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The Impact of employment benefits on employee performance and productivity in the South African mining industry

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Abstract

The present study examines the impact of employment benefits on the performance and productivity of employees within the mining sector in South Africa. The study employed a qualitative research methodology to collect the diverse viewpoints of employees, supervisors, managers, HR specialists and industry professionals operating within the mining sector of South Africa, through in-depth interviews, focus groups and the content analysis of pertinent documents.

This research study considers themes such as housing allowances, healthcare benefits, retirement plans and other non-cash incentives, to learn more about how employees feel about their benefits and how these perceptions affect their work performance and productivity.

It is anticipated that the findings of this research will contribute valuable insights to both academia and industry practitioners by shedding light on the intricate dynamics between employment benefits, employee motivation and organisational productivity in the South African mining context. Moreover, the study aims to offer actionable recommendations that mining companies can implement to optimize their benefit packages in order to enhance employees' satisfaction, engagement and, ultimately, performance and productivity.

Keywords: employment benefits, employee performance, impact, mining industry

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1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Background of the study

The employees of any organisation are the significant resources for the growth and development of that organisation. According to Kuranchie-Mensah and Amponsah-Tawiah (2016), the staff members of an organisation play a significant role in ensuring that the organisation attains its intended objectives. Mining has been identified as an industry that plays an important role, such as employment and income generation, in the development of any country (Nasirov & Agostini, 2018). According to Kalogiannidis (2021), the performance of mining employees is determined by their motivation, a lack of which can cause tardiness, poor mental health, and absenteeism, leading to costly turnover, highlighting the importance of a well-motivated, dedicated, competent, productive, and stable workforce as the most important asset of any organization (Borg, Borg, Scott-Young, & Naderpajouh, 2021)..

The significant focus of most organisations is on what needs to be done to ensure a high level of performance through their employees' contributions and, consequently, organisations need to take into consideration how employees can best be motivated through such means as employee benefits and rewards (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). According to Warrick (2017) an organisation that does not motivate and increase their staff's morale faces a high risk of losing employees of high value and will find it very difficult to attract employees of a similar calibre.

Employee benefits have been attributed with playing a crucial role in attracting potential employees and further supplementing the competitive advantage of an organisation (Kalogiannidis, 2021). Various aspects can influence the performance of employees but according to Warrick (2017), employee benefits are an extremely significant factor that contributes to the enhancement of employees' performance. Researchers have defined employment benefits as the forms of compensation provided by organisations to their employees in addition to their salary/wage, and can be in the form of health, medical, disability and life insurance, retirement benefits, housing, vacation time and/or flexible working arrangements (Ahmed & Ahmed, 2014; Kadir, AlHosani, Ismail & Sehan, 2019; Kibet & Kalei, 2020; Nandy & Basu, 2018).

Employee benefits in an organisation have been described as the 'sensitive subjects' that determine the extent of input that employees contribute to the organisation in

order to commit to a great performance (Ahmad & Raja, 2021). How an organisation treats its employees is very important because positive behaviour enhances its ability to achieve and keep a competitive advantage over other organisations.

1.2. Context of the study

Several scholars (Kalogiannidis, 2021; Purusottama & Ardianto, 2019) have highlighted that the modern workplace is becoming increasingly competitive and mining industries are looking for ways to attract and retain talented employees. One of the most effective ways that these organisations are achieving this goal is by offering non-financial employment benefits (Pancasila, Haryono & Sulistyo, 2020) as listed in section 1.1 above.

According to Purusottama & Ardianto, (2019), employment benefits have become an essential component of an organisation's compensation package for attracting and retaining talented staff, as is currently the case within the mining industry. The most common employee benefits that are offered by the mining industry include health insurance, retirement benefits, paid time-off and flexible work arrangements (Society For Human Resource Management, 2015). This current study seeks to provide insights into how the mining industry can use these employee benefits to improve employees' performance and productivity, both critical factors for the success and growth of any organisation.

The impact of employee benefits on the employees' performance in the mining industry is a topic that has not been given significant attention and is rarely prioritised in the research world although it is a worldwide issue that requires considerable attention. This gap in extant research is particularly notable given the increased importance of employee benefits in the current competitive job market. It is in this context that this study sought to address this knowledge gap by exploring the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance and productivity within a specific mining company.

1.3. Research problem

Even though the mining industry has been described as a significant sector in both the South African and global economy, the industry is characterised by challenging working conditions that can have a negative impact on the performance of the employees (Ateba, Prinsloo & Gawlik, 2019; Nasirov & Agostini, 2018). Due to the

mining industry's challenging environment, there is a significant need to discover the factors that motivate mining industry employees. It is anticipated that the response to this knowledge gap will contribute significantly to the mining managers' decision-making regarding the preparation of employee benefits and rewards for the motivation of employees.

The success of any organisation is largely dependent on the performance of its employees because their high-performance leads to high production (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). Despite the benefits offered, there is limited information on how these rewards affect employees' performance in the South African mining sector. The operation of the mining industry is imperative to national growth and development and, for this reason, there is an interest in learning how employee benefits influence their performance. Therefore, this study uses the qualitative method to assess the role of employee benefits on the performance of personnel within the South African mining industry.

1.4. Research Questions

The study sought to explore the following research questions to achieve the following objectives:

- What is the state of the employment benefits offered in the South African mining industry, and to what extent are they utilised by employees?
- What is the impact of employee benefits upon employees' performance in the South African Mining industry?
- How does non-monetary compensation and benefits affect employees' performance in the South African mining industry?

1.5. Research objectives

1.5.1. General objective

The general objective of the study was to explore the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance in the South African mining industry.

1.5.2. Specific objectives

The study sought to achieve the following specific objectives:

Research objectives
a. To assess the state of employment benefits offered in the South African mining industry.
b. To assess the influence of employee benefits upon employees' performance in the South African Mining industry.
c. To determine the effect of employee benefits upon employees' performance in the South African mining industry.

1.6. Justification/rationale of the study

According to Kuranchie-Mensah and Amponsah-Tawiah (2016), employees are a significant element within an organisation. Organisations should offer employee benefits as a way of motivating high employee performance to attain the organisation's intended objectives. The rationale for studying the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance is to understand how employee benefits can affect employees' motivation and productivity.

It is anticipated that the findings of this study will benefit the management of the mining industry. It will enable management to identify the gap between their employment benefits system and its impact on employees' performance and, thereafter, to take corrective action and make better future decisions on their employee benefits system to the advantage of both their workers and the organisation. The results of this study, together with the findings delineated in the literature review, will add to the existing field of knowledge on the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance and, in addition, provide the stimulus for further study.

The proposed study is important for several reasons. First, it will provide empirical evidence on the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance in the South

African mining industry through the insight it offers on how specific employment benefits affect employees' performance and, as indicated previously, provide a foundation for future research in this area.

Second, the proposed study will offer insights on how the mining industry can use employee benefits to attract and retain talented employees. It will also provide a comprehensive understanding of how employment benefits impact employees' performance, which is critical for the mining industry's decision-making processes.

Third, the proposed study is important because it addresses a gap in research seeking to discover the relationship between employee benefits and employees' performance in the mining industry. The current competitive job market makes it essential for the mining industry to attract and retain talented employees and improve both theirs and the organisation's overall performance. The study, thus, will provide insights on how the mining industry can achieve what has now become a critical factor in its success.

Fourth, the proposed study is important because it has practical implications for public policy. Employment benefits are a critical factor in achieving social welfare objectives, such as attaining income equality and improving access to healthcare. The study's findings may be useful in designing public policies that incentivize the mining industry to provide employee benefits that not only improve employees' performance but also their socio-economic status and well-being.

In conclusion, the proposed study is important because it provides empirical evidence of the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance and productivity in the mining industry. The study seeks to afford the mining industry guidance on how it can use employee benefits more effectively to attract and retain talented employees and improve their performance. The study's findings may also have practical implications for public policy in achieving social welfare objectives.

1.7. Delimitations of the study

The research study covers the chosen mining industry in South Africa. To have a finite and clear understanding the study will concentrate only on the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance in that specific South African mining industry. The proposed study has the following delimitations:

a. Mining industry: The study will focus on a single mining industry which is one of the top mining in South Africa. Therefore, the results may not be generalisable to other mining organisations.

b. Interview: The data for this study will be collected through interviews. This data collection method may limit the depth of data collected.

c. Cross-sectional design: The proposed study will use a cross-sectional research design,that involves collecting data at a single point in time. This design limits the researcher's ability to establish causality between employee benefits and employees' performance and productivity.

d. Self-reported data: The study will rely on self-reported data from employees, which may be subject to social desirability bias. Participants may overstate or understate their performance and productivity levels or the importance of employee benefits in their work.

e. Small sample size: The proposed study will have a small sample size, which may limit the generalisability of the study's findings to other mining industries.

1.8. Operational Definitions.

Employment benefits: Non-wage compensations that are provided by organisations to their employees, such as health insurance, retirement benefits, paid time-off and flexible work arrangements (Kibet & Kalei, 2020).

Employee performance: The overall effectiveness and contribution of an employee to the organisation's objectives. Employee performance can be measured in terms of achieving individual goals, meeting job expectations and contributing to the overall success of the organisation (Abdi Mohamud, Ibrahim & Hussein, 2017).

Perception of employment benefits: The subjective assessment of the value of employment benefits by employees can be measured using survey questions that assess the respondents' perceived importance and achieved satisfaction of different employment benefits (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007).

1.9. Structure of the dissertation

This study is organized into five chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter has provided an overview of the research problem, research questions, and objectives of the study. The background, context and rationale of the study was presented, and the research design and methodology outlined. The chapter also included the significance of the study, the delimitations and the operational definitions of key terms.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter will provide an extensive review of the existing literature on employment benefits, employee performance and productivity. The chapter examines the theoretical underpinnings of the study, identify research gaps and offers a foundation for the research hypotheses. The literature review will explore the relationship between employee benefits and employee performance, identify the most common types of employment benefits and provide a framework for understanding the role of employee benefits in the mining industry.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter will provide a detailed description of the research design, data collection and data analysis methods used in this study. The chapter will describe the interview development, including the survey's content, structure and administration. It will also afford an overview of the sampling method and the data analysis techniques used in the study.

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

This chapter will present the results of the study, including descriptive statistics and regression analysis. It will provide a detailed analysis of the data and will explore the relationships between employee benefits and employees' performance and productivity. The chapter will also examine the differences in the participants' perception and satisfaction of employment benefits across different employee demographics.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter will summarize the findings of the study, discuss their implications and provide recommendations for the mining industry within South Africa. It will also

discuss the study's limitations and provide suggestions for future research in this area. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a discussion of the study's contributions to the existing literature on employment benefits and employees' performance within South Africa's mining industry.

2. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this literature review is to explore the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance in the South African mining industry. It will present the different types of employment benefits that are offered by the South African mining industry, evaluate employees' perceptions of employment benefits and their satisfaction with these benefits and provide a presentation of the relationship between employment benefits and employees' performance. This literature review will provide a comprehensive overview of the existing research on the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance in the South African mining industry. These findings will have important implications for employers and policymakers and will inform the development of effective employee benefit programmes that maximize employees' motivation and performance.

2.2. Definition and understanding of employee benefits

Employee benefits are the reward received by an employee for services rendered in terms of their job description within an organisation (Noorazem, Md Sabri & Mat Nazir, 2021). Employee benefits can be in the form of money or goods (supplied directly and indirectly) that an organisation gives employees for the work or services they complete for the organisation. According to Sitopu, Sitinjak and Marpaung (2021) employee benefits are also referred to as compensation and comprise anything that workers receive from the organisation as a reward for their work. Such employee benefits include incentives, bonuses, insurance and treatment that an organisation gives directly (Arif, Syaifani, Siswadi & Jufrizen, 2019; Noorazem, et al., 2021). According to Kadir *et al*, (2019), there is a difference between compensation and benefits. The compensation has been described as a financial payment and the benefit as a non-financial form of value. However, both the compensation and the benefit are given in response to the employee's contribution to the organisation (Kadir *et al*, 2019). The basic benefits and compensation that organisations offer include salary, promotion, allowances and incentives.

2.3. Definition of employee motivation

Employee motivation has been described as an important element that encourages individuals to work for an organisation (Khan, Rehmat, Butt, Farooqi & Asim, 2020). Kalogiannidis (2021) argues that employee motivation is a significant phenomenon

that generates, maintains and directs how workers behave within the work environment. Motivating workers boosts their enthusiasm, loyalty and passion and further increases their willingness to work voluntarily with improved performance, resulting in increased productivity (Kuswati, 2020). According to Kalogiannidis (2021), workers' motivation to perform their work is complicated due to both employee factors and organisational actors. Employees are motivated by factors such as goals, abilities and attitudes and the organisation motivates employees through their salary and job security. If organisations manage employee benefits ineffectively this practice results in decreased motivation of hard-working employees (Kadir *et al*, 2019).

2.4. Employee performance

Employee performance is the outcome of the quality and quantity of work attained by workers in carrying out their duties concerning the responsibilities allocated by the organisation's management (Heslina & Syahruni, 2021). Kuswati (2020) added that performance is the quality or quantity of work produced or services provided by an employee.

2.5. Forms of employment benefits

Several types of employment benefits are offered in the mining industry such as training and development, job security, composition, health and wellness programmes and work-life balance initiatives (Darma & Supriyanto, 2017; Kaynak, Toklu, Elci & Toklu, 2016; Sal & Raja, 2016).

2.5.1. Training and development

Rahayu, Rasid and Tannady (2019) state that training and development benefits are intended to enhance employees' skills and knowledge and to improve their job performance. These benefits can take many forms, such as on-the-job training, formal training programmes, mentoring and coaching and career development opportunities. Research has shown that training and development benefits are positively related to employee performance and productivity (Ndungu, 2017; Sal & Raja, 2016).

2.5.2. Job security

Job security benefits refer to the degree to which employees feel confident that they will not lose their job in the future (Darvishmotevali & Ali, 2020). Kaindama and Qutieshat (2022) stated that job security can be enhanced through various means, such as long-term contracts, tenure and seniority-based promotions. Research has

shown that job security benefits are positively related to employees' performance and productivity (Newman, Cooper, Holland, Miao & Teicher, 2019).

2.5.3. Compensation

Kadir *et al*. (2019) compared compensation benefits to the financial rewards that employees receive for their work. Compensation benefits can take many forms, such as base salary, bonuses, profit sharing and stock options. Research has shown that compensation benefits are positively related to employees' motivation and performance (Darma & Supriyanto, 2017). Kadir *et al.* (2019) agreed that compensation relates to all the rewards received by employees in exchange for their work. For organisations to ensure efficient management of compensation, they need to have an appositive influence on the performance of their workers and the understanding of different forms of compensation for motivating the employees (Darma & Supriyanto, 2017). This practice will lead to employees willingly working towards achieving organisational objectives. Organisations with a generous reward system retain employees because this practice leads to their job satisfaction, loyalty and commitment.

2.5.4. Health and wellness

Health and wellness benefits are intended to promote employees' physical and mental health, and to reduce workplace stress and absenteeism (Vonderlin, Schmidt, Biermann, Lyssenko, Heinzel-Gutenbrunner, Kleindienst & Müller, 2023). These benefits can take many forms, such as health insurance, gym memberships and mental health counselling. Research has shown that health and wellness benefits are positively related to employees' satisfaction and productivity (Kaynak *et al.,* 2016).

2.5.5. Work-life balance

Work-life balance has been described as the degree to which employees can balance their work and personal life (Adnan Bataineh, 2019) and, thus, work-life balance benefits help employees to achieve this equilibrium. Work-life balance benefits can take many forms, such as flexible work schedules, telecommuting and paid time-off. Research has shown that work-life balance benefits are positively related to employees' satisfaction and productivity (Jackson & Fransman, 2018). According to Kadir *et al*, (2019) the motivation to work, demographic factors, working hours, marital status, working overtime and personal well-being hardly affect the work-life balance of

female workers, instead, satisfactory compensation is identified as the factor having a significant impact on their work-life balance.

2.6. The significance of employee benefits

Employment benefits are crucial for the mining industry to maintain a competitive edge through the retention of its workforce due to adequate motivational practices (Jung & Suh, 2019). Several scholars (Al-Ali Ameen, Isaac, Khalifa & Shibami, 2019; Kalyanamitra, Saengchai & Jermsittiparsert, 2020) agreed that these benefits can have positive effects on employees' performance and productivity, job satisfaction and retention. However, it is important to note that the effectiveness of these benefits may vary across different industries, job levels and demographic groups (Abdi Mohamud et al., 2017, Kaynak et al., 2016). Al-Ali et al. (2019) mentioned that it is important to note that not all benefits are equally important to all employees. The relative importance of different benefits may depend on individual factors such as age, gender and job level (Agbozo, Owusu, Hoedoafia & Atakorah, 2017). Jung & Suh (2019) stressed that it is crucial for the mining industry to understand their employees' needs and preferences and to tailor the employee benefit programmes accordingly.

Industries such as the mining industry offer various types of employment benefits to attract, motivate and retain their workforce (Ali & Anwar, 2021). As mentioned previously, these benefits include training and development, job security, compensation, health and wellness programmes, and work-life balance initiatives (Abdul et al, 2023; Solihu, Iyobhebhe & Sam, 2023). The reward system of an organisation plays a significant role in encouraging workers' performance (Kadir et al, 2019). Inadquate benefits and compensation result in low performance that further leads to a low satisfaction level. A dissatisfied employee often exhibits high absenteeism and a poor work outcome.

2.7. Employee perceptions and satisfaction

2.7.1. Employee perceptions

This section evaluates employees' perceptions of employment benefits and their satisfaction with these benefits and explores the factors that influence these feelings, such as age, gender, job level and industry sector. An understanding of employees' perceptions and satisfaction in terms of benefits is crucial for the mining industry to

attract, motivate and retain its workforce (Caron, Asselin & Beaudoin, 2020; Chen Jiang, Li & Gao, 2021).

Chen et al. (2021) describe employee perceptions of employment benefits as the employees' beliefs and attitudes about the benefits that they receive from their employer. Several scholars (Siengthai & Pila-Ngarm, 2016; Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2016) have shown that employees' perceptions of employment benefits are influenced by such factors as the availability and quality of the benefits, the communication and transparency surrounding the benefits and the degree to which they meet the employees' needs and preferences. Employees' perceptions of employment benefits are positively related to job satisfaction and retention (Abdi Mohamud *et al*., 2017).

2.7.2. Employee satisfaction

Employee satisfaction refers to the degree to which employees are satisfied with the benefits that they receive from their employer (Chen *et al*, 2022). Some scholars (Kaynak et al., 2016; Ndungu, 2017) stated that employee satisfaction with employment benefits is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the fairness of the benefits, the degree to which the benefits are perceived as valuable and meaningful, and the extent to which they align with the employees' goals and values. This state is positively related to employees' job satisfaction and retention (Hoole & Hotz, 2016).

According to Kaynak *et al*., (2016), the factors that influence employees' perceptions of employment benefits may vary depending on individual factors such as age, gender, job level and industry sector. For example, younger employees may prioritize training and development benefits, while older employees may prioritize health and wellness benefits. Women may place greater importance on work-life balance benefits, while men may prioritize compensation benefits (Agbozo *et al*., 2017). Employees at higher job levels may place greater importance on job security benefits, while employees at lower job levels may prioritize compensation benefits (Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah, 2016). Employees' perceptions regarding employment benefits, may differ depending on the nature and demands of the industry (Sutanto & Kurniawan, 2016).

2.8. The importance of employee perceptions and satisfaction

Various scholars (Hoole & Hotz, 2016; Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020) agreed that employee perceptions and satisfaction with employment benefits are crucial for private

sector organisations to attract, motivate and retain their workforce. As mentioned above, the factors that influence employees' satisfaction with employment benefits may vary depending on age, gender, job level and industry sector (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020). Therefore, it is important for private sector organisations to understand their employees' needs and preferences and to tailor their employee benefit programmes accordingly. Additionally, it is essential that organisations communicate effectively regarding their employee benefit programmes to ensure that employees perceive these as fair, valuable and meaningful.

As mentioned above, employees' perceptions and satisfaction with employment benefits are crucial for the South African mining industry to attract, motivate and retain its workforce (Caron, Asselin & Beaudoin, 2020). Ninaus *et al.* (2021) indicated that satisfaction with employment benefits is influenced by factors such as the availability and quality of the benefits, the communication and transparency surrounding the benefits, and the degree to which the benefits meet the employees' needs and preferences. Yousuf *et al*. (2022) added the following elements: the degree to which the benefits are deemed to be fair, valuable and meaningful and in alignment with the employees' goals and values.

2.9. The relationship between employee benefits and employee performance.

This section presents the relationship between employee benefits and employees' performance and productivity and explores the mechanisms by which employment benefits impact these two aspects.

Several scholars (Jung & Suh, 2019; Noorazem *et al.*, 2021) indicated that employment benefits have a positive relationship with employees' performance and productivity. Sal and Raja (2016) found that training and development benefits had a similar impact, while Newman *et al.* (2019) added job security benefits through the mediating factors of perceived job security and trust in management. Kaynak et al. (2016) found that health and wellness, combined with the mediating factors of organisational commitment and work alienation, likewise had a positive relationship with employees' productivity and performance, while Inuwa (2016) stipulated a positive relationship between job satisfaction and employees' improved [performance.

The mechanisms by which employment benefits impact employees' performance and productivity imay vary depending on the type of benefit. Training and development

benefits may improve employees' skills and knowledge and may lead to increased motivation and job satisfaction (Sal & Raja, 2016). Job security benefits may increase employees' loyalty and commitment to the organisation and may lead to reduced stress and improved job satisfaction (Newman *et al*., 2019). Compensation benefits may improve employees' motivation and job satisfaction and may lead to increased effort and productivity (Darma & Supriyanto, 2017). Health and wellness benefits may improve employees' physical and mental health and may lead to increased job satisfaction and thereby reduce absenteeism (Kaynak *et al*., 2016). Finally, work-life balance benefits may improve employees' work-life balance and lead to improved job satisfaction and reduce stress (Jackson & Fransman, 2018).

It is important to note that the relationship between employee benefits and employees' performance and productivity may not be linear. For example, Kaynak *et al*. (2016) argued that the relationship between health and wellness benefits and employees' job performance was curvilinear, suggesting that there may be an optimal level of health and wellness benefits beyond which the benefits may have diminishing returns. Hoole and Hotz (2016) found a similar curvilinear relationship between total rewards benefits (including compensation, benefits and work-life balance) and work engagement.

2.10. Theoretical framework

Various theories have been developed to explain the impact of employee benefits on employees' performance. These theories formed the foundation of this study. According to Kotler and Gary (2005), the theoretical framework is the gathering of interrelated concepts, including the theory to guide a research study that determines the items for measurement and statistical relationships being studied.

2.10.1. Expectancy reinforcement theory

This theory was conceptualised by Skinner and Vroom (1974), in their proposal to understand how the behaviour of workers changes under different phenomena in the territory of motivation. The expectancy theory proposes that a behaviour which has a rewarding experience is likely to be repeated. The high level of employee performance that correlates with monetary reward causes the future repetition of this level of performance, again accompanied by monetary reward. Employees expect benefits from employers for excellent performance and when the organisation fails to reward or recognise them, such behaviour is unlikely to be repeated.

The principles of the expectancy theory (Skinner & Vroom, 1974) pay more attention to the relationship between rewards and behaviour. Motivation is the product of expectation and contributes significantly to the behaviour of employees. Different organisations have different set goals and employees can be motivated if they expect to be rewarded for good performance. This expectation is defined as a momentary belief regarding the chances that a specific action will be followed by a set reward. The expectancy reinforcement theory suggests that there is a positive relationship between efforts and performance that attracts a desired reward. The high performance will be replicated in specific future periods because of the rewards employees received during previous periods and the rewards they expect to enjoy in future.

2.10.2. Equity theory

This theory is usually referred to as Adam's equity theory of motivation (Sah, 2014). The theory suggests that the level of employees' motivation is affected by whether employees believe that their employee benefits are at least equal to the amount of effort that they put into their work. Workers will be motivated to 'go the extra mile' in their work if they perceive that the benefits received compensate adequately for the amount of effort expended.

According to this theory, workers feel fairly treated if the reward scheme offers equal compensation for equal effort to all employees. If workers discover that they have not received the same reward as their colleagues for the same amount of effort, dissatisfaction will ultimately have a bearing on the extent of effort they will expend towards achieving the organisation's goals in the future.

2.10.3. Agency theory

The agency theory involves the correlation between the principal (the owner of the capital) and the agents (the managers of the firms)._It is the managers' responsibility is to ensure that principal's interests are safeguarded at all times to ensure that the common goal is achieved. According to Jensen (1983), an organisation needs to ensure that there is always a healthy relationship among all the stakeholders including management and employees.

2.10.4. The theoretical basis of this study

The expectancy theory formed the foundation of this study. This theory concentrates on individual beliefs and expectations, thus, enabling researchers to understand how

employees view the link between their efforts, performance and the results they obtain. This knowledge may be used to build successful employment benefits packages that enhance employees' engagement and performance (Newman *et al*., 2019).

Employees may see benefits, such as training and development programmes, as providing them with the required skills and knowledge to function successfully in their positions in the context of employment benefits. This idea raises their expectations, driving individuals to work harder and achieve better levels of performance. Employees who feel that engaging in a training programme will improve their work abilities and performance are more likely to expend effort during the training course and, hence, perform better in their job.

The assumption that one's performance will result in specific results, such as rewards or recognition, is referred to as instrumentality. Employees may perceive employment benefits such as job stability or an opportunity for promotion as contributing to desirable results. For example, employees can expect that good performance will be compensated with cash rewards, promotions or enhanced work satisfaction, thus they are motivated to work hard and enhance their performance by this notion of instrumentality. Employees who feel that their good performance will be recognized with a promotion or an increase in pay are more likely to be motivated to succeed in their profession.

The value that employees set on the results they expect to obtain is referred to as valence. Employees' valence preferences for certain employment benefits may differ. For example, one employee may place a higher value on comprehensive healthcare than a substantial retirement plan, whilst another may place a higher value on flexible working arrangements over improved remuneration. An understanding of employees' valence preferences allows firms to customize their employment benefit offers to better match their employees' preferences, boosting their motivation and performance. For example, a firm that provides a broad selection of benefits and enables employees to choose those that are most beneficial to them is likely to have a more motivated and productive staff.

The expectancy theory sheds light on the link between employment benefits and employees' motivation and performance. It highlights the fact that perceptions regarding the links between effort, performance and results impact employees'

motivation and performance. Organisations may influence employees' expectations and create a compelling work environment by providing suitable employment benefits.

By highlighting the significance of understanding employees' beliefs, expectations and perceptions, the expectancy theory may impact a research study's methodology and data analysis. The incorporation of both qualitative and quantitative approaches, such as measuring expectancy, instrumentality and valence, as well as conducting mediation or subgroup analyses, along the principles outlined in the expectancy theory, can provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact employment benefits have on employee's motivation and performance.

2.11. Conceptual framework

A conceptual framework is a critical component of any research study, providing the foundation upon which the study is built and defining the key concepts, variables and relationships between them (Huang, 2018). In the case of a study on the impact of employment benefits on employees' performance and productivity in the private sector, several theoretical frameworks could be applied. In this response, as mentioned on figure below;

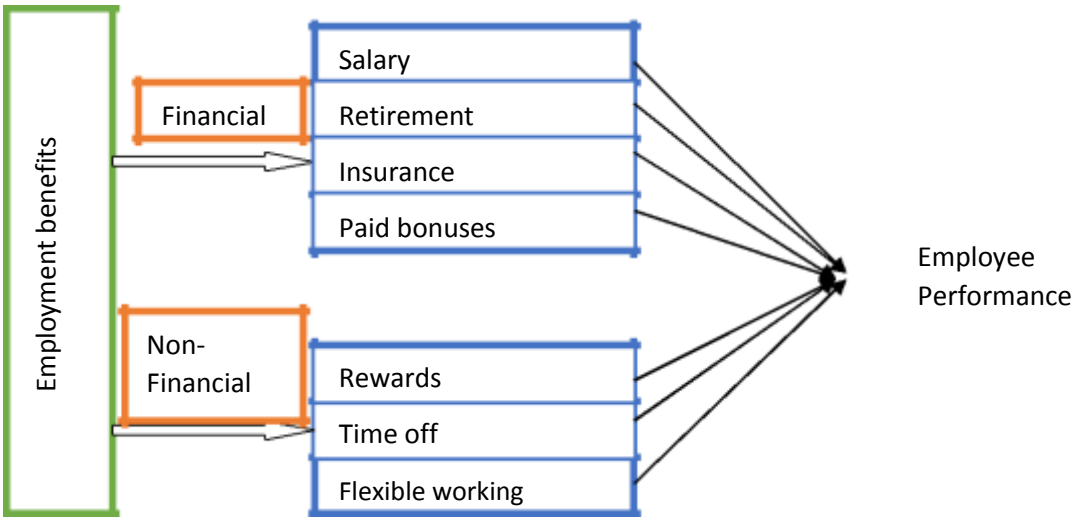

Figure 1: Research model (Source: Researcher)

Proposition 1: The relationship between motivation and the employees' performance has been described as positive and having a significant effect.

Proposition 2: The high level of employee turnover has a negative impact on the organisation's economic and social processes. Its profitability and productivity will be reduced because of high employee turnover.

Proposition 3: Employment benefits have a positive relationship with employees' performance and productivity. An organisation that provides adequate and equal employment benefits is likely to have high employee performance and productivity.

Proposition 4: Dissatisfied employees tend to exhibit a high level of absenteeism.

2.12. The existing research gaps

- ✓ Even though the reviewed research has shown that effective compensation and benefits increase the level of employees' performance, there still is a need for organisations to continue to develop and implement strategies for providing effective compensation and benefits that will further increase employees' performance.
- ✓ There is a need for further studies that cover a larger geographical area and also compare the result received from different countries and mining industries of varying sizes. Such research will ensure a broad spectrum of participants' perceptions regarding the relationship between employee benefits and employees' performance within the mining industry.
- ✓ Regardless of the progress that has been achieved regarding employee benefits shown in the reviewed literature, there is a need pto acquire responses from employees regarding the form of benefits they perceive as valuable rather than those that management deem to be important.
- ✓ Even though the reviewed literature has shown that employee benefits have a significantly positive influence on performance and productivity, the actual impact of these benefits is not fully understood, and there is a need for a comprehensive review of the existing research in this area.

2.13. Literature Review Matrix

Study	Research question	Methods	Sample size	Main findings
(Sal & Raja 2016)	What is the impact of training and development on employee performance and productivity?	Survey	200 employees	There is a significant positive relationship between training and development and employee performance and productivity.
(Siengthai & Pila-Ngarm 2016)	How does the interaction of job redesign and job satisfaction impact employee performance?	Survey	300 employees	Job redesign and job satisfaction have a significant positive impact on employee performance, and there is a significant interaction effect between the two.
(Newman et al., 2019)	How do industrial relations climate and union instrumentality enhance employee performance?	Survey	500 employees	Perceived job security and trust in management mediate the relationship between industrial relations climate and union instrumentality and employee performance.
(Wen et al., 2019)	How do different leadership styles influence employee job performance?	Survey	250 employees	Transformational and transactional leadership styles have a significant positive effect on employee job performance.
(Kaynak et al., 2016)	What is the effect of occupational health and	Survey	350 employees	Occupational health and safety practices have a

Study	Research question	Methods	Sample size	Main findings
	safety practices on organisational commitment, work alienation and job performance?			significant positive effect on organisational commitment, work alienation and job performance.
(Abdi Mohamud et al., 2017)	What is the effect of motivation on employee performance?	Survey	150 employees	There is a significant positive relationship between motivation and employee performance.
(Hendri, 2019)	How do job satisfaction and organisational commitment mediate the relationship between organisational learning and employee performance?	Survey	400 and organisational commitment.	Organisational learning has a significant positive effect on employee performance, and this relationship is mediated by job satisfaction employees
(Jackson & Fransman 2018)	What is the effect of flexible work arrangements on subjective experiences of productivity and job satisfaction?	Survey	female employees	Flexible work arrangements have a significant positive effect on subjective 200 experiences of productivity and job satisfaction.
(Agbozo et al., 2017)	What is the effect of the work environment on job satisfaction?	Survey	300 employees	There is a significant positive relationship between work environment and job satisfaction.

Study	Research question	Methods	Sample size	Main findings
(Kuranchie-Mensah & Amponsah-Tawiah 2016)	What is the relationship between employee motivation and work performance?	Survey	250 employees	There is a significant positive relationship between employee motivation and work performance.
(Darma & Supriyanto 2017)	What is the effect of compensation on employee satisfaction and performance?	Survey	150 employees	Compensation has a significant positive effect on employee satisfaction and performance.
(Ndungu, 2017)	What is the effect of rewards and recognition on employee performance?	Survey	200 employees	Rewards and recognition have a significant positive effect on employee performance.
(Sutanto & Kurniawan 2016)	What is the impact of recruitment, employee retention and labour relations on employee performance in the batik industry?	Survey	300 employees	Recruitment, employee retention, and labour relations have a significant positive effect on employee performance in the batik industry.
(Hoole & Hotz 2016)	What is the impact of a total reward system on work engagement?	Survey	200 employees	A total reward system on work management.

2.14. Summary of Literature Review

The reviewed literature has shown that employees' performance contributes very significantly to organisational productivity and success. Several scholars (Heslina & Syahruni, 2021; Kuswati, 2020) have shown that for an organisation to boost the level of its employees' performance, it is necessary to plan effective strategies for rewarding

employees. The reviewed literature indicated that employee benefits can help increase the level of employees' performance but it has also shown that other factors which might contribute to the increase in employees' performance level need to be taken into consideration.

As indicated previously, the literature review suggests that employment benefits have a positive relationship with employees' performance and productivity. The mechanisms by which employment benefits impact employees' performance and productivity may vary depending on the type of benefit but may include increased job satisfaction, motivation and engagement. The South African mining industry should consider the potential curvilinear relationship between employee benefits and employees' performance and productivity and, thus, should strive to provide an optimal level of benefits that meets the needs and preferences of their diverse employees.

3. CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research approach

Leedy and Ormrod (2019) have described the research approach as the process selected by the researcher for collecting, analysing and interpreting the research data. The research approach consists of three forms – qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. According to Apuke (2017), the quantitative method involves gathering and analysing numerical data for describing the phenomenon. The qualitative method is an approach for collecting, analysing and interpreting non-numerical data, such as text, for attaining the required understanding of the situation (Roller, 2019). Mixed method research incorporates both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches by combing numerical and non-numerical data within the research study (Creswell & Creswell, 2005).

To ensure that this current study addressed its intended objectives, the researcher adopted the qualitative research approach. According to Ishtiaq (2019), this approach encompasses a logical procedure of researching real-life situations such as how a specific group of people behave. Qualitative research is mostly used to explore the interaction between people or the functionality of an organisation. Creswell and Creswell (2005) indicated that qualitative research comprises analysing people's experience and behaviour without using numerical information. This current study used the inductive mode of reasoning that Mousa (2017) defined as the systematic process used for analysing qualitative data to reach an informed decision. The inductive mode aims to acquire an understanding of both the situation and the relationship between people and the situation.

3.2. Research design

The research design or plan provides the strategy for gathering the data required for the study (Asenahabi, 2019). It involves a planned process for choosing the area of study and collecting and analysing the appropriate data in order to address the research objectives (Taherdoost, 2021). The research design is the planned framework of action that acts as the bridge between the research questions and the implementation of the selected research strategy (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). There are three types of research design: descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. Descriptive research illustrates a situation or shows how entities are related without providing any further explanation (Asenahabi, 2019). Exploratory research is

conducted in a situation in which very little information is available or when there is insufficient knowledge about the phenomenon under study (Lassoued, Alhendawi & Bashitialshaaer, 2020). Explanatory research aims to elucidate descriptive research by identifying the reasons why something happened (Hunter, McCallum & Howes, 2019). The main objective of this current study was to explore the impact of employee benefits on employee performance in the South African mining industry. For this purpose, the researcher adopted the exploratory research design because it ensured that the study addressed its intended objectives.

3.3. Population and sample

3.3.1. Population

Leedy and Ormrod (2019) defined the population as the complete group of cases in which the researcher is interested. The identification of the population is a significant part of the research study and it is imperative for the researcher to outline the exact location and characteristics of the target population. The study population must include every member of the population, even those members who are known to be unaccessible. The target population of this current study comprised employees of the South African mining industry.

3.3.2. Sample and sampling method

There are two types of sampling i.e., probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling comprises simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling, cluster sampling and multi-stage sampling (Rahman, Tabash, Salamzadeh, Abduli & Rahaman, 2020). Non-probability sampling includes snowball, quota, convenience and purposive sampling (Obilor, 2023).

Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental or selective sampling, is the deliberate selection of people who satisfy specified criteria related to the study goals (Quinlan, Babin, Carr & Gryphon, 2019). This sampling method was utilised to select individuals who work for the South African mining sector and have direct experience with employment benefits. Participants for this study were recruited based on specified criteria that corresponded with the research objectives and included job level, years of mining sector experience and extent of involvement with employee benefits. The reason for using these criteria was to guarantee that the selected sample included

people with appropriate experiences and perspectives regarding the influence of employment perks on employee performance.

3.4. Data collection

3.4.1. Research instrument

Various research instruments are used for collecting data such as surveys, interviews, questionnaires and observations, each of which has advantages and disadvantages (Flick, U., 2015.). It is very important to identify and define the most appropriate research instrument of the study, thus the interview was deemed the most suitable instrument for collecting the required qualitative data for this study.

3.4.2. Interviews

Interviews are frequently used to collect the data in a qualitative study, this process involves the researcher asking questions and respondents providing answers (Husband, 2020). This verbal interchange between the interviewer and the interviewee is mostly conducted face-to-face or through the telephone (De Jonckheere & Vaughn, 2019). The various forms of interviews include structured interviews, unstructured interviews and semi-structured interviews. The structured interview is a well presented scheduled interview with set questions while during the unstructured interview questions arise from the situation (Flick, U., 2015.). In the semi-structured interview, the researcher employs prepared questions, however, more questions are added freely during the course of the interview.

3.4.3. Data collection procedure

The data for this study was collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with South African mining industry employees. The researcher formulated the interview guidelines for the preparation of these interviews. The researcher emailed or phoned potential participants to check their availability to participate in the face-to-face interview. The researcher explained the study's objectives as well as the process and procedures of the interviews to all the participants. A recording device was used to capture the participants' responses during the interviews.

3.5. Data analysis and data interpretation

The qualitative data gathered from the interviews was subjected to rigorous analyses to extract significant insights and identify patterns and themes concerning employment perks and employees' performance. Thematic analysis, a commonly used qualitative

approach, was utilised to systematically analyse the data and acquire a better understanding of the participants' viewpoints (Silverman, 2016). Thematic analysis consists of multiple iterative processes that allow for a thorough study of the data (Souza, 2019). The transcription of the interview tapes was the initial stage in the thematic process during which the spoken replies were transposed into written text while maintaining the accuracy and integrity of the source data.

The transcribed data then was organised and coded (Souza, 2019). Coding comprises giving labels or tags to data segments that reflect essential ideas, concepts or patterns. Initially an open coding technique was used, in which codes were created without regard for predefined categories or assumptions. This activity enabled new themes to arise immediately from the data. Similar codes were placed together to establish possible themes as the coding progressed (Souza, 2019). These themes were developed and amended via a continuous comparison process in which new data was compared to existing codes and themes to guarantee consistency and correctness. This recurring coding and theme generation practice continued until saturation was achieved, i.e., the point at which fresh data no longer produced new themes or modified existing ones.

The highlighted topics were then categorized to reflect the essence of the participants' thoughts on employee perks and employees' performance. These categories were based on the patterns and correlations discovered in the data, emphasizing similarities, divergences and subtleties in the participants' replies. After the categories had been formed, the results were interpreted. The examination of the interconnections between categories, finding linkages to existing literature and ideas, and offering comprehensive descriptions and explanations for the found themes are all part of this process. The interpretation was informed by the study's research aims and theoretical frameworks.

Rigour and openness was the focus throughout the analytical process. Multiple scholars were engaged in this practice to improve the credibility of the study's findings and frequent meetings were conducted to debate and develop emergent topics. The software tools for qualitative data analysis NVivo and Dedoose, were used to help in data organisation and management.

The qualitative data analysis resulted in a complete report outlining the discovered themes, categories and interpretations. Direct excerpts from the interviews with the participants were used to support and highlight the results, lending credibility to the study. This research study used theme analysis to acquire a thorough knowledge of the participants' viewpoints on employment benefits and employees' performance in the South African mining sector. This qualitative analysis approach enabled systematic data exploration, allowing for the discovery of relevant patterns and themes that led to a better understanding of the study's issues.

3.6. Trustworthiness

3.6.1. Credibility

Credibility refers to the extent to which the study's findings and conclusions can be trusted and considered reliable. The credibililty of research results is essential because it ensures that the information presented is accurate, valid and based on rigorous analyses (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). Tobin and Begley (2004) define credibility as the "fit" between respondents' views and the researcher's representation of them.

3.6.2. Transferability

The generalisability of an inquiry is referred to as transferability. This practice only applies to case-to-case transfer in qualitative research (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Although the researcher is responsible for providing thorough descriptions so that individuals who wish to transfer the findings to their particular situation can assess transferability, the researcher is unable to predict the sites that may wish to do so (Nowell *et al*., 2017).

3.6.3. Dependability

Researchers can guarantee that the study process is rational, traceable and well-documented to attain dependability (Tobin & Begley, 2004). It is necessary to ensure the presence of people who are adequately equipped to assess the reliability of the research (Nowell *et al*., 2017). The auditing of a research study's methodology, a process that will be covered in more detail below, is one way that it might ensure its dependability (Tobin & Begley, 2004).

3.6.4. Conformability

Conformability focuses on proving that the researcher's interpretations and findings are drawn from the data, a practice that requires the researcher to provide evidence of how the study's interpretations and conclusions were arrived at (Tobin & Begley, 2004).

Credibility, transferability and dependability are all attained when conformability is established (Tobin & Begley, 2004). Nowell *et al*. (2017) advised researchers to use markers such as the justifications for theoretical, methodological and analytical choices throughout the entire study to ensure that other researchers can understand how and why decisions were taken,

3.7. Ethical consideration

Ethical concerns are critical in any research project (Hasan, Rana, Chowdhury, Dola & Rony, 2021). This study on the influence of employment perks on employees' performance in the South African mining sector followed strict ethical guidelines to preserve the participants' well-being, privacy and rights.

3.7.1. Ensuring participants have given informed consent

All participants' informed permission was sought before they participated in this research project. This technique included presenting them with extensive information on the research's objective, nature and processes, as well as the possible risks and advantages of participation (Xu *et al*., 2020). Before freely granting their agreement to participate, participants were given adequate opportunity to evaluate the material and ask questions. The informed consent procedure was recorded and kept as proof of the participants' willing participation in the research process.

3.7.2. Ensuring confidentiality and anonymity

To preserve the privacy of the participants, confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously enforced. Each participant was given a unique identification code that was used to replace names or other identifying information in the study data. This method ensured that the participants' identities are kept private throughout the study procedure (Silverman, D. (Ed.). (2016)The gathered data, including the results of the interviews, is kept secure and only authorised researchers will have access to it. Any results will be disseminated in aggregated and anonymous form, guaranteeing that no individual participant may be identified.

3.7.3. Making sure that no harm comes to participants

Any possible dangers linked with the study were carefully examined and minimised to safeguard the well-being of the participants (Hasan *et al*., 2021). There were no physical dangers associated with the research, and participants did not suffer pain or mental distress when expressing their experiences and perceptions regarding job 'perks' and employee performance. Suitable steps were put in place throughout the data collection process to establish a safe and supportive atmosphere. Participants were notified that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time and without penalty.

3.7.4. Making sure no potential conflicts of interests

Potential conflicts of interest were also discovered and resolved. The researchers preserved neutrality and openness, avoiding any personal or professional biases that would have impacted the research process or outcomes (Hasan *et al*., 2021). To protect the integrity of the research, any financial or non-financial issues that might have represented a conflict of interest were declared and addressed (Hasan *et al*., 2021). Ethical behaviour that respects the dignity and autonomy of all engaged is essential when conducting a research study (Flick, 2015). Before commencing data collection, appropriate institutional review boards or ethical committees were consulted. These organisations evaluated the study's design, techniques and ethical concerns to ensure that these followed established ethical principles and legislation. By adhering to these ethical principles, this study prioritised the participants' rights and well-being, safeguarded their anonymity and assured the integrity and credibility of the research results.

4. CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0. Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the findings resulting from the data gathered through interviewing employees of South Africa's mining industry, as well as the literature review in Chapter Two above. The first part of this chapter presents the analysis of the themes and sub-themes that emerged from the collected data.

The second part of this chapter presents the findings of all four study propositions listed in Chapter Two above. The discussion of the results of the study is integrated with the said literature review to ensure that the study generates insights to address the research questions.

4.1. Presentation of the findings.

4.1.1. State and types of employment benefits

All the participants mentioned various types of employment benefits available to South African mining industry employees and indicated that these benefits differ according to the level and form of their employment. The majority of participants are employed on a contract basis, a fact that also has an impact on the type of employment benefits they receive from their employers.

All the participants indicated that the common employment benefit they receive is the pension fund and stated that the organisation contributes a specific amount to their pension fund. The consistency of the payout of the pension fund and the systems for contributing to these pension fees or provident fund fees is not clear. It appears that there is a lack of transparency regarding the existence of provident fund fees for workers who are part of unions or whose pensions are managed by the contracting companies that outsource them.

> *"…So, the benefits that I'm aware of that the employees currently receiving the permanent employees is they have pension fund benefit. So, the company will contribute 16.5% towards your pension fund and then the employee also contributes",* (Participant 3).

> *"So, from my point of view, it'll be the pension fund contribution because at the end of the day when you go and pension, you do not want to struggle. So, the*

fact that the company is contributing quite a lot of percentage of your package to your pension fund, it's very important for me because, at the end of the day, we are working so that we can put money aside for the day we or to all do work so that we are not so that we can be independent", (Participant 1).

The mixed presence of temporary-employed/contracted mineworkers means that the issue of pension benefits and provident funds becomes slightly unclear. The common understanding amongst workers is that a pension is available to them upon the cessation of employment. The disbursement of these funds, especially for deceased members, becomes an issue when employees are not informed of their eligibility for a withdrawal benefit.

Furthermore, the organisation's pension fund that is available to certain categories of workers (essentially long-term employment contractors) does not make provision for contributions by contractors/subcontractors even though those workers represent a significant portion of the workforce. This practice can be seen to motivate workers to achieve a permanent position within the company as opposed to being employed via subcontractors.

"When we are hired by the company, we get a pension and they take money for when you retire. If you are on a short contract or they hired you for one job…you can't get pension", (Participant 6)

"There are various types of employment benefits here in our organisation, you see, we have financial in which you get money directly into your account from the employer and also have non-financial benefits such as leave days and wellness training programs…", (Participant 4).

The majority of participants mentioned that it is important to belong to a medical aid scheme because as a mine worker their working environment is often unsafe. The participants mentioned that the company also contributes a specific percentage towards their medical aid scheme. The provision of a medical aid system (that requires a contribution from both the company and the employee) in contrast to the occupational hazard payout (which is an obligation on the company itself for injuries or deaths that occur at the workplace) is often confused or used interchangeably amongst the participants.

"…Then there are the medical aid contributions that you get for yourself for the employee adult dependent and children dependents", (Participant 8).

"…That's so good. And then the performance, I think if you know your wife and children is taking care of on the medical, you will work hard", (Participant 5).

"Our workplace is not that safe and many things can happen at any time, so, it is important to have a medical aid in which the organisation contributes a specific amount of money as a benefit to us as employees…", (Participant 5)

Participants further mentioned that the medical aid benefit is significant because it also covers family members' medical expenses. All the participants mentioned that medical aid coverage is indispensable as an employment benefit in the mining industry and also indicated that it is desirable because it ensures medical cover for family members who do not work in the mining industry.

Forty percent of the participants mentioned that they receive a housing allowance but indicated that not all employees in the mining industry qualify for this benefit. It appears that the housing allowance is availed to long-term full-time employees of the company while accommodation for short-term employees or those on a contract is dispensed according to the contracting companies.

A participant mentioned that the organisation pays a certain percentage of the housing bond of an employee who qualifies for this benefit or builds houses and sells them to qualifying employees at a very low price.

"There are people that also getting housing allowances, but I'm not applicable for, it's only a certain group of employees who will qualify for that and I'm not sure if there's any other allowance on other levels that is working at", (Participant 10).

"Majority of the ordinary mining workers stay in informal areas with informal houses such as shacks as they do not qualify for housing benefit, eish, this benefit is very important, and I wish all the mining workers can be offered this benefit", (Participant 7).

Participants mentioned that there are several other employment benefits such as long-term service benefits, overtime benefits, '13th cheques', standby allowances and cell

phone allowances. The availability of these benefits is determined by tenure and not performance. Participants mentioned that employees prefer tangible benefits as opposed to benefits that they do not deem as essential or which they may not wish to utilise.

> *"So, the biggest one that they want is the ones that you see now, which is housing allowance, or which is your car, or your cell phone, or bonuses, or immediate viable ones, the ones that a person can feel in his pocket. The rest are necessary though, but because you don't see them, people tend to go for the ones that you physically feel now. So, in a way, you're talking about the monetary one, that, if I have a bonus fee or production bonus, this is what I can see now",* (Participant 5).

> *"You know the benefit that most of us mining workers like the financial benefit, like getting money into your account and using it for whatever you want, this wellness programmes eish, I want money to solve my problems".* (Participant 9).

From the types and forms of employee benefits, the participants showed more interest in financial benefits than non-financial ones such as wellness programmes for promoting a healthy lifestyle, counselling and gym membership that contribute significantly to the reduction of employees' stress and burnout and further reduce medical costs and absenteeism. Participants acknowledged, however, that most non-financial benefits contribute significantly to improving employee productivity.

4.1.2. The effect of employment benefits on employee performance

All the participants mentioned that employment benefits have an impact on employees' performance and further indicated that employee motivation resulting from the various benefits has a positive impact on the overall performance of an organisation.

4.1.2.1. Motivation

All participants mentioned that employment benefits contribute significantly to the motivation of the employees and further indicated that employees who do not receive any benefits may not be driven to put more effort into their work.

"…when are organisation increased the employment benefits such as compensation rates, our performance level within the organisation raised and this further improved the productivity of the organisation", (Participant 3).

"Yeah, I think it's got a big impact on the performance of the employees because they will work hard if they know they will get the benefit at the end of the month… So, I think that will also be a factor, a contributing factor for employees to want to work for the company. And then also the pension fund benefits because it's good they would want to work for the company and none other company. That's why we've got employees that's been working here for 20 to 40 years because of the benefits", (Participant 4)

Participants mentioned that benefits provide motivation for employees to work hard and stimulate them to continue to effectively execute their daily tasks – particularly in the case of short-term employees or contract workers for whom the contracting companies do not expend the same efforts to attract or retain employees due to the temporary nature of their employment.

"At the end of the day, a good bonus is releasing think a bonus is a very good vehicle to use to motivate people. Because if you must, I think now on the other side, if you take away the bonuses then there will be no drive for the people to work order work site fair work more effective because for what will they do it understand", (Participant 9).

"Working in an organisation knowing that you will get rewarded for your hard work it is very motivating and it makes me go the extra mile, because you are happy to get the benefit of your hard work". (Participant 8).

4.1.2.2. Productivity

All the participants agreed that employment benefits have a significant influence on the productivity of an organisation. The participants indicated that an organisation that provides effective benefits for its employees also improves its level of productivity.

"… correct, our productivity improves if we get good benefits, there was a time our company increased the salary and I saw the worker's productivity increasing, some people prefer to be on standby because they know that there

is a benefit for that and there more are on standby the more the productivity", (Participant 6).

"If you know that you will get a good bonus at the end of the middle of the month, you will put in extra effort. If you know will have a good pension fund contribution, you will stay with the company, and stay committed to the company. So, I think the benefit is already related to performance",\ (Participant 1).

"Same with the cell phone. Yes. In my experience, out-of-employment benefits like your healthcare, retirement plan, paid leave, impact the performance", (Participant 10).

Participants indicated that employment benefits have a positive influence on the employees' performance. Employees effectively complete their daily tasks to ensure that they will receive an annual bonus. This practice means that the productivity of the organisation will improve enabling it to reach its annual target.

"Say, for example, the top management, they get once a year bonus and there's also certain criteria that need to be met for that bonus for them to get that bonus. SoI think if you are doing your day-to-day job, you have in the back of your mind your annual bonus and you will make sure that all those measurements that you get measured on that will include safety, production cost, all those measures are made so that you can get your bonus", (Participants 4).

The lure of an annual benefit fosters routine high performance and economic work habits in an\e employee that, in turn, can ameliorate the working conditions of all employees.

4.1.2.3. Job satisfaction

All the participants mentioned that employment benefits are significant factors influencing the worker's satisfaction at their place of employment. Participants opined that employment benefits play an important role in increasing workers' level of contentment/satisfaction with their employment.

"most of us in this organisation earn a very low salary, but other benefits such as medical aid, housing allowance and overtime allowance contribute

significantly to how happy we are when we are here and I believe the organisation saw that our salaries are low and decided to improve the benefits we receive, at the end both us and the employer we are happy". (Participant 9).

"When I started working here many years ago there were very few benefits, and this made many workers not enjoy their work and resulted in very low levels of employee satisfaction and further caused absenteeism, turnover and poor productivity", (Participant 2).

The findings show that employers need to consider employment benefits as the alternative means of improving workers' satisfaction if monetary benefits such as salary increases or bonuses are not a viable option. The facilitation of employment benefits is a significant aspect of workers' satisfaction in the workplace and their absence is detrimental to the morale of workers.

4.1.2.4. Retention

The majority of the participants agreed that appropriate employment benefits contribute significantly to talented workers' retention in a competitive labour market. Participants mentioned that many companies are looking for highly qualified and/or experienced workers and further indicated that satisfactory employment benefits ensure that an organisation has high retention rates.

"…with the qualifications am holding and the years of experience I believe I can easily get employment quickly at another organisation, but you see, this organisation gives us good benefits which you will never get from many organisations, receiving such benefits make us work with lot energy", (Participant 8).

Participants mentioned that benefits differ according to the level of employment, thus, managers' benefits are not the same as those of general workers as their performance expectations are different. This situation can motivate employees to perform well consistently in order to gather as much experience as possible and ensure their elevation towards the coveted management status.

"So, there's that benefits that differ that I'm aware of. So, all benefits are equal across the company except on the management level. So, for example, the sheets, the way it's calculated, it's a bit different. So, if you look at the

management level, certain benefits differ from the other levels of employees, but that's it based on gender base on anything else, all is the same", (Participant 9)

Participants indicated that most mining companies help to develop employees and even pay for them to further their studies. Skills development, education and training programmes are essential as they reflect an organisations' willingness to invest in and increase the latent potential of its workforce. Participants mentioned that a company that develops its employees has a high retention rate compared to a company that does not develop its workers.

"And not just necessarily part of the mining industry I feel is prone to develop its people even when times are tough, they don't sponsor for example you to go and study or further your career. So, to me, that is something that was preventing you. If the company is going through a difficult time, they might take away that sponsorship and I call it sponsorship because at the end of the day, should you pass, you need to work it back and repair it. They don't necessarily deduct it should you fail. They then deduct it from the facility". (Participant 1)

4.1.2.6. Commitment

Participants mentioned that employee benefits have a significant impact on employee commitment and further stressed that employee benefits play a substantial role in employees' commitment. Participants indicated that the continued commitment of employees can be influenced by the types and forms of the benefits they are receiving.

"…you know to add to what I said, receiving these benefits from this organisation makes me fully commit to my daily tasks, and the level of commitment is determined by how happy I am here at work, so you know all these benefits make me happy and the more am happy is the more I perform very well", (Participant 1).

The incentivising role played by employment benefits is conducive to an employee's commitment. Employees' commitment level is positively reinforced by the recognition and compensation for effort, as well as the provision of additional benefits in accordance with the length of time the employees has worked for the organisation.

"I try my level best to show my commitment here at work but sometimes know that there are people who get more benefits than me, eish, I feel like some workers are more special than me, I am not saying am not happy with what I am getting", (Participant 10)

4.1.2.7. Sense of belonging

The majority of the participants mentioned that the company sells shares to them and that this practice encourages them to work hard because it creates a sense of belonging. Employees' share-ownership plans provide workers with a sense of ownership over their effort. Such a system helps ensure employees that their personal commitment to their work is not solely for the benefit of unseen stakeholders. The employees' interests are aligned with the interests of the organisation that elicits personal engagement as well as organisational commitment from employees. They deem the dividend they receive as proportional to the effort they exert, a fact that has a positive effect on their overall performance. Forty percent of the participants indicated that receiving shares from the organisation motivates them to work even harder which further improves the company's productivity. Participants mentioned that the employment benefits offered by the mining industry are superior to those awarded by other organisations.

"So, I think the benefits in the mining industry are more than any other industries. You might get into the product industry might be a bonus as a Christmas, but that is it. So, I do not, you know, and its certain companies that allow employees to be both to be shared with us, to get shares of the company", (Participant 8).

4.2. Discussion of findings regarding the study propositions

The significant objectives of this study were to determine the impact of employment benefits on employees' performance in the South African mining industry. The results of the study indicated that there is a positive relationship between employment benefits and employees' performance. The study findings showed that employment benefits motivate employees to improve their performance at the workplace. The study showed that employees are motivated by employment benefits and that these rewards make them complete their duties effectively. The study results showed that employees enjoy

receiving employment benefits for their workplace performance and this practice has a positive impact on the organisation's productivity.

Regarding the impact of benefits on an employee's or organisation's performance, the research findings showed that employee benefits have a positive impact on the organisations' performance, this positive relationship was revealed through aspects such as employee motivation, productivity and retention. The data collected during the interviews indicated that the majority of employee benefits that are implemented by the South African mining industry are understood and appreciated by the workers and have proved to be significant as a retention-promoting factor. The findings also showed that job satisfaction is an important factor that affects staff retention because it reduces employees desire to resign from the organisation.

4.2.1. Discussion of study proposition 1.

Proposition 1 was concerned with the relationship between motivation and the employees' performance and described the relation between motivation and performance as positive and having a significant effect.

The findings of the study were consistent with those of the reviewed literature in indicating that employee motivation is a significant factor for encouraging employees to work enthusiastically within an organisation. The reviewed studies indicated that employee motivation is an important aspect that generates productivity, maintains morale and directs employees' work behaviour within an organisation (Kalogiannidis, 2021). The findings from the current study's interviews showed that motivation in the workplace encourages employees to pursue the maximum benefits offered by the organisation and this practice supports the findings of the reviewed studies that indicated that motivating employees boosts their enthusiasm, loyalty and passion and thus, increases their willingness to work voluntarily with improved performance resulting in increasing productivity for the organisation (Kuswati, 2020). These findings consistently show that employees are motivated through employment benefits. However, the limit to which motivation may be engendered by employment benefits has not been explored and is beyond the scope of this study that sought only to establish a positive relationship between employment benefits and employees' motivation and performance.

The findings of this study further revealed that employees who do not receive any benefits may not be driven to put more effort into their work. The reviewed literature indicated that the increase in employment benefits – such as financial compensation that was identified as a primary form of benefit – contributes significantly to the level of performance improvement within an organisation. This study's findings are consistent with those of the literature review and indicate that motivated employees tend to work hard in pursuit of a conditional benefit, a practice that has a significantly positive impact on employees' performance and organisational productivity.

4.2.2. Discussion of study proposition 2.

This study proposition was concerned with the high level of employee turnover damaging the organisation's economic and social processes. The study findings indicated that the organisation's profitability and productivity was reduced because of the high level of employee turnover.

The above findings are consistent with those of the reviewed literature in stipulating that employee turnover is costly due to the expenses associated with recruiting, selecting and training new recruits. Mining organisations with high employee turnover face challenges in training newly recruited employees. The findings showed that the quality and quantity of employee benefits negatively impacted the resignation rate, specifically the number of health-related employee benefits and the percentage of employee benefit expenses over the total staff costs. These findings also indicated that the employee benefits implemented by the mining industry that workers understand and appreciate contribute significantly to retaining staff.

The reviewed literature indicated that job satisfaction is a subjective factor which influences retention by reducing or negating employees' consideration of changing their place of employment. It further indicated that merely providing information on the cost-to-company or form of employment benefits is not sufficient to lower the likelihood of employee turnover. This study's findings highlighted that transparency of employee distribution is very important and the perception of inequality according to responsibilities and performance can have an additional influence on staff turnover. From both the findings and the reviewed literature it is clear that a high level of

employee turnover harms the organisation's economy, social processes and overall cohesion, thus, adversely affecting its profitability and productivity.

4.2.3. Discussion of study proposition 3.

This proposition implied that there was a positive relationship between employment benefits and employee's performance and productivity. An organisation that provides adequate and equal employment benefits to its employees is likely to have high employee performance and productivity.

The reviewed literature has shown that employment benefits have a positive relationship with employees' performance and productivity (Jung & Suh, 2019; Noorazem *et al*, 2021). The reviewed literature indicated that organisations that offer skills training and staff development as employee benefits enhance employees' motivation and satisfaction that increases their performance and improves the organisations' productivity (Sal & Raja, 2016). The findings further indicated that workers who are satisfied with the employment benefits offered by their employer tend to improve their work performance. The findings of the current study revealed that the influence of employment benefits depends upon the type of benefits offered by an organisation. The health and wellness benefits have a high chance of improving the worker's physical and mental health that may further lead to a reduction of absenteeism and improve the organisation's productivity.

The study findings are consistent with those of the reviewed literature because both revealed that there is a positive relationship between employment benefits and increased employees' performance and productivity. The reviewed literature revealed that workers improve their performance and productivity in a workplace in which there are favourable working conditions and when they are assured that the employment benefits are implemented through a system which guarantees procedural equality. These findings showed that both the performance and productivity of employees improve when they feel they are valued and appreciated through recognition and employment benefits. This current study found that the employees whose efforts and performance are recognised develop a sense of belonging that further increases their morale and augments their output and the organisation's productivity. From both the

reviewed literature and this study's findings, it is clear that employment benefits, performance and productivity have a significant relationship.

4.2.4. Discussion of study proposition 4.

This study proposition was concerned with the fact that dissatisfied employees tend to cause a high level of absenteeism within an organisation.

The reviewed literature indicated that employees' job satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the fairness and equity of the benefits, the degree to which the benefits are both perceived as valuable and meaningful and the extent to which they align with the employees' goals and values. Employees' satisfaction with employment benefits is positively related to job satisfaction and retention (Hoole & Hotz, 2016).

The current study's findings have shown that employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs and workplace conditions have a high rate absenteeism. It was further discovered that benefits such as job security increases employees' loyalty and commitment to the organisation. Job security was identified as playing a very significant role in reducing stress and improving job satisfaction. The findings of the reviewed literature indicated that employment benefits, such as wellness programmes that include a healthy lifestyle, counselling and physical exercise through gym membership, significantly improve employees' job satisfaction. The reviewed literature revealed that organisations that ineffectively manage employment benefits tend to exhibit decreased levels of motivation, especially amongst hard-working employees (Kadir *et al*, 2019).

4.3. Chapter Conclusion

The significance of employment benefits in an organisation cannot be overemphasized. The success of any organisation depends upon its employees' performance. This study investigated the impact of employment benefits on employees' performance in the South African mining industry. The study found that employment benefits have an important influence on employees' performance and that rewards such as overtime, car and/or housing allowances can be utilised by organisations to motivate employees.

Based upon the study findings, it was concluded that employment benefits have an important positive effect on the employees' performance. It, thus, is clear that for an organisation to achieve its holistic objectives and stay productive in the local and

global environment, the awarding of appropriate and equal employee benefits should be prioritised.

5. CONCLUSION¸LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 5.0. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the findings from interviews with mine workers regarding employment benefits and employee performance while broadly discussing them in relation to the propositions made in Chapter 2 of this study. This chapter will discuss the principal findings from the study in pursuance of the primary research objectives as well as their implications for businesses, stakeholders and other relevant parties. The limitations of this research study will be delineated, and the chapter will conclude with recommendations for further research.

5.1. PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

This study set out to examine the impact of employment benefits in the South African mining industry and how they can positively influence employees' commitment, performance and productivity within the workplace. The focus on the mining industry stemmed from the challenges faced by mine workers due to the occupational demands of working in an industry that necessitates high performance from employees placed in a hazardous work environment and often faced with a short-term employment expectancy.

The main finding from this research study was that there is a range of employment benefits, both wage-related and non-wage related, that have a marked impact on employees' morale, performance and productivity. It, however, is difficult to quantify the impact of these benefits on performance because they are the not sole factors that determine employees' performance, morale or job satisfaction. Furthermore, these employment benefits can both positively and negatively influence employees' performance. However, based on the reviewed literature and the data collected during this study, it can be concluded that the absence of employment benefits may result in job dissatisfaction, lack of organisational commitment, lower productivity from employees and lead to low employee retention,.

From a qualitative analysis of the participating mineworkers' attitudes toward employment benefits, this research has established that there is a significant link between the productivity of employees and the provision of employment benefits. The

conditional provision of employment benefits – based on the high performance of an employee, skills training and achieving a permanent employment status – can positively contribute to employees' commitment and motivation in the workplace.

The responses provided by participants during the interviews conducted conveyed that the greatest motivators for mineworkers are primarily benefits that are associated with permanent employment or long tenures as mineworkers (in essencep increased salaries, pension funds, medical aid, training and development, transport and housing allowances) and, secondarily, benefits that vary between employment contracts (such as the flexibility of working hours, paid time-off, performance-based bonuses and overtime pay).

The most highly valued benefits for miners were satisfactory compensation, pension funding, medical aid contributions and housing benefits, especially in the light of the lack of longevity, job security and occupational hazards that are associated with mine work. Employment benefits that accrue with long term employment have been shown to contribute positively to the morale and productivity of mineworkers. The overall effect of such benefits on the performance of employees is to allow them to enjoy the fruits of their labour for as long as possible.

The inductive mode of reasoning employed when analysing the responses to the semi-structured interviews conducted with the mineworkers enabled the researcher to acquire great insight into the impact of employment benefits that are used as an incentive for greater performance and productivity. The qualitative data illustrated the contrasting attitudes and morals of newly recruited or contracted miners whose performance determines their access to the primary benefits as opposed to the permanently employed or more experienced workers whose morale or productivity are not dependent upon certain benefits, by virtue of their skills, training and long-tenure.

The generalisability of these above insights is limited because the data was collected from a specific type of mining company within a particular geographical area, with the sample group being limited to a single division of the company. Regardless of these limitations, these results imply that the broader mining industry should ensure that the employment benefits they offer cater to the needs and preferences of their recipients. The current state of employment benefits, however, cannot be viewed in a vacuum

because historical exploitation, migrant labour trends and high employee turnover rates have affected the current state of the modern mineworker's conditions of employment.

The abundance of short-term/temporary contract mineworkers, coupled with the low retention rates currently present in the mining industry are enabling factors for extracting high performance while providing minimal long-term employment benefits. Such benefits, nevertheless, also can have a negative effect on morale in the long run.

Employees may be motivated to work when employment benefits accrue mainly to permanent employees. This practice can motivate new recruits, temporary employees or contract workers to strive towards becoming permanently employed as soon as possible without necessarily ensuring that they will continue to perform better once a pension or housing benefit has been achieved. Due to high employee turnover within the mining industry, the inequality in compensation, as well as the lack of transparency regarding pension and provident funds, it is difficult to measure the extent to which these long-term benefits are fully utilised by mining employees.

Lastly, the provision of employee benefits observed in this study operate on a theoretical foundation, namely the expectancy-reinforcement theory discussed earlier. In order for employees to consistently perform at high levels, there must be a reward associated with productivity that guarantees the quality of employees' future performance. The achievement of consistently high performances from employees depends upon their discretionary efforts.

The provision of essential employment benefits – such as job security, adequate compensation and pension funding – once employees reach certain milestones the promise of employment benefits can coerce rather than inspire morale from employees and create an environment that fosters competition between employees at the cost of organisational commitment, employees' engagement and social cohesion.

5.1.1. IMPLICATIONS FOR MINING INDUSTRY MANAGEMENT

Employment benefits can incentivize and motivate employees' performance most effectively when they cater for the needs and preferences of the employees receiving them. A workplace that does not provide benefits which are essential to the survival of the employee as an individual (such as adequate compensation, pension and disability payouts, housing and medical aid) can foster an environment in which the employees perceive their basic needs to be unmet, thus, leading to job dissatisfaction.

Employee engagement is essential for creating a work environment that attracts, inspires and retains high performance employees. The 'one-size-fits-all' approach to employee benefits applies only insofar as the employment benefits are monetary based. If employment benefits are not solely monetary based (as is the case for permanently employed/in-house mineworkers) a degree of autonomy regarding the benefits received may improve the overall employment experience and stimulate growth while creating organisational goals that focus on the holistic performance of mineworkers, both within a group and in their individual capacity.

5.2. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research delved into the complex relationship between employment benefits and employees' performance within the South African mining industry. The study identified a range of both wage-related and non-wage-related benefits that significantly impact employees' morale, performance and productivity. While it was challenging to quantify the direct impact of these benefits, the absence of such perks was linked to low employee retention, minimal organisational commitment, job dissatisfaction and decreased productivity.

One major finding highlighted the crucial role of incentivized employment benefits, especially those associated with permanent employment or long tenures, in positively influencing mineworkers' commitment and motivation within the workplace. The study discerned a dual effect, acknowledging that these benefits could both motivate and potentially lead to negative consequences, such as fostering competition and demoralizing employees.

The research also shed light on the factors that motivated mineworkers, emphasising the importance of benefits linked to job security, increased salaries, pension funds, medical aid, training and housing allowances. However, it was noted that the historical context, high turnover rates and the prevalence of short-term contracts in the mining industry contributed to challenges mineworkers experienced in fully leveraging long-term benefits.

The implications of this study for the mining industry's management highlighted the need for a nuanced approach to employment benefits and ensuring that they align with employees' fundamental needs. While benefits tied to performance can drive short-term productivity, an exclusive focus on this approach may result in insufficient organisational commitment and low employee retention. The study's results suggested that employee engagement is crucial for fostering a work environment that attracts and retains high-performing individuals and stressed the importance of personalized, non-monetary benefits.

In recognition of certain limitations, such as the cross-sectional design and the limited sample group, the study calls for future research to explore the causal nature of the relationship between employment benefits and employees' performance. It recommends a more extensive, diverse sample and a longitudinal approach that will lead to a better understanding of the evolving perceptions of employees over time.

In summary, this research underscores the pivotal role of employment benefits in shaping mineworkers' commitment, satisfaction and performance. By acknowledging the intricate interplay of factors within the mining industry, it provides valuable insights for industry stakeholders, urging a balanced and comprehensive approach to employee benefits to foster a sustainable and motivated workforce.

5.3. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The study broadly assessed the impact of employment benefits on employees' performance and productivity amongst mineworkers within a specific company. Certain limitations curtailed the depth and generalisability of the findings. These limitations included:

- The cross-sectional research design was able to establish a relationship between employee benefits and employees' performance, but it cannot be said to have established a causality among these two factors.
- Social desirability bias resulted in participants' overvaluing or emphasising the necessity or impact of certain benefits over others. The perceived importance of certain benefits influenced the job satisfaction level of employees based on the availability of the benefits.
- The study was conducted within a short timeframe that did not allow for the researcher to gauge the change in employees' perceptions over an extended period. Therefore, the results reflect the perceptions of a small group of participants at a certain period.
- The sample group was limited to one mining company and a small number of employees.
- The participants lacked variance because the mineworkers interviewed were mainly in-house/permanent employees as opposed to an equal distribution of temporary or contracted workers and permanent employees.

5.4. IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The link between employment benefits and employees' performance is an issue that requires further investigation to determine the causal nature of the relationship and how to maximize productivity from mineworkers. It is suggested that the study be extended to a larger sample group and also be diversified by mining industry and including skilled, unskilled, temporary and permanently employed mineworkers.

A longitudinal quantitative design should be considered as opposed to the cross-sectional one employed in this study, to observe the change in employees' perceptions over time and observe the effect of social desirability biases amongst different groups of workers. Lastly, a comparative analysis between a penalty-based benefit system (benefits are removed due to lack of productivity) and a bonus-based benefits system (positive performance is rewarded with benefits) may assist future researchers in identifying the underlying drive motivating employees' performance in the presence of employment benefits.

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APPENDIX A: PARTICIPATION FORM



Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Theron Fana Shiluvana. I am a Masters Student in Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. My supervisor is Dr / Prof. Erasmus Appiah. I am conducting a research study about the impact of employment benefits on employee performance in the South African mining industry

I am inviting you to take part in an interview. If you decide to take part, your participation in this research study will last about 45-60 minutes. The interview will take place at mining premises] at [your available time

With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview. This data will be sorted on the database server and can be deleted after 3 years. Only researcher will have access to the data.

During the research activity, I will need to ask for some personal information about you, including age

The interview will be confidential and anonymous. When I share the results of the research study, I will not include your name or anything else that could identify you. With your permission, other researchers may use the data collected from this study, but your name and any personal information will not be used or shared.

If you decide to take part in the research study, it should be because you want to volunteer. You do not have to take part. You can stop being in the study at any time. You do not have to answer any questions if you do not want to. You will not get any direct benefits if you choose to join the research study. You will not lose any services, benefits or rights you would normally have if you decide not to join. Taking part in the research study will not cost you anything. You will not be paid for being in this research study.

The risks for this research study are no more than what happens in everyday life / some of the questions asked may make you feel sad or upset. If this happens, I will stop the interview and continue another time.

This research study will be written up as a research report. If you would like to receive a summary of this report, I will be happy to send it to you.

If you have any questions during or afterwards about this research study, feel free to contact me my supervisor on the details listed below. If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical procedures of this research study, you are welcome to contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical), telephone +27(0)11 717 1408, email hrecnon-medical@wits.ac.za.

Yours sincerely,
Theron

Researcher:
Theron Shiluvana, 2013257@students.wits.ac.za

Supervisor:
Prof Erasmus Appiah, Erasmus.appiah@wits.ac.za,

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

Wits Business School

Master's in Business Administration (MBA).

Title of Study: Impact of employment benefits on employee performance in the mining industry

Researchers: Theron Fana Shiluvana

Name of Participant: (Please print) ---------- I understand that this study in which I have agreed to participate explores Impact of employment benefits on employee performance in the mining industry. I have decided to take part in an interview that covers the themes mentioned above as a volunteer. I am aware that the interview will be recorded on tape, transcribed, and then stored in a database for this study. If I choose, I will have the chance to review and edit the transcript.

I am aware that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time and without penalty. I am aware that my participation will not be compensated. I am aware that I am under no duty to respond to any interview question that I find to be intrusive, offensive, or improper. I am aware that all personal information will be treated in utmost confidentiality, and that all responses will be coded so that my name won't be associated with them.

I understand that only Theron Fana Shiluvana will have access to the data.

Participant Signature ---------- Date ----------I have fully explained the procedures of this study to the above volunteer.

Researcher Signature ----------
Date ----------

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE

- What are the types of employment benefits are offered in the South African mining industry, and to what extent are they utilised by employees?
  - Can you please provide an overview of the employment benefits commonly offered in the South African mining industry?
  - In your experience, what are the most sought-after employment benefits among employees in the mining industry?
  - Could you share some information about the utilization or uptake of these benefits by employees? Are there any challenges or barriers that prevent employees from fully utilizing these benefits?
  - How do the employment benefits offered in the South African mining industry compare to those provided in other industries within the country?

- How do employment benefits impact employee performance in the South African mining industry?
  - In your experience, how do employment benefits, such as healthcare, retirement plans, and paid leave, influence employee performance in the South African mining industry?
  - Have you noticed any differences in the performance of employees who actively utilize the provided employment benefits versus those who do not take full advantage of them? If yes, could you elaborate on these differences?
  - Are there any particular employment benefits that have a more significant impact on employee performance compared to others? If so, what are they, and why do you think they are influential?
  - In your opinion, do you believe that employees who receive comprehensive employment benefits are generally more motivated and engaged in their work compared to those with limited or no benefits? Please explain your perspective?
- What is the impact of employment benefits on employee performance on different demographics such as, gender, age and job level in the South African mining industry?
  - In your experience, have you observed any differences in the impact of employment benefits on employee performance based on gender in the South African mining industry? If yes, could you elaborate on these differences?

- How do age demographics influence the relationship between employment benefits and employee performance in the South African mining industry? Are there any particular benefits that resonate more with different age groups?
- Do job levels or positions within the mining industry play a role in how employment benefits impact employee performance? Are there any specific benefits that are more relevant or impactful for employees in different job levels?
- Are there any specific employment benefits that tend to have a more significant impact on employee performance for different genders in the mining industry? Please provide examples or insights

- Based on your knowledge and experience, what recommendations would you suggest to mining companies in order to maximize the positive impact of employment benefits on employee performance in the South African mining industry?

APPENDIX D: ETHICS CLEARANCE

Graduate School of Business Administration
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg

Wits Business School

Wits Business School Ethics Committee
Constituted under the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical)

Ethics Clearance Certificate

Ethics protocol number: WBS/BA2313257/505
This certificate is only valid when a legitimate Wits protocol number and signed by the Researcher (below)

This certificate is only valid if accompanied by formal permission from the relevant stakeholder(s).

Project title	Employment benefits and employee performance in the South African mining industry
Investigator / Researcher	Mr Theron Shilowa
Nature of Project	MBA (Research Article)
Decision of the Committee	Approved, provided stakeholders and participants are guaranteed confidentiality.
Issue Date of Certificate	2023/09/15
Expiry date	Date of submission of the project / research report
Chairperson	Dr Pius Oba +27 11 717 3976 +27 82 733 6587 pius.oba@wits.ac.za

Declaration by Researcher

One copy must be signed by the Researcher and returned to the Chairperson of the Wits Business School Ethics Committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorised to carry out the above-mentioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature

2023/09/19
Date

APPENDIX E: PERMISSION LETTER

IMPALA
Member of the Implats Group

MEMORANDUM

To:	Theron Fana Shiluvana
From:	Nomaswazi Ndlovu – Head of Human Resources OE & Shared Services
Date:	06 October 2023
Subject:	Research Proposal 23 – 27 October 2023
	Topic: *The impact of employment benefits on employee performance and productivity in the mining industry.*

We would like to advice you that Impala Platinum Mine in Rustenburg is granting you, permission to do your Research work on the proposed dates.

The research will entail collecting data from at least management positions with a face-to-face interview and the interview will be done with maximum of 10 managers from different functions. The interview is expected to take approximately 1 hour. Audio recording will be used to facilitate accurate data collection. Participants will be requested to provide written consent before the research commences.

Please ensure that all responses are treated with strict confidentiality, with participant identities (including names and organizations) replaced with pseudonyms during data collection and anonymized in the final report. This is critical to ensure compliance with POPIA.

Name	Title
Johnny Nong	HR Manager: Employee Relations
Given Lefyedi	HR Manager: Talent Management
Nishika Indurjeeth	Commercial Lawyer Finance
Kabelo Lefifi	Project Manager
Sizwe Phakathi	Head of Safety
Simon Mporetji	Head of Environment
Khanyiso Mtshulana	Mine manager
Tshepo Molapisi	Senior Manager Engineering
	Project Manager

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