

**THE EFFECT OF EMPOWERMENT ON EMPLOYEES:
THE CASE OF BAFOKENG RASIMONE PLATINUM
MINES PROCESSING PLANT**

By

GOBUSAMANG GRADUWELL SETHOBA

A mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master Business in Administration at the Mafikeng
Campus of the North-West University

PROFESSOR: S.LUBBE

May 2013

DECLARATION

I Sethoba Gobusamang Graduwell, hereby declare that the mini-dissertation entitled **“THE EFFECT OF EMPOWERMENT ON EMPLOYEES: THE CASE OF BAFOKENG RASIMONE PLATINUM MINES PROCESSING PLANT”** is my own work that was carried out at the Graduate School Business and Government Leadership, Faculty of Commerce and Administration, North West University, Mahikeng Campus, Republic of South Africa.

The work contained herein is my original work and has never been submitted wholly or in part to any University or Institution for an award of a degree.

Sethoba Gobusamang Graduwell

Sign: 

Date: 17 April 2013

Acknowledgement

I unreservedly pay great homage to God All Mighty, the Creator of all things through Jesus Christ, for giving me this golden heaven sent opportunity of acquiring this knowledge. To Him be the glory and honour forever and ever.

I am forever indebted to Professor Samuel Lubbe, for the love and burning passion and dedication towards his work, who at all times wants to see students achieving the desires of their hearts. It is through his ardent zeal and intense exertion, that I managed against all odds to complete this dissertation. To him I say “thanks a million times for having availed yourself to supervise my work, you indeed allowed me to sip off your oozing knowledge that overflows from your calabash of wisdom. Let that vast experience and knowledge profit more students who will come after me. Keep that knowledge forever flowing like sweet waters of a river, that give life to the deserts, so that more students could benefit from and through you”.

My greatest gratitude goes to “Her Royal Highness” “The Queen of my Heart” Tshepiso Dorcas Sethoba, for allowing me to pursue my dream. “Izo!” I am aware that I have made a huge sacrifice of our family time just to achieve this. If it was not through your great and constant support, my dreams could have been thwarted. I thank Jesus Christ who availed you to me as: a wife, life partner, friend, lover, soldier and shoulder to lean on, you are my precious and priceless gift. Thank you “ngwana”.

To my twin sons, this, I lay down to you as challenge for you to surpass. Always remember the following

- “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of all wisdom”
- “mmetla kgoia ya borwa o e betla a lebile gaabo”

- “Obtain knowledge and hang it down with dignity and pride, as a mantle of manhood”.

Special appreciation goes to the following people who played a significant role in aiding me to achieve this.

Pastors: Kelebogile T. Resane; Thoka T.Tlhapane & F.Tlhapane; M.Seabelo; E.S. Xipu and N. Xipu

Family and Friends:Tselane Mosella(May her soul rest in peace), Busisiwe Khunou (my daughter), Thapelo and Tiisetso, Aus Rabbie, Mumsy, Ikobeng and Mr. G Motlhamme, Mr and Mrs Panniza, (Santsuru and Koko Tamati) Rre le Mme Mosito, Ramatsha and Mmagauta Molokwane, Ipeleng and Oarabile Sethoba, Tshidi and Mohau Ngakane, Vidor, Fred, Grant, Solly and Thakana Molokwane, Themba Tusha and Ma “U”, Doube “L” Walaza and Beauty.

All members of WORLD WIDE WORD MINISTRIES and all colleagues. To you I say “Nko ya kgomo mogala tshwarathata e re o utlwa sebedu osekwa wa kgaoga” thanks for all you support and prayers.

In memory of my late son “ Rebaona- ka- Chwaro Sethoba” whose sudden departure left holes in our hearts

“To God be the glory and honour forever and ever”

Abstract

The principal aim of this research is to examine the impact of empowerment on employee work performance. In particular, to assess the extent to which a key characteristic of empowerment such as devolution of responsibility and skills capacity building is influencing and instrumental in securing improvements in employee commitment and job performance in the workplace.

Based on the analysis and interpretation of data, it was found out that there is a great impact of implementing employee empowerment by BRPMPP. It was realised there is no gap between the planning and implementation phases of the employee empowerment strategic plan. Their training sessions are adding value to their work and that such sessions are beneficial and helpful. Employee Empowerment served as the cornerstone of change at BRPMPP and is also the key to its successful business competitive strategy. As such, for an organisation to survive the turbulence related to the execution of its business and see "success" its staff and management's ability to evolve and adapt to change(s) both foreseen and unforeseen is essential.

The study provides several recommendations to alleviate the constraints in both planning and implementing Employee Empowerment. Planning and scheduling empowerment process should match with the vision and mission of the organisation. The Employee Empowerment processes must be properly aligned with the employees desired career path relevant to the organisation. It must not be a process that is designed to appease the labour law requirement or as a means to frustrate junior staff. Data acquisition for analysis and information management regarding the impact of EE on the organisation can improve productivity and continuous improvement in the organisation.

Departmental Employee Empowerment plans must not be implemented in silos. Human resources as a production factor is always important when an empowerment strategy is planned, designed and implemented. Human resource must not be treated as an extension of machinery in the production line, but as the nuclear power house of the existence of the very organisation. Departmental empowerment plans must be well-coordinated so that a perfect harmony and balanced empowerment in the entire organisation is experienced.

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Chapter One

Background of the study

1.1. Introduction

The purpose of the study is to examine the impact of empowerment on employee work performance. In particular, to assess the extent to which a key characteristic of empowerment such as devolution of responsibility and skills capacity building is influencing and instrumental in securing improvements in employee commitment and job performance in the workplace.

According to Cummings and Worley (2008:350), employee participation is important to the organisation change process because empowerment fulfils the individual's need for a sense of control. The study examines the nature of empowerment and the reasons for its introduction followed by a detailed analysis of the impact of empowerment in the workplace.

Chapter one of the study outline is as follows: the background of the study, statement of the problem, justification for the study, research aims and objectives, the research design, scope and limitation of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.2. Background to the study

According to Smit, Brevis, Cronje and Vrba (2007:40) increased competitions in domestic and overseas markets, and government deregulation have led organisations increasingly to turn to employees as a source of competitive advantage. They further state that the concept of empowerment has been identified as a recent and advanced manifestation of employee involvement. However, according to Burke (2011:14) empowerment itself is a difficult and demanding organisational change, moreover like

many change effort an incremental and gradual implementation strategy is recommended on the road to full empowerment.

The role of training in organisations cannot be overemphasised since training is how the skills and knowledge necessary for effective empowerment are acquired. It is widely understood that training is recognised as important to the success of most organisational change efforts. Cummings and Worley (2008:350) also mentioned that “training helps in preparing the organisation for change, in accomplishing the change itself, and in making the change a permanent part of the organisation.”

The South African Government established a number of legislations addressing particularly the skills shortages in the workplace and the imbalances of the past through the Skills Development Act, Skills Development Levies Act, and Employment Equity Act, with the aim of empowering the workforce (Bendix, 2010:153).

The Skills Development Act aims to develop the skills of the South African workforce and to improve the quality of the life of workers and their prospects of work, and to improve productivity in the workplace and the competitiveness of employers and to promote self-employment-hence, empowering the people to actively participate in decision-making which might result in securing improvements in employee commitment and job performance in the workplace (Coetzee, 2007: 418).

South African organisations find themselves in a unique situation because the National Skills Development Strategy of the South African government has, through the Skills Development Act 9 (1998), the Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), identified the need for qualitative, relevant and appropriate training for the upgrading of workplace skills within the country. The processes of Outcomes Based Education (OBE), Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and the further skills development are aimed to equip the South African workforce with the skills to succeed in the global market and to offer opportunities to individuals and communities for self-advancement to enable them to play a productive role in society (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

There are significant challenges facing organisations in empowering their workforce in accordance with the demand of the South African skills development legislation. There are, however, positive aspects regarding the current state of affairs that could lend themselves to an increased redistribution of power between management and employee. This is most common in the form of increasing employee authority and responsibility.

When employees feel as though they have a choice and can make direct decisions, this does often lead to a greater feeling of self-worth (Louw and Venter, 2008:70). It is against that background that Greasley, Bryman, Dainty, Price, Soetanto- and King (2005:354) add that the notion of empowerment involves the workforce being provided with a greater degree of flexibility and more freedom to make decisions relating to work.

This has, in turn, led many organisations to adopt schemes designed to encourage employee involvement (Cunningham & Hyman, 1996:14). They further state that the concept of empowerment has been identified as a recent and advanced manifestation of employee involvement with its advocates arguing that that is the answer to gaining improved organisational performance and employee motivation. Therefore, the meaning of empowerment has tended to be associated with the concept of power, thereby implying that power is redistributed by those in senior position to those in more subordinate position (Greasley *et al.*, 2006:354).

Devolution of responsibility for securing improvements in employee commitment and job performance in the workplace can be more complex than is commonly assumed by much of the literature promoting employees as the deliverers of the operational activities within an organisation. In essence, devolution of responsibility is focused on increasing the efficiency of delivery of devolving the responsibility to the lowest possible level within an organisation (Gilbert, De Winne and Sels, 2010:23). Therefore, optimal devolution of responsibility within organisations must be encouraged. [*However, Canning, Hellawell, Hughes, Gatersleben, and Fairhead,*

(2010:64) suggest] that an organisation should not expect too much from devolution because devolution cannot guarantee the following:

- ❖ Increased effectiveness or efficiency.
- ❖ Better planning, decision making, resource allocation, evaluation or accountability.
- ❖ More participation by employees.
- ❖ Shared vision and sense of mission.
- ❖ Greater responsiveness, stronger culture, or a greater focus on employee learning.
- ❖ High commitment, morale, initiative or professionalism.
- ❖ Better employees and more innovative and effective managing.
- ❖ Excellence and equity of employees' outcomes.

However, according to Gilbert *et al.* (2010:23) empowerment is an accepted way of doing business and has been shown to help organisations develop a customer focus. Therefore, an empowered organisation is one where employees are given the authority and responsibility for serving the customer speedily and efficiently (Gilbert; De Winne and Sels, 2010:23).

1.3. Main problem

Managers are faced with difficulties when attempting to empower employees and these prevent a business from becoming an empowering organisation. According to Greasley *et al.* (2006:354) there is resistance to the change both from managers and from employees themselves. It is often assumed that employees will buy into empowerment, as the benefits are "obvious". However, this has been disputed by Chen, (2010:222) who claims that previously disempowered employees may resist empowerment, as they fear the increased levels of responsibility and accountability.

According to Jarrar and Zairi (2002:266), it is plausible that management and employees will offer quite distinctive perspectives as to the meaning and success of

empowerment and thus offer a different dimension to the understanding of empowerment.

During the past years, a variety of change programs and new strategies coming out of the strategic planning meetings of many organisations in the mining industry have been witnessed. They aimed at transforming organisational structures and processes to enhance productivity, effectiveness, and competitiveness. However, these change efforts have fallen short because they failed to actively involve employees in the change process. Speegle, (2010:85) asserts that for participation to pay off, it must be combined with meaningful information and real influence. Basically, influence is what employee empowerment is all about (Messmer, 2007:279).

Callaway- (2007:7) suggests that “empowerment is the key to understanding trust and trusting relationship in an organisation”. This means that to feel empowered, employees need to have confidence that management understands the special commitments and circumstances that make their contributions valuable (Messmer, 2007:279). Speegle, (2010:84) maintains that a well-trained and empowered member of staff can help turn a dissatisfied customer into an advocate of the organisation.

1.4. Objectives of the study

- 1.4.1. To establish to what extent the organisation provides training and skills programs in an effort of empowering its workforce.
- 1.4.2. To determine if management is reluctant to the empowerment efforts fearing relinquishing their power to their subordinates.
- 1.4.3 To determine if management is indeed reluctant to embrace implementation of employee' empowerment measures fearing such empowerment initiatives will result in loss of control in managing the organisation effectively and efficiently.
- 1.4.4 To establish if employees are actively participating in decision-making process confines within their working environment.

1.4.5. To determine if employees perceive the empowerment efforts as just empty rhetoric and management's attempts to exploit them.

1.5. Justification of the study

The continuing turbulent environment means that- organisations find themselves having to review their working practices continuously. Despite attempts to develop a more competitive culture of learning, it is argued that the fundamental principles which govern organisations within the South African context remain those that White (2000:164) identified as functionalism, uniformity and hierarchy.

The more employee empowerment is seriously taken by management, the greater the beneficial impact on the organisation, because Callaway (2007:7) states that dissatisfied employees are a powerful force in forming and potentially damaging an organisation's reputation. It is within this context that study will encourage management to embrace the concept of empowerment, devolution of responsibility and ownership for decisions in the workplace (Louw and Venter (2008:70).

This study is basically making management aware that employee empowerment is a strategic and positive approach to effective and efficient service delivery which benefits both the employees and the organisation. It is again within this context that the study will encourage management to recognise the fact that empowerment challenges traditional ways in which the organisation and its people operate (Jarrar and Zairi, 2002:266).

1.6. Structure of the dissertation

This research is organised into five chapters as indicated below:

Chapter one: Introduction and background to the study

This chapter indicates the purpose of the research and the structure that will be followed throughout the study. In so doing, it presents the problem to be investigated

through a preliminary literature review, followed by the statement and justification of the study. The chapter further presents the objectives and the research design.

Chapter two: Literature review

This chapter will explore a variety of literature to formulate the conceptual framework upon which the entire research process will depend.

Chapter three: Research design and methodology/85/8

This chapter will outline the research design and method suitable to operationalise the research instruments. Issues such as data collection instruments will be presented along with the processes used to gather and analyse the research data.

Chapter four: Analysis of data and presentation of results

This chapter will explore the data collected from the research study, and present the analysis obtained through the aid of statistical methods applied and discussed.

Chapter five: Report on findings, Conclusion- and Recommendations.

This chapter presents a summary of the findings as related to the hypothesis and explored literature where conclusions will be drawn to enable the study to present recommendations for future research.

1.7. Conclusion

Employee empowerment is a term used to express the ways in which non-managerial staff can make autonomous decisions within the confines of their day-to-day tasks or activities. These self-willed decisions can be small or large, depending upon the degree of power with which the company wishes to invest in employees (Messmer, 2007:279).

Employee empowerment can begin with all the training initiatives and skills programs, as well as the devolution of responsibility and converting the whole organisation to an empowerment model. Conversely it may merely mean giving employees the ability to make some decisions on their own (Louw and Venter (2008:70).

According to Cummings and Worley, (2008:350) the thinking behind employee empowerment is that it gives power to the individual and thus makes for happier employees. By offering employees choice and participation on a more responsible level, the employees are more invested in their organisation, and view themselves as representatives of such. However, for employee empowerment to work successfully, management must be truly committed to allow employees to make decisions, because this will allow for managers and employees to collectively contribute ideas toward better service delivery. The next chapter will explore a variety of literature to formulate the conceptual framework upon which the entire research process will depend.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

Since the dawn of democracy in South Africa, labour laws have changed (Ferreira, 2006: 197). These changes, amongst others, ushered in many different labour related concepts that intended to address different issues and problems experienced by the labour force. The South African government established a number of legislations addressing particularly the skills shortages in the workplace and the imbalances of the past through the Skills Development Act, Skills Development Levies Act, and Employment Equity Act etc, as an endeavour to empower the workforce (Smit, Brevis, Cronje and Vrba, 2011:40).

Employees empowerment, in both government and private sectors, became the central drone word meant to address the injustices of the previous legacy (Horwitz and Currie, 2007: 445; Ashman, 2001:1097; and McEwan, 2002: 469).

Employees empowerment as a concept, like many other, emerged as a beacon of hope overarching the intellectual landscape of restructuring and development, especially to the disadvantaged groups (blacks, coloureds, Indians and Chinese) in South Africa. It appeared as a symbol of recognition, power and a well crafted tool that could transfer roles of leadership, decision making and power from the lilly-white management based organisations, both in the government and private companies, to the previously disadvantaged majority (McEwan and Bek, 2006:1021).

The South African Small, Medium, and Macro Enterprises as the pulse of economic growth and employment creators, play a role in effecting change and processes aiming at the employee empowerment (Ferreira, 2006: 197). However, this is usually done with extra care, as trying to keep up with the ever-increasing rate and complexity of change can leave the staff feeling overwhelmed and uncooperative (Ashman, 2001: 1098; Neumayera and De Soysa, 2010:1016 and Chu, 2003:7)

maintain that for a change programme to work, the organisation and its people must want it.

2.2. Employees empowerment and Organisational change

Darwin in Balshaw and Golberg (2008:6), the widely acclaimed father and legend of evolution, once said “It is not the strongest species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change”. Likewise, for any organisation to survive the turbulence related to the execution of its business and see “success”, its staff and management’s ability to evolve and adapt to changes both foreseen and unforeseen, is a determining factor, not necessarily only on resources available- (holding all other factors constant).

According to Louw and Venter (2008:70), an organisation’s ability to survive in the competitive landscape of the 21st century is a highly complex task, as all these changes impact on the organisational strategies: employees, leadership, productivity and organisational architecture. Adding to such heightened complexities are the ever increasing competitive business practices, new technology along with the highly skilled and competent employees. The proclivity towards strategic flexibility is the order of the day, so as to accommodate these changes and also, adhering to the organisations’ vision, mission and general corporate growth strategy.

2.3. Empowerment

A review of literature on employee empowerment reveals that when an endeavour is made to define a concept, horrible, fierce and sharp arguments are always inevitable, due to a lack of agreement upon definition and terminology. These arguments, amongst others, stem from differences of notions, schools of thought, and the obvious eclectic fields of study. Empowerment as a concept is not exceptional to such public and academic scrutiny (Littrell, 2007:87; Chang and Liu, 2008:1442; Hancera and George, 2003:3; Focka, Chiang, Auc and Huid, 2010:10; Chowa, Lob, Shac and Hongc, 2006:478).

Publication interchange terms of employee involvement and employee participation with employee empowerment without defining the similarities and distinctions between them. For instance, some authors maintain that participation is an employee involvement act that serves as a function of several basic organisational processes (information sharing, training, decision making and rewards) whereas, advocates of traditional participative management literature, tend to view the programme itself apart from other organisational processes (Hancera and George, 2003:3; Chowa *et al.*, 2006: 478; Chang and Liu 2008:1442; Focka *et al.*, 2010:10).

Many writers argue that employee involvement implies that a greater degree of mutuality is present in the organisational relationship, when those of the traditional participative management contend that it takes just a programmatic approach to employee participation (Horwitz and Currie, 2007:452; Chang and Liu, 2008:1443; Hancera and George, 2003:4; Chowa *et al.*, 2006:484; Walters and Cloete, 2008:1163; Focka *et al.*, 2010:12).

According to Amichai-Hamburger, McKenna and Tal (2008: 1776), it appears that the preference of one term over the other has to do with semantics. This is also partly intertwined with expressions of a range of political and academic view points. Along with the implicit ideological perspective from which dominant accounts of the subject are written and are never made explicit.

Empowerment can also be understood as a philosophy, as a set of organisational behavioural practices and an organisational programme. It can be referred to as a process whereby one's belief in his/her competence is enhanced. The expectancy of motivation for an individual is his/her belief system that the efforts in a given task will result in a desired level of performance and his/her performance will produce desired outcomes. The empowerment therefore means enabling and raising people's conviction to execute desired behaviour rather than just raising their hope for favourable performance outcomes (Ashman, 2001:1111; Horwitz and Currie, 2007:458; McEwan, 2002:429).

A central problem in this field is that the term empowerment has been used very loosely by both practitioners and academics. At its simplest empowerment would commonsensically be associated with the redistribution of power. Practically, it is seen as a form of employee involvement, designed by management and intended to generate commitment and enhance employee contributions to the organisations (Littrell, 2007:88).

According to Rapp, Ahearne, Mathieu and Schillewaert (2006: 279) and Chu (2003:18), empowerment enables individuals to be in charge of their own responsibilities. simultaneously meeting and exceeding the company and personal goals through shared company vision for change. Such an empowerment perception makes the individual to consider the self as a force for change and behave accordingly to achieve it. It can enable everyone in an organisation to take part in and to make a contribution to organisational change.

Robbins, Crino and Fredendall (2002:419) maintain that the most important of all is that the individual through empowerment finds satisfaction in initiating and achieving change in an organisation. Littrell (2007:89), further classifies employee empowerment into three categories: as an act (the act of granting power to the person(s) being empowered); a process: (that leads to the experience of power); and also as a psychological state.

2.3.1. The act of empowerment

The advocates of empowerment (Littrell, 2007:89; McEwan and Bek, 2006:1027; Horwitz and Currie, 2007:445; Chang and Liu, 2008:1442; Hancera and George, 2003:7; Chowa *et al.*, 2006:487; Walters and Cloete, 2008:1165; Focka *et al.*, 2010:1001; Ashman, 2001:1097; McEwan, 2002:429) claim that empowering employees will enable them to do good work and to take responsibility for their own performance so as to produce more satisfied customers a more competitive organisation and greater profits.

The initiatives which claim to be empowering cover suggestion schemes, autonomous work groups, employee training, quality circles, team briefings, and de-layering the management structure. Many of these initiatives have much in common with management strategies which are also described as employee involvement and employee participation. Littrell (2007: 92) considers the empowering act as the actions of enabling workers to set their own work-related goals, make decisions and solve problems within their spheres of responsibility and authority.

Chowa *et al.* (2006:488); Focka *et al.* (2010:1002); Littrell (2007:93); Ashman (2001:1098); Walters and Cloete (2008:1166), suggest that the following acts if properly implemented by management can empower employees. *Viz*:

- ❖ Expressing confidence in employees' abilities.
- ❖ Holding high expectations concerning their performance.
- ❖ Allowing employees to participate in the decision-making process.
- ❖ Allowing employees freedom and autonomy in how they perform their jobs.
- ❖ Setting inspirational or managerial goals for employees.
- ❖ Using position power in a prudent and positive way and limiting the use of coercive power.
- ❖ Allowing relative discretion in performance of the job based upon maturity and competence of the employee (Rapp *et al.*, 2006:279).

2.3.1. Processes

Littrell (2007:93) and Focka *et al.* (2010:1002), share the same perception in that the examination of both academic and practitioner accounts of managerial processes which claim to empower employees cover a wide variety of different forms and intentions for empowerment. These different forms include among others: quality circles, autonomous work groups, suggestion schemes, or 'whatever training' etc. All different forms of empowerment are likely to represent different perceived benefits, both intrinsic and extrinsic to the supposedly empowered individuals.

Focka *et al.*, (2010:12), further argue that the empowerment process can best be understood as a generic term. As such, it will cover a wide range of initiatives implemented by management of human resources that reflect a wide range of managerial intentions and concerns. Some writers (Robbins *et al.*, 2002:423; Jackson and Sirianni, 2009:279) commented on the need to develop the appropriate 'service driven', 'customer orientated', or 'total quality' cultures. A common feature of these recommendations is that organisations need to develop strategies for managing their employees which ensures greater employee involvement and empowerment.

With a few notable exceptions by Chowa *et al.* (2006:489); Focka *et al.* (2010:1028); Littrell (2007:94); Ashman (2001:1097); Walters and Cloete (2008: 1168), the published commented on employee empowerment fails to recognise differing forms of empowerment. These forms are likely to be used by different organisations in response to managerial perceptions of their commercial needs.

The empowerment process is viewed by many writers (Littrell, 2007:96; McEwan and Bek, 2006:1033; Horwitz and Currie, 2007:448; Chang and Liu, 2008:1442; Hancera and George, 2003:6; Chowa *et al.*, 2006:478; Walters and Cloete, 2008:1165; Focka *et al.*, 2010:1026; Ashman, 2001:1098; Horwitz and Currie, 2007:448; McEwan, 2002:430), as an universalistic management strategy. It is driven by changes in technology, global competitive pressures, the service era and a need to engage employees on an emotional level as a counter to powerlessness.

In view of the above, there are some forms of empowerment which do allow an extension of workplace democracy within managerially prescribed limits, because empowerment is essentially concerned with commitment and control. It is about shifting the locus of control from externally imposed organisational control of employees to internalised personal self-control by the employee (Focka *et al.*, 2010:1026).

Central to all these is, what do managers seek to achieve or understand or mean with empowerment. According to Littrell (2007:94) and McEwan and Bek (2006:1033),

there are four distinct but over-lapping empowerment forms reflecting managerial intentions and motives for empowerment. They are as follows:

2.3.1.1. Empowering through participation

This form of empowerment is concerned with giving employees some decision making authority in aspects of work organisation which has formally been the domain of management. Giving employees authority to deal with customer complaints, to organise their work schedules and to cash up takings, or to meet unpredictable service requests without reference to managers are examples (Littrell, 2007:94; McEwan and Bek, 2006:1033). These arrangements, to varying degrees, allow a tactical level of democracy because employees have a degree of control over immediate work tasks, though parameters and objectives are fixed by managers.

2.3.1.2. Empowerment through involvement

It relates to those initiatives in which managers are chiefly concerned to gain from the experiences and expertise of employees (Littrell, 2007:94). Aims to improve organisational communication processes in all directions are important. Processes involving team briefings, consulting and joint problem solving enable managers to learn from employee experiences. Decisions about actions and responses are taken by managers. Team briefing sessions and quality circles are examples of these initiatives (McEwan and Bek, 2006:1033).

2.3.1.3. Empowerment through commitment

This often overlaps with the above, because, both aim to improve employee commitment through the changes in working arrangements introduced. Some initiatives, however, are about gaining greater commitment to 'delighting customers'. Here employees are being encouraged to accept responsibility for the service encounter, without necessarily having more authority (McEwan and Bek, 2006:1034). These initiatives might be described as intensifying work without additional

remuneration. Communication processes are limited, frequently top-down with suggestion schemes as limited devices for gaining from employee experiences.

Customer care programmes and various appeals to sources of extrinsic and intrinsic job satisfaction are initiatives aimed chiefly at improved commitment (Littrell, 2007:94). Whilst the three sets of intentions given above aimed chiefly at operatives, the fourth initiative which claims to be empowering is aimed at managers and the management hierarchy (Nauman *et al.*, 2010:638).

2.3.1.4. Empowerment through delayering

This initiative normally occurs during the restructuring of an organisation, specifically when it deals with the removal of extra layers of management that are unnecessary (Ergeneli and Metin, 2007:41). Littrell (2007:95) McEwan and Bek (2006:1034), suggest that these four managerial meanings are not intended to create four mutually exclusive categories, as managers in different organisations may well be more concerned with one meaning rather than the others, but it is also likely that many managerial actions will be driven by a mixture of motives and will include more than one, or all of these (Nauman *et al.*, 2010:638; Ergeneli and Metin, 2007:41).

2.4. Psychology of empowerment

The concept of psychological empowerment is controversial and often misunderstood. If managers can understand and fully accept it, as a concept that has good potential outcomes, they will always be prepared to exhibit decreased degrees of control and increased levels of trust (Hancera and George, 2003:4).

It is important for managers to examine the individual factors, if psychological empowerment is to be considered a motivational construct (Amichai-Hamburger *et al.*, 2008:1776). They should then be prepared to take specific actions to increase the level of employee agreement on the factor (Chang and Liu, 2008:1442).

This in turn, leads to higher levels of psychological empowerment, as employees feel they have the competence but not the influence. Managers might spend more time

asking questions and listening to employee ideas about the performance of the job and how it might be made more meaningful (Focka *et al.*, 2010:1025)

Amichai-Hamburger *et al.* (2008: 1776) conclude that the engagement of employees at an emotional level so as to gain greater commitment, generate greater involvement in service quality and increase labour stability. That is, however, not only restricted to organisations operating service sector businesses.

Amichai-Hamburger *et al.* (2008:1776) claim that empowered employees will react to customer needs as they arise, they will respond quickly to complaints and will take personal pride in ensuring that service encounters are a success. Importantly, they will feel pride and concern for the customer experience (Focka *et al.*, 2010:1025). Whatever the intentions of managers, the effects of empowerment will be mediated by the feelings and experiences of the supposedly empowered. Hence any consideration of the various forms which empowerment takes must be sensitive to the potential tensions between managerial meanings and employees experiences. This claim is supported by a research of Chang and Liu (2008:1042).

Chang and Liu (2008:1442) further state that when the organisational and psychological domains are combined, employee empowerment may be viewed as a cognitive state, and also, as a psychological empowered experience with power-sharing, competence and value internalisation in organisations. Innovative behaviour is the intentional generation, promotion and realisation of new ideas within a work role, work group or organisation, in order to benefit role performance, the group or the organisation (Focka *et al.*, 2010:1025).

Giving employees the opportunity to make relevant decisions concerning their job may lead to increased willingness to take action and increased job related satisfaction (Chang and Liu, 2008:1443). Empowerment is not just telling people that they are empowered; it is also having them feel they are empowered and willing to demonstrate the associated behaviours (Amichai-Hamburger *et al.*, 2008:1776).

Managers need to re-examine their own behaviours and how they supervise the activities of others. Re-examining the structure of the job, the training given and employee recognition are important to increasing feelings of empowerment and productivity (Focka *et al.*, 2010:1025).

2.5. Successful implementation of employee empowerment

According to Ashman (2001:1098), the successful implementation depends entirely on the perfect co-ordination of all independent and internal factors in an organisation, as mentioned above. These independent factors internal to the organisation are as follows:

2.5.1. Management's commitment to change

Chu (2003:5) maintains that in the process of developing a culture that is conducive to employee empowerment during change, management must consistently show high commitment to encourage employee empowerment as a form of change to take place as predetermined by the company. According to Horwitz and Currie (2007:449), managers should work very hard in being good examples to their subordinates in the organisation and also that employee empowerment is beneficial to the organisational development and is supported and rewarding.

According to Ashman (2001:1098), management must try and succeed in cultivating a psychological contract between them and the staff, so that through employees empowerment initiatives, a continuous improvement in the product quality becomes the goal of the company.

Merits also given to individuals and teams that is able to make contributions to attain this goal (Mc Ewan, 2002:478). Support in the form of time and resources should be provided to attain improvements. Their commitment must be very clear, not only on formal occasions, but also in informal ones such as talking to individuals about it during social gatherings after work (Chu, 2003:9).

2.5.2. Education and communication with staff

During the employee empowerment process, management should play the role of an educator. They should educate people on the importance of changing through employee empowerment as a means to the long-term competitiveness and survival of the organisation (Ashman, 2001:1101). Chu (2003:9), suggests that they should do this through various meetings and seminars held for this purpose.

The staff must be fully aware of employee empowerment as a change strategy, and of what it requires of and provides to them, and also, how they will be affected in the process of change. The area where there is a need of training for improvements must be identified and an appropriate training programmes must be conducted to empower the employee or employees concerned to acquire the skills and knowledge required to cope with those changes (Horwitz and Currie, 2007: 452).

2.5.3. Participation and involvement by people in the planning of changes

Participation and involvement will bring together those who will contribute to the improvement of quality, the design of the change processes and the implementation of the change. This will increase the staff commitment to these changes (Mc Ewan, 2002:471; Chu, 2003:7).

2.5.4. Assessment of performance of people on a long-term basis

Chu (2003: 12) statement that “doing nothing means making no mistakes” was the kind of mindset that had become embedded in the people in a company for a long time. This phenomenon was basically the result of a company tradition of following instructions from management without querying, as this could be regarded as being offensive to the management (McGrath and Akoojee, 2007: 422). The measurement of one’s performance by short-term results such as meeting delivery dates and cost saving by, say, delivering orders that were below specifications to customers was another observable cause of the phenomenon (Ashman, 2001: 1102).

Mc Ewan (2002:472) suggests that in tackling problems believed to hinder change in an organisation, management must convince their staff that performance assessment would not be affected. Even if the effort is a failure, if the initiative is a genuine one, the individual would not be punished. After all, the performance of individual was to be assessed by taking his/her performance into evaluation on a long-term rather than on a short-term basis (Horwitz and Currie, 2007:453).

2.5.5. The industry's environment and benchmarking

The management of a company found it very important to encourage people to keep a close watch on what was happening in the internal and external environment (Chu, 2003:13). The needs of the market must be closely monitored and changes made in the organisation to adapt to them. Benchmarking is to be performed against competitors in the industry so that gaps could be identified and improvements made accordingly to bridge them (Ashman, 2001:1098; McEwan, 2002:473; McGrath and Akoojee, 2007:421).

2.5.6. Change as an organisational Culture

According to Chu (2003:14) an organisational culture for change is an underpinning cornerstone in the success of organisational change. Such a culture must be cultivated in a company to make change normality in an organisation (Horwitz and Currie, 2007: 453). The culture should be such that people in it find it easy to go for changes and are willing to contribute in the successful implementation of them.

In many SMEs, owing to their small size, it is a general practice that the top management or owner of a company makes change decisions on his/her own and then gives instructions to his/her subordinates to implement the change. An organisational culture of change cannot be created over-night (Ashman, 2001:1102). It takes time and much effort on the part of management to nurture it. Hence, empowerment becomes the most important element in the development of the organisational culture of change (Chu, 2003:14).

In many situations, failures to achieve changes in SMEs are owing to the over-focus by the top management and owners on the hardware of the change programme while neglecting the software ingredients in the process of planning and implementing change (Mc Ewan, 2002:473). An organisational culture that is conducive to change is one of the important software elements that shape the attitude, value and therefore the positive behaviour exhibited by people in an organisation towards change. On the other hand, empowerment is the one that gives people the ability to initiate change, and to take part in the planning and implementation of the change (McGrath and Akoojee, 2007:422; Chu, 2003:14).

Commitment to change by top management, and the involvement, achievement, recognition and assessment of employees' performance on a long-term basis are the key elements in developing an organisational culture for change in the SMEs, (Mc Ewan, and 2002:472). Employee empowerment is the best managerial skill to reduce the resistance of people to change (McGrath and Akoojee, 2007:424). It provides the intrinsic satisfaction in the employee that motivates them to take part in the process of change. These software ingredients are essential and vital for successful change to take place in the industry. Unfortunately, they are very often the missing links in the process of change. It is believed that by bridging these links, the chance of success in the change endeavours by the SMEs can be greatly enhanced (Horwitz and Currie, 2007: 451).

2.6. Dimension of empowerment

Whatever the intentions of managers, initiatives which claim to be empowering will be translated into concrete practical arrangements which set the limits and boundaries within which the empowered operate (Littrell, 2007:94). Somewhere, these arrangements will clarify just what the empowered have the authority to do and for what they will be responsible. It is here within the practical objective limits set by management that tensions between the perceptions and needs of management are likely to be set against the perceptions and needs of the empowered (Nauman *et al.*, 2010:638).

Feigenbaum (2011:1) and Ergeneli *et al.* (2007:42) suggest that the success of a particular initiative will in the first instance be dependent on the empowered being given the authority and freedom to make decisions which they themselves consider to be valuable, significant and important. This will clearly be subjectively assessed by individuals, who will differ in their evaluation of these arrangements.

It is important to arrive at an objective analysis of the changes which have been introduced. Thus both staff and management need to establish the precise form which empowerment will take within a given situation, and afterwards, to establish how working arrangements have changed and what it is the empowered will be able to do in comparison with what they did prior to the change (Littrell, 2007:96).

2.6.1. Five dimensions of empowerment

❖ **Task Dimension**

-low discretion _____ high discretion

❖ **Task Allocation**

-seeks permission _____ responsible autonomy

❖ **Power**

-own tasks _____ influence above job

❖ **Commitment**

-calculative _____ moral

❖ **Culture**

-control oriented _____ trust oriented

Fig2.6.1.1. Five dimensions of empowerment Source: (Lashley, 2004: 339)

The above dimensions of empowerment provide a means of describing, analysing and locating the form of empowerment being introduced in a company (Ergeneli *et al.*, 2007:42). They provide a mechanism for identifying the boundaries and contexts set for the form of empowerment being introduced. They as such, measure extent or intense or degree of empowerment of every form mentioned above. Simply put, they

are more like an SI Units system for example, Kilometre; Metre; Kilogram; Litre etc (Robbins *et al.*, 2002:420; Jackson and Sirianni, 2009:279).

Jackson and Sirianni. (2009:279) claim that each of these five dimensions is based on a bi-polar model which assumes a traditional production line, top down approach at one extreme and a more empowered approach at the other. If the detail of the changes against these dimensions is considered, a much closer picture of the form of empowerment can possibly be developed along with the consistency of the arrangements and the limits placed upon them (Ergeneli *et al.*, 2007:42).

2.7. Empowerment Strategy

Empowerment does not happen in a vacuum, it happens in an existing organisation that has an operating structure, supported by operational systems and policies. All these serve as the guidelines of flow of resources e.g. from input (labour material, technology etc), to production processes (interactions of all the planned resources) to output (intended or planned product or services) (Ro and Chen, 2011:422). It brings about a change on the structures (reporting line) or operational systems (who does what? when? how? etc).

Central to these changes, the human resource is a key factor, as these changes are for and about them, that is, any change always affects them either negatively (e.g. through retrenchment or down-sizing) or positively (through promotions and an increase of remunerations). Ang (2002:192) affirms that it is axiomatic that people have been ascribed as one of the most important resources, indeed if not the key resource of organisational success.

In whatever way, it can therefore be maintained that organisational success has been attributed to the people factor in more ways than one. The key issue which follows this notion is, how people in a business setting might best be organised in order to harness their full potential (Ro and Chen, 2011:423).

Ang (2002:192) maintains that a five-point empowerment strategy is ideal for the development of an organisation where people can work as individuals and also as a team towards a common goal. Her strategy involves the following points:

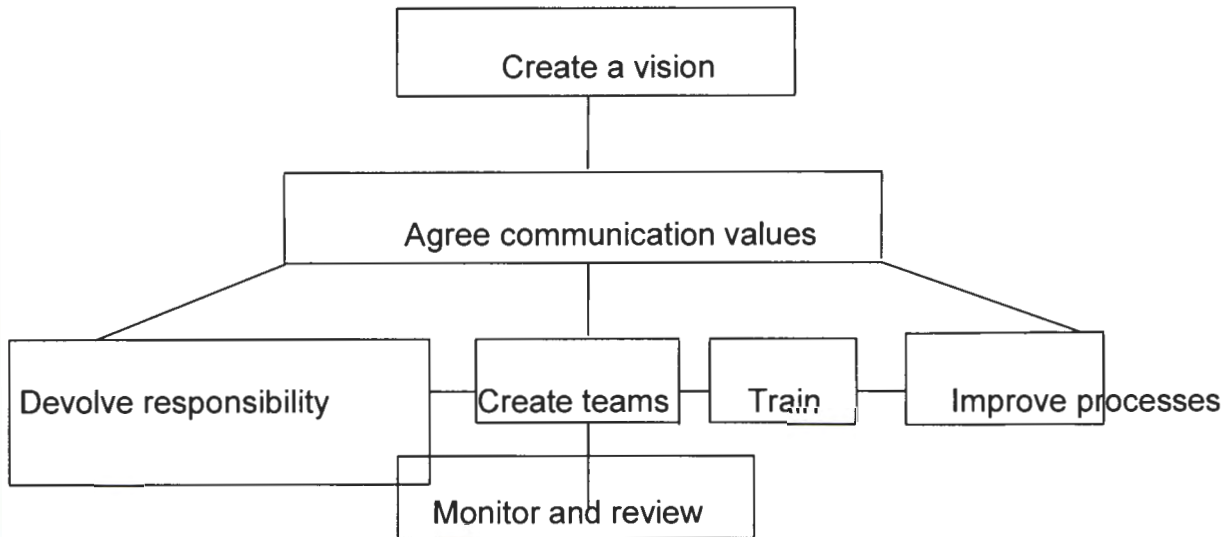


Fig. 2.7. Five Point Empowerment Strategy. Source: (Erstad 2007:325)

2.7.1. Establishment of a vision

The achievement of an empowerment objective by an organisation is closely linked to the following important concepts: the annual strategic plan, annual personal performance related appraisals- and objectives and goals of the organisation (Williams, 2007:219). Senior management needs to agree on the organisation's vision and mission (Erstad, 2007:325; Ro and Chen, 2011:423).

2.7.2. Agree communication values

The organisation's mission must also be underpinned by its values. The value or beliefs endorsed by many organisations which adopt the empowerment route include the promotion of customer service, two-way communication, teamwork and integrity (Erstad, 2007:325).

2.7.3. Devolve responsibility

A fundamental change in the culture of the organisation as a result of empowerment is the role the manager needs to adopt to facilitate the process. The coaching role of the manager in an empowered organisation, however, can be a difficult one to adopt unless managers in turn are given training and support (Erstad, 2007:325; Williams, 2007:219).

2.7.4. Team work

Team work plays a pivotal role in assisting employees to take on new responsibilities as it creates a supportive and open environment. A collective effort is better than an individual effort (Ro and Chen, 2011:423). The teams can be self-managing and have control over their working conditions, group appraisals and incentives (Erstad, 2007:326).

2.7.5. Training and support

Generally, employees need guidance and training to help them take on new levels of responsibility (Williams, 2007:219). When employees' contribution is needed, management should shift away from controlling to enabling. This will require new management skills to maximize employee potential. These skills relate to co-ordination, facilitation, commitment and trust (Erstad, 2007:326; Ro and Chen, 2011:424).

2.7.6. Improving processes

The organisation must take the opportunity of reassessing its business systems and procedures to make them, more customer-friendly (Ro and Chen, 2011:424). Empowerment therefore offers organisations an opportunity to streamline their operations to make them more efficient and effective. This in turn can mean a major departure from the traditional structure of the organisation (Erstad, 2007: 327).

2.7.7. Monitor and review

The empowerment process gives responsibility to people to make decisions affecting their workplace not once but on a continuous basis. A further initial implication of creating an empowered workforce, therefore, is the necessity it brings with it to allow employees constantly to review and improve the very things which operate within an organisation (Erstad, 2007:327)

2.8. The theories relevant to employee empowerment

According to Harris, Wheeler and Kacmar (2009:371) the impact of employee empowerment can either be positive or negative to the organisation. One theory that explains the extent and impact that employee empowerment has on the organisation is that of the manager and employee relations. The second theory is that of the individual's psychological state. These two theories explain the bases upon which employee empowerment's success or failure rest in any organisation (Hancera and George, 2003:7).

2.8.1. Leader–member exchange (LMX) theory

According to Harris *et al.* (2009), the quality of relationships between supervisors and subordinates is often studied via LMX theory. With its roots in role theory and social exchange, the LMX model suggests that supervisors form differential relationships with their subordinates. These relationships range in quality from high to low. Subordinates in high quality exchanges have relationships with their supervisors characterised by emotional support and trust (Williams, 2007:219).

The benefits of high quality LMX relationships are numerous. They include preferential treatment, increased job-related communication, differential allocation of formal and informal rewards, ample access to supervisors, and increased performance-related feedback (Hancera and George, 2003:4). Conversely, subordinates in low quality LMX relationships often experience the exact opposite;

supervisors provide limited emotional support and trust and the subordinates receive few, if any, benefits outside the employment contract (Williams, 2007:218).

Based on their research findings, the interaction of the leader and member during empowerment can either bring positive or negative results (Harris *et al.*, 2009:371). In their research, it appeared that positive interaction also resulted in an increase on: job satisfaction, turnover, general work performance, motivation, and organisational commitment also called organisational citizenship behaviours (OCBs).

The preponderance of empirical evidence surrounding the quality of the supervisor–subordinate relationship has made most researchers to conclude that this relationship is important and has and is potentially one of the most important predictors of workplace outcomes (Burke, Sims, Lazzara and Salas, 2007:606).

It is however, important to note that empowerment and LMX are fundamentally different constructs. LMX describes the quality of the supervisor–subordinate relationship, with qualities varying from low to high whereas empowerment relates to employee motivation towards work. It remains unclear in the literature if LMX and empowerment act independently, jointly, or competitively in their relation to critical employee behaviours (Harris *et al.*, 2009:372).

Hancera and George (2003:4) maintain that these advantages for high quality LMX subordinates, which can be explained by social exchange theory, are likely to be related to positive outcomes. More explicitly, high quality relationships are associated with subordinates receiving increased access, communication, and rewards, all of which are related to elevated job satisfaction and performance (in the forms of task and contextual performance), and decreased turnover intentions.

It is therefore generally believed that the positive impact of LMX on job outcomes is most salient depending upon employee feelings of empowerment. It is however, suggested that those who are less empowered will benefit more from high quality LMX relationships (Burke *et al.*, 2007:606).

2.8.2. The job characteristics theory (JCT)

Psychological empowerment at its core, relates to cognitions about one's work. One of the theoretical foundations for predictions related to empowerment can be found in the job characteristics theory (Hancera and George, 2003:5). Most authors, e.g. Hancera and George (2003:6); Williams (2007:218); Harris *et al.*, (2009:217); Burke *et al.*, (2007:607) who subscribe to this notion suggest that the specific characteristics of an employee job, skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job feedback form an individual's motivating potential score.

JCT suggests that the specific characteristics of an employee job, skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and job feedback from an individual's motivating potential score, which predicts critical psychological states, experienced as meaningfulness of work, experienced as responsibility for outcomes, and knowledge of results (Harris *et al.*, 2009:217). Thus, the characteristics of the job act as a motivator to perform, and employees are empowered and feel satisfied with their jobs when they perform. From the JCT perspective, psychological empowerment links the critical psychological states (Burke *et al.*, 2007: 607).

In general, according to Burke *et al.* (2007:608), when employees perceive high levels of empowerment, they are motivated towards their jobs and are likely to experience positive accompanying consequences. JCT advocates suggest that the feelings associated with empowerment will not only be directly associated with job outcomes, as has been shown in both previous research and literature, but it also moderates relationships between LMX and outcomes (Harris *et al.*, 2009:215).

2.9. The failure of Employee Empowerment

If all of the above are taken to cognisance, the implementation of employee empowerment sounds too easy and simple. Empowerment as a concept, just any other has its own flaws, it can benefit the organisation or make it to lose its profitability (Ergeneli and Metin, 2007:41).

Chu (2003:5) states that the overwhelming amount of the intended change in many organisations fail dismally. The first major reason is the failure to take into consideration the impact of the change on other systems within the organisation, e.g. in re-engineering, where the process was typically done in a vacuum often focused on the technological aspects only. The second reason for the failure is the negligence to deal adequately with human resources management, which ultimately determine whether the change will work or not (Brohan, Gauci, Sartorius and Thornicroft, 2011:56).

Chu (2003:3) makes a similar observation on organisational change in both China and Hong Kong manufacturing industries where such initiatives failed because they had concentrated on systems and policies, while ignoring the people who made them work. He argues that empowerment should be taken as the cornerstone of change by management so that quality could be attained. It is also the key to business competition and success in the 1990s (Amichai-Hamburger *et al.*, 2008:1776).

2.9.1. Culture

Every organisation exists in a particular community. It was established to serve needs for that very immediate community. Therefore, every change that affects the community affects the business, both directly and indirectly. Organisations are forever subjected to cultures greatly influenced by communities within which they exist (Caramelli and Briole, 2007:219).

According to Chowa, Lob, Shac and Hongc (2006:478) and Chu (2003:4), culture can be defined as the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the member of one category of people from others. This definition applies to organisations as well as to nations, professions and generations. Organisational culture is the system of shared actions, values and beliefs that develops within an organisation and guides the behaviours of its members (Caramelli and Briole, 2007:219).

It is the collective unconscious feeling of individuals in an organisation about good or evil, normality or abnormality (Williams, 2007:218). As such these value systems form a frame of reference for all kinds of daily routines, (Littrell, 2007:87) behaviour and practices and for passing judgement on persons' actions and objectives. They thus shape what people in an organisation do. They control the daily routines and daily execution of operational tasks (Chu, 2003:6).

An organisational culture may be one that is reluctant to change or one that is conducive to the acceptance of change. For example, in a company with a "change" culture, employees believe that it is their responsibility to innovate and contribute creatively (Williams, 2007:219). They actively search the environment in which the company operates for ideas of changes to make the company more adaptive to the environment and therefore be more competitive in its operations. They see these responsibilities reflected in achieving the goal of developing new and improve products and processes (Chua and Iyengar, 2006:42).

An organisation may have the well-established hardware for effecting change such as structured programmes, procedures and specifications, etc. for change, however, Lipponen, Koivisto and Olkkonen (2005:517) argue that if it does not have the culture which is conducive to the successful initiation for and the implementation of change, the change process cannot be smooth. Ignoring the differences between the hardware and the software factors in change management will surely hinder the success of it (Chu, 2003:8).

The notion emanating from conventional wisdom, as Chua and Iyengar (2006:42) proposed widely in academic and professional journals is that empowering employees anywhere, globally, leads to improvements in employee satisfaction at work and enhances relationships with customers, suppliers, other employees, supervisors, and management (Williams, 2007:220). This notion can only hold water if and only if, it happens when all other factors are held constant. These factors are known to be a challenge to every manager who needs to implement empowerment (Littrell, 2007:88).

The Confucian perception that a manager's role is to manage and a worker's is to work,' is still strong in some cultures, for example, in China. (Littrell, 2007:88). In any society where this belief is widely held, it becomes a major impediment for empowerment to be accepted, let alone practised.

The faults and vices of the traditional societies are often plagued by the unquestioning obedience expected of its members. This and many other cultural practices have resulted from the attitude engendered by the practice of unquestioning filial piety. The effects of the filial piety have a tendency of turning a society into a big factory for the production of obedient subjects (Lipponen *et al.*, 2005:517).

Empowerment in the workplace tends to be seen as a new major industrial weapon against domestic and international threats (Chua and Iyengar, 2006:43). It enhances organisational effectiveness "through the wise utilisation of an organisation's human resources (Lipponen *et al.*, 2005:518).

In the societies which are open and have to a certain extent adopted the Western cultures, the concept of empowerment lead to improvements in job performances when applied under conducive environment (Caramelli and Briole, 2007:222). This indicates that empowerment becomes operational if managerial leaders are tolerant to freedom ideas (Williams, 2007:219).

As the feeling of empowerment is an attitude, opinion, or belief on the part of the employee, there will be cross-cultural differences relating to what empowerment actually means to the employee. What is empowerment to a Chinese, French, German, Italian, American, Mexican, South African, etc. It is important to note that the organisation culture is greatly influenced by the national culture (Littrell, 2007:88).

A study (conducted in South Africa around 2002) that examined the influence of ethnic diversity on organisational culture and effectiveness found that: neither ethnicity nor race significantly influenced management culture; similarly, management effectiveness was independent of both ethnicity and race (Lipponen *et al.*, 2005:519). On the basis of the foregoing study, it appears that organisational culture has an

effect in moderating or even overcoming national and ethnic culture when working in the organisational environment (Chua and Iyengar, 2006: 44).

According to Chang and Liu (2008:1443), the discrepancy may be due to a cultural difference in the perception of organisational empowerment. In the strict and oppressive culture, employees sometimes do not think of power as power authorisation or participation in organisational decision making, but rather perceive it as oppression in the organisation (Williams, 2007:219).

If managers enhance intrinsic task motivation before delegation, (Lipponen *et al.*, 2005:518), employees would perceive organisational empowerment positively in the management delegation, and improve their job related attitude (job satisfaction and commitment). Cultural differences of respondents may be the reason that organisational empowerment does not have the same effects on job productivity in the current study as other studies in western countries (Caramelli and Briole, 2007:222). Sensitivity to the potential for cultural impacts on empowerment should be considered in any work environment (Chu, 2003:17).

On the other hand, Chua and Iyengar (2006:44), maintain that a person's motivation to exert actions to attain an organisational objective is again much affected by his/her perception of his/her ability to achieve the standard of performance expected of him/her and by the valence he/she perceives of work-related outcomes. Thus, the success of organisational changes will depend a lot on the organisational culture and the empowerment one is provided in an organisation (Chu, 2003:24).

2.9.2. Management

As indicated above, managers who are deeply rooted in the traditional societies, often become stumbling blocks to paradigm shift, especially empowerment. Business owners and top managers feel threatened by the idea of delegating authority and therefore empowering employees. Authority is not delegated, changes are not supported, communication is not channelled, and information is not shared. Such behaviour is typical of the deep rooted traditional societies (Littrell, 2007:98).

According to staunch supporters of this notion, Chowa *et al.* (2006: 479) and Harris *et al.* (2009:375), leadership and decision-making are based on an authoritarian approach, high power distance, adherence to hierarchy, and concentration of power at the top. This high power distance in management, tends to put great emphasis on status and status symbols. Management control is achieved through control of information and limited sharing of information.

According to Hancera and George (2003:14), employee empowerment is often discussed from two perspectives, with the first looking at empowerment as actions taken by organisations to share power and decision-making. The impact of organisational structure on organisational behaviour is far greater than that of employee personality predispositions. The organisational structure posed is particularly important to the growth of empowerment, and that includes having access to information and job-essential resources, receiving support, and having the opportunity to learn and grow.

The mandate of management is to create conditions for work effectiveness by ensuring employees' access to the information, support, and resources necessary to accomplish work, and providing ongoing opportunities for employee development. Consequently, employees are more productive and effective in meeting organisational goals (Hancera and George, 2003:14).

2.9.3. The collectivistic versus individualistic orientation.

The evidence from a two-country survey, confirmed that the influences of individual empowerment dimensions on job satisfaction were not uniform and that their relationships were contingent upon employees' value orientation (Littrell, 2007:94; Chang and Liu, 2008:1445). They maintain that for empowerment to achieve its intended purpose, there is a need to understand how employees with different value orientations perceive individual dimensions of empowerment, and which dimensions are most relevant and effective for achieving desirable outcomes in its contexts (Focka *et al.*, 2010:1032; Hall 2008: 145 and Rappi *et al.*, 2006:284).

The findings indicated that the collectivistic orientation of employees elevated the effect of self-determination but attenuated the effect of impact on job satisfaction (Chowa *et al.*, 2006:479; and Robbins, 2002:422). To employees with a high collectivistic orientation, the psychological empowerment is more pertinent to their satisfactions, stemming from choice of work (self-determination), than to outcomes of work (impact) (Nauman *et al.*, 2010:643); and Harris *et al.*, 2009:375).

The stress relief effects of self-determination were more pronounced for high collectivists but irrelevant to low collectivistic employees (Hall, 2008:146; Rapp *et al.*, 2006:284). This difference stems from employees' collectivistic interpretation of the relative importance of task and relationship at work (Chang and Liu, 2008:1445). Shaped by their interdependent and interconnected orientations, high collectivistic employees are more willing to suppress their personal opinions and conform to organisational norms (Morrow, 2010: 3; Ro and Chen, 2011:425).

A heightened sense of self-determination derived from psychological empowerment helps release their suppression of individual judgments and compromise of their role (in- versus outgroup) fulfilment, thereby alleviating their stress in a boundary-spanning role. As a result, their satisfaction is elevated (Ro and Chen, 2011:425; Rapp *et al.*, 2006:284).

On the contrary, influenced by their independent self-construal without affording much consideration to others' views, the pressure to suppress their professional role (out-group) and to conform to others (in-group) is relatively limited for low collectivists. Another possible explanation may be that low collectivists consider autonomy and freedom at work as a norm and a basic right rather than an exception (Nauman *et al.*, 2010:643; Ro and Chen, 2011:426; and Rapp *et al.*, 2006:284).

Robbins (2002:422) maintains that an additional self-determination does not motivate behaviour significantly, although its absence may lead to job dissatisfaction. The law of diminishing returns provides a case in point. After the optimal level is reached, as the level of self-determination increases eventually the corresponding increase in job satisfaction will diminish (Rapp *et al.*, 2006:284).

Hence, the effects of self-determination on ameliorating job satisfaction become less prominent for low collectivists (Focka *et al.*, 2010:1028). These results provide new insight into Herzberg's two-factor model. It may indicate that whether a job factor is a hygiene/maintenance and/or motivator is perceived as a matter of degree rather than a two-factor dichotomy. Too much of even a motivator may receive diminishing return (Morrow, 2010: 3; Hall, 2008:146).

Their results show that the effect of impact is more relevant to job satisfaction for employees with a low collectivistic orientation than to those with a high collectivistic orientation (Ergeneli, 2007:45). As argued earlier, the satisfaction derived from a desirable work outcome is commonly regarded as personal accomplishment by employees. This outcome may be interpreted differently by employees with a high collectivistic orientation (Nauman *et al.*, 2010:644).

High collectivistic employees would not interpret work impact as an important source of satisfaction because they tend to believe that successful work outcomes are attributable to their group as opposed to themselves (Ro and Chen, 2011:426). Taking too much personal credit (impact) for a job outcome may be detrimental to group relationship, especially when it is difficult to differentiate personal effort from situational influences (Hall, 2008:146).

2.9.4. The hardware and the software factors in the management

Mind

The hardware of change management includes the clear identification of where an organisation wants to go, a systematic framework for planning and controlling of the change process, (Brohan *et al.*, 2011:58), the information and process technologies that are required to help in the implementation of the changes and attainment of the goals and the objectives aimed for by the changes (Chu, 2003:23).

On the other hand, as has been pointed out, people are the ultimate key element that determines whether the change will work or not. As the behaviour of people in an organisation is shaped by their value systems, by what they believe to be right or

wrong and by the norms of the group they belong to, the culture of the organisation in which one works has a tremendous effect on one's behaviours within it (Amichai-Hamburger *et al.*, 2008:1980).

Chu (2003:18) further notes that a person's motivation to exert actions to attain an organisational objective is affected by his/her perception. It is the perception about his/her ability to achieve the standard of performance expected of him/her. And also, his/her perception of work and related outcomes will either motivate or de-motivate him/her (Amichai-Hamburger *et al.* 2008:1779).

Thus, the success of organisational changes will depend a lot on the organisational culture and the empowerment one is provided in an organisation. The organisational culture and the empowerment can be said to be the software factors for change to be successfully implemented in an organisation (Brohan *et al.*, 2011:58).

2.9.5. Organisational support

According to the study of Hancera and George (2003:12), organisational support and empowerment have a significant impact on developing a customer-oriented mindset, especially in the service oriented business. Managers, who foster a supportive work environment, provide opportunities for growth and for the involvement of staff in decision-making, and rewarding experiences (Burke *et al.*, 2007:610). Based on employees' positive views on the impact of empowerment on customer orientation, supervisors should provide more support to empower their employees so that they will be able to give more prompt and better quality service to customers (Harris *et al.*, 2009:375).

The major organisational objective during empowerment is to give employees an opportunity to learn and grow, in an environment that offers rewarding experiences and the discretion to be involved in handling customers directly (Williams, 2007:220). Employees who perceive their organisation as one that provides support, empowerment and opportunities, will devote their energies to serving customers. Staff performance is primarily a result of organisational support and developmental

activities that enable them to deliver high-quality service to customers (Burke *et al.*, 2007:612).

The good quality interaction between customers and employees leads to desirable outcomes such as loyalty, repeat patronage, and profit (Hancera and George, 2003:11). When staff receives recognition from both the employer and customers, this gives them a great sense of pride in their job and their resultant good performance will be rewarded with promotion (Williams, 2007:14).

2.10. Research Questions

The investigative questions that guide this investigation are:

1. To what extent does the organisation provide training and skills programs in an effort of empowering its workforce?
3. Is Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines Processing Plant management keen to the empowerment efforts without fearing to relinquish their powers to their subordinates?
4. Do employees at BRPMPP perceive the empowerment efforts as empty rhetoric and management's attempts to exploit them?

2.11. Conclusion

Despite different perceptions on employee empowerment (on what it is and how it is done) held by authors from different schools of thought and fields of study, the central overarching point visible on all arguments is that all perceptions gravitate towards the fact that. Employee empowerment is a planned (by all stakeholders) act that has a process (implementation). This involves the employer or senior staff member and the junior staff members. Some limited power of authority is bestowed on the junior in the execution of his/her duty in an organisation (Littrell, 2007:87; Chang and Liu,

2008:1442; Hancera and George, 2003:3; Focka, Chiang, Auc and Huid, 2010:10; Chowa, Lob, Shac and Hongc, 2006:478).

The implementation process, however, remains an enigma to many organisations regardless of their size and industry. Paradoxically so, because it's not a one-size fits-all concept. It has its own unique features that are automatically governed by circumstances in which an entity finds itself (Littrell, 2007:93 and Focka *et al.*, 2010:1002).

These circumstances are complex in their very nature as some emanates from outside forces beyond the control of managers, like those that are political, social and economical. Nevertheless, it remains an important event that should be executed strategically in attaining the vision and mission of the organisation and also increasing both its productivity levels and competitiveness. The next chapter presents the methodology that would be used in carrying out the research.

Chapter Three

Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The research problem was stated in the previous chapter by the way of three questions that remained unanswered after the literature review. This chapter outlines the strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between the research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. Research methodology refers to the approach or steps or method to be employed when linking the research questions and objectives to data collection, analysis, and interpretation in a logical manner (Terreblanche and Durrheim, 2002:29). The data that will be collected in the resolution of a problem must always be guided and relevant to the methodology employed for that particular research problem (Kent, 2001:14).

The research questions arrived at was: To what extent does the employee empowerment impact on the operations of the Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines Processing Plant (BRPMPP)? How employee empowerment determined and implemented by managers at BRPMPP? How the determined and implemented employee empowerment is used by managers at BRPMPP to improve the standard and quality of their subordinates' work?

The aim of the study is to determine the extent to which the implementation of employee empowerment by managers at BRPMPP impacts on the standard and quality of work of employees. To validate this, it is necessary to collect information from the targeted population using correct methodology and analysis of the responses. Overall, this chapter defines the research methodology used in this study; the data collection method chosen, types of questions that can be asked and the development of the questionnaire, the survey population and sample size determined, data handling and concludes with the discussion of a researcher's compliance with research ethics (Locke, Spirduso and Silverman, 2000:289)

3.2 Research Types

3.2.1. Qualitative and Quantitative Research

Marvasti (2004:144) maintains that all research can be categorised as qualitative, quantitative, or triangulation. The nature of the data and the problem for the research will determine the research methodology to be employed. If the data is verbal the methodology is quantitative? (Kent, 2001:14).

Quantitative analysis is a formal, objective systematic process in which numerical data are utilised to obtain information about the world. It involves other identifying characteristics of a phenomenon or exploring the possible correlation among two or more phenomena. It is intended neither to involve experimental investigation by changing or modifying the situation under investigation, nor does it aim to determine the cause –and – effect relationships. It is intended to examine the situation as it is, without any alteration (Murray and Brubaker, 2000:171).

According to Babbie (2008:445) quantitative methods involve systematic evaluation of alternative actions as a basis for choice between them. He further emphasizes that the application of quantitative method involves setting up models of the problems to be analysed, selecting inputs to the models which quantify the judgements of those responsible for organisational decision and deriving the models' out puts from inputs.

Adams et al (2007:25) argue that some people avoid quantitative methods because of their inability to understand and interpret statistical or computational data and models. They further explain that these data and models they omit help to make difficult decisions easy in different environments.

Kent (2001:23) suggests that the simplest definition is to say that quantitative analysis involves methods of data collection and analysis that are non-qualitative. Babbie (2008:448) goes on to define quantitative analysis by saying that it focuses on "quality", a term referring to the essence or ambience of something. Marvasti (2004:144) notes that it involves a subjective methodology and yourself as the research instrument. Quantitative methods examine the extent to which differences in

one characteristic or variable are related to differences in one or more other characteristics or variables.”

Adams *et al*, (2007:25) maintain that if the other side is considered qualitative approaches will have two things in common firstly, they focus on phenomena that occur in the natural settings; and secondly they involve studying those phenomena in all their complexity. Qualitative researchers aim to produce understanding of social reality with a focus on interpretation rather than quantification. This is based on the generally held belief that there are different versions of understanding and the aim is to give an accurate voice to these. Qualitative researchers believe that the researcher’s ability to interpret and make sense of what he or she sees is critical for understanding any social phenomenon.

Locke *et al*. (2000:289) state that qualitative research:

- ❖ Can reveal the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relationships, systems, or people
- ❖ Enable a researcher to gain new sights about a particular phenomenon; develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives about the phenomenon; and or discover problems that exist within the phenomenon.
- ❖ Allow a researcher to test the validity of certain assumptions, claims, theories or generalisation within real-world context and
- ❖ Provide means through which a researcher can judge the effectiveness of particular policies, practices, or innovations.

Qualitative	Quantitative
Counting only if clearly necessary	Bias towards counting
Favour greater personal investment in the data	Favour a more detached, impersonal orientation towards the data
Encourage substantial flexibility in research procedures – no strong prototyping models to follow	There are relatively clear mental model for the research designs – more rule driven
Focus more on understanding organisational	Focus more on predicting outcomes

process and less predicting outcomes	and less on process variables
Heavily grounded within the local context in which the phenomena of interest occur. As a result generalising empirical results to a larger population or other settings can be problematic	It is typically presented as more context- free and therefore more general sable
More explicit about participant's reactions	Less focus on participant reactions

Table 3.2. Distinctions between quantitative and qualitative methodology
(Locke *et al.* 2000:294)

3.3. Research Method (s) Used In This Study

This study is approached with a quantitative research methodology as the study aims at examining the impact that the employee empowerment has on the operations; how it is determined, implemented and used by managers at BRPMPP to improve the standard and quality of their subordinates' work. A qualitative approach serves the following purposes, namely description, interpretation, verification and evaluation. It is mainly aiming at observation studies, correlation research, development designs and survey research (Murray and Brubaker, 2000:181).

3.4. The data required

3.4.1. Primary and Secondary Data

A primary data refers to the original information collected by the researcher specifically for the research study at hand, for example data obtained through interviews and surveys. Secondary data refers to information that has been previously gathered by someone else for some other purpose which can be reused by the researcher. Secondary sources include books, journal articles, and reports among others. Kent (2001:15) refers to primary data as the layer closest to the truth and secondary data as a layer farther away, which are not derived from the truth itself but from the primary data instead. For this study we will use both primary and secondary data. Research methodology (as it is commonly called) is employed to extract

meaning from the data, we collected. A survey will be used to acquire primary data; and secondary data will be drawn mostly from organisational annual reports, company, magazines and available literature in the academic field (Babbie and Mouton, 2002:4-5).

3.5. Data collection method

3.5.1. Method for collecting primary data

Several types of research methods are used to collect primary data. Among them, interviewing is probably the most common data gathering method in qualitative research. It can be described as the “meeting of two persons to exchange information and ideas through questions and responses, resulting in communication and joint construction of meaning about a particular topic”. In qualitative studies, interviews are not often quite open-ended; however in survey research interviews are fairly structured (Locke *et al.*, 2000:339).

3.5.1.1. Interviews

In quantitative research interviews are more structured than in Qualitative research. In a structured interview, the researcher asks a standard set of questions and nothing more (Kent, 2001:17)

3.5.1.2. Questionnaires

The questionnaire will be used as the data-gathering tool. This will allow the collection of quantifiable and qualitative data and allow for the analysis of this data to determine patterns and relationships.

Kent (2001:17) maintains that questionnaires should be as brief as possible and solicit only that information essential to the research project. In order to help maximize the number of responses to the questionnaire, the number of questions will be limited to no more than 15 questions. The questionnaire will consist of 3 sections (Refer to Appendix C). The first section of the questionnaire will be aimed at gathering biographical data on the respondents including age, gender, qualifications, and frequency, as well as the levels of decisions that are normally made by the respondent, while the second section will focus on specific questions with regards to the extent the information quality impacts on managerial decisions.

Responses are made on 5-point scales, scored such that a high score would be indicative of greater uncertainty or complexity. Other questions will require a yes or no answer and others will be open-ended questions where the respondent is expected to support their response by providing more details. To ensure that respondents share a common notion of information quality, a definition will be given in the questionnaire outline (Terreblanche and Durrheim, 2002:129).

A short disclaimer describing the purpose of the study –Refer to Appendix A	
Questionnaire – Refer to Appendix B	
‘Thank You’ Note – Refer to Appendix C	
Section 1 Question 1 to 5	Gathers biographical data on the respondents including age, gender, and qualifications
Section 2 Question 6 to 7	Looks at frequency in decision making as well as the level of decisions that are normally made by a respondent.
Section 1 Question 8 to 15	Focuses on specific questions with regards to the extent the information quality impacts on managerial decisions.

Table 3.5.1.2. Questionnaire Outline

3.5.1.3. Sampling Method

The research paradigm determines the sampling strategy namely, design and size. The quantitative method requires random and representative sampling characterized by larger samples. Sampling, according to Murray and Brubaker (2000:183), means taking any portion of the population as representative of the target population. A population is a set of all cases of interest. The population of interests for this study is all the managers and foremen who work with their subordinates in executing their daily work. The participants will have to meet the following required criteria to be included in the sample:

- ❖ The participant must be a manager or foreman involved in decision making.
- ❖ The participant must have worked in this role at least for one year.

The restriction of at least one years experience is stipulated because managers that are new may not have sufficient experience in dealing with information quality issues and this could skew the results. To get a fair representation in the sample, a list of names and positions will be obtained and the sample to be used randomly selected in the survey following the stated criteria (Terreblanche and Durrheim, 2002:133).

From 217 permanent employees at Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines Processing Plant, 4 are senior managers, 8 junior managers, 20 foremen, 25 administrative staff and 160 labourers. These employees are divided into three working shifts. The morning shift is from 7:00 – 15:00. The afternoon shift is from 15:00 – 23:00 and the last evening shift is from 23:00-07:00.

Huysamen (2001:39) has provided a table for the establishment of the appropriate sample size (S) based on the size of the population (N). In terms of this study, for $N = 217$ $S = 151,9$ therefore, for this study, S will be taken as 152. Thus, a minimum of 335 completed questionnaires will be required for meaningful conclusions to be drawn from the data gathered from the survey. The sampled group will be randomly selected from all three shifts, and will be 152 (which constitute 70% of the population).

3.6. Types of variables

Each question in a questionnaire or collected in quantitative research, gives rise to a variable. A variable is thus an empirically observable characteristic of some phenomenon that can take on more than one value or response category (e.g. gender, job level, level of agreement with a statement, profit, percentage of budget spent on advertising (Huysamen, 2001:39).

Nominal Variables – Marvasti (2004:144) suggests that the response categories can be placed in any order and the numbers assigned to the response categories have other properties except serving as labels.

Nominal Variables allow the categorisation of responses. Nominal variables can determine how many (frequency) or what percentage of responses fall in each

category. The response categories should be mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive. Numbers assigned to the categories have no numerical meaning.

Ordinal Variables – According to Terreblanche and Durrheim (2002:134), the response categories have a certain order and the numbers assigned to the response categories also have an order.

An ordinal variable allows the responses to be categorised and determine how many (or what % of) responses are in each category. The order of the numbers assigned to the categories has meaning. The numbers assigned to ordinal variables do not have meaning. An ordinal variable allows the ranking of responses to be orderly. The difference between consecutive categories need not be the same.

Ratio Variable – Huysamen (2001:40) argues that in a numerical variable where there is some standard unit of property being measured the distance between consecutive numbers is the same. Hence one can make accurate statements on the differences between cases.

A ratio variable allows the responses to be categorised. It can be determined how many (or what % of) responses are in each category. The numbers assigned to a ratio variable have numerical meaning. The order of the numbers assigned to the categories has meaning. A ratio allows us the ranking order of responses. The distance between two cases can be calculated, that is, it says how much more or less of the measured property cases contain. A ratio of two responses can be calculated.

A combination of variables will be used in the survey. In order to identify participants, nominal and ordinal variables would be used. Survey questions will vary from ordinal to ratio variables, depending on how the questions are posed (Terreblanche and Durrheim, 2002:129).

3.7. Ethical considerations pertaining to the study

According to Marvasti (2004:146), the researcher may delete all names and identifiers from the data and report only on the broad categories of responses to help ensure

confidentiality. In this study, participants will remain anonymous and the participation will be entirely voluntary. It will be considered unethical to use any personal details of respondents in the report, which can identify who the respondent is. Each participant will be informed of the exact nature of the research and participation in the survey will be entirely voluntary. Participants will be assured that the information provided would not be used for any purpose other than stated.

If this type of research has been conducted by other researchers, we will ensure not to commit plagiarism and to give credit to all authors that were drawn from to compile the body of knowledge for the research study

3.8. Conclusion

This chapter defined the research design and methodology used in this study. Further, it looked at instrumentation, research type, population, sampling method, and data gathering methods from a theoretical perspective

A discussion of how these were applied in this study was also presented. Justifications for the choices made, were also given. The next chapter presents the study findings that would be used in rejecting or accepting the questions rose.

Chapter 4

Research Results and Analysis

4.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the research findings and provides analyses and interpretations of data. The survey was conducted to examine the impact of empowerment on employee work performance at Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines Processing Plant. In particular to assess the extent to which a key characteristic of empowerment such as devolution of responsibility and skills capacity building is influencing and instrumental in securing improvements in employee commitment and job performance in the workplace.

In the survey, general personal particular information was obtained from respondents during data collection. This personal information included race, gender, designation, qualification, age sex, place of birth, work experience. Questionnaires also included a series of empowerment related questions based on how conscious mine employees were of employee empowerment related issues. These questionnaires covered the mission of the organisation and employee empowerment, work force's perceptions on employee empowerment and its impact into their work. This chapter opens with a descriptive introduction, based on the biographical profile of the respondents. The next section reflects the findings of the target market's perceptions regarding the impact of information quality on managerial decisions.

4.2 Response rate

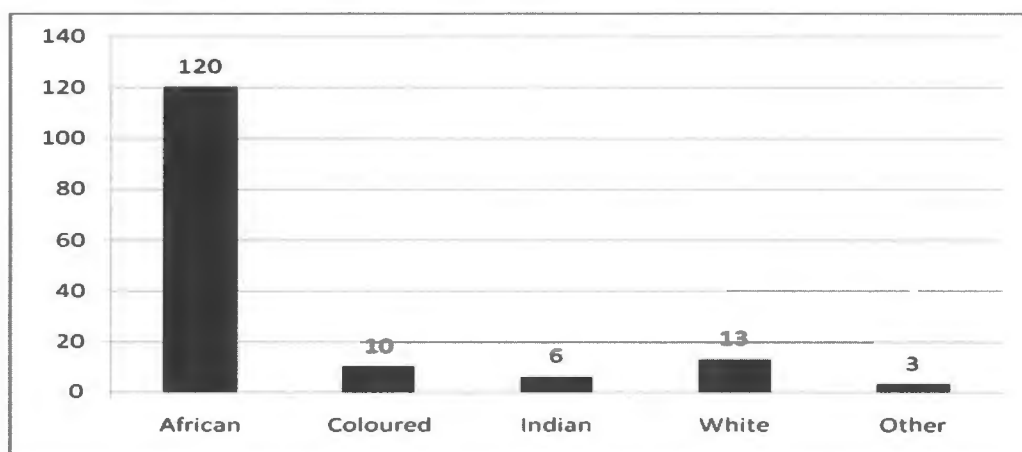
The response was good, as more than 95% of the sent questionnaires were properly completed and returned. In an attempt to get a fair representation in the sample, the following statistical sample will show that the sample met the strict rules and that it was randomly selected. All names were allocated a number and numbers were drawn. If somebody did not complete a questionnaire, the next number was drawn

and the person used. In this way the sample could be regarded as being representative. It is also acknowledged that should somebody else want to use the results, the results should be tested in his/her organisation before they are used to confirm the results. The data was summarised on a spreadsheet and the statistics were calculated using SPSS. Through all these endeavours, the researcher tried to show that he had met the requirements for the sample.

4.3 Demographics

In the study on employee empowerment, some kind of characteristic such as gender, age, educational level, department and occupation shows differences compared to their responses. The respondents were 152 in number from Royal Bafokeng Platinum Mines Processing Plant and were split evenly between African males and females, the males outnumbering the females. The educational level is an important predictor of the level of employee empowerment and how deep their level of understanding on empowerment issues in the work place is. The majority of employees at processing plant had a high school level of education some had degrees and a few had post-graduate degrees, with age ranging from 20 to 50.

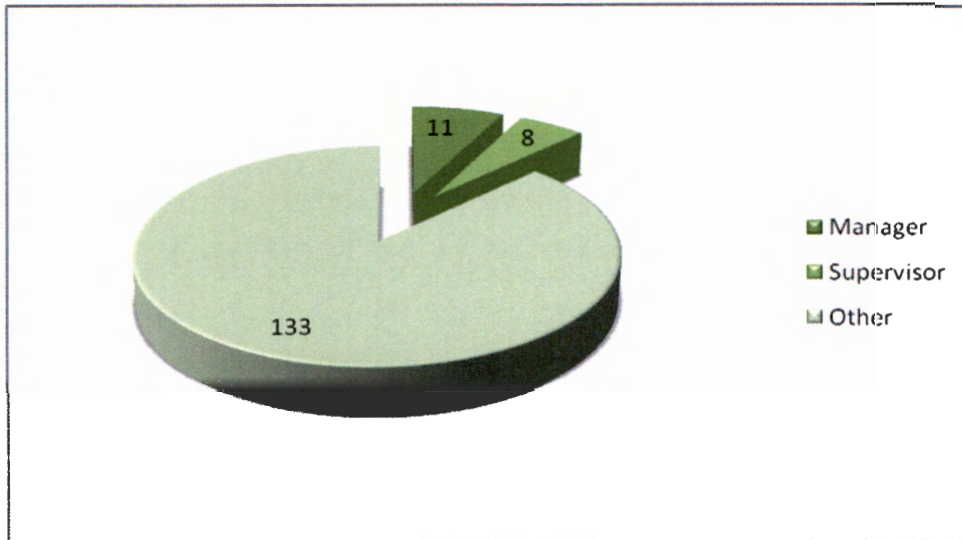
Figure 4.1 Races of the Respondents



In South Africa mining is; generally, a labour-intensive industry that absorbs a lot of African workers ranging from unskilled to skilled. These Africans are usually from South Africa and its neighbouring countries like, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zimbabwe,

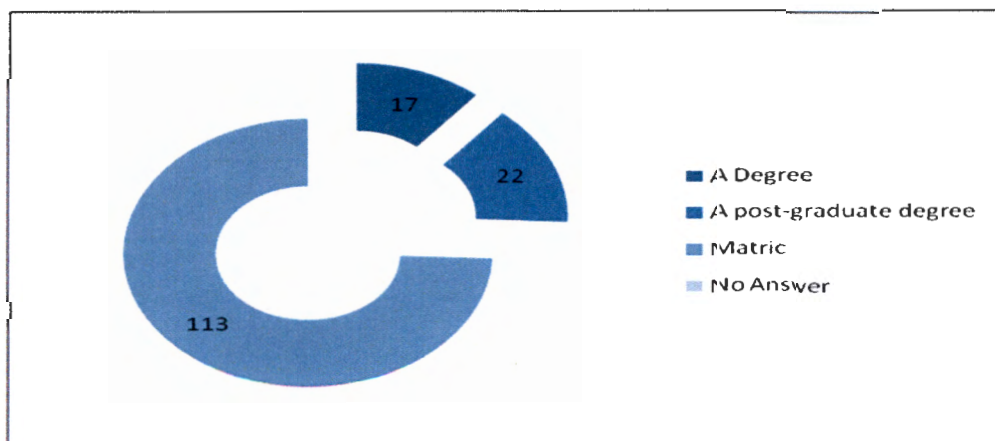
Botswana and Mozambique. According to the South African population, blacks constitutes the majority of the citizens- and whites, coloureds and Indians are in the minority. Other groups are mainly from China, and Britain (Ferreira, 2006: 197).

Figure 4.2 Positions of the Respondents



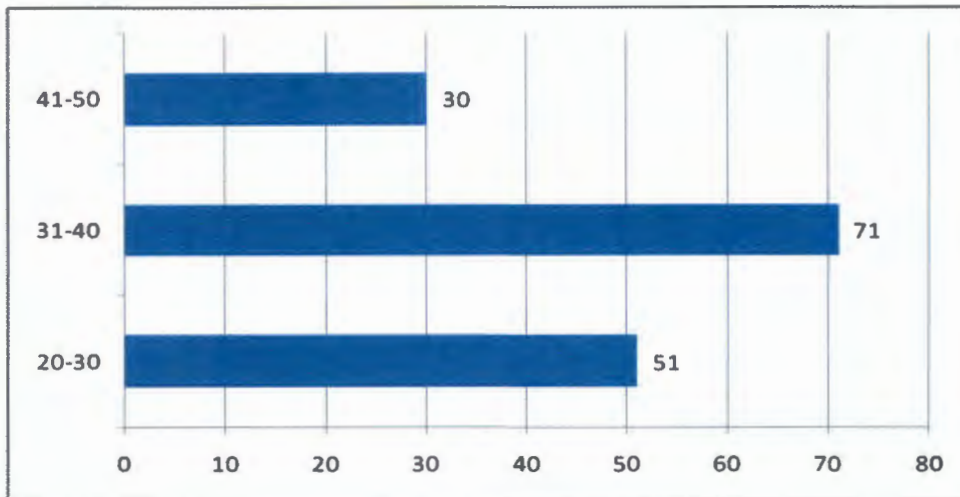
The overwhelming majority of the work force is ranges from unskilled to skilled. These are employees who occupy no senior position- they are either team members, team leaders or any other administrative staff, such as clerks and secretaries. However, their presence at work is significant as they work as support staff (Williams, 2007:219).

Figure 4.3 Qualifications of Respondents



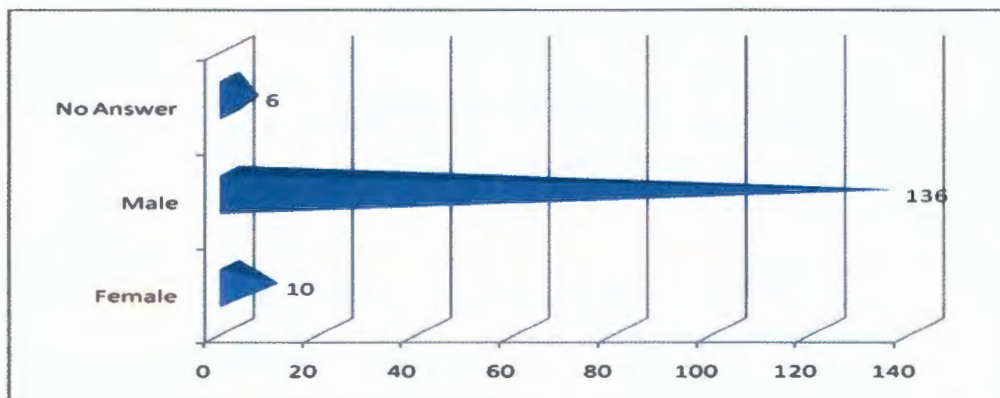
Platinum Processing Plant requires Metallurgists, Chemical and Mechanical Engineers, and other related qualifications in the line of the plant operations. It is therefore important for senior managers and even their subordinates to have a relevant and recognised formal qualification. The level of education of workers in the mining industry is generally considered to be lower (Ashman, 2001:1098).

Figure 4.4 Ages of the Respondents



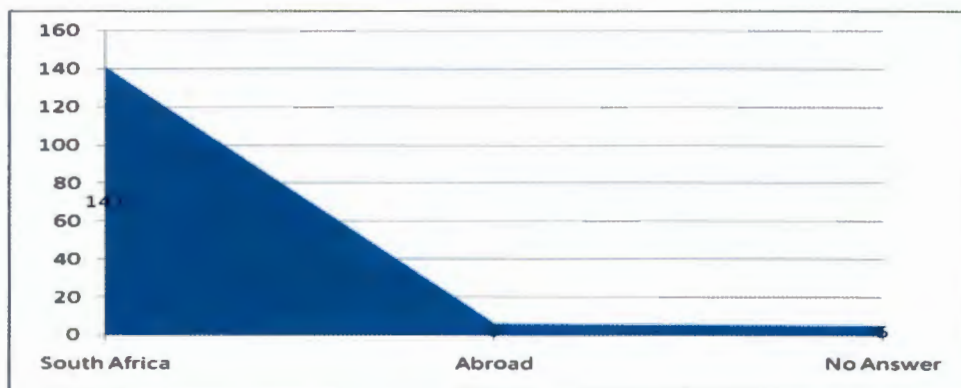
Most of the employees are possibly those who have some sort of mining-related training and/ or experience, hence they are of middle age. Their earlier years were either spent on education or training. The younger ones aged (20 to 30) are normally semiskilled to unskilled and- it will take then some extra years to obtain relevant qualifications (Kent, 2001:17).

Figure 4.5 Gender



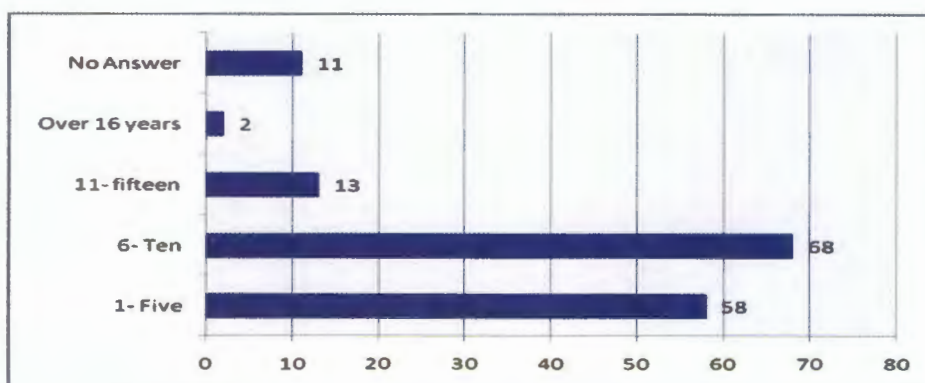
The figures reflect that the male employees are outnumbered the females. This may be due to the fact the mining industry, by virtue of its nature, requires more physical strength-; hence more males as compared to their female counterparts. Mining as a sector also has the historical background that supported employment of male employees rather than females (Ashman, 2001:1098). The other six (who did not answer the question) possibility are either gays or lesbians, and possibly too shy or scared to come out and make their sexual orientation known publicly.

Figure 4.6 Place where Respondent Grew up



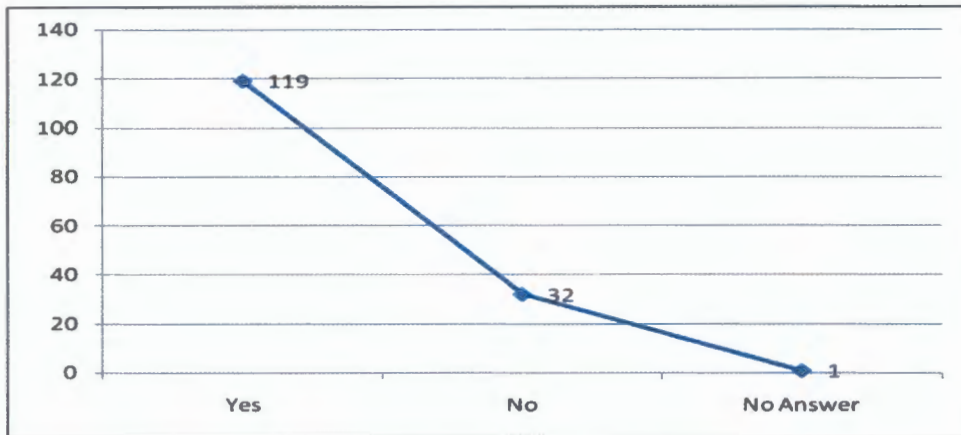
The employees who are non-South Africans of origin are usually referred to as those from abroad. They are from other continents such as America, Asia and Europe. In the survey they are mainly from China, Japan and Britain. Those who did not answer have possibly perceived the question as a xenophobic one (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

Figure 4.7 Years of the Service in the Department



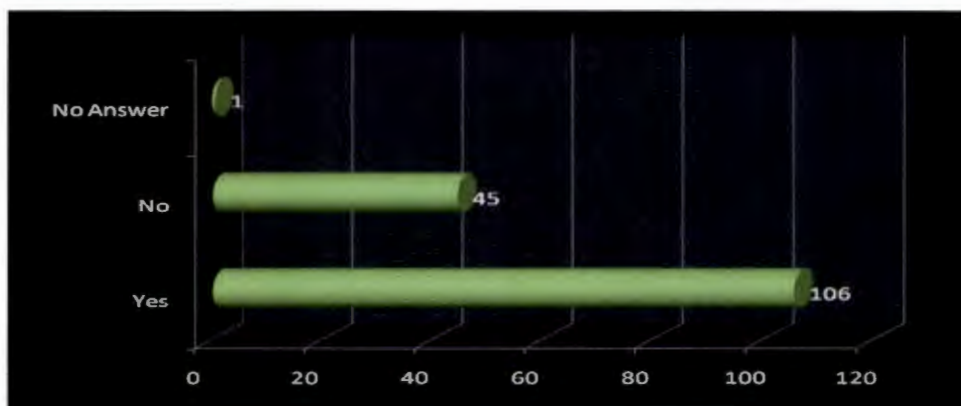
The employees who are inexperienced- but leaders usually don't want to expose their status as their counterparts may despise them. Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown. They might have obtained the position through preferential treatment, hence the reluctance (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

Figure 4.8 Do you understand the link between the mission of the organisation and employee empowerment?



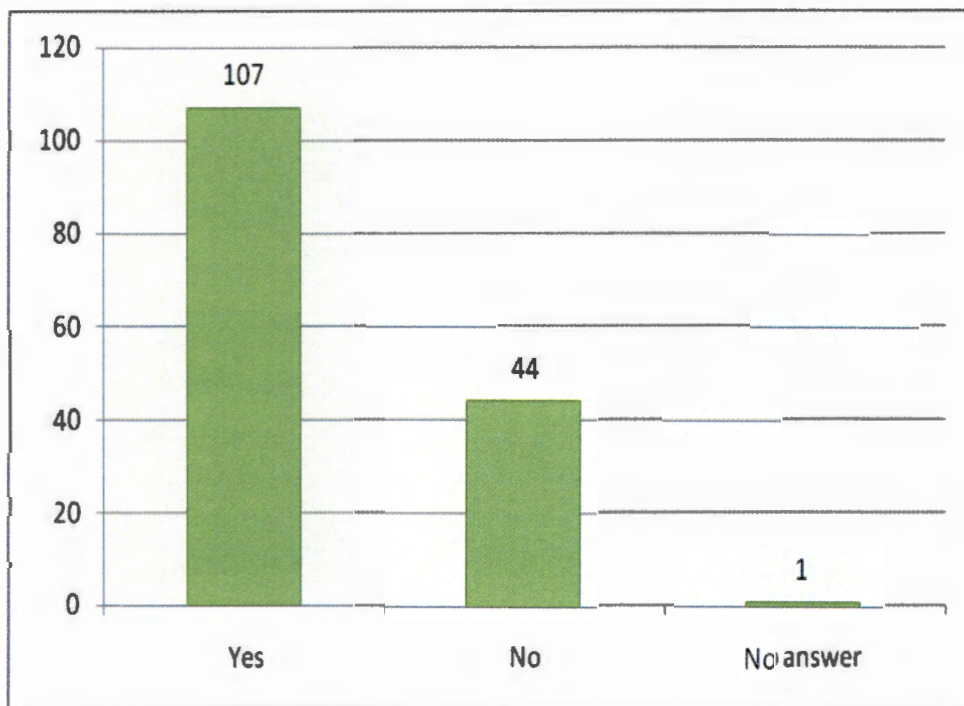
A clear mission statement should have the following four elements: purpose, values, standards and behaviours including strategy and scope (Williams, 2007:219). The values (what management believes in) along with the standards and behaviours (the rules that guide how the business operates) should consider employees as the important part of the organisation and not as the extension of machinery or technology (Erstad, 2007:325; Ro and Chen, 2011:423).

Figure 4.9 Is employee empowerment considered accurate and/or subjective?



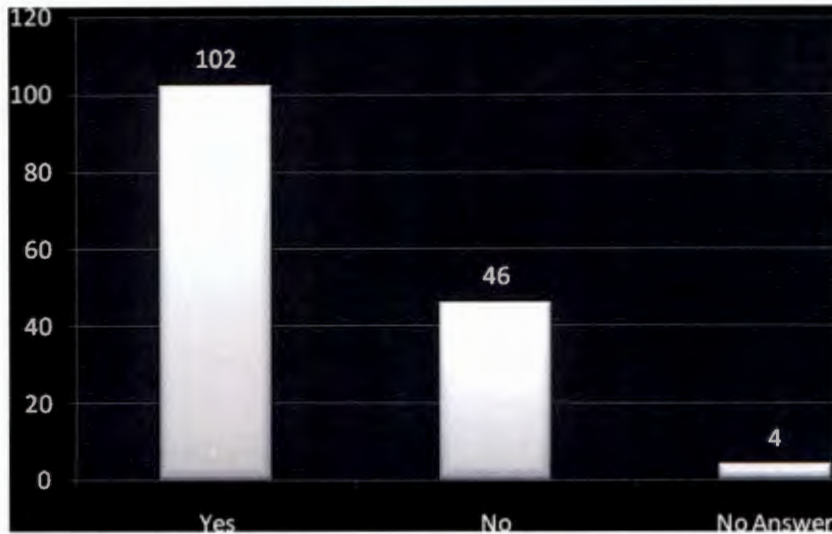
The mining charter demands that mines in South Africa must recruit, develop and retain employees through the various training, development and reward initiatives. The mining company must manage the performance and careers of its employees on a regular basis throughout the mine's life span (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010). The accurateness is the relevance of the training programs that are in line with the employees' career path.

Figure 4.10 Is the outcome of the E E session good?



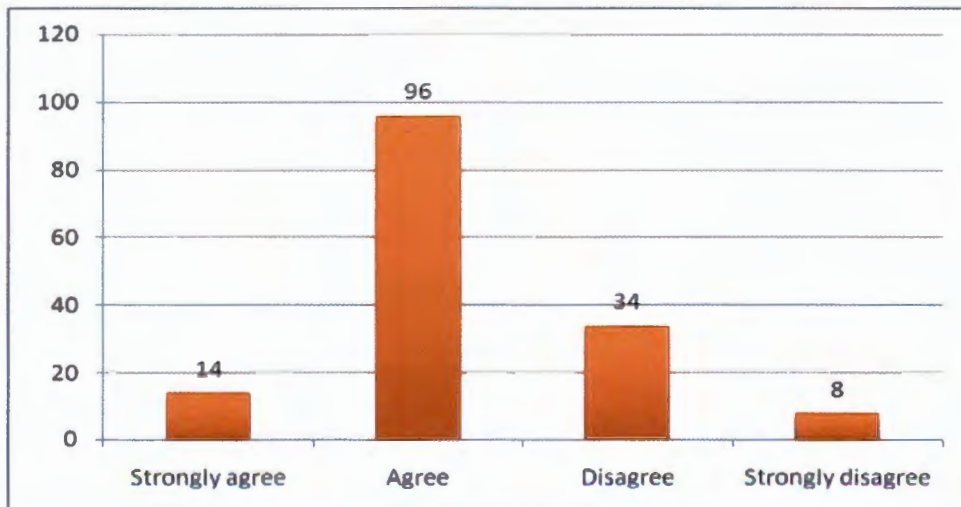
According to Littrell (2007:93) and Focka *et al.* (2010:1002), employee empowerment can take the form of contact sessions, where there is an update of information regarding employees lined up for empowerment training programmes. On the basis of the response, the overwhelming majority of employees agree that the training sessions are adding value to their work and that such sessions are beneficial and helpful.

Figure 4.11 Is there a deficiency in E E?



On the basis of this response, employees agree that the empowerment contact sessions and training programmes are not satisfactory. Based on the response, 57% agree that there is a gap between the planning phase and the implementation phase of the employee empowerment strategic plan. The fact that it is not efficient and enough further suggests that its roll out plan is extremely slow and takes time to be realised (Caramelli and Briole, 2007:219).

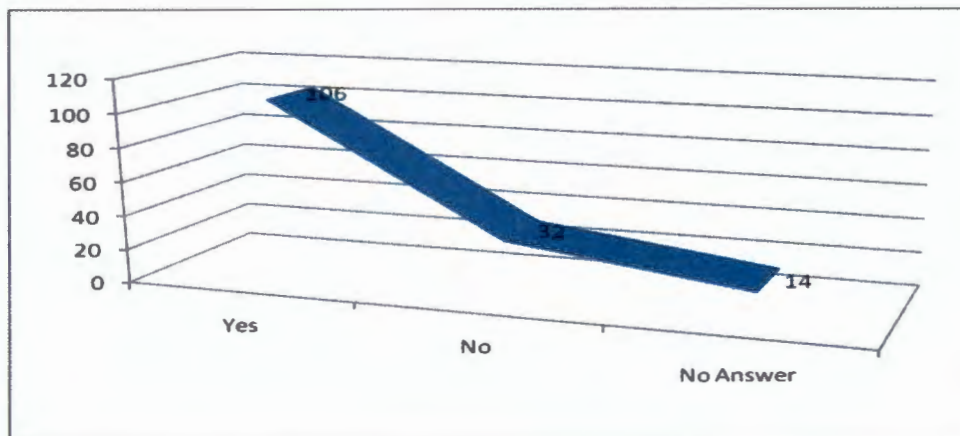
Figure 4.12 Are you satisfied with the way in which the EE session is being administered?



Some employees in the sample (those who disagree and strongly disagree) think EE should be treated better. The possibilities of such a response are that- the group has no clear EE administration policy; or the implementation of EE policy is clear but frustrates their career path; or employees are not aware of the implementation policy guide, whether it exists and what it says (Cummings and Worley, 2008:350), or lastly, the plan and policy are not well communicated to the employee group, especially those who are doing late afternoon and early morning shifts as during their working times the admin offices are closed.

Theory maintains that empowerment through involvement must relate to those initiatives where managers are chiefly concerned to gain from the experiences and expertise of employees (Littrell, 2007:94). Aims to improve organisational communication processes in all directions are important. Processes which involve team briefings, consultation and joint problem solving enable managers to both promote organisational aims, and to learn from employee experiences. Decisions about actions and responses are taken by managers. Team briefings session and quality circles are examples of these initiatives (McEwan and Bek, 2006:1033).

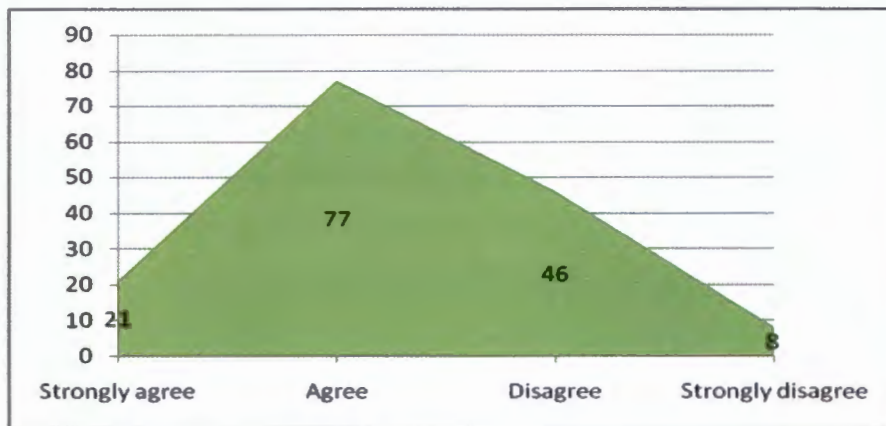
Figure 4.13 Is EE adequately implemented?



The response suggests that the implementation of the empowerment contact sessions and training programmes is satisfactory. The response suggests that there is no gap between the planning phase and the implementation phase of the employee

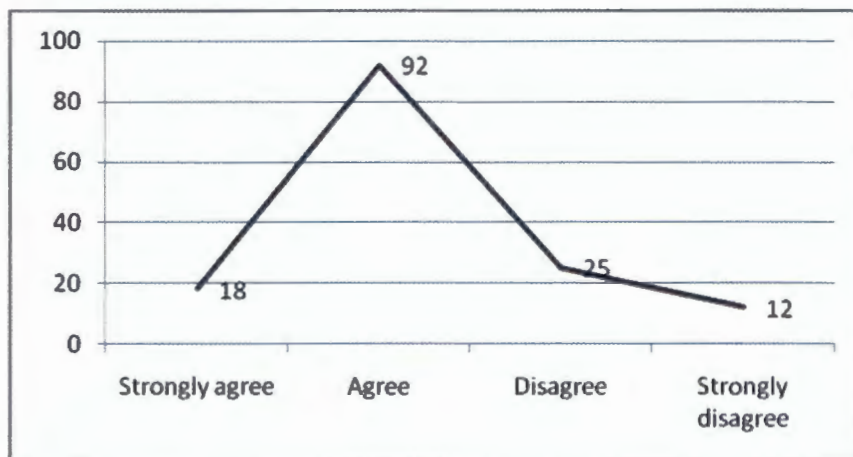
empowerment strategic plan. The fact that is adequate further suggests that its turnaround time is short (Cummings and Worley, 2008:350).

Figure 4.14 Do you think the implementation is bias/based on an employee Colour?



Mining industry in South Africa has the history of employing more blacks in junior positions. Most whites occupying the senior positions fear that blacks will take over their positions- hence, they affirm their fellow white friends for empowerment and senior positions. The pace at which the empowerment process is employed by the mining sector leaves much to be desired (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

Figure 4.15 Do you think EE policies and procedures are freely available?



The Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines' News letter that is published on a quarterly basis often informs the employees about the policies in place. The National Union of

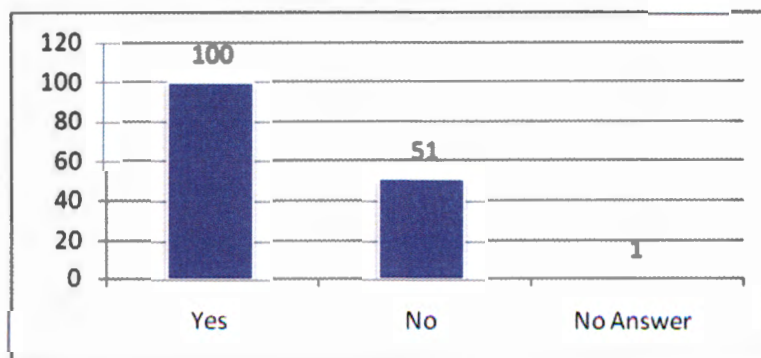
Mine Workers (NUM)'s quarterly bulletin also informs the employees on employment policies. The union representatives also inform their fellow workers about the presence of such policies. Information is posted on the notice boards and is also made available at human resources' office. There is a possibility that those who disagree are ignorant (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

Table 4.1 Do you think that rating bias is based on employee race?

Strongly agree	18
Agree	84
Disagree	39
Strongly disagree	9
No Answer	2

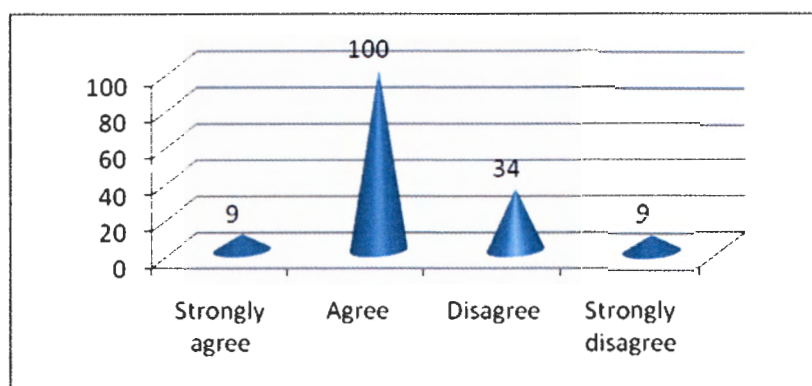
BRPMPP, as a part of the mining industry in South Africa, employs many blacks in junior positions who possibly aspire to hold senior positions currently held by white employees. These black employees possibly feel that the pace at which the empowerment process is employed by mine managers is too slow and is more of special job reservation for whites. The black employees should be consulted in the planning and implementation of the EE so that they could be part of the decisions and not mere employees whose fate is left in the hands of their white managers (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

Figure 4.16 Is appraisal ratings comparable across different jobs, divisions or departments?



Chu (2003:3) maintains that employee empowerment initiatives fail when managers concentrate on systems and policies, while ignoring the people who make them work. Employee empowerment should be taken as the cornerstone of change by management, so that it can be equally applied to all staff in different departments. It was also the key to business competition and success in the 1990s (Amichai-Hamburger *et al.* 2008:1776).

Figure 4.17 Do supervisors follow the performance management system policies and procedures?



According to Harris *et al* (2009), the quality of relationships between supervisors and subordinates is often studied via LMX theory. With its roots in role theory and social exchange, the LMX model suggests that supervisors form differential relationships with their subordinates. These relationships range in quality from high to low.

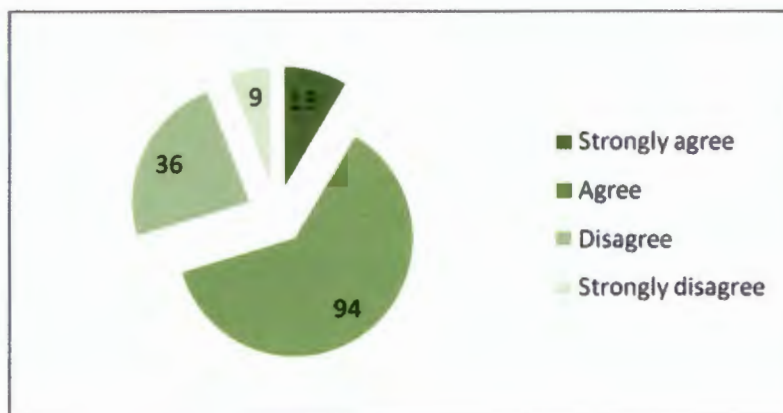
The benefits of high quality LMX relationships are numerous, including preferential treatment, increased job-related communication, differential allocation of formal and informal rewards, ample access to supervisors, and increased performance-related feedback (Hancera and George, 2003:4). Conversely, subordinates in low quality LMX relationships often experience the exact opposite; supervisors provide limited emotional support and trust and the subordinates receive few, if any, benefits outside the employment contract (Williams, 2007:218).

Table 4.2 Are you satisfied with the way the organisation provides you with feedback on your evaluation?

Strongly agree	12
Agree	88
Disagree	44
Strongly disagree	7
No Answer	1

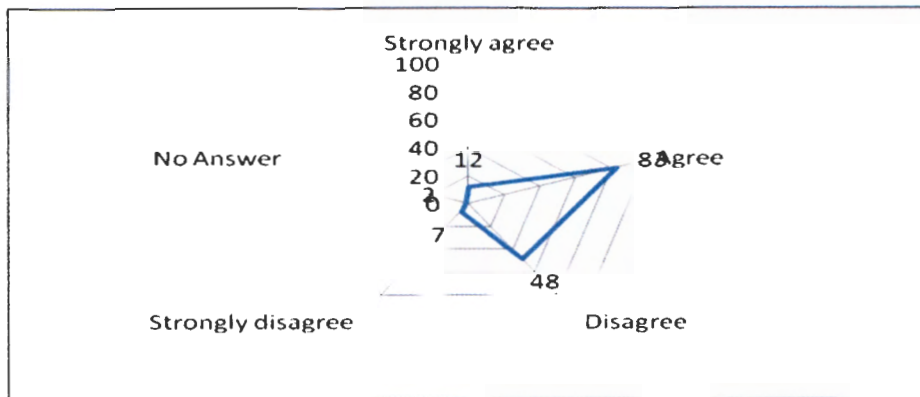
The empowerment process gives responsibility to people to make decisions affecting their workplace not only once but on a continuous basis. A further initial implication of creating an empowered workforce, therefore, is the necessity it brings with it to allow employees constantly to review and improve the very things which operate within an organisation (Erstad, 2007:327). Feedback does not necessarily mean the evaluation should affirm all employees. It is not a “pass one pass all” phenomenon. Employees should familiarise themselves with the evaluation processes.

Figure 4.18 Does a climate of trust exist based upon honest and open communication between the supervisor and employees?



The organisation's mission must also be underpinned by its values. The value or beliefs endorsed by many organisations which adopt the empowerment route include the promotion of customer service, two-way communication, teamwork and integrity (Erstad, 2007:325).

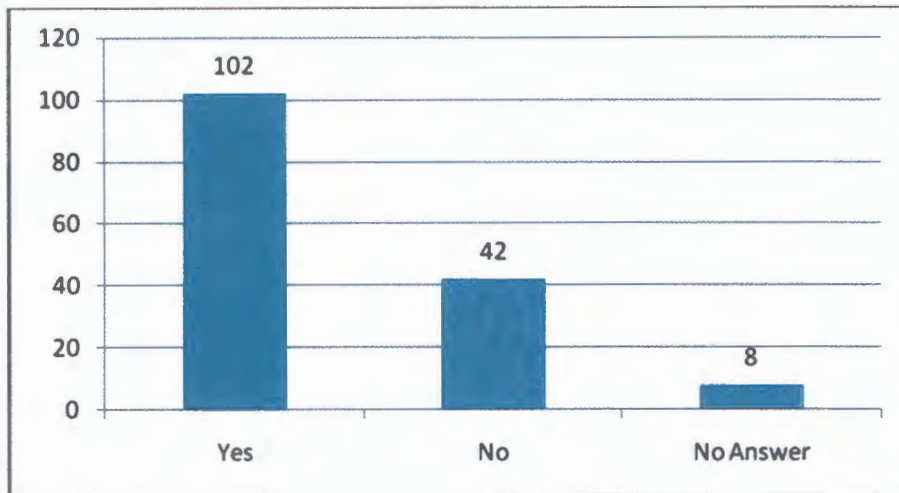
Figure 4.19 Does your supervisor show concern for your needs?



Management is concerned about their department meetings the set target with regard to production, labour turn over, training and development of the Historically Disadvantaged, including health and safety of their subordinates. All these serve as the guidelines to flow of resources, for example, from input (labour material, technology, etc), to production processes (interactions of all the planned resources) to output (intended or planned product or services) (Ro and Chen, 2011:422).

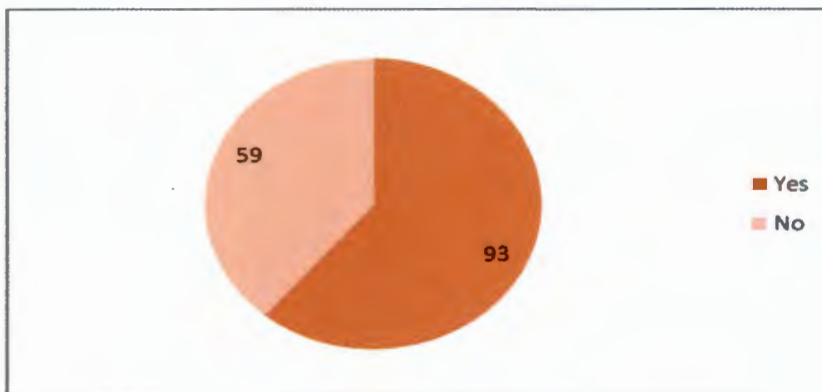
Central to these changes, human resource is a key factor, as these changes are for and about them, that is, any change always affects them either negatively (e.g. through retrenchment or down-sizing) or positively (through promotions and an increase of remunerations). In whatever way, organisational success is attributed to the people factor in more ways than one. The key issue which follows this notion is, how people in a business setting might best be organised in order to harness their full potential (Ro and Chen, 2011:423).

Figure 4.20 Is performance appraisal session discussed based on facts?



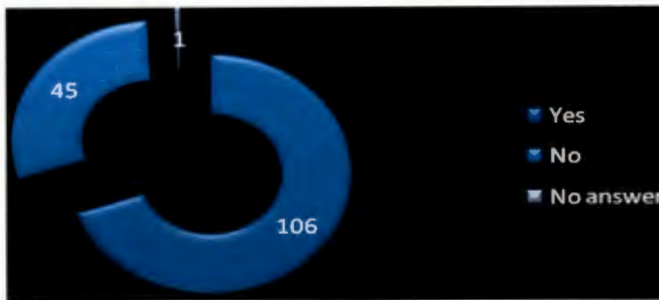
The existence of inequality between whites and blacks in the mining industry remains an undisputed fact. BRPMPP, as a part of the mining industry in South Africa, must undergo organisational change by implementing both the affirmative action and other related acts of employee empowerment (Bendix, 2010:153).

Figure 4.21 Do you think your supervisor is competent in his/her field?



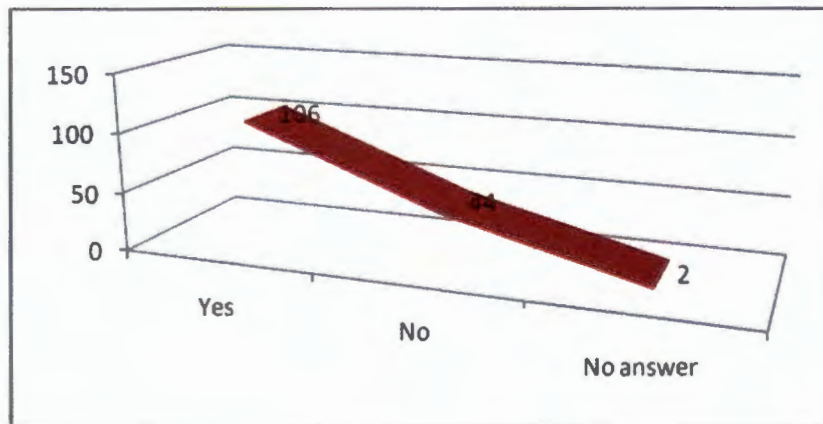
Chu (2003:5) maintains that in the process of developing a culture that is conducive to employee empowerment during change, management must consistently lead by example. According to Horwitz and Currie (2007:449), managers should work very hard in being good examples to their subordinates in the organisation and also that employee empowerment is beneficial to the organisational development and is supported and rewarding.

Figure 4.22 Do you think supervisors are properly trained?



According to Ashman (2001:1098), leaders must try and succeed in cultivating a psychological contract between them and their subordinates. Failure to do that will result in the loss of respect and even despicement of their roles in the well-being of their juniors. The thought that supervisors are not trained stems from the fact that training that is provided, is production-related and not employee empowerment related.

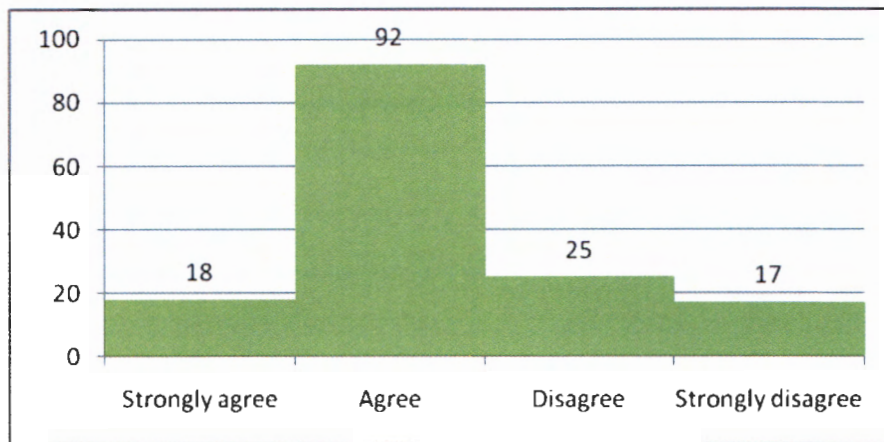
Figure 4.23 Do you think the E E management system is efficient?



Some employees in the sample (those who disagree and strongly disagree) think EE is not efficient. The possibilities for such a response may be based on the following: that the group has no clear EE administration policy; or the implementation of EE policy is clear but frustrates their career path; or employees are not aware of the implementation policy guide, its existence and contents. Or lastly, the plan and policy is not communicated well to the group, specifically to those that are doing late

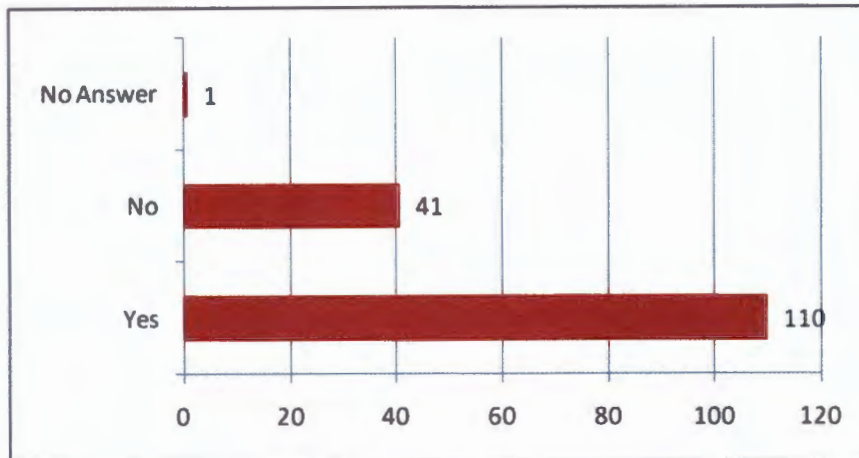
afternoon and early morning shifts as during their working times the administrative offices are closed (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

Figure 4.24 Do you think EE system policies and procedures are available freely?



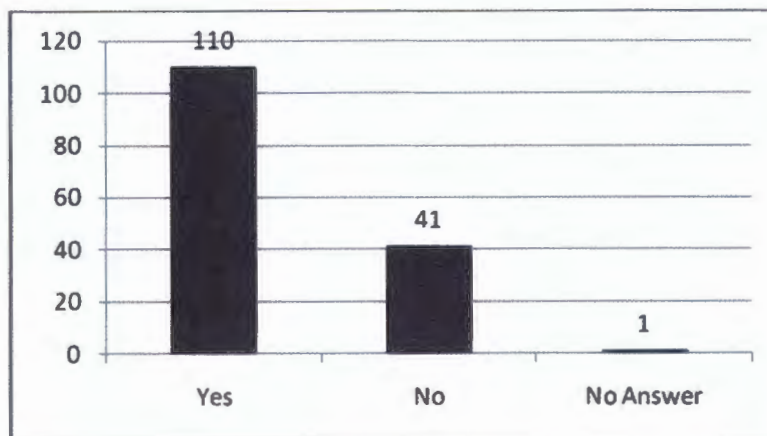
The Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines' News letter that is published on a quarterly basis often informs the employees about the policies in place. The National Union of Mine Workers (NUM)'s quarterly bulletin also informs the employees on employment policies. The union representatives also inform their fellow workers about the presence of such policies. Information is posted on the notice boards and is also made available at human resources' office. There is a possibility that those who disagree are either ignorant or unaware of current policies (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

Figure 4.25 Do you think sufficient training and development opportunities are offered and supported by BRPMPP?



Managers need to re-examine their own behaviours and how they supervise the activities of others. Re-examining the structure of the job, the training given and employee recognition are important to increase feelings of empowerment and productivity (Focka *et al.*, 2010:1025).

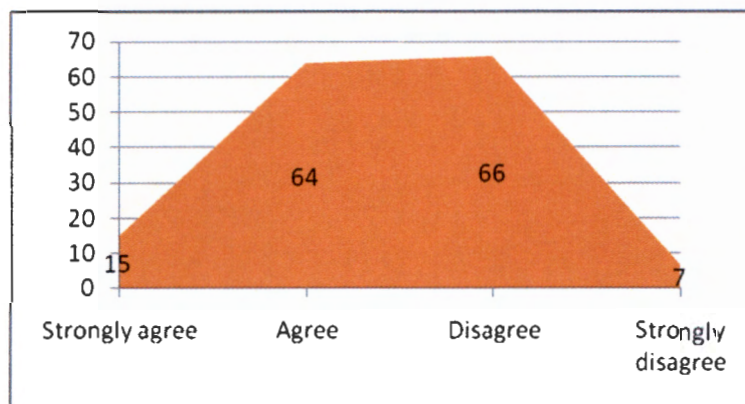
Figure 4.26 Do you think the EE is acceptable and fair?



According to Chu (2003:14), an organisational culture for change is an underpinning cornerstone in the success of organisational change. Such a culture must be cultivated in a company to make change normality in an organisation (Horwitz and Currie, 2007: 453). The culture should be such that people in it find it easy to accept changes and are willing to contribute in the successful implementation of them. During the employee empowerment process, management should play the role of an educator. They should educate people on the importance of changing through employee empowerment as a means to the long-term competitiveness and survival of

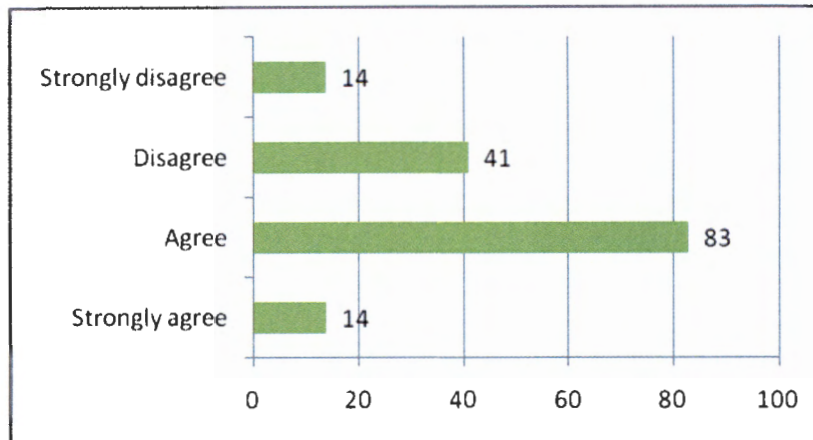
the organisation (Ashman, 2001:1101). Chu (2003:9) suggests that they should do this through various meetings and seminars held for this purpose.

Figure 4.27 Do you think your supervisor is fair in administering the EE session for all subordinates involved?



According to Ashman (2001:1098), leaders must try and succeed in cultivating a psychological contract between them and their subordinates. Failure to do that will result in the loss of respect and even being looked down on in their roles in the well-being of their juniors. The thought that supervisors are not trained stems from the fact that training that is provided is production related and not employees' empowerment related training. It is advisable that the supervisor trained in production-related jobs administer the EE in conjunction with the HR department or officer who is skilled and knowledgeable on EE issues.

Figure 4.28 Are the procedures used to administer performance appraisal sessions fair?



Certain groups of employees in the sample (those who disagree and strongly disagree) think that the administration of the performance appraisal policies is not acceptable and fair. The possibilities for such response are the group has no clear EE administration policy; or the implementation of EE policy is clear but frustrates their career paths; or employees are not aware of the implementation policy guide; or lastly, the plan and policy are not communicated well to the group, especially those that are doing late afternoon and early morning shifts as during their working times the administrative offices are closed (Coetzee, 2007: 418).

4.4. Measures of association

Correlation is a measure of the relation between two or more variables. The measurement scales used, should be at least interval scales, but other correlation coefficients are available to handle other types of data. The simplest question we could ask about two continuous variables is whether they vary in a related way; - is there a correlation between them (Sasa/stats, 2008:1474).

Pearson's Correlation Coefficient will be used for data interpretation. Correlation Coefficients can range from -1.00 to +1.00. The value of -1.00 represents a perfect negative correlation while a value of + 1.00 represents a perfect positive correlation. A value of 0.00 represents a lack of correlation. With reference to Tables 4.3a, 4.3b and 4.3c the relationships of variables will be discussed, based on years of experience versus department, work experience versus occupation, age versus department, and occupation versus department (Sasa/stats, 2008:1474).

The results of the collected data of citizenship and gender indicate that there is a negative correlation of 0.806 as far as citizenship and gender are related, which suggests that there is a good negative correlation between these variables. Both citizenship and gender are neither playing any significant role nor bearing any significant value towards employee empowerment (Ashman, 2001:1098).

There is a good positive correlation of 0.935 between ethnicity and the link between the mission of the organisation and employee empowerment. That suggests that as ethnicity (specifically white employees) becomes the determining factor in employee empowerment, the mission and vision of the organisation regarding employee empowerment (empowering previously disadvantaged individuals) will be compromised. It equally suggests that the opposite thereof is true, especially when ethnicity (black) employees) determines employees empowerment, the mission of the organisation is realised (Williams, 2007:219)

The result of the data regarding ethnicity against fair and acceptable employee empowerment is 0.803, showing a good positive correlation. This suggests that there is a degree of fairness that is widely acceptable by employees as empowerment is exercised. It indicates that managers who implement empowerment policies are fair and just, according to the employees (Ferreira, 2006: 197).

The correlation between number of years in service and the fair procedures used to administer performance appraisal is a negative 0.901 indicating a good negative correlation between these variables. The correlation implies that the number of years in service is not a determining factor for employee empowerment. The administration of the performance appraisal system is also not influenced by the employees' number of years in service. The two variables are not related in anyway (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

There is a strong negative correlation of 0.81 between qualifications and the link between the mission of the organisation and employee empowerment. That indicates

that the qualifications are not a necessity when empowerment is implemented. Hence they are not linked to what the organisation seeks to achieve in its employees empowerment. This result in making the two variables greatly independent of each other, and not related in anyway (Erstad, 2007:325; Ro and Chen, 2011:423).

The correlation between employees with knowledge or understanding of the link between the mission of the organisation and employee empowerment of South African citizens is 0.494. Thus it concluded that there is a weak positive correlation as there is a weak link between the two variables. This further suggests that these few employees with a better understanding of the organisational mission will be able to seek and acquire more relevant skills and training as a measure to align their competency with the future needs of the department or organisation (Williams, 2007:219).

The correlation between an existing climate of trust based upon honest and open communication of the supervisor and employees regarding employee empowerment is -0.769. This is an indication of a moderate to good negative link between the two variables. This, according to Ashman (2001:1098), means that the seniors implementing employee empowerment are not fully trusted by their subordinates.

The correlation between years of work experience and the show of concern for the needs of the employees by the supervisor is -0.757, and this shows a moderate to good negative relationship between these two variables. This suggests that the more experienced the employees become, the more the lesser an opportunity they will have to be promoted, as part of empowerment. The needs of subordinates are not recognised as preference is possibly given to either work and or policies (Harmony Gold, Annual Report 2010).

The chances are that older persons will stay in the very department. This is possibly due to the fact that older people tend to think carefully and prefer the same old work environment rather than a new one. And also, as they are aging, they have lesser chances for employment somewhere else. This means that they will not share skills,

knowledge and experience easily among themselves as insurance for their future jobs, more especially to younger ones. Young employees may change careers as they feel that one department stifles their dreams and ambitions and therefore move from one job to the other and also move among departments (Coetzee, 2007: 418).

The correlation between gender and trust based upon honest and open communication between the supervisor and employees is .08. This means that there is a weak positive correlation of gender and trust that open communication brings to the subordinates. The mining industry traditionally employs more males than females, but based on the current mining charter, equity on gender targets must be set and reached. This is an anomaly to the industry; it possibly makes the trust based on gender to weaken as males feel that preference is given to their female counterparts (Ashman, 2001:1098).

The correlation between ethnicity- and fair and acceptable employee empowerment policy is .803, a positive correlation between two variables. This correlation according to White (2000:164) is significant and has a positive impact, as an ethnic divided workplace can affect the policy evaluation of a company. The achievement of an empowerment objective by an organisation is closely linked to the following important concepts: the annual strategic plan, annual personal performance related appraisals, objectives and goals of the organisation (Williams, 2007:219).

The correlation between years of working experience and the fair procedures used to administer performance appraisal sessions is measured as perfect $-.091$, which is a moderate to good negative correlation. According to Louw and Venter (2008:70) the appraisal system in place is good, as it considers the experience of an employee prior to implementation of any form of empowerment.

The correlation between the fair, acceptable employee empowerment and the link between the mission of the organisation and employee empowerment is .859. This correlation between these two variables is moderate to good positive. Senior management need to agree on the organisation's vision and mission (Erstad, 2007:325; Ro and Chen, 2011:423).

The correlation between accurate and/or subjective employee empowerment and fair and acceptable employee empowerment is .955. This suggests that their relationship is a good positive correlation. And also, the outcome of the employee empowerment session and the fair and acceptable implementation is 969, it implies that their relationship is a good positive correlation. The correlation of the deficiency in employee empowerment and the fair and acceptable implementation is .856. This suggests that their relationship is a good positive correlation (Burke, Sims, Lazzara and Salas, 2007:606).

The correlation of adequately implementation of employee empowerment and the fair and acceptable implementation thereof is 927. This implies that their relationship has a good positive correlation. In general, according to Burke *et al.* (2007:608), when employees perceive high levels of empowerment, they are motivated towards their jobs and are likely to experience positive accompanying consequences. Job characteristics theory advocates suggest that the feelings associated with empowerment will not only be directly associated with job outcomes, as has been shown in both previous research and literature, but it also moderates relationships between LMX and outcomes (Harris *et al.*, 2009:215).

The correlation of the satisfaction of the way in which the employee empowerment session is being administered against the fair and acceptable implementation thereof is .901. This correlation between these two variables is moderate to good positive. The efficient management system of employee empowerment and the fair and acceptable implementation thereof is -.927. This implies that their relationship shows a good negative correlation. The sufficient training and development opportunities offered and supported by BRPMPP against the fair and acceptable implementation of employee empowerment is .954. This correlation between these two variables is moderate to good positive.

4.5. Conclusion

This chapter provides an analysis and interpretation of the data collected through questionnaires as a tool. A number of statistical techniques were applied to aid in the analysis. Correlation was used specifically to establish the meaning of the analysis of data collected. In some instances charts and tables were used to assist in the presentation of the analysis. An analysis of primary data collected revealed that all respondents understand 100% what employee empowerment is all about.

It is important to point out that up to now, there are different types of employee empowerment issues within the mining industry that need to be managed and controlled efficiently so that they can be effective. This remains a mammoth task that the human resources department must face, as far as policy development and implementation are concerned.

In the next and final chapter, the researcher will give conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study, and also address limitation items of the research. According to the statistical results, it appears that the employee empowerment issue does have correlation with organisation's vision, mission and policies.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Introduction

As indicated in the previous chapters, post 1994, employee empowerment, like many other concepts in both government and private sectors, became the central buzz word meant to address the injustices of the previous legacy (Horwitz and Currie, 2007: 445; Ashman, 2001:1097, and McEwan, 2002: 469).

This chapter consolidates the findings of the research, derived through analysis and interpretation of statistical data, discussed in the previous section. The research questions pertaining to the extent to which the implementation of employee empowerment by managers at BRPMPP impacts on the standard and quality of work of employees are also answered.

Chapter Five comprises a summary of the study, and the addressing of the findings per research question. It also provides for managerial guidelines to employee empowerment opportunities and highlights future research opportunity in this field of study. Conclusions of the study will be drawn and recommendations will also be outlined.

5.2. Summary of the study

The major organisational objective during empowerment is to give employees an opportunity to learn and grow, in an environment that offers rewarding experiences and the discretion to be involved in handling customers directly (Williams, 2007:220). Employees who perceive their organisation as one that provides support, empowerment and opportunities, will devote their energies to serve customers. Staff performance is primarily a result of organisational support and developmental

activities that enable them to deliver high-quality service to customers (Burke *et al.*, 2007:612).

Rapp, *et al* (2006: 279) and Chu (2003:18), state that empowerment enables individuals to be in charge of their own responsibilities while meeting and exceeding company and personal goals through the shared company vision for change. Such empowerment makes the individual believe himself to be a force for the change and behave accordingly to achieve it. It can enable everyone in an organisation to take part in and to make a contribution to organisational change.

Littrell (2007: 92) argues that the initiatives which claim to be empowering cover suggestion schemes, autonomous work groups, employee training, quality circles, team briefings, and de-layering the management structure. Many of these initiatives have much in common with management strategies which are also described as employee involvement and employee participation. They consider the act of empowering as, the action of enabling workers to set their own work-related goals, make decisions and solve problems within their spheres of responsibility and authority. Many of these initiatives have much in common, particularly with management strategies, which are also described by some authors as, employee involvement and employee participation.

Empowerment does not happen in a vacuum- it happens to an existing organisation that has an operating structure, supported by operational systems and policies. All these serve as the guidelines for flow of resources e.g. from input (labour material, technology etc), to production processes (interactions of all the planned resources) to output (intended or planned product or services) (Ro and Chen (2011:422). It brings about a change in the structures reporting line) or operational systems.

Employee empowerment brings change to either some or all departments or a unit (e.g. material handling procedure in the line of production). Central to these changes, the human resource is a key factor, as these changes are for and about them, i.e. any

change always affects them either negatively (e.g. through retrenchment or downsizing) or positively (through promotions and an increase of remuneration).

This study aimed at determining the extent to which BRPMPP provides training and skills programs in an effort of empowering its workforce. In Chapter Two, literature indicates, that success or failure experienced in any organisation (BRPMPP) when implementing employee empowerment is determined among others by: organisational culture, management, the collectivistic versus individualistic orientation and organisational support. This chapter consolidates the findings of the research, derived through analysis and interpretation of statistical data, discussed in the previous chapter.

5.3. Response to Research Questions

The main findings of this research in relation to each research question will now be discussed. Each question is followed by a discussion of the findings relating to that question.

5.3.1. To what extent does the employee empowerment impact on the Operations of the Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines Processing Plant (BRPMPP)?

The positive response of 52, 4% indicates that there is a great impact of implementing employee empowerment by RPMPP. The research concludes that there is no gap between the planning phase and the implementation phase of the employee empowerment strategic plan. It is further concluded that it is through the provision of adequate training and skills programs in place that the outcomes of its sessions are satisfactory. The fact that it is adequate further suggests that its turnaround time is short. According to Amichai-Hamburger, McKenna and Tal (2008: 1776), the engagement of employees at an emotional level so as to gain greater commitment, generates greater involvement in service quality and increases labour stability.

Of the sample 69.93 % agree that the outcomes of employee empowerment consultation sessions are good. On the basis of this response, it can be concluded that these training sessions are adding value to their work and that such sessions are

beneficial and helpful. The success of these sessions can be ascribed to the participation and involvement of stake holders. This working together has possibly contributed to the improvement of quality, the design of the change processes and the implementation thereof (Erstad, 2007:326).

To the question whether employee empowerment is accurate and/or subjective, 69.28% of the sampled population agrees. The possibility for this significant population is that most blacks have been appointed into many different senior positions. This is basically subject to the demands of the labour and mining laws. It can be concluded that a smaller percentage of white employees feel marginalised by the empowerment process, as preference is given to their fellow black counterparts. Possibly, it may appear to them as reverse discrimination and the reservation of jobs based on colour (Ro and Chen, 2011:423).

5.3.2. Is Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines Processing Plant management keen to the empowerment efforts without fearing to relinquish their powers to their subordinates?

Of the sampled population 57.89 % agrees that their supervisors show concern for their needs. That suggests that a favourable culture that consistently shows high commitment to employee empowerment has been adapted by senior staff (Chu, 2003:5). Leadership and decision-making are not based on an authoritarian approach, high power distance, adherence to hierarchy, and concentration of power at the top. It can be concluded that managers are working very hard in being good examples to their subordinates at BRPMPP.

Senior staff at BRPMPP is not deep-rooted in the traditional notions to the point that it is a stumbling block to a paradigm shift, especially with regard to empowerment. This is supported by the agreeing 71.71% of the sampled population that their seniors follow the performance management system policies and procedures. It can be concluded that by virtue of following the performance management system policies and procedures, seniors do not feel threatened by the idea of delegating authority and therefore empowering employees.

5.3.3. Do employees at BRPMPP perceive the empowerment efforts as an empty rhetoric and management attempts to exploit them?

It seems most unlikely, as the sample indicates that 72.36% of the sampled population is satisfied with the way in which the EE session is being administered. There is also, an overwhelming positive response of 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 above, which further indicates that BRPMPP employees perceive EE as a great endeavour that has a positive impact on their work and careers. They also indicate that the outcomes of their employee empowerment consultation sessions are good.

The successful implementation thereof seems to have been achieved through a combination of many factors, to name but a few: a conducive culture; high level of commitment by senior staff: non-authoritarian leadership approach; psychological level of readiness of the junior staff, continuous communication and general involvement of all stakeholders in the organisation (Littrell, 2007:89).

5.4. Limitations

This study has been limited to the mining industry, with special reference to Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines' Processing Plant in South Africa. It is important to note that further standalone in-house systems of other mining houses have not been considered within the scope of this research.

Also, Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines is one of the few business enterprises that is jointly owned by the local community (Bafokeng Nation) and Anglo Platinum (a subsidiary of Anglo American as the mother body). Operational systems and policies are possibly greatly influenced, by the working together of these two autonomous entities. The operation is to a greater extent tailor made to the suit interests of both parties and as such this further limits the study as the details of their interests as far as the venture is concerned are not mentioned in this study. It is acknowledged that they might possibly have an influence on the findings of this study.

5.5. Managerial Guidelines

From the results of this study the following guidelines can be given to companies who have implemented EE or are planning to implement it in the future:

Employee Empowerment serves as the cornerstone of change in an organisation and is also the key to a business successful competitive strategy. As mentioned in Chapter 2 that for any organisation to survive the turbulence related to the execution of its business and see "success" its staff and management's ability to evolve and adapt to change(s) both foreseen and unforeseen is a determining factor, not necessarily only on resources available, (holding all other factors constant).

The full potential of EE has not been exploited within the mining industry, highlighting opportunities to improve in the industry. It has been highlighted in the literature review that mining as an industry in South Africa has been plagued throughout its life span by a widened gap of inequalities, unfair labour practices and racial divisions. Regarding this little has been done in this industry as compared to other industries.

Planning and scheduling empowerment process should match with the vision and mission of the organisation. Based on analysed data in Chapter Four, 77.7% of the sampled population is aware of the link between the mission of the organisation and employee empowerment. Only 20.91% is unaware or does not understand the link between the two, and the conclusion that is drawn from the analysis is that those that form 77.77% have either seen or experienced or witnessed the benefits of employee empowerment. They are aware of its aims and objectives linked to the vision and mission.

The Employee Empowerment processes must be properly aligned with the employees desired career path relevant to the organisation. In Chapter Two Focka, *et al Chiang, Auc and Huid* (2010:12) defined the empowerment process as a generic term which covers a wide range of initiatives implemented by the management of human resources and which reflect a wide range of managerial intentions and

concerns. It must not be a process that is designed to appease the labour law requirement or as a means to frustrate junior staff.

Data acquisition for analysis and information management regarding the impact of EE on the organisation can improve productivity and continuous improvement in the organisation. This could be achieved through continuous assessment and feedback, as mentioned in chapter two.

Most companies which barely practice EE will be reactive in their implementing processes so as to be seen by law as changing organisations. It is important for them to be pro-active in their attempts so that they can align it with their business strategy.

Departmental Employee Empowerment plans must not be implemented in silos. Human resources as a production factor is always important when an empowerment strategy is planned, designed and implemented. As mentioned in Chapter two, human resource must not be treated as an extension of machinery in the production line, but as the nuclear power house of the existence of the very organisation. Departmental empowerment plans must be well-coordinated, so that a perfect harmony and balanced empowerment in the entire organisation was experienced.

5.6. Future Research

This study contributes various opportunities for further research, notably:

- Specific case studies on mining companies that show exceptional compliance with minimal labour-law requirement
- Potential shortcomings of EE in the mining sector both general and in areas outside the Bafokeng Nation's jurisdiction
- A study of the financial benefits associated with Employee Empowerment; including feasibility studies, and the realization of return on investments.
- The total cost of Employee Empowerment
- A South African primary data contributor to a future global assessment of Employee Empowerment in the mining sector.

5.7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the theoretical notion by Amichai-Hamburger, *et al* (2008: 1776), which states that when employees are engaged on an emotional level, the greater commitment gains results, that generate greater involvement in service quality and increases labour stability, holds water regarding EE at RPMPP. A positive response of 52, 4% indicates that there is a great impact resulting from the implementation of employee empowerment by RPMPP.

It, therefore, becomes clear that there is a gap between the planning and implementation phases of the employee empowerment strategic plan of RPMPP. Also, there is an adequate provision of training and skills programs in place that have satisfactory outcome sessions. These training sessions are adding value to employees' work and are as such beneficial and helpful.

The 57.89 % of the sampled population agrees that the Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines Processing Plant management is positive towards the implementation of the empowerment efforts without fearing to relinquish their powers to their subordinates. It is therefore, concluded that leadership and decision-making at BRMPP is neither based on an authoritarian approach, nor on high power distance, nor on adherence to hierarchy, and concentration of power at the top (Chu, 2003:5).

The theoretical principles regarding successful implementation of EE as outlined in Chapter Two prove to be what would make this implementation successful. There appears to be a perfect co-ordination of all independent and internal factors in an organisation. These independent factors internal to the organisation are *interalia* as follows: management's commitment to change; education and communication with staff; participation and involvement by people in the planning of change; assessment of performance of people on a long-term basis; the industry's environment and benchmarking; and change as an organisational culture (Ashman, 2001:1098; McEwan, 2002:473; McGrath and Akoojee, 2007:421).

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Appendix B

Research Instrument

Example table of questionnaires to be completed

Research Question	Survey Questions	Variable(s) and/or Relationships measured	Statistical test
1. To what extent does the employee empowerment impact on the operations of the Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines Processing Plant (BRPMPP)?	1.1. Do you understand the link between the vision of the organization and employee empowerment?	Yes/No Yes/No	Descriptive stats-frequency tables, bar charts Numerical description location, spread, distribution, cross tabulation
	1.1 Is Employee empowerment truthful and/or subjective?	Yes/No	Measures of association, Phi,
	1.2 Is the outcome of Employee empowerment good?	Not within scope, poorly, fairly, mostly, completely	Crammers V Convert nominal to ration 0,1,2,3,4 and do correlation co-efficient testing with personal
	1.3 Is there a deficiency Employee empowerment?	1.1 Yes/No	information-Pearson & Spearman Rho
	1.4 Are you satisfied with the way in which the Employee empowerment is		Normal & distribution

	being implemented?		
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Example questionnaire:

FOIR OFFICE USE ONLY: Respondent Code: _____.

Appendix C

Voluntary Questionnaire For BRPMPP Employees

“Employee Empowerment by BRPMPP.”

Researcher: Mr. Gobusamang Graduwell Sethoba

Supervisor: Prof Sam Lubbe

Note to the respondent

- The researcher need your help to understand how people view Employee Empowerment
- Although the researcher would like you to help him, you do not have to take part in this survey.
- If you do not want to take part, just hand in the blank questionnaire at the end of the survey session.
- What you say in this questionnaire will remain private and confidential. No one will be able to trace your opinions back to you as a person.

The questionnaire has three parts:

- Part 1 asks permission to use your responses for academic research.
- Part 2 asks general personal particulars like your age, gender and academic qualifications.
- Part 3 asks about Employee Empowerment items

How to complete the questionnaire

1. Please answer the questions as faithfully as you can. Also be sure to read and follow the directions for each part. If you do not follow the directions, it will make it harder for the researcher to do the research project.
2. The researcher only asks you about the things that you and your fellow employees should feel comfortable to share. If you don't feel comfortable answering a question, you can indicate that you do not want to answer it. For those questions that you do answer your responses will be kept confidential.

3. You can mark each response by making a tick or a cross, or encircling each appropriate response with a PEN (not a pencil) or by filling in the required words or numbers.

Thank you very much for filling in this questionnaire.

Part 1: Permission to use my responses for academic research

I hereby give permission that my responses may be used for research purposes provided that my identity is not revealed in the published records of the research.

Initials _____ and _____ surname

:-

Postal address: _____ Postal Code: _____

:-

Contact Numbers:

Home: _____ Cell: _____

:-

PART 2: GENERAL PERSONAL PARTICULARS <i>Please tell a little about yourself</i> Please mark only ONE		PART 3: EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT
1 I am: <input type="checkbox"/> African <input type="checkbox"/> Coloured <input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Oriental <input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> a member of another ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question	8	Do you understand the link between the mission of the organization and employee empowerment? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2 I am : <input type="checkbox"/> Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Please specify) _____	9	Is Employee Empowerment considered accurate and/or subjective? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3 I have: <input type="checkbox"/> A degree <input type="checkbox"/> A post-graduate degree <input type="checkbox"/> Matric <input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question	10	Is the outcome of the Employee Empowerment session good? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4 I am _____ years old. <input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question	11	Is there a deficiency in Employee Empowerment? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

5	<p>I am a:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Female</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Male</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question</p>	12	<p>Are you satisfied with the way in which the Employee Empowerment session is being administered?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question</p>
6	<p>I grew up:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In South Africa</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Abroad:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question</p>	13	<p>Is Employee Empowerment adequately implemented</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
7	<p>How many years of service do you have in the department/Mintek</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 5 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 6 - 10 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 11 – 15 years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> More than 16 Years</p>	14	<p>Do you think it implementation is bias or based on employee's colour?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question</p>
15	<p>Do you think that ratings bias are based on employee race?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question</p>	24	<p>Do you think Employee Empowerment system policies and procedures are available freely?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question</p>

16	<p>Is appraisal ratings comparable across different jobs, divisions or departments?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>No</p>	25	<p>Do you think the Employee Empowerment management system is efficient?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/>Yes <input type="checkbox"/>No</p>
17	<p>Does supervisors follow the performance management system policies and procedures?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> I agree <input type="checkbox"/> I disagree <input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question</p>	26	<p>Do you think sufficient training and development opportunities are offered and supported by BRPMPP?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
18	<p>Are you satisfied with the way the organization provides you with feedback on your evaluation?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> I agree <input type="checkbox"/> I disagree <input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer his question</p>	27	<p>Do you think the Employee Empowerment is acceptable and fair?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
19	<p>Does a climate of trust exist, based upon honest and open communication between the supervisor and employees?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> I agree <input type="checkbox"/> I disagree <input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this</p>	28	<p>Do you think your supervisor is fair in administering the Employee Empowerment session for all subordinates involved?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree <input type="checkbox"/> I agree <input type="checkbox"/> I disagree <input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree <input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this</p>

	question		question
20	<p>Does your supervisor show concern for your needs?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question</p>	29	<p>Are the procedures used to administer Performance Appraisal sessions fair?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I agree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I strongly disagree</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I do not want to answer this question</p>
21	<p>Is Performance Appraisal session discussed based on facts?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>		
22	<p>Do you think your supervisor is competent in his/her field?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>		
23	<p>Do you think supervisors are properly trained?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p>		

Qu18	Correlation Coefficient	-.748**	.527**	.675**	-.390**	.085	-.347**	.165*	-.788**	-.974**	-.958**	-.885**	-.337**	-.939**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.297	.000	.042	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu19	Correlation Coefficient	.767**	-.579**	-.699**	.415**	-.153	-.422**	-.118	.822**	.999**	.984**	.896**	.377**	.962**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.060	.000	.148	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu20	Correlation Coefficient	.803**	-.598**	-.785**	.473**	-.146	-.427**	-.082	.859**	.955**	.969**	.856**	.310**	.927**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.073	.000	.313	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu21	Correlation Coefficient	-.320**	.443**	.219**	.159	.145	-.448**	.153	-.394**	-.476**	-.469**	-.497**	.083	-.549**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.007	.051	.076	.000	.059	.000	.000	.000	.000	.310	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu22	Correlation Coefficient	.110	.395**	.116	-.303**	.217**	-.457**	-.901**	.067	.236**	.223**	.308**	.717**	.132
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.177	.000	.153	.000	.007	.000	.000	.413	.003	.006	.000	.000	.106
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.083	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu13	Correlation Coefficient	-.368**	.658**	.409**	.762**	.928**	.821**	1.000	.301**	.520**	.421**	-.064	-.362**	.314**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.431	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu14	Correlation Coefficient	-.862**	.040	.962**	.486**	.559**	.298**	.301**	1.000	.870**	.960**	.212**	-.915**	.940**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.623	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.009	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu15	Correlation Coefficient	-.769**	.314**	.904**	.524**	.750**	.466**	.520**	.870**	1.000	.906**	.286**	-.816**	.826**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu16	Correlation Coefficient	-.920**	.157	.998**	.578**	.653**	.422**	.421**	.960**	.906**	1.000	.185	-.900**	.912**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.054	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.022	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu17	Correlation Coefficient	-.189	.198	.193	-.297**	.057	-.141	-.064	.212**	.286**	.185	1.000	-.069	.111
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	.014	.017	.000	.484	.083	.431	.009	.000	.022	.000	.395	.174
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu18	Correlation Coefficient	.796**	-.039	-.890**	-.560**	-.584**	-.352**	-.362**	.915**	.816**	.900**	-.069	1.000	-.973**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.631	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.395	.000	.000

	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	
Qu19	Correlation Coefficient	-.801**	.000	.914**	.504**	.555**	.303**	.314**	.940**	.826**	.912**	.111	-.973**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.996	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.174	.000	.
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu20	Correlation Coefficient	-.745**	-.058	.875**	.467**	.521**	.264**	.280**	.901**	.789**	.871**	.057	-.927**	.954**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.476	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	.489	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu21	Correlation Coefficient	.417**	-.068	-.519**	-.077	-.321**	.056	-.149	-.532**	-.566**	-.515**	-.523**	.451**	-.480**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.406	.000	.348	.000	.492	.066	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152
Qu22	Correlation Coefficient	-.290**	.754**	.313**	.627**	.760**	.861**	.833**	.216**	.415**	.324**	-.009	-.271**	.226**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.008	.000	.000	.912	.001	.005
	N	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152	152

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.3c Correlation

			Qu20	Qu21	Qu22
Spearman's rho	Ethnic	Correlation Coefficient	.803**	-.320**	.110
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.177
		N	152	152	152
	Status	Correlation Coefficient	-.598**	.443**	.395**

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qualification	Correlation Coefficient	-.785**	.219**	.116
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.007	.153
	N	152	152	152
Age	Correlation Coefficient	.473**	.159	-.303**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.051	.000
	N	152	152	152
Gender	Correlation Coefficient	-.146	.145	.217**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.073	.076	.007
	N	152	152	152
Citizenship	Correlation Coefficient	.427**	-.448**	-.457**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152
Years	Correlation Coefficient	-.082	.153	-.901**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.313	.059	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu 1	Correlation Coefficient	.859**	-.394**	.067
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.413
	N	152	152	152
Qu2	Correlation Coefficient	.955**	-.476**	.236**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.003
	N	152	152	152
Qu3	Correlation Coefficient	.969**	-.469**	.223**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.006
	N	152	152	152
Qu4	Correlation Coefficient	.856**	-.497**	.308**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152

Qu5	Correlation Coefficient	.310**	.083	.717**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.310	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu6	Correlation Coefficient	.927**	-.549**	.132
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.106
	N	152	152	152
Qu7	Correlation Coefficient	-.745**	.417**	-.290**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu8	Correlation Coefficient	-.058	-.068	.754**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.476	.406	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu9	Correlation Coefficient	.875**	-.519**	.313**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu10	Correlation Coefficient	.467**	-.077	.627**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.348	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu11	Correlation Coefficient	.521**	-.321**	.760**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu12	Correlation Coefficient	.264**	.056	.861**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.492	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu13	Correlation Coefficient	.280**	-.149	.833**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.066	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu14	Correlation Coefficient	.901**	-.532**	.216**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.008

	N	152	152	152
Qu15	Correlation Coefficient	.789**	-.566**	.415**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu16	Correlation Coefficient	.871**	-.515**	.324**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	152	152	152
Qu17	Correlation Coefficient	.057	-.523**	-.009
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.489	.000	.912
	N	152	152	152
Qu18	Correlation Coefficient	-.927**	.451**	-.271**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001
	N	152	152	152
Qu19	Correlation Coefficient	.954**	-.480**	.226**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.005
	N	152	152	152
Qu20	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.456**	.196*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.016
	N	152	152	152
Qu21	Correlation Coefficient	-.456**	1.000	-.017
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.838
	N	152	152	152
Qu22	Correlation Coefficient	.196*	-.017	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.016	.838	.
	N	152	152	152

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

RESEARCH LETTER

Dear Sir / Madam

My name is Gobusmanag Graduwell Sethoba, and I am conducting my research for the completion of a Masters's degree (MBA) at North-West University, Mafikeng Campus. I hereby request permission to collect data to be used in my research from your company.

The information to be gathered through the questionnaires will be kept completely confidential.

Your kind assistance will be highly appreciated

Yours sincerely

Sign: 

Gobusmanag Graduwell Sethoba

Contact: 073 388 9931 or 076 690 8025/ E-mail: [gsethoba@gmail.com/](mailto:gsethoba@gmail.com)

Fax:086 653 0598

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby certify that I have language edited the following text:

**MBA dissertation titled: "The Effect of Empowerment on Employees: The Case
of Bafokeng Rasimone Platinum Mines Processing Plant"**

by

G G Sethoba

Date: 2012 10 15



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BA (Hons), MMet, MSc (Eng), PhD
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