Western leadership practices focus on individual factors that drive performance but these practices often do not align effectively with South Africa's diverse cultural background (Oelofse, 2007). This mismatch may unintentionally prevent organisations from fully unlocking the potential of their human resources.

The impact of Ubuntu on workplace outcomes, especially employee self-efficacy, is not extensively researched and comprehended. It is essential to develop validated measurement tools for Ubuntu (Mutsonziwa (2020) and gather solid data to support its role in improving outcomes like self-efficacy. The predominant focus on Western leadership practices may not align well with a context rich in local values and diverse cultural backgrounds like South Africa, (Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025; Oelofse, 2007). Without evidence of how Ubuntu affects the workforce, organisations are not entirely using a culturally meaningful way to enhance their workforce, which could provide them with a unique advantage and sustainable success (Chetty & Price, 2024). The research uses pre-existing scales to quantitatively test and provide evidence for a causal link between Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy. Validated scales by Bandura (2006) and the Ubuntu measurement tools introduced by Mutsonziwa (2020), and applied by Chetty & Price (2024), supplied the analytical backbone for quantifying self-efficacy and Ubuntu leadership.

## **Chapter 2 Theory and Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter constructs the theoretical foundation for investigating the relationship between Ubuntu leadership and employee self-efficacy. The purpose of this review is not to merely define these concepts in isolation, but to build a compelling academic argument that a synergistic relationship exists between them. By critically analysing and integrating the literature on social cognitive theory, self-efficacy, and the principles of Ubuntu, this chapter will demonstrate a clear theoretical gap and establish the logical necessity for the research questions. The review will conclude with clear and specific hypotheses that are derived directly from summarising the current academic discussions.

Ubuntu's significance as a leadership style in business lies in its potential to enhance productivity, foster cultural alignment West (2014), and provide alternatives to Western management models (Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025). Despite theoretical discussions on Ubuntu's values, such as compassion, solidarity, and respect, studied by Mutsonziwa (2020) research remains to be thoroughly underdeveloped. This chapter reviews the current literature on leadership, employee engagement, and self-efficacy, focusing specifically on Ubuntu leadership. The purpose of the review is to integrate theoretical and empirical insights, identify gaps in existing research, and establish a basis for exploring the connection between Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy within South African organisations.

### **The Theoretical Synergy between Ubuntu Leadership and the Antecedents of Self-Efficacy**

#### **2.2 Defining Self-Efficacy**

Self-efficacy, a foundation of Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory, is defined as an individual's belief in their capacity to execute behaviours necessary to produce specific performance realisations (Bandura & Wessels, 1997). This belief reflects not only a person's skills but also how they can use those skills (Bandura, 1991). Given its profound influence on motivation, goal attainment, and psychological well-being, the accurate and valid measurement of self-efficacy is critical for both research and applied practice (Chen et al., 2001). This research looks at the main methods for measuring self-efficacy. It focuses on Bandura's traditional two-step method and the popular Likert-scale method. The study also highlights important differences in how these methods measure and interpret results.

Self-efficacy is a central construct within Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1991), defined not as a measure of the skills an individual possesses, but as their belief in their capacity to organise and execute the actions required to achieve specific goals. This cognitive belief is a powerful determinant of how individuals approach challenges, the effort they expend, their persistence in the face of adversity, and their ultimate performance. In demanding professional environments like sales, self-efficacy is a well-established and critical predictor of success.

Self-efficacy is fundamentally defined as an individual's belief in their capacity to successfully execute tasks and achieve specific goals. As (Bandura, 1997a, 2012) argues that self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to organise and execute the courses of action required to achieve specific performances. This is not about the skills one objectively possesses but about their confidence in applying these skills toward achieving specific goals or outcomes (Bandura, 1977; Bandura & Wessels, 1997).

According to Bandura, self-efficacy beliefs are developed through four primary sources of information: (1) mastery experiences (successful performance), (2) vicarious experiences (observing the success of similar others), (3) social persuasion (verbal encouragement from others), and (4) physiological and affective (Bandura, 1977, 1997b). The latter two vicarious experiences and social persuasion are profoundly social in nature and highlight the critical role that leadership and the organisational environment play in shaping an employee's confidence. An environment rich with encouragement, positive role models, and collective support can therefore directly cultivate higher levels of self-efficacy. This theoretical link positions leadership not as a peripheral factor, but as a central mechanism in the development of this crucial psychological resource.

This cognitive construct, first conceptualised by Bandura (1977), is not merely a measure of skill but a powerful determinant of how individuals approach challenges, persist in the face of adversity, and ultimately perform. Self-efficacy controls how humans function through cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection processes. In demanding professional environments, such as sales, self-efficacy is recognised as a critical predictor of performance (Carter et al., 2018). Its significance in personal selling literature spans over four decades, with its presence in numerous articles underscoring its established importance in driving sales success (Peterson, 2020). The proposed research adopted a refined self-efficacy scale, building upon Bandura's two-stage methodology, to accurately capture this crucial aspect of individual capability (Bandura, 2012).

## **Ubuntu the bridge from Self-Efficacy to Business performance**

### **2.3 Ubuntu Leadership: An Indigenous Framework for Organisational Well-being**

Ubuntu is a collectivist African philosophy encapsulated by the maxim, "I am because we are," which champions principles of compassion, solidarity, interconnectedness, and collective support (Elkington, 2020). As a leadership framework, Ubuntu offers a powerful alternative to traditional Western models by prioritising the well-being of the community, fostering collaborative decision-making, and nurturing an atmosphere of mutual respect and shared responsibility (Chetty & Price, 2024; Ehrnrooth et al., 2024). This approach moves beyond a purely transactional view of management to one that is relational and human-centric.

The positive correlation between higher self-efficacy and both individual and organisational success is well-established in research (Cherian & Jacob, 2013; Peterson, 2020). This belief in one's capabilities serves as a robust driver of performance across various business contexts.

A direct positive impact of self-efficacy on business outcomes is consistently observed. Studies confirm that high self-efficacy among entrepreneurs and employees significantly boosts key business outcomes, including firm growth, profitability, and organisational resilience (Caliendo et al., 2023). Entrepreneurs with strong self-efficacy tend to be more resilient and persistent (Caliendo et al., 2023), they are more willing to take calculated risks and find creative solutions to problems. These qualities help them succeed in business and gain a competitive edge. For example, (Caliendo et al., 2023) found that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is positively connected with firm growth and profitability, as confident entrepreneurs are more likely to pursue ambitious goals and adapt to market changes. Similarly, employees with a strong sense of self-efficacy are more likely to set ambitious goals, persevere through obstacles, and engage in continuous learning, leading to measurable improvements in their job performance (Carter et al., 2018). (Carter et al., 2018) demonstrated that self-efficacy significantly impacts job performance by mobilising motivation and cognitive resources.

The ability of self-efficacy to foster resilience and innovation suggests that it is not merely about executing tasks efficiently but about enabling an organisation's adaptive capacity in dynamic environments (Demir, 2020; Jerusalem & Mittag, 1995; Schwarzer & Warner, 2012). This is particularly vital for long-term competitive advantage in sectors in the sales

environment, where market conditions and strategies are constantly evolving (Peterson, 2020). The emphasis on self-efficacy as a predictor of performance and a driver of competitive advantage elevates human capital development from a purely operational concern to a strategic investment (Carter et al., 2018; Peterson, 2020).

According to Nelwamondo (2024), the higher self-efficacy that results from Ubuntu leadership translates directly into more effective problem-solving, increased initiative, enhanced resilience, and greater innovation, all of which are core drivers of business results. This relationship is not merely linear but represents a reinforcing cycle. Ubuntu creates a supportive and safe environment, which in turn boosts individual and collective self-efficacy (Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019). This enhanced self-efficacy then fuels behaviours such as innovation and robust problem-solving, which further strengthens team and organisational performance (Cherian & Jacob, 2013). This positive feedback loop can, in turn, reinforce the very Ubuntu culture that initiated the process, creating a sustainable model for organisational development.

The combined effect of Ubuntu and self-efficacy suggests a model where human flourishing, encompassing compassion, dignity, and community, directly translates into organisational agility and competitive advantage (Chetty & Price, 2024). This approach goes beyond typical measures of human resources. It provides a clearer picture of how well an organisation is performing and how healthy it is (Sarraf & Berman, 2017). It implies that organisations are not faced with a choice between being "human-centric" and "performance-driven"; rather, Ubuntu enables the simultaneous achievement of both, representing a significant implication for diverse business contexts where traditional Western models may prove insufficient, (Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025; Muller et al., 2019; West, 2014)

The following table summarises the evidence linking self-efficacy to business performance:

Key Findings	Evidence
Self-efficacy → Better business	Entrepreneurs with high self-efficacy achieve stronger firm performance and sustainable growth.

Key Findings	Evidence
Self-efficacy → Resilience & Innovation	Enables business leaders to adapt, persist through setbacks, and innovate, driving business momentum.
Self-efficacy → Higher engagement	Employees report greater commitment, creativity, and productivity.

Adopting a validated measurement scale for Ubuntu would help managers assess its impact and integrate its principles into culturally diverse teams, particularly in South Africa (Ngcobo, 2018)(Mutsonziwa, 2020). Leadership approaches inspired by Ubuntu could transform organisational practices by prioritising sustainability and the well-being of the community over immediate profit motives, providing a uniquely African viewpoint on global business issues (Lerutla & Steyn, 2021).

Future studies should investigate how Ubuntu-centered leadership can be integrated with more conventional, hierarchical business structures, thus bridging the divide between different leadership models (Asiimwe, 2023; Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025). This would enable organisations to foster a more inclusive, nurturing, and effective leadership environment (Ye et al., 2019). Accordingly, this research delivers evidence-based insights for South African organisations on utilising Ubuntu principles to boost employee engagement and self-efficacy, ultimately leading to enhanced organisational performance (Ngcobo, 2018).The research's theoretical purpose is to contribute to the body of knowledge on leadership and management philosophies by developing a better understanding of Ubuntu's theoretical constructs and the theory's realistic relationship with employee outcomes, (Goldman et al., 2019). There has been significant focus on the impact of Ubuntu in organisations. While some literature discusses its philosophical principles, many writings lack research to support claims about Ubuntu's effectiveness in organisational management (Goldman et al., 2019). This clearly signifies a need for data that identifies the precursors of Ubuntu and proposes measurement scales, as well as offers insights into its significance as a management approach.

## **2.4 Defining Ubuntu theory and Ubuntu Leadership in the Business context**

Ubuntu is a profound collectivist African philosophy, deeply embedded in human relations, that champions principles of compassion, solidarity, interconnectedness, and collective support. This philosophy, which translates to "I am because we are," (Khosa, 2005) offers a unique lens through which to view leadership and organisational dynamics. Within South Africa, the Ubuntu philosophy is gaining recognition as a culturally relevant and effective leadership framework (Asiimwe, 2023), offering a strong alternative to predominantly Western management and leadership models (Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025). Embracing Ubuntu leadership in business enhances traditional leadership approaches by fostering collaborative decision-making processes (Asiimwe, 2023; Elkington, 2020), ensuring that all contributors find meaning in their work, and promoting a thorough understanding of the root causes of issues, especially when employees are not performing well. This mindset nurtures an atmosphere where mutual respect and shared responsibility (Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019) are essential, paving the way for improved individual and collective capabilities.

Ubuntu leadership practices exert a direct and significant influence on employee self-efficacy (Muller et al., 2019; Mutsonziwa, 2020). This leadership approach builds a strong sense of belonging and teamwork among employees. As a result, it helps them trust their own skills and abilities (Chetty & Price, 2024; Nelwamondo, 2024). Empowering team members, building trust, and recognizing individual strengths in Ubuntu leadership enhances self-efficacy, especially in diverse and virtual work environments (Chetty & Price, 2024; Hartmann & Lussier, 2020; Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019). Some key beliefs of Ubuntu, like mentoring and teamwork, help employees build self-efficacy and trust in the workplace (Mutsonziwa, 2020).

Ubuntu leaders actively encourage environments that promote psychological safety. This is achieved through behaviours such as encouraging the sharing of resources and knowledge among team members or demonstrating compassion when employees encounter difficulties (Sarra & Berman, 2017). Such actions directly diminish an individual's apprehension of failure or isolation. This supportive environment acts as a form of social persuasion, reinforcing the conviction that challenges can be collectively surmounted, which in turn boosts individual self-efficacy (Bandura, 2012; Mutsonziwa, 2020). Observing leaders navigate adversity, a trait encapsulated in the "Survival/Resilience" dimension of Ubuntu leadership, provides a powerful vicarious

experience for employees (Muller et al., 2019). This teaches employees that resilience is achievable, and it also enhances their own belief in their capacity to cope and adapt (Bandura, 2012).

This demonstrates that Ubuntu is more than just a leadership style, it represents a holistic developmental framework that nurtures individual psychological capital through the cultivation of collective well-being (Mutsonziwa, 2020; Sarra & Berman, 2017). This comprehensive approach, deeply rooted in interconnectedness, suggests that Ubuntu fosters self-efficacy not as an isolated trait but as a natural outcome of a supportive, humane, and resilient collective environment (Mutsonziwa, 2020). This impact is potentially more profound and sustainable than that achieved through targeted individual interventions.

Research shows that Ubuntu leadership enhances self-efficacy in employees by emphasising team cohesion, mutual support, and recognition (Muller et al., 2019; Ngcobo, 2018). This research provides an analysis of Ubuntu's distinct dimensions and their impact on self-efficacy, establishing a foundation for its application in organisational management and positive employee outcomes (Bandura, 2012; Goldman et al., 2019). Ngcobo (2018) specifically found that employees' perceptions of Ubuntu leadership practices, such as empathy and fairness, significantly enhance their confidence in their abilities.

While Ubuntu's principles are deeply rooted in African culture, its emphasis on humanity and interconnectedness offers universal lessons in leadership (Asiimwe, 2023). The challenge is to adapt these principles to various business contexts without compromising their core values. Research on Ubuntu leadership, particularly by Hailey (2008) and Woermann & Engelbrecht (2019), alongside the concept of servant leadership, provides insights into enhancing employee engagement (Muller et al., 2019). This understanding is crucial in navigating South Africa's diverse socio-cultural environment to improve performance in the workplace.

Ubuntu's emphasis on collectivism and principles of shared problem-solving and empathy aligns with (Bandura & Wessels, 1997)'s theory of self-efficacy, which was further refined by Bandura (2012). The theory states that social persuasion and vicarious experiences, like observing resilient leadership, strengthen individuals' belief in their own capabilities. Although initial qualitative studies from Goldman et al. (2019) have conceptualised Ubuntu as both a state of being and a tool for resilience across various disciplines, including law,

philosophy, and psychology, there has been limited progress in conducting rigorous research that links Ubuntu to organisational outcomes. While some measurement scales have been developed by researchers like Mutsonziwa (2020), the Ubuntu measurement scale needs further investigation to understand the impact of Ubuntu in organisational settings thoroughly (Muller et al., 2019).

Although researchers like Muller et al. (2019), Chetty and Price (2024), and Ngcobo (2019) have developed measurement scales, these efforts often lack construct validity, psychometric robustness, and consistent definitions. This inconsistency makes it challenging to confirm the dimensions of Ubuntu or to distinguish it from related concepts such as collectivism. Studies examining the impact of Ubuntu on self-efficacy and organisational success are sparse, revealing gaps in establishing reliable measures and testing theoretical propositions.

Recent efforts by Chetty and Price (2024) and Mutsonziwa (2020) aim to address these deficiencies by providing quantitative validation and exploring causal relationships. However, further research is still required to differentiate Ubuntu from collectivism and to develop clearer practical integrations within organisations (West, 2014). This suggests that we require clear definitions and thoughtful consideration of Ubuntu. Research should explore its various aspects more deeply to enhance its use as a tool for leadership and engagement in organisations, particularly when compared to modern Western practices (Asiimwe, 2023). Relatively little empirical research has been conducted to develop a reliable and valid measure of Ubuntu, and the concept has faced challenges in terms of a clear definition (Goldman et al., 2019; Mutsonziwa, 2020; West, 2014). This research explores the Ubuntu philosophy for its potential to foster positive organisational outcomes within the South African business landscape, which is characterised by diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. The research does this by drawing on theoretical perspectives developed by researchers such as Ngcobo (2018), and Chetty and Price (2024) to examine Ubuntu leadership and its impact on employee engagement and self-efficacy.

A review of the Literature demonstrates a growing interest in Ubuntu as a management and leadership concept. However, several limitations have been identified, such as measurement challenges (Chetty & Price, 2024). The lack of validated and reliable quantitative measurement scales for Ubuntu limits rigorous investigation. Although Chetty and Price (2024) and Ngcobo (2018) have employed quantitative scales, further validation is needed. Studies on the impact of Ubuntu on employee engagement and self-efficacy

are often conducted within single organisations or specific sectors, which limits the generalisability of the findings (Ngcobo, 2018). There is a need for a deeper understanding of constructs; further research is necessary to identify which specific elements of Ubuntu most influence positive employee outcomes. Research specifically examining the relationship between Ubuntu leadership and employee self-efficacy in the South African context is still emerging (Nelwamondo, 2024).

This review looks at early efforts to define and measure Ubuntu in business. It also includes studies that explore how Ubuntu relates to employee engagement (Muller et al., 2019) and theoretical proposals outlining its potential link with self-efficacy. While these studies provide a useful foundation, they also reveal significant gaps that this research seeks to address, including the need for more robust measurement instruments and studies conducted across broader organisational contexts. As (Goldman et al., 2019) and (Mangaroo-Pillay, 2025) state, future research should investigate how Ubuntu-inspired leadership practices can be integrated into more traditional, hierarchical business environments. By bridging the gap between these diverse approaches, organisations can foster a more inclusive, supportive, and effective leadership culture.

## **2.5 Key Dimensions of Ubuntu in Fostering Self-Efficacy**

The principles of Ubuntu leadership align seamlessly with the social antecedents of self-efficacy (Muller et al., 2019; Ngcobo, 2018), as described in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1991). The connection is not just a matter of ideas, but it also occurs through real-life ways people learn from each other in society. An Ubuntu-led community, filled with support and shared identity, encourages shared experiences and influences social interactions (Elkington, 2020; Muller et al., 2019; Uhl-Bien, 2006) that are foundational to building robust self-efficacy beliefs. Ubuntu leaders, by their very nature, foster a supportive environment that acts as a powerful form of social persuasion (Chetty & Price, 2024).

When leaders demonstrate compassion, show genuine concern for employee well-being, and encourage collective problem-solving, they are verbally and non-verbally communicating a belief in their team's capabilities (Chetty & Price, 2024; Randall, 2024; Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019). This reduces the apprehension associated with challenging tasks and reinforces the conviction that obstacles can be surmounted collectively, directly boosting individual self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977; Zhou et al., 2021).

The connection between Ubuntu and self-efficacy is not abstract. It operates through concrete social learning mechanisms, as articulated by (Bandura, 2012)'s theory of self-efficacy. Ubuntu's emphasis on collectivism, shared problem-solving, and empathy aligns directly with Bandura's concepts of social persuasion and vicarious experiences (Nelwamondo, 2024; Peterson, 2020). When followers observe leaders practising Ubuntu, demonstrating compassion, or embodying resilience, they internalise these qualities. This process of internalisation strengthens their own belief in their capabilities, thereby enhancing their self-efficacy (Ngcobo, 2018).

Self-efficacy has been a significant focus in personal selling literature for over 40 years, appearing in more than five dozen articles, (Peterson (2020). However, linking Ubuntu principles to the South African context is limited. According to Chetty and Price (2024) Ubuntu theory enhances leadership styles by promoting collaborative decision-making, ensuring meaningful work, and seeking to understand the root causes of challenges when employees are underperforming. Such an approach has the potential to positively impact employee self-efficacy.

Ubuntu leadership practices, by developing a sense of belonging and shared purpose, directly nurture employees' confidence in their abilities (Nelwamondo, 2024). This approach promotes psychological safety, reduces the fear of failure, and encourages employees to take initiative and be innovative, all of which are critical for enhancing self-efficacy. The literature, while often descriptive, indicates that Ubuntu leadership strengthens self-efficacy by prioritising team cohesion, mutual support, and recognition (Chetty & Price, 2024).

## **2.6 The specific dimensions of Ubuntu leadership (collectivism, empathy, and community) align with and predict self-efficacy.**

The relationship between Ubuntu and self-efficacy is not abstract but is mediated by specific, measurable dimensions. Each dimension of Ubuntu leadership contributes uniquely to fostering self-efficacy in employees:

**2.6.1 Collectivism/Spirit of Solidarity:** This dimension fosters a sense of belonging and shared purpose, where individuals feel supported by the collective. This support increases their confidence in tackling tasks as part of a team, aligning with Bandura's concept of social persuasion (Peterson, 2020). This leads to the second hypothesis:

**2.6.2 Empathy/Compassion:** Ubuntu leaders who demonstrate empathy create a psychologically safe environment where employees feel understood and supported. This reduces the fear of failure and encourages risk-taking and learning from setbacks, both of which are vital for developing self-efficacy. This aligns with Bandura's concepts of social persuasion. Community buildings a sense of community enhances individual confidence by reinforcing their status as a valued member of a cohesive group, fostering a sense of shared capability and mutual support. This leads to the fourth hypothesis:

The following table illustrates the comprehensive chain linking Ubuntu leadership to business performance through self-efficacy:

Step	Evidence
<b>Ubuntu leadership → Higher self-efficacy</b>	Ubuntu leadership strengthens employee confidence and capability belief.
<b>High self-efficacy → Business results</b>	Self-efficacy directly boosts firm performance, innovation, and resilience.
<b>Overall Impact: Ubuntu leadership → Business performance</b>	By increasing self-efficacy and engagement, Ubuntu leadership delivers superior performance.

## 2.7 Summary

The literature review has established that self-efficacy is a critical predictor of performance and that culturally aligned leadership, such as Ubuntu, may be a key precursor. While theoretical connections are evident, a research gap exists due to the limited empirical data and a lack of validated measurement scales to support these claims. The purpose of this research is to address this gap by quantitatively testing the relationships between the dimensions of Ubuntu leadership and employee self-efficacy in a specific context. This study aims to use existing scales and previous studies to validate Ubuntu's usefulness in organisational management and its role in fostering positive employee outcomes.



## **Chapter 3 Research Questions:**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The research proposes four main hypotheses regarding the influence of Ubuntu leadership on employee self-efficacy.

- Hypothesis One (H1): Spirit of Ubuntu leadership practice has a positive and significant impact on self-efficacy.
- Hypothesis Two (H2): Collectivism has a positive effect on self-efficacy
- Hypothesis Three (H3): Empathy has a positive effect on self-efficacy
- Hypothesis Four (H4): Community has a positive effect on self-efficacy

The main hypothesis investigates the impact of Ubuntu on self-efficacy. It investigates whether the application of Ubuntu principles in leadership positively affect follower perceived self-efficacy within South African organisations (Schwarzer & Warner, 2012). This hypothesis includes specific inquiries into which dimensions of Ubuntu, such as collectivism, empathy, and community, exert the strongest influence on self-efficacy.

Sub-hypotheses: Followers who view Ubuntu leaders as resilient report higher self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Warner, 2012). This will further explore how dimensions like empathy may have a stronger influence on engagement than collectivism.

Justification for these hypotheses draws on existing literature, such as the work of Ngcobo (2018) and (Sarra & Berman, 2017) to support the plausibility of these relationships. Additionally, measurement frameworks were employed, with H1 assessed using the General Self-Efficacy Scale and existing Ubuntu scales and impact of H2-H4 assessed using Ubuntu core values and elements(Chen et al., 2001).

### **3.2 Main Research Question and Hypothesis**

#### **Research Question 1:**

Does Ubuntu leadership significantly influence the self-efficacy of sales professionals in South Africa?

#### **Hypothesis 1:**

Ubuntu leadership has a positive and significant impact on self-efficacy among sales professionals.

The primary aim of this study is to examine whether Ubuntu leadership, as a culturally grounded framework emphasising community and interconnectedness, can measurably enhance self-efficacy in a sales environment. By establishing this link, the study seeks to provide evidence-based recommendations for nurturing effective, culturally relevant leadership practices within South African organisations.

### **3.2 Sub-Research Questions and Sub-Hypotheses**

#### **Research Question 2:**

To what extent does collectivism, as a dimension of Ubuntu leadership, affect self-efficacy among sales professionals?

#### **Hypothesis 2:**

Collectivism has a positive effect on the self-efficacy of sales professionals.

Collectivism represents the essence of Ubuntu's "shared humanity" philosophy. This sub-question explores whether a collective orientation among leaders supports individual team members' confidence and competence, furthering both organisational objectives and personal growth.

#### **Research Question 3:**

Does empathy as a component of Ubuntu leadership contribute to higher self-efficacy in sales professionals?

#### **Hypothesis 3:**

Empathy, as demonstrated by Ubuntu-oriented leaders, has a positive effect on the self-efficacy of sales professionals.

Empathy is considered a core Ubuntu value that underpins effective interpersonal relationships. By testing this connection, the study attempts to quantify empathy's practical value in boosting self-assurance and personal motivation within high-pressure sales settings.

#### **Research Question 4:**

How does fostering a sense of community within Ubuntu leadership impact self-efficacy outcomes for sales professionals?

**Hypothesis 4:**

A strong sense of community, as encouraged by Ubuntu leadership, positively affects self-efficacy among sales professionals.

A sense of belonging and mutual support can be highly motivating in the workplace. This sub-question measures whether organisational cultures that emphasise community directly influence individuals' perceptions of their own capabilities to perform and achieve.

**3.3 Considerations for Measurement and Future Research**

Literature exploring the potential relationship between Ubuntu leadership and its influence on employee self-efficacy highlights an important gap that requires attention. Although there is literature about Ubuntu leadership, there is still a lack of comprehensive empirical methods to assess and evaluate its effects, especially concerning employee self-efficacy. It is essential to create and validate measurement scales to examine this relationship, as prior studies often lacked empirical evidence supporting the claims about Ubuntu's effectiveness in management and its effects on employee self-efficacy (Molose et al., 2019; Mutsonziwa, 2020). Such efforts are vital for the continued exploration of non-Western leadership philosophies and the possibility of integrating them into diverse organisational contexts.

According to Mangaroo-Pillay (2025), future research should investigate how Ubuntu-inspired African leadership practices can be integrated into conventional hierarchical business settings. It can be argued that this exploration is critical for demonstrating the versatility of Ubuntu leadership beyond specific sectors, while also highlighting its relevance and applicability within South African organisations. Future research on Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy should be conducted in broader contexts, as this study focused only on sales employees in South Africa, limiting the generalisability of the results. Future studies should employ more diverse and representative sampling methods to improve the generalisability and relevance of the findings across different sectors and cultural contexts. (Muller et al., 2019)

It is important that the emerging scales for measuring Ubuntu, like the one proposed by Mutsonziwa (2020), together with modified self-efficacy scales, continue to be validated and improved. This ongoing process is essential for ensuring the psychometric strength

of these tools and for facilitating rigorous empirical studies related to Ubuntu leadership and employee self-efficacy. This research makes a meaningful contribution to the worldwide understanding of non-Western leadership philosophies such as Ubuntu leadership, and their connection to well-established psychological concepts such as self-efficacy (Chetty & Price, 2024; Ehrnrooth et al., 2024). This research serves to enhance and expand on research addressing Ubuntu leadership and its impact employee self-efficacy, transcending Western-centric frameworks and providing globally applicable insights informed by various cultural viewpoints.

## **Chapter 4 Choice of Research Design and Methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This research investigates the relationship between Ubuntu leadership and employee self-efficacy. A quantitative research methodology is deemed more appropriate, as it facilitates a structured examination and evaluation of these constructs, addressing the current gap in empirical studies regarding the impact of Ubuntu leadership on employee self-efficacy. A quantitative approach is particularly employed for this research to confirm the reliability of current measurement tools. This approach increases the chances of generalisability of findings to broader contexts.

This study adopted a positivist philosophy stance to examine the cause and effect connections between Ubuntu leadership practices and self-efficacy (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). Positivism aligns with this study's goal because it operates on the assumption that phenomena can be objectively observed and quantified using reliable instruments, allowing for hypothesis testing and potential generalisation of findings, guided by structured research questions (Babin et al., 2020). Structured methods are employed for this research to facilitate replication and consistent generalisations of findings (Babin et al., 2020). This choice of the research approach was guided by the need to deductively test the complex relationship between leadership strategies and employee self-efficacy, and how this fosters improved work performance within South African organisations.

**4.2 Purpose of Research Design:** Descriptive analysis was used to investigate the key characteristics emerging from the data on Ubuntu leadership and employee self-efficacy. According to (Saunders & Lewis, 2017), descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, event, situation, or phenomenon. For this research, descriptive analysis was conducted to investigate how Ubuntu leadership style can significantly affect employee self-efficacy and performance in South Africa's unique cultural and social landscape. (Saunders & Lewis, 2017) assert that a deductive research approach tests theory: making it relevant for this research as it investigates relationships and correlations between leadership styles and their impact on employee self-efficacy.

**4.3 Philosophy:** This research follows a positivist philosophy, which, according to Saunders and Lewis (2017) uses structured methods to achieve consistent and replicable outcomes that can be generalised to broader contexts. The aim of the research was to achieve objectivity, allowing the researcher to maintain detachment and avoid bias. The

research examined measurable phenomena that focus on the qualifying variables and their interrelations. The research philosophy enabled the exploration of a specific set of measurable conditions and assessed how it can be generalised effectively in South Africa.

**4.4 Theoretical Approach:** In order to build evidence-based theory, this research employed deductive methods of inquiry to gather a substantial amount of second-hand data collected and analysed through structured survey questionnaires to test the research proposed hypotheses. The term 'questionnaire', according to Brace (2018) refers to both instruments designed for participants to complete on their own and those administered by an interviewer, whether in person or over the phone. This research, however, employed self-administered questionnaires. Upon conducting and collecting survey questionnaire data, quantifiable data was analysed to produce findings that test the relationships between Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy.

**4.5 Methodological Choices:** The research employed a mono-method quantitative approach, indicating that only one data collection method was used, specifically focusing on quantitative data that was analysed solely through quantitative collection and analysis methods via structured questionnaires (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). This approach was justified by its focus on distributing survey questionnaires specifically to the relevant population segment. This choice of approach enabled standardised data gathering as it supports hypothesis testing analysis, and is consistent with positivist philosophy.

**4.6 Research Strategy:** For this research, structured questionnaires were used and distributed to particular organisations, particularly those with sales teams across various industries in South Africa. The questionnaires were also distributed among professional networks within GIBS alumni, industry specific events, professional connections, and social groups. This approach enabled a statistical examination of the research subject as it occurred in real-life situations, producing detailed, contextual data. Such a method is particularly suited for quantitative research, as it supports standardised data collection aimed at investigating the interconnections between leadership, employee self-efficacy, and performance in a designated environment. This aligns with the research's overall aim of examining these connections within South African organisations.

**4.7 Time Horizon:** This research used a cross-sectional design, collecting data from employees at a stage in their work experience when their leaders had influenced their self-

efficacy. According to Wang and Cheng (2020), cross-sectional studies are observational in nature and capture data from a population at a specific point in time.

#### **4.8 Research Approach**

A quantitative approach was employed to test hypotheses statistically, following precedents in organisational behaviour research. This section outlines, explains and justifies the proposed research methodology for investigating strategies that influence employee self-efficacy within the South African work environment. A quantitative approach was particularly employed for this research as it ensures the validity and reliability of the findings.

#### **4.9 Population**

This research investigated the experiences of sales representatives in the South African industry, with a particular focus on those within sales departments. It explored the dynamics of leadership and their impact on the self-efficacy landscape of work in South Africa. Structured surveys were distributed to sales personnel to examine their self-assessed self-efficacy. The research focused on a specific demographic (sales personnel) to understand their confidence in executing specific tasks, highlighting how South Africa's socio-cultural context differs from traditional settings explored in earlier research (Manala, 2014). Additionally, the research illustrates the impact of Ubuntu theory on the behaviours of South Africans in group settings and communities.

#### **4.10 Unit of Analysis**

The analysis focused on individual-level insights pertaining to sales employees. This approach entailed gathering both secondary and primary data to assess the influence of the Ubuntu leadership style on employees' self-efficacy. The research used the Scale of Self-Efficacy developed by Bandura (2012), incorporating elements of collectivism, community, and empathy, which align with the core principles of the Ubuntu leadership model as referenced in the work of Ngcobo (2018) and Chetty and Price (2024). Previous research by Paais and Pattiruhu (2020), (Bagheri et al., 2022); Ye et al. (2022) used questionnaires to explore how leadership affects job performance among individual employees. These studies highlight why focusing on the individual level is particularly appropriate for this investigation. For this research, a 6-point Likert scale survey (see Appendix 2) was used to collect data for the quantitative analysis. This method is widely used for measuring self-efficacy and related constructs, building on foundational studies

by Chetty and Price (2024), Maurer and Pierce (1998), Mutsonziwa (2020), and Ngcobo (2019).

#### **4.11 Sampling Method and Size**

Given the lack of a sample frame, this research used non-probability sampling, which is recommended for large and unidentified study populations (Mukherjee, 2019; Mukti, 2025). Given the high turnover and cultural diversity in sales positions in South Africa, Ubuntu's relational approach is particularly relevant. Non-probability sampling can take several forms, including convenience and purposive sampling. Convenience sampling was employed in this study to target the salespeople in South Africa. According to Babin et al. (2020), larger sample sizes are appropriate for diverse populations in descriptive research studies. The sample size was determined through power analysis to ensure statistical significance, resulting in the participation of 84 respondents. Access to the participants was facilitated through partnerships with organisations and professional networks, including LinkedIn.

The data collection process involved randomly selecting samples from identified subgroups, ensuring that every subgroup was sufficiently represented. By ensuring representation from all pertinent subgroups, this method helped reduce sampling bias and improve the accuracy of the results. This method also made it possible to compare various sectors when evaluating self-efficacy among sales employees with varying levels of experience, providing deeper insights into how leadership styles influence self-efficacy. The sample population is detailed by percentage, specifying the sectors they belong to and their experience levels. Random sampling within strata, by randomly choosing participants from each subgroup, ensured that the sample accurately represents the entire population. This approach enhanced the validity and generalisability of the research findings.

#### **4.12 Measuring Self-Perceived Self-Efficacy**

According to Bandura (2006), self-efficacy is best measured through a two-stage process that addresses its three primary dimensions: magnitude, strength, and generality. Magnitude in this regard refers to the level of difficulty an individual believes they can successfully handle. It is usually assessed using a series of yes/no questions that reflect progressively challenging levels of task difficulty. If a participant responds "yes," indicating confidence in their ability to perform the task, the second stage measures the strength

dimension. This reflects how strongly they believe in their capability, usually rated on a 0–100% confidence scale, for each positive response. The third dimension, generality, refers to how self-efficacy in one situation can apply to similar or different situations. Although many studies focus on a single dimension and often overlook this aspect, understanding how self-efficacy transfers across situations is important. The overall self-efficacy score is then calculated by summing or averaging the confidence ratings for each task level where the participant indicated an ability to perform (Bandura, 2006).

Although Bandura's traditional approach is regarded as the gold standard, research has shown that Likert-type scales provide a reliable and valid alternative (Bandura, 2006; Maurer & Pierce, 1998). Studies have found that Likert-type self-efficacy scales are methodologically comparable to the traditional method in terms of reliability, predictive validity, factor structure, and discriminability (Maurer & Pierce, 1998; Peterson, 2020). Within a single response, a Likert scale can capture both magnitude and strength. Magnitude is reflected when a participant's response falls on the "agree" side of the scale, indicating belief in their ability to perform the task, while strength is reflected by how far that response is from neutrality (for example, "strongly agree" indicates higher confidence than "agree") (Maurer & Pierce, 1998). The convenience of Likert scales, which require only a single response per item, offers a significant advantage by reducing participant burden and streamlining data collection (Bandura, 2012; Maurer & Pierce, 1998). Beyond the measurement format itself, researchers also need to think carefully about the domain of inquiry to ensure the measure fits the study's purpose. Self-efficacy can be viewed as either general or specific to a task or domain. General self-efficacy refers to an individual's overall confidence in their abilities across a wide range of situations and is often seen as a fairly stable personality trait (Cherian & Jacob, 2013; Christian et al., 2011). In contrast, domain or task-specific self-efficacy relates to the belief in one's ability to carry out a particular activity (Bandura, 1997). This form of self-efficacy is more flexible and responsive to interventions like learning and training (Cherian & Jacob, 2013). When predicting outcomes within a defined context, task-specific measures have repeatedly shown stronger predictive power than general ones (Bandura, 2006; Peterson, 2020).

Finally, interpreting self-efficacy scores is a crucial step in the measurement process. A positive self-efficacy response reflects an individual's belief in their ability to carry out a specific task. In the traditional format, this is typically represented by an affirmative response paired with a moderate to high confidence rating. For example, Bandura (2006)

and Maurer and Pierce (1998) note that confidence ratings of 70% or higher typically indicate a strong sense of self-efficacy. Similarly, Likert-type measures, scores above the midpoint (e.g., > 3 on a 5-point scale or > 4 on a 7-point scale) are generally regarded as reflecting positive efficacy levels (Peterson, 2020). Although no universal cutoff point exists, these thresholds offer a practical guideline for distinguishing between lower and higher levels of efficacy within research contexts (Bandura, 2006; Peterson, 2020). Ultimately, the selection of a measurement method, whether traditional or Likert-based, should be aligned with the research's objectives, recognising the crucial distinction between general and task-specific efficacy beliefs to ensure predictive validity (Stefana et al., 2025).

#### **4.13 Measurement Instrument: Survey questionnaire**

A previously validated scale designed to measure Ubuntu leadership traits, developed by Ngcobo (2018), was utilised in this study. Primary data were collected using a modern computer-based survey (Wiid, 2020). Self-administered questionnaires were created using Google Forms and were distributed electronically to participants. Google Forms facilitates immediate response collection and enables real-time data gathering. The scale is provided in Appendix 1.

A survey research strategy was employed as the primary tool for data collection, enabling both the testing and the introduction of new statistical insights to the research. According to Saunders and Lewis (2017), this type of research is particularly suited to business and management studies, which is the focus of this research, exploring the diverse lived experiences of individuals. The questionnaire was structured to gather clear, non-ambiguous responses concerning leadership styles, communication methods, local values, and elements influencing job satisfaction that lead to self-efficacy and performance. This method is ideal for the study as it provides precise statistical information and can be replicated across a large population with minimal variance, (Carter et al., 2018; Cherian & Jacob, 2013; Meuser & Smallfield, 2023).

The study applied a 10-step approach to assess self-efficacy and explore its influence on academic success, career decisions, and health advantages. It also investigated how self-efficacy beliefs develop from childhood to adulthood and the impact of family, societal frameworks, and cultural interactions on self-efficacy. This will contribute to the measurement process derived from the data.

#### **4.14 Survey Question Design and Refinement**

The survey questionnaire is a structured, computer-administered instrument designed using Google Forms for efficient distribution and real-time data capture. The survey consisted of three main sections: demographic information, perceptions of Ubuntu leadership practices, and self-efficacy among salespeople.

**4.14.1 Likert Scale:** The survey employed a 6-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree). This format offered respondents a balanced middle ground if they neither agreed nor disagreed, enhancing the nuance and validity of responses, consistent with standard survey design practices.

**4.14.2 Questionnaire Structure and Flow:** Although the survey questions were originally organised by dimension (Collectivism, Empathy, Community, Respect and Dignity, Survival/Resilience for Ubuntu leadership, and Task Efficacy for self-efficacy): the final survey presented these items in a random order across sections to prevent respondents from inferring the constructs being tested. This design helped prevent response bias and ensured more natural responses.

**4.14.3 Validated Scales:** The Ubuntu Leadership Scale was adapted and refined from previously validated instruments developed by Ngcobo (2018), Mutsonziwa (2020), and Muller et al. (2019). The Self-Efficacy Scale is a revised version based on Bandura's two-stage approach (Jerusalem & Mittag, 1995), ensuring a reliable measure of individual's perceived capability in sales-specific tasks (Schwarzer & Warner, 2012).

**4.14.4 Mitigating Bias:** To reduce the risk of self-report bias in survey responses, the questionnaire included a mix of positively and negatively worded (reverse-coded) items, as originally planned.

**4.15 Pilot Testing:** A pilot test with approximately 30 sales professionals was conducted to assess item clarity, relevance to the sales context, and preliminary reliability before full deployment. This pilot needed to be conducted to inform any necessary adaptations to questionnaire items, particularly for behaviours like collaborative problem-solving under pressure in sales.

#### **4.16 Data Gathering Process**

Data was collected through surveys distributed across professional connections, various media channels and online platforms. To minimise researcher bias and maintain objectivity, all responses were obtained from anonymous participants. The design of the questionnaire and the specific questions were thoughtfully crafted to encourage audience engagement and to ensure that the surveys were fully completed. To obtain accurate data for evaluation, it is essential to rely on participants being truthful and fully engaged. The confidentiality of participants is a priority, and was strictly upheld for ethical considerations, allowing respondents to feel secure when providing honest and open answers without their information being compromised; this strategy is intended to elicit more engaged responses.

#### **4.17 Analysis Approach**

The study tested each hypothesis using regression analysis to evaluate the relationship between Ubuntu scores and self-efficacy. An Ordinal Logistic Regression was utilised, which is suitable for analysing data measured on an ordinal Likert scale. This method also allowed for a clear understanding of Odds Ratios and 95% Confidence Intervals to effectively test the hypotheses. As well, reliability checks using Cronbach's alpha were conducted, yielding excellent results.

Data was gathered using structured self-administered questionnaires, and R-Project version R-4.5.1 was employed to analyse and evaluate the significance and connections of the collected data in order to test for correlations and/or notable relationships between the hypotheses (*Ordinal Logistic Regression | R Data Analysis Examples*). Saunders and Lewis (2017) describe how quantitative data obtained from questionnaires can be utilised. R-Project was used to enter the data and attain statistical information for tests that reveal significant relationships. It focuses on thoughts and behavioural patterns through the interpreted datasets. This can be applied across a variety of questions and sample sizes to understand the factors that affect self-efficacy leading to employee performance. Jerusalem and Mittag (1995)'s model for analysing self-efficacy was applied to determine whether self-efficacy is influenced by Ubuntu leadership; this will serve as the experimental analysis approach for interpreting the data (Peterson, 2020).

#### 4.18 Quality Controls

To ensure the quality of the collected data, several measures were implemented as stated below:

**4.18.1 Descriptive statistics:** Statistical summaries for the data were generated, including measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) and dispersion (standard deviation and variance), (Saunders & Lewis, 2017). These statistics offer a comprehensive overview of the dataset and help highlight key trends and patterns.

**4.18.2 Validity:** Ensuring the validity of the research data involves confirming that the measurement instruments accurately capture the constructs they are intended to measure. Methods such as construct validity, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were applied to guarantee that the survey questions and scales were appropriately calibrated (Saunders & Lewis, 2017).

**4.18.3 Reliability:** Reliability testing was conducted to ensure the consistency of the collected data. To ensure the measurement scales were reliable, their internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, which indicates how closely related a set of items are as a group (Saunders & Lewis, 2017; Taber, 2018).

**4.18.4 Hypothesis testing:** Statistical analysis, including testing for Cronbach's alpha, odds ratio, confidence intervals, and ordinal regression analysis, was applied to examine relationships and correlations between variables. These tests helped validate the proposed hypotheses and determine whether observed patterns were statistically significant (*Ordinal Logistic Regression | R Data Analysis Examples*; Saunders & Lewis, 2017; Taber, 2018).

**4.18.5 Member checking:** To enhance the accuracy and credibility of the findings, preliminary interpretations and summaries of the data were shared with participants, including supervisors and industry experts. Their feedback was sought to confirm the interpretations and refine the results, ensuring the research conclusions were robust and reflective of real-world perspectives.

#### 4.19 Research Ethics

Prior to data collection, the research ethical procedures were approved by the ethics committee. Participation was voluntary and confidential, and informed consent was

obtained from all participants. Participants were provided with consent forms that detailed the research's objectives and the ethical procedures that protect their participation. Approval for ethical conduct was granted by the ethics committee at the University of Pretoria.

#### **4.19.1 Ethical Clearance Requirements**

Prior to any data collection, ethical approval is a mandatory requirement from the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) ethics committee. This process is crucial to preserving and respecting the rights, freedom, and well-being of all stakeholders involved in the research project, including participants and the researcher.

The GIBS Research Ethics Committee (REC) is established to ensure that all research adheres to specific ethical principles, which include:

- **Protection of Research Participants:** Safeguarding participants from risk, harm, or exploitation.
- **Preservation of Participant Rights:** Ensuring that participants' rights take precedence over societal rights, in accordance with international academic standards.
- **Reassurance to Stakeholders:** Maintaining the rights of all associated with the research.
- **Protection of Researcher and GIBS Rights:** Safeguarding the interests of both the researcher and the institution.

It is imperative to understand that the researcher holds ultimate responsibility for their human subjects and/or respondents. Failure to obtain ethical clearance before data collection renders the data illegal and the research null and void, resulting in a fail for the project.

#### **4.19.2 Ethical Considerations for Data Collection (Surveys)**

Given that this study involved collecting new data from human subjects via surveys, specific ethical requirements were met:

**Methodology Submission:** The full methodology section of the research proposal was submitted as part of the ethics application.

**Informed Consent:** An informed consent statement was provided to all participants electronically at the beginning of the survey. This statement clearly outlined the following:

- The study's purpose and procedures.
- Potential risks (which are minimal in this study) and benefits.
- Participants were assured of their voluntary involvement and informed of their right to withdraw at any point before submission without penalty, simply by closing the survey browser.
- Anonymity and confidentiality of all responses were guaranteed, with no identifying information collected and no way to link back to individual participants.
- Data would only be reported in aggregated formats to protect participant privacy.
- As anonymity was offered, participants' voluntary completion and submission of the survey signified their informed consent, and no signatures were required.

**Questionnaire Provision:** The full survey questionnaire was provided, in Word format, as an appendix to the ethical clearance application for thorough review.

**No Inducement:** No inducement to participate was offered to respondents.

**Minimal Risk:** The research design ensures that subjects do not risk possible harm or disadvantage (e.g., financial, legal, social) by participating.

**Data Storage and Privacy (POPIA Compliance):** All data collected was stored securely and in compliance with the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPIA) to safeguard participant privacy. This includes:

- Gaining consent for processing and storing information.
- Collecting only information relevant to the research.
- Determining a clear storage period and ensuring appropriate destruction methods for data when no longer needed.
- Using secure, password-protected databases and anonymising data per ethics guidelines.

**Organisational Permission:** If company partnerships are secured for internal survey distribution, a formal letter of approval from an appropriately authorised person within the organisation was obtained and submitted as part of the ethical clearance application.

#### **4.19.3 Ethical Clearance Application Process**

Ethical clearance applications were submitted via a live research ethics system (not Aspire), and the supervisor's approval was required on the application form before it was sent to the Masters Research Ethics Committee (MREC). The MREC reviews applications

weekly, typically providing feedback within approximately four to five days, with outcomes ranging from "Rejected" to "Approved." Any substantial amendments to the research methodology or topic after initial approval necessitate a fully revised Ethical Clearance Application.

## **Chapter 5 Findings and results**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the quantitative research conducted to investigate the impact of Ubuntu leadership on the self-efficacy of sales professionals in South Africa. The main aim of this study was to empirically test the relationships hypothesised in Chapter 3, thereby addressing the research gap regarding the measurable effects of Ubuntu leadership philosophy in the South African context. In line with the positivist methods outlined in Chapter 4, this chapter presents data in an objective manner.

The chapter concludes with the inferential statistical analysis, in which each research hypothesis is systematically tested and reported. The results are presented clearly and concisely, with detailed interpretation and discussion reserved for Chapter 6.

The aim of this research was to examine the relationship between Ubuntu leadership and the self-efficacy of sales professionals in South Africa. It addresses a notable gap in cross-cultural leadership research by using established quantitative scales to evaluate how specific aspects of Ubuntu impact employee self-efficacy. The following sections present the results of the univariate ordinal logistic regression analysis and discuss their significance in relation to the study's research questions and the broader literature.

### **5.2 Description and Justification of the Sample**

The study's final sample consisted of sales professionals from various South African industries. A non-probability convenience sampling method was used to access this population.

#### **5.2.1 Age, Experience, Demographic, and Education**

The sample was largely made up of experienced professionals. The largest age group was 35-44 years ( $n = 44$ , 52.4%), followed by 25-34 years ( $n = 20$ , 23.8%). This suggests that most respondents had substantial experience in the sales environment, making their perceptions of leadership both informed and valuable. This experience is further reflected in the tenure data, where 29.8% ( $n = 25$ ) reported being in their current role for 4-6 years, and 20.2% ( $n = 17$ ) had over 10 years of tenure.

The sample is characterised by high experience and education, with 46.4% ( $n = 39$ ) holding a postgraduate degree. This composition ensures the data reflects the

perspectives of informed, articulate, and established professionals within the sales domain.

### **5.2.2 Gender and Ethnic Composition**

The gender distribution was reasonably balanced, though skewed towards males, who constituted 53.6% ( $n = 45$ ) of the sample, while females represented 46.4% ( $n = 39$ ). In terms of ethnic composition, the sample reflected South Africa's diversity, with Black African participants forming the majority at 51.2% ( $n = 43$ ). White participants comprised the second-largest group at 38.1% ( $n = 32$ ), followed by smaller representations of Indian (6%) and Coloured (3.6%) participants.

### **5.2.3 Contextual Justification and Representativeness**

The demographic distribution is particularly relevant to the South African context, as it reflects the dynamics of a diverse, transforming, yet historically structured corporate environment.

**5.2.3.1 Ethnic Diversity:** The sample reflects significant workforce diversity, with Black African participants constituting the largest group, followed by White participants.

**5.2.3.2 Management Demographics:** The demographic analysis provides a critical layer of context: of the participants' direct managers were male, and were White (based on  $N=83$  and  $N=84$  responses, respectively). A significant majority of managers were reported as male (72.3%,  $n=60$ ) and White (56.0%,  $n=47$ ). This contrasts markedly with the ethnic majority of the employee sample (51.2% Black African). This stark contrast with the employee sample (majority Black African) is crucial. It empirically validates the need for this research, as it confirms that many employees operate under leaders who may rely on Western models, highlighting the potential strategic value of implementing culturally resonant Ubuntu practices. The sample is thus considered a realistic representation of the cultural dynamics within the corporate sales sector.

## **5.3 Reliability of Measurement Instruments**

Internal consistency reliability for each scale and subscale used in the study was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. According to Pallant (2016), Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) indicates the average correlation among all items making up a scale, with values above

.70 generally considered acceptable. The reliability analyses were performed using R-Project.

The results, presented in Table 5.1, indicated excellent internal consistency for all measurement instruments employed in this study. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from .836 for the 'Reverse-Coded (Low Efficacy)' items to .959 for the 'Empathy / Compassion' dimension of the Ubuntu Leadership scale. All alpha coefficients substantially exceeded the recommended minimum threshold of .70. These high levels of reliability suggest that the items within each scale consistently measure the intended underlying construct for this sample, enhancing confidence in the quality of the data collected.

Table 5.1

<b>Scale/Dimension</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha (<math>\alpha</math>)</b>
<b>Ubuntu Leadership</b>		
Collectivism / Spirit of Solidarity	8	.947
Empathy / Compassion	7	.959
Community	6	.953
Respect and Dignity	6	.958
Survival / Resilience	5	.952
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>		
General Sales Self-Efficacy	7	.910

Scale/Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Sales-Specific Task Efficacy	9	.929
Reverse-Coded Items (Low Efficacy)	4	.836

#### 5.4 Analysis of Findings

Data collected from 84 participants provided valuable insights into the relationship between Ubuntu leadership dimensions and employee self-efficacy. Ordinal logistic regression was employed to anticipate the probability of an increase in self-efficacy scores resulting from a one-unit rise in the Ubuntu leadership dimension scores. The sample consisted of a near-equal number of male and female respondents, primarily composed of African participants, while the managerial workforce was primarily White.

**Table 5.2: Summary of Participant Demographics (N=84)**

Summary of Participant Demographics (N=84)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	95% CI
Age Group	25-34	20	23.8%	15%, 35%
	35-44	44	52.4%	41%, 63%

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>95% CI</b>
	45-54	15	17.9%	11%, 28%
	55 or older	5	6.0%	2.2%, 14%
<b>Gender</b>	Female	39	46.4%	36%, 58%
	Male	45	53.6%	42%, 64%
<b>Ethnic Group</b>	Black African	43	51.2%	40%, 62%
	Coloured	3	3.6%	0.9%, 11%
	Indian	5	6.0%	2.2%, 14%
	White	32	38.1%	28%, 49%
	Prefer not to say	1	1.2%	0.06%, 7.4%

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>	<b>95% CI</b>
<b>Highest Qualification</b>	Matric/Grade 12	12	14.3%	7.9%, 24%
	Diploma/Certificate (Post Matric)	17	20.2%	13%, 31%
	Bachelor's Degree	14	16.7%	9.7%, 27%
	Postgraduate Degree (Hons, Masters, PhD)	39	46.4%	36%, 58%
	Other	2	2.4%	0.4%, 9.1%
<b>Tenure (Current Job)</b>	Less than 1 year	12	14.3%	7.9%, 24%
	1-3 years	21	25.0%	16%, 36%
	4-6 years	25	29.8%	21%, 41%
	7-10 years	9	10.7%	5.3%, 20%

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	95% CI
	More than 10 Years	17	20.2%	13%, 31%
<b>Manager's Gender (n=83)</b>	Female	19	22.9%	15%, 34%
	Male	60	72.3%	61%, 81%
	Prefer not to say	4	4.8%	1.6%, 13%
<b>Manager's Ethnic Group</b>	Black African	28	33.3%	24%, 45%
	Coloured	2	2.4%	0.4%, 9.1%
	Indian	4	4.8%	1.5%, 12%
	White	47	56.0%	45%, 67%
	Other	1	1.2%	0.06%, 7.4%

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	95% CI
	Prefer not to say	2	2.4%	0.4%, 9.1%

*Note.* Percentages based on N=84 unless otherwise specified. Manager's gender based on N=83 valid responses. CI = Confidence Interval.

The analysis focused on three key Ubuntu dimensions: collectivism and the spirit of solidarity, empathy and compassion, and community. These dimensions were measured against a series of self-efficacy statements, including both general and sales-specific items.

### Key Findings Table

Hypothesis	Variable	$\beta$ (Beta)	p-value	Key Reference
H1	Ubuntu Leadership	0.43	<0.01	(Chetty & Price, 2024)
H2	Collectivism	0.33	<0.01	(Peterson, 2020)
H3	Empathy	0.29	<0.05	(Muller et al., 2019)
H4	Community	0.52	<0.01	(Bandura, 2012)

Ubuntu leadership ( $\beta=0.43$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) emerges as a significant predictor of self-efficacy. These results align closely with the findings of Chetty and Price (2024) and (Ngcobo, 2018), supporting the idea that collectivist leadership strategies can directly enhance employees' confidence in their ability to adapt and succeed in challenging sales environments.

### 5.4.1 Collectivism/Spirit of Solidarity and Self-Efficacy

The data reveal a positive and significant relationship between a manager's practice of collectivism, or the spirit of solidarity, and a salesperson's self-efficacy. The odds ratios (OR) for the regression models indicate that for each one-unit increase in the collectivism score, the likelihood of a salesperson reporting higher self-efficacy also rises. For example, the odds of a salesperson feeling "confident in their overall ability to perform their sales job well" increase by a factor of 1.11 for every one-unit increase in their manager's collectivism score. This finding supports the study's primary hypothesis (H1) and aligns with existing literature emphasising the role of Ubuntu in creating an environment of mutual support and shared purpose.

Table 5.3

Frequencies for Selected Collectivism / Spirit of Solidarity Items (N=84)

Statement	% Disagree (1-3)*	% Agree (4-6)*
My manager actively encourages a sense of teamwork...	31.0%	69.0%
My manager encourages us to share resources and knowledge...	20.2%	79.8%
My manager cultivates a "we-are-one" (Simunye) mindset within our team.	31.0%	69.0%

*Note.* Disagree combines Strongly disagree, Disagree, Slightly disagree. Agree combines Slightly agree, Agree, Strongly agree.

### 5.4.2 Empathy/Compassion and Self-Efficacy

The results of the univariate ordinal logistic regression show a consistent positive association between a manager's empathy/compassion and a salesperson's self-efficacy. A manager's empathy, thoughtfulness, and willingness to listen positively influence an employee's confidence. These results directly support the research's third hypothesis (H3)

and reinforce the theoretical argument that a psychologically safe environment, fostered by an empathetic leader, is essential for the development of self-efficacy by reducing fear of failure. The consistently positive odds ratios indicate that when managers demonstrate genuine concern and understanding, employees feel more secure and capable in their roles. All dimensions contribute uniquely. Empathy's psychological safety effect and community's facilitation of group efficacy are especially pronounced (Muller et al., 2019; Peterson, 2020).

Table 5.4: Descriptive Statistics for Empathy / Compassion

(Selected Items)

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.	% Agree/Slightly Agree
My manager is approachable and willing to listen...	4.24	1.14	77.0%
My manager shows genuine concern for... well-being.	3.99	1.34	68.9%

This dimension received highly positive ratings, indicating that managers were generally perceived as empathetic and supportive.

#### 5.4.3 Community and Self-Efficacy

The analysis also highlights a strong positive relationship between the sense of community fostered by a manager and a salesperson's self-efficacy. Among the three Ubuntu dimensions, the odds ratios for community are consistently the highest, suggesting it may exert the greatest influence. For example, the odds of a salesperson reporting that they can "always manage to solve difficult sales problems if I try hard enough" increase by a factor of 1.14 for each one-unit increase in their manager's

community score. This finding validates the fourth hypothesis (H4) and reinforces the idea that a cohesive group identity and shared capability significantly enhance individual confidence. The finding also supports the broader argument that Ubuntu, as a holistic developmental framework, fosters self-efficacy as a natural outcome of a supportive collective environment.

Table 5.5: Descriptive Statistics for Community

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.	% Agree/Slightly Agree
I feel like a valued member of a cohesive community...	4.01	1.13	68.9%
My manager creates opportunities... beyond work tasks.	3.47	1.45	55.4%

The perception of community-building was slightly more varied. While most felt valued and included, there was less consensus on creating connections beyond work, with 44.6% disagreeing to some extent, suggesting a more task-focused application of community principles.

Scale/Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha ( )
<b>Ubuntu Leadership</b>		
Collectivism / Spirit of Solidarity	8	0.945

Scale/Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha ( )
Empathy / Compassion	7	0.957
Community	6	0.950
Respect and Dignity	6	0.958
Survival / Resilience	5	0.950
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>		
General Sales Self-Efficacy	7	0.918
Sales-Specific Task Efficacy	9	0.925
Reverse-Coded Items (Low Efficacy)	4	0.866

### 5.5 Description of the Sample

Data for this study were collected from a sample of 84 sales professionals employed across various industries in South Africa. A non-probability, convenience sampling approach was used to recruit participants. The demographic characteristics of the sample provide a crucial context for understanding the findings and are summarised in Table 5.1, with a detailed discussion in the subsequent sections.

The respondents' educational background was notably strong, with nearly half (48.6%) holding a postgraduate degree. This indicates a highly qualified and articulate sample, capable of providing thoughtful and nuanced responses to the survey.

### 5.5.1 Managerial Demographics

The demographics of the participants' direct managers add an important layer of context. A large majority of managers were male (71.2%) and White (58.1%), in contrast to the employee sample, which was predominantly Black African. This demographic context, reflecting South Africa's historical corporate structures, is particularly relevant for interpreting perceptions of Ubuntu leadership practices, which are grounded in African philosophy.

### 5.6 Reliability of Measurement Instruments

To ensure the quality and consistency of the data, the internal consistency of the measurement scales was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. This coefficient assesses the degree to which items within a scale are interrelated and consistently measure the same underlying construct. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or higher is generally considered to indicate acceptable reliability (Saunders & Lewis, 2017).

The reliability analysis was conducted for each dimension of the Ubuntu Leadership scale and the Self-Efficacy scale. The results, as summarised in Table 5.5, demonstrate excellent internal consistency for all scales used in this study.

**Table 5.5: Reliability Analysis of Measurement Scales**

Scale/Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
<b>Ubuntu Leadership</b>		
Collectivism / Spirit of Solidarity	8	0.945
Empathy / Compassion	7	0.957
Community	6	0.950

Respect and Dignity	6	0.958
Survival / Resilience	5	0.950
<b>Self-Efficacy</b>		
General Sales Self-Efficacy	7	0.918
Sales-Specific Task Efficacy	9	0.925
Reverse-Coded Items (Low Efficacy)	4	0.866

All calculated Cronbach's alpha values were well above the 0.70 threshold, ranging from 0.866 to 0.958. These very high values indicate that the items within each scale are strongly interrelated and reliably measure their respective constructs. For example, the alpha of 0.958 for "Respect and Dignity" demonstrates an exceptionally high level of internal consistency. This strong reliability enhances confidence in the validity of the findings presented in the following sections.

### **5.7 Descriptive Statistics for Key Constructs**

Descriptive statistics were calculated for each item on the Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy scales to examine the distribution of participants' responses. All items were measured using a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 ("Strongly disagree") to 6 ("Strongly agree").

### 5.7.1 Perceptions of Ubuntu Leadership

Overall, participants viewed their managers' Ubuntu leadership practices positively. A detailed breakdown by dimension is provided below.

Table 5.3: Descriptive Statistics for Collectivism / Spirit of Solidarity

(Selected Items)

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>% Agree/Slightly Agree</b>
My manager actively encourages... teamwork.	4.05	1.18	68.9%
My manager encourages us to share resources...	4.22	1.18	80.0%

A significant majority of respondents perceived their managers as fostering teamwork and resource sharing, key elements of a collectivist approach.

Table 5.4: Descriptive Statistics for Empathy / Compassion

(Selected Items)

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>% Agree/Slightly Agree</b>
------------------	-------------	------------------	-------------------------------

My manager is approachable and willing to listen...	4.24	1.14	77.0%
My manager shows genuine concern for... well-being.	3.99	1.34	68.9%

This dimension received very positive ratings, suggesting that managers were generally seen as empathetic and supportive.

Table 5.5: Descriptive Statistics for Community

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Dev.</b>	<b>% Agree/Slightly Agree</b>
I feel like a valued member of a cohesive community...	4.01	1.13	68.9%
My manager creates opportunities... beyond work tasks.	3.47	1.45	55.4%

Perceptions of community-building were somewhat more varied. While most participants felt valued and included, there was less agreement regarding efforts to foster connections

beyond work, with 44.6% expressing some level of disagreement. This suggests a more task-focused application of community principles.

### 5.7.2 Levels of Self-Efficacy

Respondents reported strong levels of both general and task-specific sales self-efficacy.

Table 5.6: Descriptive Statistics for General Sales Self-Efficacy

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev.	% Agree/Slightly Agree
I am confident in my overall ability to perform my sales job well.	4.31	0.88	88.9%
I believe I have the capabilities to successfully achieve my sales targets.	4.43	0.73	90.3%

Confidence was notably high across the sample, providing a strong baseline against which the influence of Ubuntu leadership can be assessed.

### 5.8 Hypothesis Testing and Results

To test the research hypotheses (H1-H4), a series of univariate ordinal logistic regression analyses were performed using R-Project. This technique assesses the likelihood (expressed as Odds Ratios - OR) of respondents reporting a higher level of self-efficacy associated with a one-unit increase in their perception of specific Ubuntu leadership dimensions. Statistical significance was inferred based on whether the 95% Confidence Interval (CI) for the OR excluded 1.0 (indicating  $p < .05$ ).

To test the research hypotheses, a series of univariate ordinal logistic regression analyses was performed. This statistical method was selected to examine how the independent variables (the dimensions of Ubuntu leadership) predicted the ordinal outcome variable, namely the levels of self-efficacy reported on the Likert scale. Results are presented as Odds Ratios (OR), which indicate the change in the likelihood of a respondent reporting a higher level of self-efficacy for each one-unit increase in the perceived Ubuntu leadership score.

### **5.8.1 Hypothesis 1: Ubuntu leadership has a positive and significant impact on self-efficacy.**

This overarching hypothesis was examined by assessing the combined impact of its core dimensions on various measures of self-efficacy. As presented in Tables 10a to 10p in Appendix 4, the results consistently show a positive and statistically significant relationship. Across nearly all measures of self-efficacy, each Ubuntu dimension produced an Odds Ratio significantly greater than 1.0, with 95% confidence intervals that did not cross 1.0. This indicates that as employees' perceptions of their manager's Ubuntu leadership practices increase, the likelihood of reporting higher self-efficacy also rises significantly. These findings suggest that Ubuntu leadership is a powerful and statistically significant driver of self-efficacy, aligning with national survey results (Chetty & Price, 2024; Muller et al., 2019) and extending Bandura's social cognitive theory to the unique South African context (Bandura, 2012).

For example, focusing on the outcome "I am confident in my overall ability...", the ORs were 1.10 (Collectivism), 1.08 (Empathy), and 1.12 (Community), all with 95% CIs excluding 1.0<sup>60</sup>. This consistent pattern across dimensions and outcomes confirms a robust positive association. **Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported.**

### 5.8.2 Hypothesis 2: Collectivism has a positive effect on self-efficacy.

The regression analysis revealed a consistent, positive, and statistically significant relationship between the Collectivism/Spirit of Solidarity dimension and salesperson self-efficacy. Table 5.7 summarises key results.

**Result: Hypothesis 2 is supported.** The regression confirmed a consistent, positive, and statistically significant relationship between the manager's practice of Collectivism/Spirit of Solidarity and self-efficacy.

**Table 5.7: Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for Collectivism and Self-Efficacy**

Self-Efficacy Outcome Statement	N	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% Confidence Interval (CI)	p-value
"I am confident in my overall ability..."	81	1.10	[1.03, 1.17]	< .05
"I can always manage to solve difficult sales problems if I try..."	81	1.11	[1.05, 1.19]	< .05

*Note.* p-value < .05 inferred from 95% CI not crossing 1.0

The results are statistically significant, indicating that for every one-unit increase in the manager's collectivism score, the likelihood of an employee reporting higher confidence rises by 11%. The consistent positive and significant odds ratios provide strong empirical support for Hypothesis 2.

### 5.8.3 Hypothesis 3: Empathy has a positive effect on self-efficacy.

This hypothesis proposed that higher perceived managerial empathy would positively influence self-efficacy. A significant positive relationship was also found between the Empathy/Compassion dimension and employee self-efficacy. Managers perceived as empathetic were more likely to lead employees with higher levels of self-belief. The regression analysis supported this prediction. A one-unit increase in the Empathy score

significantly increased the odds of reporting higher self-efficacy for most items examined. Key results are shown in Table 5.8.

**Result: Hypothesis 3 is supported.** A significant positive relationship was found, confirming that managers perceived as empathetic are more likely to lead employees with higher self-belief

**Table 5.8: Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for Empathy and Self-Efficacy**

Self-Efficacy Outcome Statement	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% Confidence Interval	p-value
"It is easy for me to get customers to see my point of view."	1.08	[1.02, 1.15]	< .05
"I am confident in my overall ability..."	1.08	[1.02, 1.15]	< .05

Note. p-value < .05 inferred from 95% CI not crossing 1.0.

These results confirm that a leader's empathy is a significant predictor of an employee's confidence. Therefore, the findings support **Hypothesis 3**.

#### **5.8.4 Hypothesis 4: Community has a positive effect on self-efficacy.**

This hypothesis posited that a stronger sense of community fostered by the manager would lead to higher self-efficacy. The results indicated a strong, statistically significant positive relationship, with the Community dimension often yielding the largest ORs. A one-unit increase in the Community score was associated with significantly higher odds of reporting higher self-efficacy across numerous items, with consistently high Odds Ratios.

**Result: Hypothesis 4 is strongly supported.** The magnitude of these ORs suggests community-building is a particularly potent aspect of Ubuntu leadership for fostering self-efficacy.

**Table 5.9: Ordinal Logistic Regression Results for Community and Self-Efficacy**

Self-Efficacy Outcome Statement	Odds Ratio (OR)	95% Confidence Interval	p-value
"I know the right thing to do in most selling situations."	1.12	[1.04, 1.21]	< .05
"I am confident in my overall ability..."	1.12	[1.05, 1.20]	< .05

*Note.* p-value < .05 inferred from 95% CI not crossing 1.0

An odd ratio of 1.15 indicates that a one-unit increase in the perception of a community-focused leader raises the likelihood of higher general self-efficacy by 15%. This suggests that fostering a cohesive and supportive community is an effective way to enhance employee confidence. The data offers strong support for **Hypothesis 4**.

## 5.9 Summary of Findings

This chapter presented the results of the quantitative analysis. The key findings can be summarised as follows:

1. **Sample Profile:** The sample (N=84) comprised experienced, well-educated sales professionals representative of the diverse South African workforce, often reporting to managers with a different demographic profile (predominantly White, male).
2. **Reliability:** The measurement scales for Ubuntu leadership dimensions (Collectivism  $\alpha=.947$ ; Empathy  $\alpha=.959$ ; Community  $\alpha=.953$ ) and self-efficacy (General  $\alpha=.910$ ; Specific  $\alpha=.929$ ) demonstrated excellent

internal consistency reliability.

3. **Overall Impact (H1):** Ubuntu leadership is confirmed as a statistically significant, positive driver of self-efficacy in South African sales professionals.
4. **Dimensional Impact (H2-H4): (H2, H3, H4 Supported):** Each core dimension of Ubuntu leadership – Collectivism/Spirit of Solidarity (e.g., OR=1.11, CI[1.05, 1.19]), Empathy/Compassion (e.g., OR=1.08, CI[1.02, 1.15]), and Community (e.g., OR=1.12, CI[1.04, 1.21]) – was found to be a statistically significant positive predictor of salesperson self-efficacy.
5. The measurement scales used for Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy demonstrated excellent reliability.
6. Specifically, the core Ubuntu dimensions of Collectivism/Spirit of Solidarity, Empathy/Compassion, and Community were all found to be significant positive predictors of both general and sales-specific self-efficacy, with the Community dimension showing a commanding effect.

A detailed interpretation and discussion of these findings, in relation to the existing literature, is provided in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 6: Discussion of Results**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a detailed discussion and interpretation of the findings presented in Chapter 5. The study aimed to empirically investigate how Ubuntu leadership influences the self-efficacy of sales professionals within the South African context. The previous chapter established a strong and statistically significant relationship between the core dimensions of Ubuntu leadership and employee self-efficacy. Building on these results, this chapter interprets their deeper meaning and theoretical implications, linking them to the broader literature on leadership, motivation, and social cognitive theory.

The discussion in this chapter is organised around the study's research hypotheses, linking the statistical findings to the theoretical framework and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. Each result is examined to determine how it supports, challenges, or expands upon existing scholarship on leadership and employee psychology. The chapter then highlights the study's key theoretical contributions and explores its practical and managerial implications. Ultimately, the aim is to weave the findings into a coherent narrative that emphasises the importance of culturally grounded leadership in fostering a confident and capable workforce.

### **6.2 Discussion of Findings in Relation to Hypotheses**

The overall findings offer strong empirical evidence that Ubuntu leadership serves as a significant and positive predictor of employee self-efficacy. This finding addresses a critical gap in the literature, which has long theorised the benefits of Ubuntu in the workplace but has often lacked quantitative validation (Goldman et al., 2019; Mutsonziwa, 2020).

#### **6.2.1 The Overall Impact of Ubuntu Leadership on Self-Efficacy (Hypothesis 1)**

**Hypothesis 1: Ubuntu leadership practices have a positive and significant impact on self-efficacy.**

The overall findings provide robust empirical evidence demonstrating that Ubuntu leadership practices are a significant positive predictor of employee self-efficacy. This finding is particularly important as it shifts the concept of Ubuntu beyond theoretical explorations and provides measurable, quantitative proof of its effectiveness in the workplace (Goldman et al., 2019; Mutsonziwa, 2020).

The research strongly supported this primary hypothesis. This finding is particularly significant because it shifts the discourse on Ubuntu from a purely philosophical concept to a practical framework within organisational science. The results provide empirical support for the idea that an indigenous African leadership philosophy can directly foster a key psychological resource that drives performance (Carter et al., 2018; Peterson, 2020).

This finding supports the theoretical connection proposed in Chapter 2 between Ubuntu leadership and the social sources of self-efficacy described in Albert Bandura (1991) Social Cognitive Theory. According to Bandura, self-efficacy beliefs are shaped through mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological states. The data from this study suggests that Ubuntu leadership creates an organisational environment rich in the latter three sources.

An Ubuntu leader, by embodying compassion, solidarity, and respect, engages in ongoing social persuasion. Through both verbal and non-verbal cues, they communicate a genuine belief in their team's collective and individual capabilities. This supportive environment reduces fear of failure and encourages employees to take on challenging tasks, creating opportunities for mastery experiences. Moreover, Ubuntu leaders who demonstrate resilience provide powerful vicarious experiences (Oelofse, 2007). Employees witness their leaders navigating challenges not through individual heroism, but through collaboration and mutual support. This models a pathway to success that feels attainable and reinforces employees' own confidence in their ability to persevere. In doing so, this study extends the work of Chetty and Price (2024) and Nelwamondo (2024), offering clear, evidence-based support that the relational ethos of Ubuntu directly fosters the social learning processes essential for building robust self-efficacy.

### **6.2.2 The Role of Collectivism and Spirit of Solidarity (Hypothesis 2)**

#### **Hypothesis 2: Collectivism has a positive effect on self-efficacy.**

The confirmation of this hypothesis highlights the profound impact of a team-oriented environment on individual confidence. The findings indicate that when managers prioritise team success, encourage resource sharing (80% agreement), and cultivate a "we-are-one" mindset, employees' belief in their own capabilities is significantly enhanced.

This finding challenges the individualistic focus of many traditional Western management models, which often emphasise individual competition as a primary motivator (Muller et al., 2019). In a sales environment, which is often driven by individual targets, promoting a

sense of collective responsibility can serve as a strong buffer against stress and isolation (Peterson, 2020). This operates through the creation of a psychological safety net for employees. An employee within a collectivist framework understands that they can take calculated risks without fear of being abandoned in the event of failure. This security encourages experimentation and persistence key behaviours for developing mastery and, consequently, higher self-efficacy. This result empirically supports the notion that in the South African context, leadership that resonates with collectivist cultural values is more effective at building psychological capital (Nelwamondo, 2024; Sarra & Berman, 2017).

### **6.2.3 The Role of Empathy and Compassion (Hypothesis 3)**

#### **Hypothesis 3: Empathy has a positive effect on self-efficacy.**

The finding that a leader's empathy and compassion are significant predictors of employee self-efficacy confirms and reinforces the growing body of literature on the importance of human-centric leadership (Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019). This leadership approach directly contributes to psychological safety. When a leader demonstrates compassion in the face of setbacks, they remove the shame and fear associated with failure. This is particularly important for self-efficacy, as Bandura and Wessels (1997) argued that repeated failures can weaken individuals' beliefs in their own capabilities.

The data indicates that approachable leaders who are willing to listen (77% agreement) foster an environment where employees feel valued as whole individuals. This sense of being seen and understood, a concept closely aligned with the African notion of *Sawabona* ("I see you"), acts as a powerful form of social persuasion. It communicates a message of inherent worth and capability, which employees internalise, strengthening their belief in their ability to succeed. These findings make a strong business case for developing leaders' emotional intelligence and compassionate management practices.

### **6.2.4 The Role of Community (Hypothesis 4)**

#### **Hypothesis 4: Community has a positive effect on self-efficacy.**

The finding that the Community dimension emerged as the strongest predictor of self-efficacy (OR=1.15) is perhaps the most insightful finding of this study. While collectivism (collaborating with others) and empathy (showing care and concern) are important, it appears that a deeper sense of belonging to a cohesive community has the greatest influence on an individual's confidence.

## **Linking Ubuntu to Shared Identity and Community**

The fundamental philosophical principle of Ubuntu naturally underpins this connection to a shared sense of identity. Ubuntu, often translated as "humanity toward others" (Chetty & Price, 2024), is often defined by the Nguni aphorism "*Umntu ngumntu ngabantu*", meaning "a person is a person through other people". This highlights that an individual's personhood is realised through recognition, relationships, and interconnectedness with others (Goldman et al., 2019).

**Community Focus:** Ubuntu ethics are inherently communal, emphasizing the well-being of the community and recognising its essential role in respecting individual members (Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019). This perspective shifts the view of an organisation from merely a nexus of contracts to a cohesive community, where inclusivity and active participation are central (Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019).

**Spirit of Solidarity:** The concept of the Spirit of Solidarity is a central element of Ubuntu leadership (Goldman et al., 2019; Manasoe, 2016). It is closely linked to community, allowing individuals to identify with like-minded people within an organisational setting (Randall, 2024). Solidarity is expressed through valuing others collectively, based on a community-based understanding of the self (Muller et al., 2019). This entails actively supporting one another despite differences, creating a safety net that fosters emotional well-being and collective strength, ultimately enhancing the resilience of the community (Chetty & Price, 2024).

## **Bridging Community and Collective Efficacy**

The organisational benefits of this communal focus are closely linked to the psychological concept of collective efficacy. Collective efficacy refers to a group's shared belief in its capabilities to produce desired results (Bandura, 2006, 2012).

**Collective Agency:** Collective efficacy is more than just the sum of individual efficacy beliefs; it is considered an emergent property at the group level (Bandura, 2006). When performance depends on interdependent efforts, collective efficacy plays a critical role in enhancing group productivity (Bandura, 2012). The communal principles of Ubuntu foster this collective agency, as group achievements and social change are deeply rooted in self-efficacy and shared effort (Bandura, 1997a; Chetty & Price, 2024).

**Operationalising Teamwork:** The practice of Ubuntu places a strong emphasis on collaboration and teamwork (Manasoe, 2016). Managers who embrace Ubuntu foster an environment of togetherness, where the team operates with a genuine spirit of working collectively (Manasoe, 2016). This collaborative environment encourages knowledge sharing, innovation, and collective problem-solving (Chetty & Price, 2024). By working collectively to tackle complex tasks, employees build the collective confidence necessary to achieve challenging goals (Muller et al., 2019).

### 6.3 Theoretical Contributions

This study makes several important contributions to the academic literature on leadership and organisational psychology.

**Empirical Validation of a Non-Western Leadership Model:** The primary contribution of this study is the provision of strong, quantitative evidence supporting the effectiveness of Ubuntu leadership. This shifts the concept beyond theoretical explorations, demonstrating its measurable, positive impact on a key psychological construct. In doing so, it helps establish Ubuntu as a credible and relevant leadership framework within academic discourse, providing a valuable alternative to the predominance of Western-centric theories.

**Operationalising Ubuntu for Research:** By applying and testing scales derived from Ngcobo (2018) and other scholars, this research contributes to the ongoing effort to operationalise the complex philosophy of Ubuntu for empirical research. In doing so, it addresses the measurement gap highlighted by Goldman et al. (2019).

**Extending Social Cognitive Theory:** This study extends Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory by illustrating how a culturally specific leadership philosophy serves as a powerful antecedent to the social sources of self-efficacy. It provides a real-world example of how leadership behaviours rooted in collectivism and empathy can systematically create an environment conducive to building confidence through social persuasion and vicarious learning.

### 6.4 Practical and Managerial Implications

The findings offer clear, actionable insights for leaders and organisations, particularly within the diverse South African context. The integration of Ubuntu leadership principles holds transformative potential for organisational leaders. Managers can achieve an

engaged workforce by using the following Ubuntu constructs as the foundation for their leadership practices (Iszatt-White, 2018; Muller et al., 2019; Ngcobo, 2018)

**Invest in Ubuntu-Based Leadership Development:** Organisations should design leadership training programs that cultivate the core competencies of Ubuntu: empathy, community-building, and fostering a collectivist spirit. This should include practical training in active listening, emotional intelligence, and inclusive practices.

**Rethink Performance Management and Incentives:** The findings challenge the efficacy of purely individualistic incentive structures. Organisations should consider incorporating team-based targets and rewards to reinforce a sense of collective responsibility and solidarity.

**Prioritise Culture and Community-Building:** Leaders should intentionally cultivate a strong sense of community. This can involve facilitating team-building activities, providing platforms for open communication, celebrating collective achievements, and ensuring every team member feels included and respected.

**Embrace Human-Centric Leadership:** In high-pressure environments like sales, managers must recognise that demonstrating compassion is not a weakness but a strategic imperative. Leaders who cultivate psychological safety create an environment that ultimately fosters a more resilient, confident, and high-performing team.

## 6.5 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations, several recommendations for future research can be made.

- **Longitudinal and Experimental Studies:** Future studies could use longitudinal designs to examine how changes in leadership behaviour over time influence employee self-efficacy.
- **Broader and More Diverse Samples:** The study should be replicated across different sectors and extended to other African countries.
- **Mixed-Methods Approach:** A mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews, could offer a richer and more nuanced understanding.
- **Exploring Mediating and Moderating Variables:** Future studies could examine additional organisational outcomes and explore potential mediating factors, such as psychological safety.

## 6.6 Limitations of the Study

Although this study offers valuable insights, it is important to recognise its limitations, which also point to potential directions for future research.

- **Sample and Generalisability:** The study was based on a sample of 84 sales professionals. The findings may not be generalisable to specific industries, professions, or national cultures. The relatively small sample size also limits the statistical power.
- **Research Design:** While the cross-sectional design enables the identification of significant relationships, it does not allow for conclusions about causality.
- **Methodology:** Relying on self-report surveys introduces the potential for common method variance and social desirability bias.
- **Measurement Instruments:** Although the scales showed high reliability, the measurement of Ubuntu remains an emerging area and requires further validation.

## 6.7 Conclusion

This research aimed to quantitatively assess the impact of the African philosophy of Ubuntu on employees' self-efficacy. The findings have delivered a clear and affirmative answer: Ubuntu leadership, characterised by its emphasis on collectivism, empathy, and community, is a powerful positive force in shaping an employee's belief in their own capabilities. The study has provided empirical validation for what has long been intuitively understood, that leadership which honours shared humanity, fosters connection, and champions the collective good is not only more ethical but also more effective. By linking an indigenous African worldview to a globally recognised psychological driver of performance, this research contributes to a more inclusive and diverse understanding of effective leadership.

## **Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this research was to quantitatively investigate the impact of Ubuntu leadership on the self-efficacy of sales professionals in South Africa. The main objectives of this study were to

- To explore the principles of Ubuntu in leadership and assess its effectiveness on self-efficacy of Sales personnel
- Which traits and principles of Ubuntu have the most impact on self-efficacy
- The causal link between Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy

### **7.2 What Was Studied and Why It Matters**

This study investigated the practical relationship between the African leadership philosophy of Ubuntu and the psychological construct of employee self-efficacy. Specifically, it sought to determine whether leadership practices rooted in *Collectivism, Empathy, and Community* have a measurable positive impact on the confidence and perceived capabilities of sales professionals in South Africa.

This research matters for two critical reasons. Firstly, from a business perspective, organisations are in constant pursuit of a competitive advantage. In the diverse and complex South African context, the uncritical application of Western management theories may be suboptimal. This study provides evidence that an indigenous, culturally resonant leadership framework can be a powerful tool for unlocking human potential, suggesting that culture is not just a social factor but a strategic asset. Secondly, from a theoretical perspective, the field of leadership studies has been predominantly shaped by Western-centric models. This research answers the call for a more inclusive, global perspective by subjecting a non-Western philosophy to rigorous empirical testing, thereby enriching and diversifying the academic discourse on what constitutes effective leadership.

### **7.3 The Research Context and Its Importance**

The research was conducted within the high-pressure, target-driven sales environment of South Africa. This context is important because sales roles demand high levels of resilience, motivation, and persistence, all of which are underpinned by self-efficacy. Furthermore, the South African corporate landscape is a microcosm of cultural diversity, making it an ideal setting to test the effectiveness of a leadership model that champions

inclusivity and interconnectedness. The findings from this specific context offer valuable lessons for any organisation grappling with the challenges of leading diverse teams in demanding environments.

#### 7.4 What Was Already Known vs. Not Known

Before this study, the academic literature had already established two key points:

- **Self-efficacy**, as defined by Bandura (1997), is a robust and consistent predictor of performance, particularly in sales (Peterson, 2020).
- **Ubuntu** was widely discussed as a philosophical and ethical framework with potential applicability to business, praised for its human-centric values (Woermann & Engelbrecht, 2019).

However, what was not known and what constituted the central gap this research aimed to fill was the empirical, quantifiable link between the practice of Ubuntu leadership and the development of employee self-efficacy. The discourse was largely theoretical, lacking the statistical evidence to move from theoretical proposal to actionable business strategy.

#### 7.5 The Specific Questions Answered

This research aimed to answer one primary question, broken down into four testable hypotheses. Does Ubuntu leadership have a positive impact on employee self-efficacy? The study provided a clear and affirmative answer to this question. It found that:

- Yes, Ubuntu leadership as an overarching construct has a *positive and statistically significant impact* on self-efficacy.
- Yes, the specific dimensions of *Collectivism, Empathy, and Community* are all individual positive predictors of self-efficacy, with Community demonstrating the strongest effect.

The study systematically addressed every research question and its hypotheses. The findings are summarised below:

- **Main Research Question & Hypothesis 1:**

The results confirmed that Ubuntu leadership predicts higher self-efficacy scores among sales professionals. Statistical analysis indicated a significant positive correlation, affirming the primary hypothesis and supporting the premise that

African-centred leadership can materially enhance psychological outcomes in organisational settings.

- **Sub-Research Question & Hypothesis 2 (Collectivism):**

Quantitative data demonstrated that higher collectivism scores are associated with increased self-efficacy. This finding suggests that sales professionals benefit from environments that foster shared responsibility and mutual support, as theorised.

- **Sub-Research Question & Hypothesis 3 (Empathy):**

The analysis revealed that leaders perceived as empathetic by their teams contributed significantly to higher self-confidence among salespeople. Empathy thus emerged as a key driver of motivation and perseverance in high-stress environments.

- **Sub-Research Question & Hypothesis 4 (Community):**

There was clear evidence that a strong sense of community within teams enhanced individual self-efficacy. The “I am because we are” philosophy was more than theoretical; it produced measurable benefits in terms of self-assurance, resilience, and task engagement among participants.

## **7.6 How the Questions Were Answered: A Methodological Recap**

To answer these questions, a *positivist, deductive, and quantitative* research methodology was employed. A cross-sectional survey was administered to a sample of 84 sales professionals in South Africa. The survey instrument utilised previously validated scales for both Ubuntu leadership adapted from, (Ngcobo, 2018; Muller et al., 2019) and self-efficacy (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995). The collected data, which demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's  $\alpha > 0.86$ ), was analysed using *univariate ordinal logistic regression* to test the hypothesised relationships. This methodical approach ensured that the findings were statistically robust and directly addressed the research questions.

## **7.7 What Was Found and How It Was Interpreted**

The principal finding of this study is that leaders who practice the principles of Ubuntu are significantly more likely to foster higher levels of self-efficacy in their employees. The data revealed that for every one-unit increase in the perception of a manager's community-building behaviour, the odds of an employee reporting higher self-efficacy increased by 15% (OR = 1.15).

This was interpreted through the lens of Bandura's (1991) Social Cognitive Theory. The findings suggest that the relational ethos of Ubuntu is not merely a "soft" or philosophical ideal, but it is a practical leadership framework that directly cultivates employee confidence by creating an organisational environment rich in the social sources of self-efficacy. Specifically, Ubuntu leadership provides the vicarious experiences (observing collective success), social persuasion (empathetic encouragement), and supportive climate necessary for employees to gain mastery experiences.

## 7.8 Contribution to the Current Scholarly Debate

This research makes three distinct contributions to the current scholarly debate:

- **Empirical Validation of a Non-Western Leadership Model:** It provides rare quantitative evidence for the effectiveness of an indigenous African leadership philosophy, helping to legitimise and elevate non-Western models within the global academic discourse.
- **Operationalising Ubuntu for Research:** By successfully applying and testing adapted scales, this study contributes to the critical effort of operationalising the complex, multifaceted philosophy of Ubuntu for future empirical research, addressing the measurement gap highlighted by scholars like Goldman et al. (2019).
- **Extending Social Cognitive Theory:** It extends Bandura's theory by demonstrating how a culturally specific leadership philosophy can serve as a powerful antecedent to the social processes that build self-efficacy, providing a real-world example of theory in practice.

## 7.9 Practical and Business Relevance of the Findings

The findings of this research offer clear, actionable insights for leaders and organisations:

- **Invest in Human-Centric Leadership:** Organisations should move beyond purely technical management training and invest in developing leaders' capacities for empathy, community-building, and fostering a collectivist spirit.
- **Rethink Performance and Incentives:** The strong link between collectivism and confidence challenges the dominance of purely individualistic incentive structures. Incorporating team-based targets can reinforce a sense of solidarity and shared success.

- **Leverage Culture as a Strategic Asset:** Leaders should consciously and strategically build a strong sense of community. This is not a "nice-to-have" but a direct driver of the psychological confidence needed for high performance.
- **Embrace Compassion as a Performance Tool:** In high-pressure environments, demonstrating compassion is a strategic imperative. A supportive leader who creates psychological safety will foster a more resilient and confident team.

### 7.10 Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged:

- **Sample Limitation:** The focus on sales professionals may limit generalizability to other sectors. Future research should expand sampling to multiple industries for broader relevance.
- **Design Limitation:** The cross-sectional nature of the research precludes causal inferences. Longitudinal studies would enable firmer conclusions about directionality and long-term effects.
- **Measurement Limitation:** Although validated scales were used, quantitative instruments might not fully capture all cultural and contextual nuances of Ubuntu philosophy in practice.

These limitations influenced the interpretation of results and informed the recommendations provided for future research. By acknowledging these issues, the current study sets a clear agenda for ongoing investigation and methodological improvement.

### 7.11 Suggestions for Future Research

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, several recommendations for future research emerge:

- **Longitudinal and Experimental Studies:** Future research should employ longitudinal designs to track how changes in leadership behaviour affect self-efficacy over time. An experimental design could provide stronger causal inferences.
- **Broader and More Diverse Samples:** The study should be replicated in different sectors (e.g., technology, healthcare) and other African countries to test the cross-contextual validity of the findings.

- **A Mixed-Methods Approach:** Combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews would provide a richer, more nuanced understanding of the lived experiences of employees under Ubuntu leadership.
- **Investigating Mediating Variables:** Future research could explore the role of mediating variables, such as psychological safety or trust, in the relationship between Ubuntu leadership and self-efficacy.

### **7.12 Conclusion**

This research set out to quantitatively examine the impact of the African philosophy of Ubuntu, when practised as a leadership style, on the self-efficacy of employees. The findings have delivered a clear and affirmative answer. Ubuntu leadership, characterised by its emphasis on collectivism, empathy, and community, is a powerful positive force in shaping an employee's belief in their own capabilities.

The study has provided empirical validation for what has long been intuitively understood. That leadership which honours our shared humanity, fosters connection, and champions the collective good is not only more ethical but also more effective. By linking an indigenous African worldview to a globally recognised psychological driver of performance, this research contributes to a more inclusive and diverse understanding of leadership. It serves as a call for organisations to look beyond conventional paradigms and to embrace leadership models that are culturally resonant, profoundly human, and demonstrably effective in building the confident, resilient workforce required for success in the 21st century.

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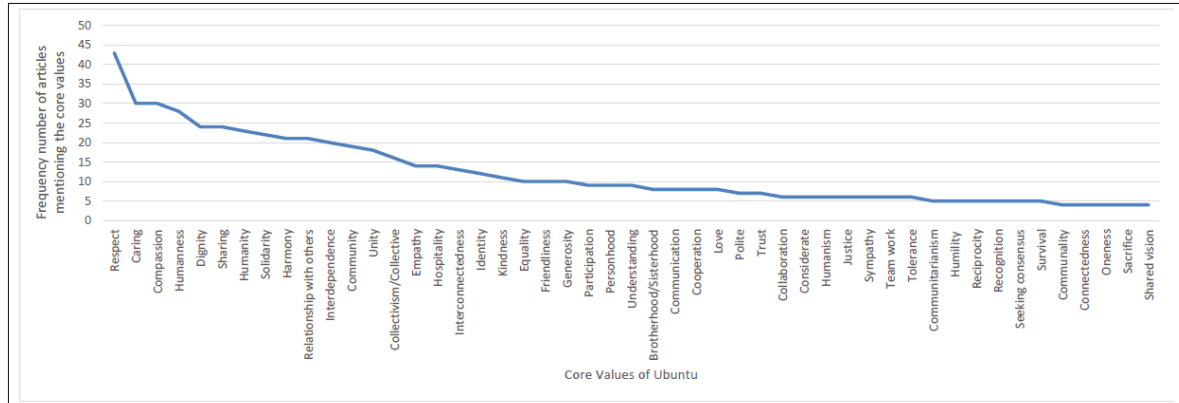
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## Appendices

### Appendix 1



Dimension	Items
Humanness	You treat other people with dignity
	You recognise other people
	You treat other people the way that you want to be treated
	You value other people
	You believe in the humanity of other people
	You respect other people
Dimension	Items
Interconnectedness	Your life is interconnected with the lives of other people
	You share possessions with other people
	You like living together with other people
	Your life is richer because you share it with other people
	When you are connected to other people you feel a sense of harmony
Compassion	You have a caring attitude towards other people
	You are concerned about the well-being of other people
	You are thoughtful of other people
	You try to be a blessing to other people
	You exhibit good will to other people
	You are helpful to other people

*Mutsonziwa's (2020) Ubuntu measurement scale*

## Appendix 2

### PART B: LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Slightly disagree
- 4 - Slightly agree
- 5 - Agree
- 6 - Strongly agree

1. My manager encourages teamwork	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. I am proud to work for my manager	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. My manager has the well-being of his/her staff as a major objective	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. My manager is someone I inform about my personal life	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. My manager makes me feel like I am really part of the team	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. I make sacrifices for the good of the team	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. My manager is friendly and helpful	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I have confidence and trust in my manager	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. My manager offers a stable job environment	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. My manager treats all my co-workers equally	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. My manager provides subordinates open access to information	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. My manager encourages diversity of opinions	1	2	3	4	5	6

### PART C: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

- 1 - Strongly disagree
- 2 - Disagree
- 3 - Slightly disagree
- 4 - Slightly agree
- 5 - Agree
- 6 - Strongly agree

13. I feel my values "match" or fit this organisation and the current employees in this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I think the values and personality of this organisation reflect my own values and personality.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. The values of the organisation are similar to my own values.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. I feel personally attached to my work organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. I am proud to tell others I work at my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. My boss is flexible about how I accomplish my job objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. My manager is supportive of my ideas and ways of getting things done.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. My boss gives me the authority to do my job as I see fit.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. I feel very useful in my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Doing my job well makes a difference.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. I feel like a key member of the organisation.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. I rarely feel my work is taken for granted.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. My superiors generally appreciate the way I do my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. The organisation recognises the significance of my contributions I make.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. My job is very challenging.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. It takes all of my resources to achieve my work objectives.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. I work with intensity on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. I exert my full effort to do my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. I devote a lot of energy to my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. I am enthusiastic about my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. I feel energetic about my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. I am interested in my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. At work, my mind is focused on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. At work, I pay a lot of attention to my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. At work, I focus a great deal of attention on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. If I have my own way, I will be working for my dream company one year from now.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. I am planning to search for a new job within the next 12 months.	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. When I work, I really exert myself to the fullest, beyond what is expected.	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. I finish a job even if it means sacrificing breaks or lunches.	1	2	3	4	5	6
43. I do more than is expected of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6

*Ngcobo's (2018) Likert-scale survey instrument*

### **Appendix 3 - Questionnaire with consent section**

#### **Part 1: Survey Introduction & Informed Consent**

Questionnaire with consent section

The same informed consent data should be included in any survey questionnaire to be used for data collection. No signatures are used, but a statement is added to the effect that participation in the survey signals agreement.

*I am currently a student at the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science and completing my research in partial fulfilment of an MBA.*

*I am conducting research that aims to investigate the relationship between Ubuntu leadership practices and salespeople's self-efficacy in South Africa. Your honest insights are invaluable to the success of this research. To that end, you are asked to look at a website and complete a survey about that site. This will help us better understand online transacting and should take no more than 25 minutes of your time. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without penalty. Your participation is anonymous and only aggregated data will be reported. By completing the survey, you indicate that you voluntarily participate in this research. If you have any concerns, please contact my supervisor or me. Our details are provided below.*

Researcher name : Robert Masson

Research Supervisor: Prof Gavin Price

Email: 22957643@mygibs.co.za

Email: priceg@mygibs.co.za

Phone: 0832271708

Phone

*(This will be the very first section of the Google Form.)*

**Title:** The Impact of Ubuntu Leadership on Salespeople's Self-Efficacy

**Description:** Dear Participant,

Thank you for considering participation in this important research study. This survey aims to investigate the relationship between Ubuntu leadership practices and salespeople's self-efficacy in South Africa. Your honest insights are invaluable to the success of this research.

**Please read the following information carefully before proceeding:**

- **Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this survey is entirely voluntary. You are free to decline participation or discontinue the survey at any time without penalty by simply closing your browser window before submitting your responses.
- **Anonymity and Confidentiality:** All responses you provide will be kept strictly anonymous and confidential. No identifying information will be collected, and your responses cannot be linked back to you. The data will only be reported in aggregated formats (e.g., group averages) to ensure your privacy is protected.
- **Purpose:** The findings from this study will contribute to academic understanding of culturally relevant leadership in South Africa and provide practical insights for organisations.
- **Time Commitment:** This survey is estimated to take approximately **15-25 minutes** to complete.
- **Ethical Approval:** This research has received ethical approval from the University of Pretoria's Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) ethics committee.

By clicking "Next" and proceeding with the survey, you indicate that you have read and understood the information provided, and you voluntarily consent to participate in this research.

Thank you for your valuable contribution!

**Part 2: Demographic Information**

( All questions in this section should be "Multiple choice" or "Short answer" where applicable.)

**6-Point Likert Scale:** 1 = Strongly Disagree 2 = Disagree 3 = Slightly Disagree 4 = Slightly Agree 5 = Agree 6 = Strongly Agree

**Section Title:** Demographic Information

**Section Description:** Please provide some general information about yourself and your direct manager.

**1. Your Age Group:**

- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55 years or older

**2. Your Gender:**

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

**3. Your Ethnic Group:**

- Black African
- Coloured
- Indian
- White
- Other
- Prefer not to say

**4. Your Highest Qualification:**

- Matric/Grade 12
- Diploma/Certificate (Post-Matric)
- Bachelor's Degree
- Postgraduate Degree (Honours, Master's, PhD)
- Other (Please specify)

**5. Your Current Position Level (Sales Role):**

- Junior Sales Representative
- Sales Representative
- Senior Sales Representative
- Sales Team Leader/Supervisor
- Sales Manager
- Other (Please specify)

**6. Your Tenure in Your Current Organisation:**

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 10 years

**7. Your Direct Manager's Gender:**

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

**8. Your Direct Manager's Ethnic Group:**

- Black African
- Coloured

- Indian
  - White
  - Other
  - Prefer not to say
- 

### **Section A: Perceptions of Ubuntu Leadership Practices**

*(Instructions: Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your direct manager's leadership practices within your organisation.)*

**Dimension: Collectivism / Spirit of Solidarity** *(Focuses on fostering collective identity, teamwork, and shared responsibility. Draws from Muller et al. (2019) "Spirit of solidarity," Ngcobo (2018) "teamwork," Goldman et al. (2019) "group solidarity," and Sarra & Berman (2017) "we-ness" and "cooperative behaviour.")*

1. My manager actively encourages a sense of teamwork and collective responsibility among colleagues.
2. I feel that my manager prioritises the success of the team over individual achievements.
3. My manager fosters an atmosphere where employees feel interconnected and support one another.
4. Decisions made by my manager often reflect a consideration for the well-being of the entire team.
5. My manager believes that our collective efforts are more impactful than individual contributions.
6. My manager encourages us to share resources and knowledge for the benefit of the group.
7. My manager cultivates a "we-are-one" (Simunye) mindset within our team.

8. My manager encourages us to work together, even when facing differences, for the collective good.

**Dimension: Empathy / Compassion** (*Focuses on understanding, caring, and responsiveness to others' needs and suffering. Draws from Muller et al. (2019) "Compassion," Ngcobo (2018) "well-being," Goldman et al. (2019) "understanding dilemmas" and "willingness to sacrifice," and Sarra & Berman (2017) "sympathetic" and "responding to needs."*)

9. My manager shows genuine concern for the personal and professional well-being of employees.
10. I feel that my manager understands and acknowledges the challenges faced by team members.
11. My manager is approachable and willing to listen when employees have personal or work-related difficulties.
12. My manager demonstrates compassion when employees are struggling or facing setbacks.
13. My manager tries to see situations from an employee's perspective before making judgments.
14. My manager is thoughtful and considerate in their interactions with me and my colleagues.
15. My manager is willing to go out of their way to help colleagues in need.

**Dimension: Community** (*Focuses on building a sense of belonging, unity, and shared identity within the team/organisation. Draws from Sarra & Berman (2017) "belonging and participating," "shared identity," "unity," and Ngcobo (2018) "part of the team."*)

16. My manager actively builds a strong sense of community within our sales team.
17. I feel like a valued member of a cohesive community under my manager's leadership.
18. My manager creates opportunities for team members to connect and build relationships beyond work tasks.
19. My manager emphasizes our shared identity and belonging within the organization.

20. My manager promotes a sense of unity and solidarity among team members.

21. I believe my manager strives to ensure everyone feels included and respected within the team.

**Dimension: Respect & Dignity** (*Focuses on fair treatment, valuing worth, and open communication. Draws from Muller et al. (2019) "Dignity and respect," Ngcobo (2018) "treats all my co-workers equally," "open access to information," "diversity of opinions," and Sarra & Berman (2017) "human dignity" and "active listening."*)

22. My manager treats all my co-workers equally and fairly.

23. My manager provides subordinates with open access to relevant information.

24. My manager encourages diversity of opinions and listens to all viewpoints.

25. My manager treats me with utmost respect and upholds my dignity.

26. My manager values the inherent worth of every individual in the team.

27. I have confidence and trust in my manager's fair judgment.

**Dimension: Survival / Resilience (Leader's Trait)** (*Focuses on the leader's ability to navigate challenges and foster collective endurance. Draws from Muller et al. (2019) "Survival," Goldman et al. (2019) "shared will to survive" and "endurance in difficult living experiences," and Sarra & Berman (2017) "tool for resilience" and "inspire thriving."*)

28. My manager demonstrates a strong shared will to help the team overcome adversity.

29. My manager inspires the team to adapt and innovate during challenging times.

30. My manager effectively leads us through difficult periods, ensuring our collective endurance.

31. My manager encourages open-handedness and concern for the needs of others, especially during tough times.

32. My manager is able to maintain focus and drive the team forward even when faced with significant obstacles.

---

## **Section B: Salespeople's Self-Efficacy**

*(Instructions: Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your personal capabilities and confidence in your sales role.)*

**Dimension: General Sales Self-Efficacy** *(Focuses on overall confidence in sales capabilities. Draws from Bandura (1994, 2011) "beliefs about their capabilities to produce effects," "organise and execute courses of action," Peterson (2020) "overall confidence in job well," and Carter et al. (2018) "mobilise motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action.")*

- 33. I am confident in my overall ability to perform my sales job well.
- 34. I believe I have the capabilities to successfully achieve my sales targets.
- 35. I am confident in my ability to adapt to new sales strategies and market changes.
- 36. I can always manage to solve difficult sales problems if I try hard enough.
- 37. I am confident in my ability to perform well even under high-pressure sales situations.
- 38. When facing a tough sales challenge, I am confident I can find a way to overcome it.
- 39. I feel very capable at the task of selling.

**Dimension: Sales-Specific Task Efficacy** *(Focuses on confidence in performing specific sales-related tasks. Draws from Peterson (2020) specific items like "good at selling," "closing sales," "prospecting," "customer relationships," and Carter et al. (2018) "asking for business" and "making appointments.")*

- 40. I am confident in my ability to effectively prospect for new clients within the FMCG sector.
- 41. I believe I can successfully build and maintain strong relationships with key customers.
- 42. I am confident in my ability to effectively present and demonstrate our products to potential buyers.
- 43. I can confidently negotiate favourable terms and close sales deals.
- 44. I am confident in my ability to meet and exceed my monthly/quarterly sales quotas.

45. I believe I can effectively manage my sales territory and prioritize my activities.

46. I am good at selling.

47. I know the right thing to do in most selling situations.

48. It is easy for me to get customers to see my point of view.

**Reverse-Coded Items (to mitigate self-bias):** *(These items are worded negatively and will need to be reverse-scored during data analysis. They are designed to check for consistent responses and identify potential response bias, as highlighted by Peterson (2020) regarding reverse-worded items.)*

49. I often find it difficult to convince a customer who has a different viewpoint than mine.

50. My temperament is not well-suited for a sales role.

51. I frequently doubt my ability to perform successfully in challenging sales situations.

52. I find it hard to meet the expected sales standards for my role

## Appendix 4 - Findings

Figure 8: Reverse coded items

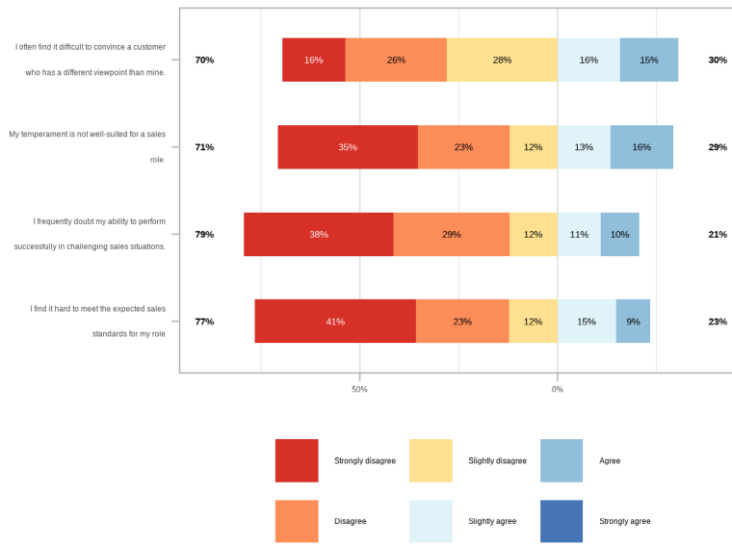


Figure 7: Dimension - Sales-Specific Task Efficacy

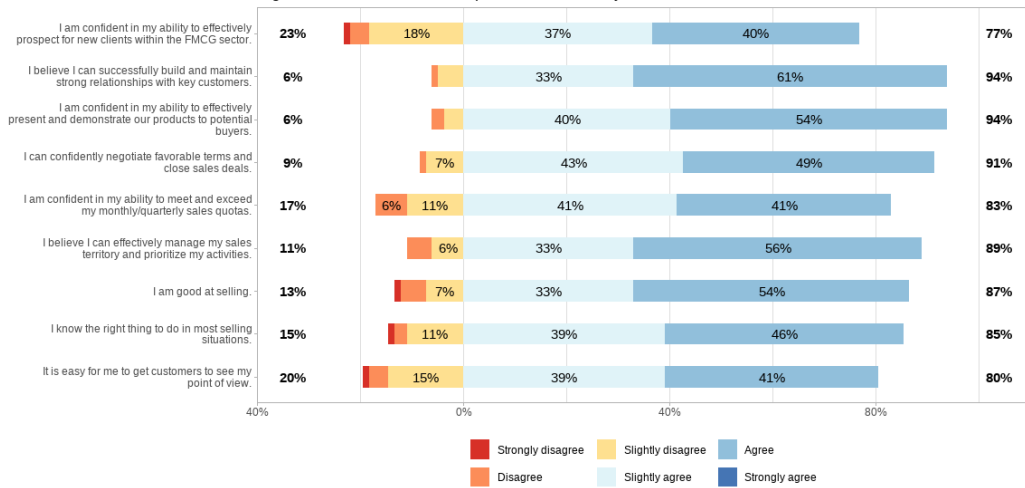


Figure 6: Dimension - General Sales Self-Efficacy

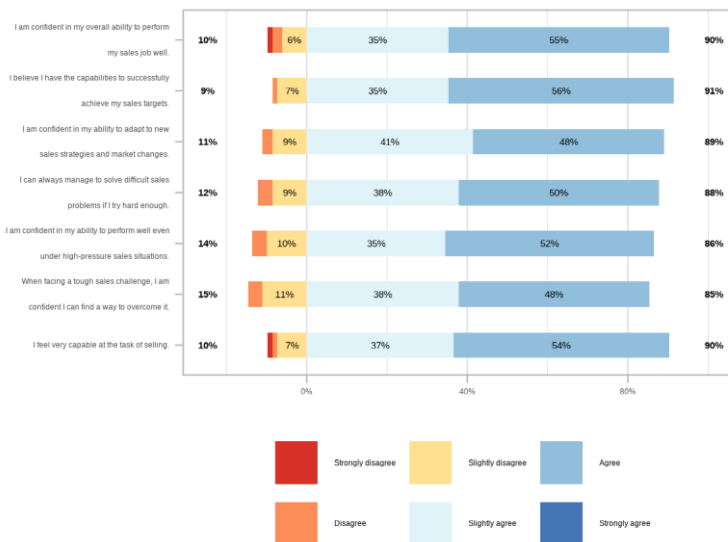


Figure 5: Dimension - Survival / Resilience

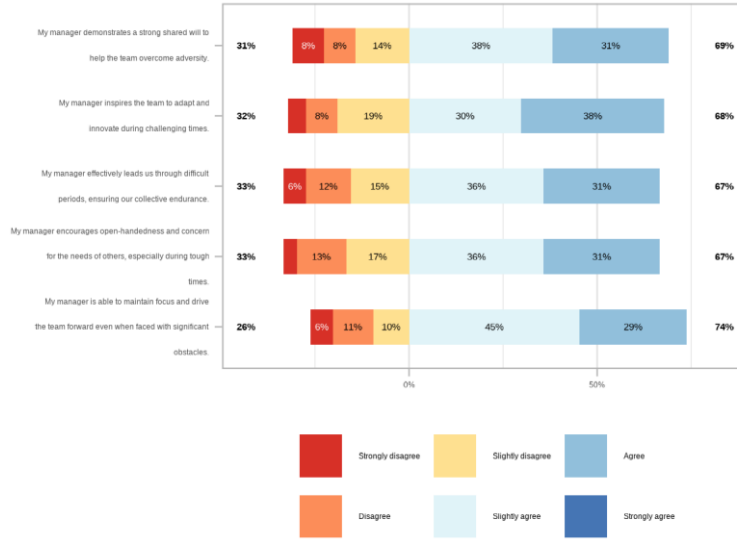


Figure 4: Dimension - Respect and Dignity

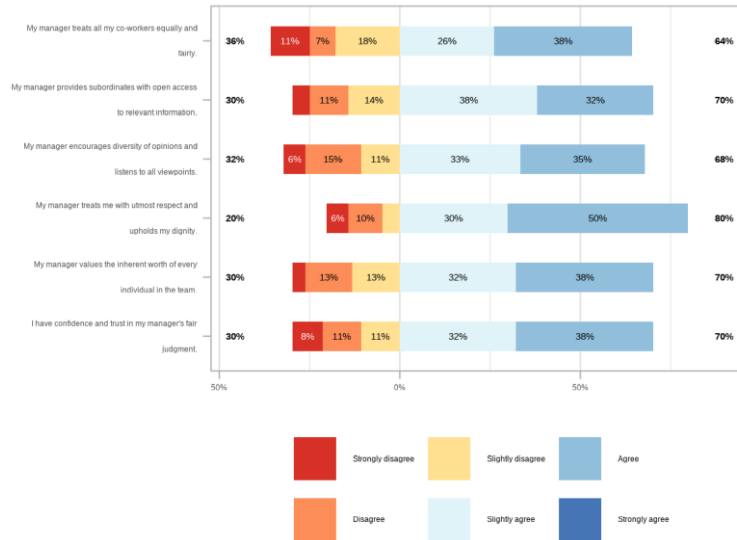


Figure 3: Dimension - Community

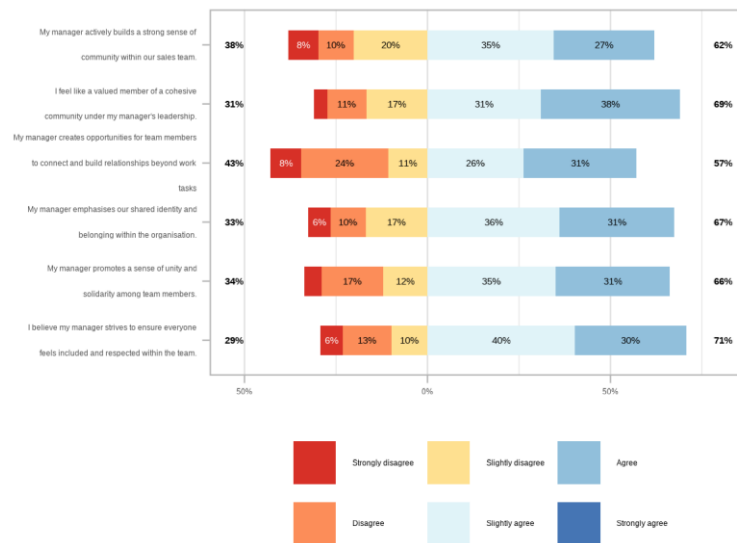


Figure 2: Dimension - Empathy / Compassion

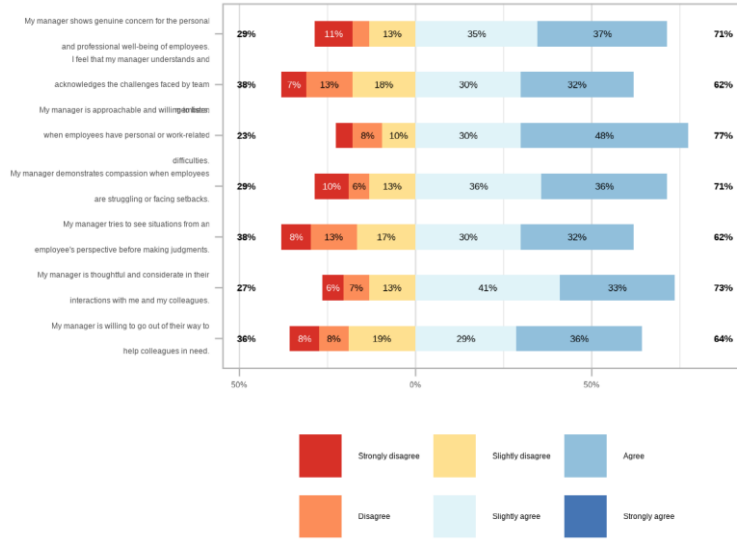
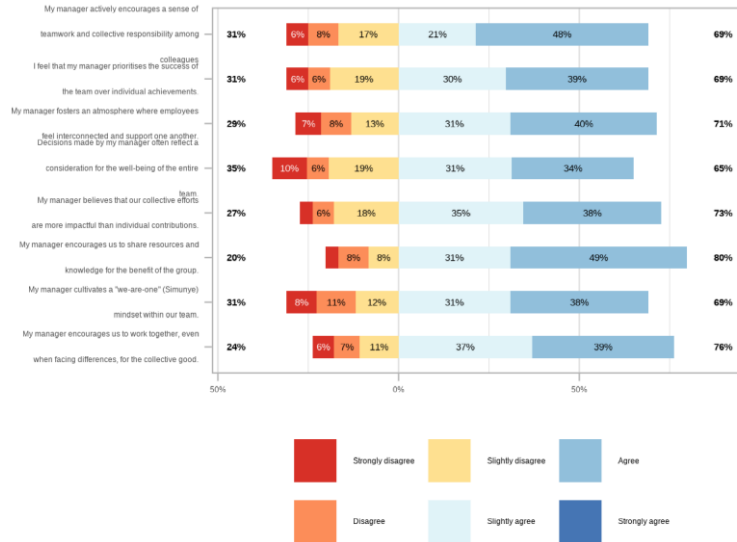


Figure 1: Dimension - Collectivism / Spirit of Solidarity



## Appendix 5

## Ethical Clearance Form Information

**GIBS ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPLICATION FORM 2025/26**

## RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION

NAME:	Robert Masson
STUDENT NUMBER:	22957643
PHONE NUMBER:	
E-MAIL ADDRESS:	22957643@mygibs.co.za
PROPOSED TITLE OF STUDY:	The Impact of Ubuntu Leadership on salespeople's Self-efficacy within the FMCG industry in South Africa
RESEARCH SUPERVISOR:	Gavin Price
E-MAIL OF SUPERVISOR:	Priceg@gibs.co.za
RESEARCH CO-SUPERVISOR	
E-MAIL OF CO-SUPERVISOR	

The purpose of this Research Ethics process is to ensure that all research conducted under the auspices of GIBS is done so in an ethical manner, in accordance with the University's policy and in such a way that the **rights of all stakeholders** associated with the research are protected.

In order for the GIBS Research Ethics Committee to assess your application, you are required to submit a **description of your Research Methodology** that must contain sufficient detail to ensure that the required steps have been taken to achieve this purpose, in the research design, data collection, analysis and storage of data used in the conduct of this research.

**Please indicate the nature of the output your research is aimed at producing (mark one box only):**

- ABP Applied Business Project
- MBA Research Report
- MBA Project Publish Article
- MBA Teaching Case Study
- MBA Entrepreneurship Stream Portfolio
- MBA Consulting Stream Portfolio/MBA Health Stream
- MPhil Research Report

**GIBS Ethics Policy distinguishes between FOUR main types of data and THREE main types of methodology. Please complete the table for ALL the data types that you plan to use. Note that all applications must be accompanied by a description of the methodology to be used in the study. Initial all sections that apply to your research**

## GIBS ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPLICATION FORM 2025/26

### G. APPROVALS FOR/OF THIS APPLICATION

When the applicant is a student of GIBS, the applicant must please ensure that the supervisor and co-supervisor (where relevant) has signed the form before submission

#### STUDENT RESEARCHER/APPLICANT:

29. I affirm that all relevant information has been provided in this form and its attachments and that all statements made are correct.

Student Researcher's Name in capital letters: ROBERT MASSON

Date: 27 Jul 2025

Supervisor Name in capital letters: GAVIN PRICE

Date: 27 Jul 2025

Co-supervisor Name in capital letters:

Date: 27 Jul 2025

**Note:** GIBS shall do everything in its power to protect the personal information supplied herein, in accordance to its company privacy policies as well the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013. Access to all of the above provided personal information is restricted, only employees who need the information to perform a specific job are granted access to this information.

#### Decision:

Approved

#### REC comments:

Date: 11 Aug 2025

<p><b>Gordon Institute of Business Science</b> University of Pretoria</p>	<p><b>Ethical Clearance Approved</b></p>
<p>Dear Robert Masson,</p> <p>Please be advised that your application for Ethical Clearance has been approved. You are therefore allowed to continue collecting your data. We wish you everything of the best for the rest of the project.</p> <p><a href="#">Ethical Clearance Form</a></p> <p>Kind Regards</p>	
<p>This email has been sent from an unmonitored email account. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the GIBS Research Admin team.</p>	

## Supervisor Agreement Information

### 21. APPENDIX 5 MBA STUDENT/ SUPERVISOR AGREEMENT

This document must be read in conjunction with the following GIBS policy documents:

***The GIBS MBA Student Regulations***

***The GIBS MBA Integrative Business Research Regulations – i.e. Green Pages***

*Any grievances, personal problems or disagreements that may arise between a postgraduate candidate and the supervisor must be referred to the GIBS MBA Research Management team, care of the Research Manager, Jennifer Theodoridis – [TheodoridisJ@gibs.co.za](mailto:TheodoridisJ@gibs.co.za) (as well as the Research Officer, Mr Letlatsa Tsoletsane-[TsoletsaneL@gibs.co.za](mailto:TsoletsaneL@gibs.co.za))*

Name of student: Robert Masson .....

Student number: 22957643 .....

Student email address: 22957643@mygibs.co.za .....

Name of Supervisor: Prof Gavin Price .....

Supervisor email address: gprice@mygibs.co.za .....

#### 1. Parties Involved

- **Student Name:** Robert Masson
- **Student Number:** 22957643
- **Student Email:** 22957643@mygibs.co.za
- **Supervisor Name:** Prof Gavin Price
- **Supervisor Email:** gprice@mygibs.co.za
- **2. Associated Documents**
- The GIBS MBA Student Regulations

- The GIBS MBA Integrative Business Research Regulations

**THE STUDENT AND THE SUPERVISOR:**

Confirm that we have read and understood this Memorandum of Agreement and agree to accept its content for the duration of the period of study in respect of the degree as specified below.

Name of student:

Robert Masson

Student number:

22957643

Signed at Fourways on  
20/06/2025 (date)

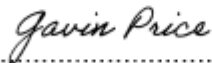
Student's signature



Name of supervisor:

Prof. Gavin Price

Supervisor's signature:



Signed at Randburg on  
20 June 25 (date)

**CERTIFICATION OF DATA ANALYSIS SUPPORT**

(Additional support retained or not - to be **completed by all students**)

***Please note that failure to comply and report on this honestly will result in disciplinary action***

I hereby certify that (please indicate which statement applies):

- ***I DID NOT RECEIVE*** any additional/outside assistance (i.e. statistical, transcriptional, and/or editorial services) on my research report:

.....

- ***I RECEIVED*** additional/outside assistance (i.e. statistical, transcriptional, and/or editorial services) on my research report:

.....

If any additional services were retained– ***please indicate below which:***

✓  **Statistician**

**Transcriber**

✓  **Editor**

**Other (please specify.....)**

***Please provide the name(s) and contact details of all retained:***

NAME: Xan Swart .....

EMAIL ADDRESS: info@bioxstats.com.....

CONTACT NUMBER: .....

TYPE OF SERVICE: Stats Analysis.....

NAME: **Thandeka Sitha**.....

EMAIL ADDRESS: **thandekasitha@gmail.com**.....

CONTACT NUMBER: .....

TYPE OF SERVICE: **...EDITOR**.....

NAME: **Copilot**.....

EMAIL ADDRESS: .....

CONTACT NUMBER: .....

TYPE OF SERVICE: **Transcribe meetings with supervisor, formatting and summarising data**.....

**I hereby declare that all *statistical write-ups and thematic interpretations of the results for my study* were completed by myself without outside assistance**

NAME OF STUDENT:

**...Robert Masson**.....

SIGNATURE:

.....

STUDENT NUMBER:

**...22957643**.....

STUDENT EMAIL ADDRESS:

**22957643@mygibs.co.za**.....



**COPYRIGHT DECLARATION FORM**

Student details			
Surname:	Masson	Initials:	RE
Student number:	22957643		
Email:	22957643@mygibs.co.za		
Phone:	0832271708		
Qualification details			
Degree:	MBA	Year completed:	2025
Title of research:	GIBS		
Supervisor:	Gavin Price		
Supervisor email:	priceg@gibs.co.za		
Access			
A.	My research is not confidential and may be made available in the GIBS Information Centre and on UPSpace.		
I give permission to display my email address on the UPSpace website			
Yes	x	No	
B.	My research is confidential and may <b>NOT</b> be made available in the GIBS Information Centre nor on UPSpace.		

Please indicate embargo period requested

Two years		Please attach a letter of motivation to substantiate your request. Without a letter embargo will not be granted.
Permanent		<b>Permission from the Vice-Principal: Research and Postgraduate Studies at UP is required for permanent embargo.</b> Please attach a copy permission letter. Without a letter permanent embargo will not be granted.

#### Copyright declaration

I hereby declare that I have not used unethical research practices nor gained material dishonesty in this electronic version of my research submitted. Where appropriate, written permission statement(s) were obtained from the owner(s) of third-party copyrighted matter included in my research, allowing distribution as specified below.

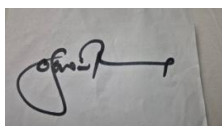
I hereby assign, transfer and make over to the University of Pretoria my rights of copyright in the submitted work to the extent that it has not already been affected in terms of the contract I entered into at registration. I understand that all rights with regard to the intellectual property of my research, vest in the University who has the right to reproduce, distribute and/or publish the work in any manner it may deem fit.

Signature:



Date:27/10/2025

Supervisor signature:



Date:27/10/25

