

Analysing labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry in Gauteng

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ABSTRACT

The process of temporarily banning the recruitment of new employees is known as labour hiring freeze, this process could potentially leverage a company's cost competitiveness. This research analyses labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals' mining industry. The study uses a quantitative research approach. The sample of 96 respondents was drawn from the target population of 166 managers from 13 sand mining companies. Findings indicated the implementation of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness has influenced the reduction of personnel costs, improved cost competitiveness and better market performance. It has also influenced improved employee morale, motivation and productivity. However, despite such values, findings imply labour hiring freeze is associated with certain inherent drawbacks that can threaten its value as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Findings imply that the implementation of labour hiring freeze is causing distortion of work roles, overworking of the employees, employee dissatisfaction, low morale, low motivation, negative attitude about the organisation, high labour turnover and loss of valuable employees. Given these findings, executives would have been expected to adopt the appropriate strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Unfortunately, it seems not much is being done. Although some of the respondents agreed, it seems there is a challenge of using strategies like communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze as well as the use of job enrichment to render work more interesting. Besides the analysis and response to individual employee needs, there is also a challenge of using the other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs. Other limitations were identified in the use of tasks and process re-engineering. Just like the use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required, the use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance was also found to be a challenge. To effectively undertake labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness, it is argued that the executives in the sand minerals mining industry must consider using the accompanying cost cutting strategies like the minimisation of raw-materials' costs. It must also consider developing and using communication as a strategy for influencing improved employee morale and motivation. These must be undertaken in conjunction with the use of incentives and recognitions to reward the outstanding performance. Other strategies encompass the use of exceptional recruitments for unique essential positions, and analysis and response to

individual employee needs. Future research can use a qualitative approach to explore the values and constraints of labour hiring freeze. This study can be of great use to managers, company executives and boards members in future when considering the use of this initiative as a tool to curtail costs in their companies. The results and recommendations of this study can enable company executives to make informed decisions.

Keywords Competitiveness, drawbacks, employees, financial performance, labour hiring freeze, strategic tool, sand minerals mining, values

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1. no (Sample Size) = $\frac{N(166)}{1 + N(166)(e(\text{Precision level at 10\%}))^2} = 99.4. \dots\dots\dots 33$

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Labour hiring freeze refers to the process of temporarily banning the recruitment of new employees. It may also entail the ban on promotion and pay increases for the existing employees. Labour hiring freeze drives a company's cost competitiveness. It reduces the costs of hiring new employees as well as the costs of advertisements and hiring recruitment consultants (Sullivan, 2000:1). It is through such initiatives that labour hiring freeze reduces a company's marginal costs to enlarge its overall profitability margins. Labour hiring freeze spawns the optimization of the existing human resources to accomplish as an array of tasks as possible (Sullivan, 2000:1). Besides improved employee productivity, this also lowers the overall personnel costs for the accomplishment of different activities. Significant reduction of personnel costs spurs a company's cost competitiveness (Heathfield, 2018a:2). It catalyses the extent to which a company is able to charge prices that cannot be easily matched by competitors. It is through that that labour hiring freeze spawns a company's cost competitiveness. The end results of such initiatives may be reflected not only in the enlargement of the profitability margins, but also a company's financial bottom-line (Heathfield, 2018a:2). However, trends in the sand minerals mining industry indicates that as much as labour hiring freeze spurs cost reduction, it can also breed unintended consequences that can undermine its value as a cost reduction strategy.

Labour hiring freeze can cause the overworking of the existing employees. This can breed frustrations and discontent that in turn cause burnout and high labour turnover (Mollica & DeWitt, 2000:1068). All these may not only undermine a company's cost competitiveness, but also its performance. It is against that backdrop that this research explores the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry in Gauteng. Effectiveness refers to the extent to which the implementation of a particular concept aids the organisation achieve its strategic goals and objectives. In this research, effectiveness is measured by asking the opinions of the managers in the sand mineral mining industry about the extent to which the implementation of labour hiring freeze is aiding the sand mineral mining companies achieve their intended objectives and goals.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Natural sand from riverbanks, estuary and coastal land is one of South Africa's most valuable minerals. Natural sand from the coastal land, estuaries and riverbanks is used in an array of building constructions as well as for making tiles (Carnie, 2015:2). Sand mining goes hand in hand with the mining of slate, clay, sandstone, dolerite, gravels and granites. The process for mining these valuable minerals entails the extraction of sand from the beaches and inland dunes or dredging of sand from riverbeds. This is often accomplished using open pit methods that encompass clearing the vegetations and building the access routes using bulldozers (Carnie, 2015:2). This clears the way for sand to be dug and extracted using an excavator from the sand mining pits. The mined sand is often transported to the processing plants from where they are supplied to the building construction companies or industries for making tiles and bricks (Chevallier, 2014:1). It is the actual mining and excavation of sand that takes a number of people. It requires semi-skilled and unskilled labour, as the skilled are mainly employed in the supervision, management and the processing of the excavated sand (Carnie, 2015:2). In effect, as compared to the other industries such as coal mining, sand mining industry is selected for this research due to its aggressive actions that it has undertaken to implement labour hiring freeze as a cost cutting strategy. However, the study will only focus on the sand mining companies in the Gauteng Province since Gauteng companies have a similarity that they mainly mine in riverbanks.

Given the scarcity of sand, sand mining is increasingly emerging as lucrative business which is attracting both legal and illegal sand mining companies (Chevallier, 2014:1). This causes competition that affects the overall attractiveness of the sand mining industry. To survive, sand mining companies have to resort to aggressive cost cutting strategies (Chevallier, 2014:1). In effect, quests for survival in the midst of the increasing competition in the sand minerals mining industry are driving most of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry to adopt more aggressive cost cutting strategies. Aggressive cost cutting strategies is considered critical for lowering the prices of the final products to spur a business' overall competitiveness (Samaraweera, 2009:5). To achieve this, most of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry have been adopting cost cutting strategies that include investment in more superior sand mining and processing technologies and machineries. Investment in more superior sand mining and processing technologies and machineries is considered critical for bolstering the overall level of operational efficiency (Samaraweera, 2009:5).

Improved operational efficiency bolsters productivity. Besides improved productivity, it also catalyses cost reduction to spawn the overall competitiveness of the sand mining companies. Even if such initiatives bolster cost competitiveness, other businesses in the sand mining industry have also been considering outsourcing as a cost cutting strategy. This is attributable to the fact that some of the businesses are opting to outsource some of the non-core activities such as transportation in a bid to minimize costs. Yet, as some of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry adopt such strategies, others have been opting for downsizing and retrenchment (Iverson & Pullman, 2000:977). This is explained by the fact that as the economy continues to perform badly, some of the sanding companies are opting to downsize and undertake retrenchment of their staff as cost reduction strategies. As costs reduce, they expect to not only survive through the economic turbulence, but also to remain competitive (Carnie, 2015:2). Downsizing is also considered critical for responding to the demands of the environmentalist about the nature and scale of operation of the sand mining companies that damage the environment. This is attributable to the reasoning that removal of sand from riverbed causes increment in the water speed that in turn also causes the erosion of riverbanks (Carnie, 2015:2). It also erodes the ecosystems of the areas where sand mining is undertaken.

Removal of sand from the beaches also deprives the area of the bunk that prevents flooding. It also undermines the tourism attractiveness of the beach from which sand is removed. In effect, threats from environmentalists cause uncertainties about the future (Chevallier, 2014:1). Combined with the need to reduce costs so as to respond to competition as well as uncertain turbulent economic environment; that explains why some of the mining companies are opting for labour hiring freeze in the meantime. This is attributable to the fact that the future is uncertain for some of the mining companies to expand and to continue hiring new employees (Chevallier, 2014:1). Given the current situation, labour hiring freeze is viewed as valuable for aiding cost reduction. It reduces the recruitment costs (Chevallier, 2014:1). Recruitment freeze is one of the defensive strategies an organization can adopt to cut costs and to make the company more productive and profitable (Nyasha, 2017:17-21). (Baumolet, 2013:9; Jones & George, 2016:160; Ladimeji, 2013:1) argue that recruitment freeze reduces organizational slack and operating costs, streamlines operations and enhances effectiveness towards making an organization more competitive. In support Kozlowski & Chang (1993) assert that freezing recruitment enhances organizational efficiency, reduces costs and improves organizational performance. It also reduces the costs of salaries and

remunerations as promotions and pay increases are presently frozen. Even though this could be reflected in the improved cost competitiveness of the sand mining companies, so far its drawbacks are already being felt by the employees (Carnie, 2015:2). Complaints of overworking without pay increases are already increasingly emerging among the employees. Such frustrations and discontent are causing low morale and the rising rate of labour turnover. Unless, alternative cost cutting strategies are adopted, such drawbacks of labour hiring freeze seem to threaten the achievement of the goals that it had been intended to achieve.

1.3 LABOUR HIRING FREEZE AS A STRATEGIC TOOL FOR DRIVING COMPETITIVENESS

Labour hiring freeze tends to be undertaken as a cost minimization quest during periods of consistently poor financial performance. Labour hiring freeze may also be undertaken during periods of a company's overcapacity or redundancy. It can also be influenced by government regulations, use of technology and the available labour pool. The motive of labour hiring freeze is usually not only to save costs, but also to avoid laying off employees. In situations where a crisis is not expected to last long, temporary halt of recruitment whilst also avoiding laying off the existing employees improves a company's responsiveness to the sudden future positive changes in market trends (Sullivan, 2019:1). Through such initiatives companies are often able to minimize costs. Strategic labour hiring freeze constitutes of three main steps that encompass analyse, freeze and control (Nyasha, 2017:17; Sutcliffe, 2013:13). Analyse process entails the evaluation of the unfolding environmental trends vis-à-vis their impacts on a company's performance. Freezing is the actual process of stopping hiring of new employees. Control is the process of ensuring that labour hiring freeze achieves the intended outcomes. Yet, as the business follows this strategic labour hiring freeze process, there are also certain methodologies that must be used. Labour hiring freeze may entail the use of methodologies that entail stopping hiring, freezing replacement of departing employees, reduction of workweek, salary reduction, benefits' reduction, temporary layoffs with defined return date, and temporary shutdowns. Certainly when successful, labour hiring freeze can induce enormous values for the organisation. Literature suggests that the values of labour hiring freeze often encompass improved cost competitiveness, productivity and motivation (Gittonga, 2012:119; Heathfield, 2018a:2; Ladimeji, 2013:2; Madrick, 2011:5). However, Sullivan (2009:2) argues as much as most companies often opt for labour hiring freeze during periods of downturn, it often induces drastic consequences on a company's performance.

Literature implies that labour hiring may affect revenue generating roles, cause frustrations and discontent among employees and affect a company's brand image (Cascio, 2009:10; Heathfield, 2018a:2; Sullivan, 2000:1). All these imply that for labour hiring freeze to be undertaken, the use of certain strategies to improve its effectiveness is a prerequisite. Literature suggests that the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness often encompass assessment and identification of individual motivators, task and process re-engineering, job enrichment, training and re-training and downsizing (Baumolet *et al.* 2003).

1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Labour hiring freeze is being implemented by banning the recruitment of new employees to fill the emerging new vacancies (Leng, 2017:2). Instead, the management is capitalising on using the existing employees to cover their positions as well as other similar positions that are falling vacant. Such strategies are being accompanied by other cost cutting strategies such as freezing salary and benefits' increases as well as reduction of the temporary and contract employees. Other strategies have encompassed incentivizing some of the employees to leave through voluntary layoffs, buyouts or early retirement (Leng, 2017:2). All these are being accompanied by the use of the initiatives that take advantage of the employees who aim to leave the company (Leng, 2017:2). Although some of the employees have been motivated by labour hiring freeze because they retain their jobs as compared to retrenchment, of late dissatisfaction among the employees seem to be setting in (Samaraweera, 2009:5). As dissatisfaction set in, most of the employees are beginning to feel that the company is heading towards the wrong direction. In effect, some of the employees have started to leave. Yet, as they leave, their jobs are passed to the remaining employees without increment in pay (Samaraweera, 2009:5). This causes more dissatisfaction that threaten to undermine effective performance of some of the employees. This is compounded by the fact that as new tasks are passed to the remaining employees, there is increasing tendencies for employees to perceive that they are being overworked or even exploited (Samaraweera, 2009:5). The end results have been reflected in the endless exodus of more valuable employees, thereby causing manpower crisis. With manpower crisis, management is already increasingly finding it difficult to fire low performers, thereby limiting quests to improve performance. The implications are latent in the fact that although labour hiring freeze was aimed at reducing costs, it seems its unintended consequences are threatening to undermine its value as a cost cutting strategy (Samaraweera, 2009:5). In effect, the focus of this empirical research is to evaluate the opinions of the employees

in the sand mining industry about the values, drawbacks and strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze as a cost cutting strategy. Such opinions are critical for discerning how labour hiring freeze can be undertaken in the future when faced with such similar situations. Since, it will expose the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze, it will enable the analysis of whether labour hiring freeze must be undertaken or the alternative cost cutting strategies such as improving operational efficiency can be undertaken. Through such analysis, the study will be able to measure effectiveness by assessing the opinions of the managers in the sand mineral mining industry about how the implementation of labour hiring freeze is aiding the sand mineral mining companies achieve their intended goals and objectives.

1.5 THE MAIN OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The aim of this research is to explore the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry in Gauteng.

1.6 SECONDARY OBJECTIVES

The research objectives of the study are to:

- Examine the literature on the values, drawbacks and strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze
- Select the most appropriate methodology and design to reach the objectives.
- Analyse the perspectives of the employees in the sand mining industry about the values, drawbacks and strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze.
- Recommend measures for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry in Gauteng.

1.7 METHODOLOGY

To respond to these secondary research objectives, the study used the deductive research paradigm, exploratory research design and the survey research method.

1.7.1 Deductive Research Paradigm

This research uses the deductive research paradigm. A deductive research paradigm often commences with problem identification as well as hypothesis formulation and subsequently the collection of secondary and primary data to discern how such hypothesis is concompayed or disputed ((Bryman & Bell, 2007:49; Hunter, Laura, Leahey& Erin, 2008:6). The selection of the research paradigm is usually predicted by the nature of the research. In effect, this research opts for the use of the deductive research paradigm. This is explained by the fact that the study aims to assess the opinions of the employees on labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry. In effect, the study aims to elicit summarised numerical responses to aid not only the analysis of the frequencies, but also the means to compare the opinions between different groups. Through such analysis, the study will be able to identify the values as well as the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze so as to discern the strategies that can be recommended for improving the implementation of labour hiring freeze in the sand minerals mining industry. Whereas the paradigm in such analysis is deductive, the research design is exploratory.

1.7.2 Exploratory Research Design

A research design can be exploratory, co-relational, post adhoc, experimental or a case study (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006:12). However, this research uses the exploratory research design. The use of the exploratory research design aided the analysis of the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Through such analysis, the use of exploratory research design enabled the study respond to the third and the fourth secondary research objectives. However, to accomplish the entire primary research process, the study used the survey research method to collect data from the population described in the next subsection.

1.7.3 Sampling

A target population refers to the subjects or units that are related to the phenomenon being researched (Bland, 2010:14). In this research, the target population constitute of 166 managers from 13 (thirteen) sand minerals mining companies in the Gauteng Province. Gauteng Province was selected due to the larger concentration of the sand minerals mining companies in Gauteng as

compared to the other provinces. Since the researcher resides in Gauteng, Gauteng Province was also selected due its proximity that would render the study more cost effective. A sample size of 99 managers was determined to be sufficient for the study. The response of 96 managers was received and used for analyses.

1.7.4 Design of Survey Questionnaire

Primary data will be collected using the survey research questionnaire (See Annexure 1). The survey research questionnaire will be designed in line with the research objectives and questions (Gillham, 2008:9). This is a newly developed questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed in consultation with the literature in chapter 2 of this dissertation. In effect, it contains four sections, section A to section D that are drawn from the sections of the literature in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. Section A contains demographical questions. Section B explored the values of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. The third section (C) evaluates the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. The fourth section (D) examines the strategies used for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Each statement on the questionnaire from section B, C and Section D contains five options that encompass 1- A great deal, 2- Quite a bit, 3- Some-what, 4- Very little, 5-Not at all. Measures were also undertaken to ensure that each statement in the questionnaire is unambiguous with clear meaning for the respondents to respond with relative ease. Thereafter, a Cronbach alpha analysis was undertaken to test the validity and reliability of the survey questionnaire. The result of the Cronbach alpha analysis was 0.8 which in the context of Bryman and Bell's (2003) views indicated the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. This was followed by a brief pilot testing to test the suitability of the survey questionnaire. Any errors detected were corrected prior to the commencement of the actual data collection that was accomplished using personal administration. The obtained survey data was analysed according to the process described in the next section.

1.7.5 Data Analysis

The obtained data was analysed using Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. That implies after all the data had been obtained, data cleaning was undertaken prior to capturing raw data into the SPSS spreadsheet (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:22; Petrie & Samib, 2005:36). This was followed by an analysis to obtain the frequency for each variable. The analysis of the frequencies was accompanied by the analysis of the mean to compare the opinions of different groups (indicated by demographic factors). The obtained frequencies for each variable were presented in charts and accompanied with the explanation and discussion of the mean. Subsequently, the findings were presented according to four sections that encompass demographics, the values of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry, the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry, and the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Such presentation aided the analysis of whether the study has responded to the critical research questions that aim to explore the values, drawbacks and strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Yet, as the study was being accomplished, initiatives were also undertaken to improve the overall validity and reliability of the study.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Research on labour hiring freeze has not been widely undertaken by most of the previous studies (Sullivan, 2000:1; Heathfield, 2018a:2; Mollica & DeWitt, 2000:1068). In effect, this study focuses on the sand mineral mining companies in the Gauteng Province for the reason that these companies share similar characteristics on the basis that they all mine from river banks, utilise the same markets as well as the same labour sources. At the same time, this research is therefore of significant importance because it will undertake thorough analysis of labour hiring freeze that will offer new insights on how labour hiring freeze can be undertaken. The study will enable the analysis of the values as well as the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Such analysis will enable management identify the risks of labour hiring freeze and to assess whether it is one of the cost cutting strategies that must be undertaken. With such drawbacks and risks identified, management will also be able to discern the strategies that must be applied to not only deal with such risks, but also to improve the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Through the application of such strategies, management would be able to

get better results. However, considering that the notion of labour hiring freeze is not a widely researched area, the findings of this research will certainly enrich the existing theories on labour hiring freeze.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

This research will be accomplished according to five main sections that encompass:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background: This chapter will provide the introduction and background on labour hiring free as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. It will also contain the research problem statement, research objectives and questions as well as the significance of the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: This chapter will offer a critical analysis of the literature on the values, drawbacks and strategies for improving labour hiring free as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology: This chapter will elucidate on the research paradigm, design and methodology used in the accomplishment of the primary research.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion: Findings of this research will be analysed and discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations: General conclusions and recommendations of the study will be documented in this chapter.

1.10 SUMMARY

It is evident from this chapter that the focus of this empirical research is to evaluate the opinions of the employees in the sand mining industry about the values, drawbacks and strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze as a cost cutting strategy. Such opinions are critical for discerning how labour hiring freeze can be undertaken in the future when faced with such similar situations. Since, it will expose the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze, it will enable the analysis of whether labour hiring freeze must be undertaken or the alternative cost cutting strategies such as improving operational efficiency can be undertaken. To reach logical conclusions, this chapter also provides the research problem statement as well as the objectives that guide the study. Against that backdrop, the discussions in the next chapter offer critical analysis of the literature which is relevant to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter offers a critical analysis of literature which are relevant to the study. The aim of the chapter is to respond to the first secondary research objective which is to examine the literature on the values, drawbacks and strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze. To accomplish this, the chapter provides critical analysis of the concept of labour hiring freeze. It also evaluates literature on the strategic labour hiring freeze process as well as the methodologies for labour hiring freeze. The later sections examine literature on the values and drawbacks of labour hiring freeze. The discussions conclude with the analysis of literature on the strategies for improving labour hiring free as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness. The details are as follows.

2.2 LABOUR HIRING FREEZE

Labour hiring freeze refers to the processing of banning the recruitment of new labour-force to fill the existing vacancies (Kenton, 2018:1). It instead emphasizes the utilization of the existing workers to cover up for the existing vacancies and shortfalls in a company's human resources. Labour hiring freeze entails temporal halt on recruitment of new workers. It also encompasses halts on pay increases as well as promotions. It is usually undertaken during periods of recess, or looming market crisis which is causing consistently a company's poor market performance (Scott, 2018:1). In effect, labour hiring freeze tends to be undertaken as a cost minimization quest during periods of consistently poor financial performance. Labour hiring freeze may also be undertaken during periods of a company's overcapacity or redundancy. It can also be influenced by government regulations, use of technology and the available labour pool (Sullivan, 2019:1). The motive of labour hiring freeze is usually not only to save costs, but also to avoid laying off employees. In situations where a crisis is not expected to last long, temporary halt of recruitment whilst also avoiding laying off the existing employees improves a company's responsiveness to the sudden future positive changes in market trends (Sullivan, 2019:1). Through such initiatives companies are often able to minimize costs. Labour hiring freeze minimizes costs in that as the business opts for the utilization of the existing labourforce, it tends to minimize the often hefty recruitment cost (Ladimeji, 2013:2). Significant reduction of labour costs reduces a company's

overall marginal cost and subsequently the prices that it charges the final consumers. This thereby impacts positively on a company's cost competitiveness. Improved cost competitiveness influences the increment of a company's returns on investment as well as shareholders' values (Ladimeji, 2013:2). It also enhances the optimization of the existing labourforce. Labour hiring freeze also influences improvement of employee motivation (Cooper, Johnson & Holdsworth, 2012:19). This is attributable to the fact that as the business seeks to optimize the existing employees instead of laying off, it tends to impact positively on improved employee motivation.

2.3 STRATEGIC LABOUR HIRING FREEZE PROCESS

Strategic labour hiring freeze constitutes of three main steps that encompass analyse, freeze and control (Nyasha, 2017:17; Sutcliffe, 2013:13).

2.3.1 Analyse

Analyse process entails the evaluation of the unfolding environmental trends vis-à-vis their impacts on a company's performance. This analyses can be done using a PESTEL (political, economical, social, technological, ecological and legal) analysis (Nyasha, 2017:17). Political trends would require the analysis of the implications of government policies on a company's performance. Areas of attention would require the analysis of the implication of government policies on employee rights, wages and other labour regulations. If it affects a company's cost savings, then, the use of labour cost reduction strategies such as downsizing, retrenchment or labour hiring freeze can be undertaken (Nyasha, 2017:17). Such analysis must be accompanied by the evaluation of the implications of the unfolding economic trends on a company's performance. Trends causing inflation or declining market attractiveness would also imply the use of labour hiring freeze would insulate the business against the impending turbulence. As on the otherhand, social trends would require the evaluation of the impact of social factors such as changes in customer tastes and preferences on a company's market performance (Sutcliffe, 2013:13). Declining market attractiveness would suggest that restructuring is critical for a company's survival during the periods of downturn. That implies the use of labour hiring freeze would be a prerequisite (Mbengeranwa, 2014:5).

Yet, as such analysis is being undertaken, the evaluation of the implications of the unfolding technological trends may also determine the employment policies that the business must pursue (Sutcliffe, 2013:13). Technologies that require less labour would create favourable conditions for

the implementation of labour hiring freeze. This contrasts with the situation where the emerging new technologies are more labour intensive however ecological pressure by activists would also imply that labour hiring freeze or any other forms of downsizing is a prerequisite (Rehnam, 2012:122). This is attributable to the fact that ecological pressure can in certain cases threaten the scale of operation or even the survival of a business which is engaged in the ecologically threatening business activities. The same applies to legal pressure where the changes in government regulations may create conditions that affect a company's performance (Nyasha, 2017:17). Such changes manifest the introduction of policies and legislations that liberalise the economy to create competition. Since competition reduces market attractiveness, aggressive cost cutting strategies such as downsizing or labour hiring freeze would enable a business reposition itself to thrive in the midst of the impending turbulence (Rehnam, 2012:122). Such analysis may reveal whether labour hiring freeze is required or not required. If required, the next step would require freezing.

2.3.2 Freeze

Freezing is the actual process of stopping hiring of new employees. Depending on the circumstance, it is more preferable as the business shifts its attention from seeking for recruits to devising the best ways of utilizing the available employees (Mekgoe, 2008:19). As compared to downsizing, it motivates the employees. It also saves costs as the costs of hiring new employees are eliminated. Freezing may not only entail stopping hiring of new employees, but also refraining from replacing the departing employees (Gyu-Chang & Joy Sung Park, 2002:486). This implies as the employees leave for reasons such as voluntary retirement, changed interests and better offers in alternative companies, their positions are not filled by new recruits (Mekgoe, 2008:19). Instead, the management explores how the remaining employees can be used to fill such gaps. In the periods of downturn, this also saves costs of recruiting new employees. Freezing may also require the reduction of workweeks that the employee spends at work (Sutcliffe, 2013:13). However, such approach is often disliked by the employees because it also involves reducing the pay that the employees earn. In effect, it is in most of the cases prone with the risks of losing very valuable employees. Yet, in addition to stopping hiring new employees, the business may also opt for salary freeze. Salary freeze is the process of stopping all forms of salary increases and promotions (Sutcliffe, 2013:13). Just like the reduction of workweek, this can also affect employee satisfaction. In most of the hiring freeze processes, existing employees tend to get allocated

additional roles and responsibilities (Baumolet, 2003:12). In effect, if addition of such new tasks is not accompanied with pay increases, it may cause dissatisfactions to in turn induce high turnover (Katua, Mukulu & Gachunga, 2014:5). However, salary freeze is often still a better option as compared to layoffs. This is because it enables a business to retain most of its employees. Yet, if salary freeze does not induce the desired effects on cost savings, some of the businesses still often opt for salary reduction. Just like salary freeze, salary reductions also enable a business retain most of its employees (Madrack, 2011:5). This presents a better option as compared to when the employees are retrenched during the periods of downturn.

In situations of acute crisis, salary reductions may be accompanied with the benefits freeze or reductions. This is attributable to the fact that in the event that the business is experiencing significant poor performance, benefits freeze or reduction is often opted for as compared to layoffs. This tends to motivate the employees as they retain their jobs (Madrack, 2011:5). Yet, besides salary and benefits freeze, some businesses may also opt for temporary layoffs with defined return dates or temporary shutdown. In a nutshell, hiring freeze is implemented by stopping all open requisitions, removing all postings on job boards, refraining from replacing departing employees, and stopping attendance of all job fairs and recruitment events (Scott, 2018:1). It also encompasses cancellation of all job interviews and offers. This contrasts with headcount freeze where new recruitments of exceptionally talented employees are not prohibited (Scott, 2018:1). Nevertheless, the completion of the freeze process is often followed with control.

2.3.3 Control

Control is the process of ensuring that labour hiring freeze achieves the intended outcomes (Kenton, 2018:2). It is the process of evaluating and correcting the deviating activities. It enables management deal with the emerging new challenges of labour hiring freeze. To accomplish this, continuous thorough analysis of the existing tasks and roles is a prerequisite. Such analysis is critical for identifying the areas of challenges. This enables effective response by identifying the employees that can fill such areas (Kenton, 2018:2). That implies it is not only tasks and roles' analysis which is important, but also the analysis of the personnel that can fill such positions (George, 2004:25). Such analysis must entail the evaluation of the skills and competencies of the selected employees as well as their abilities to multitask (Cascio, 2009:10). This is critical for ensuring the success of the labour hiring freeze that usually comes with the change and distortion

of tasks and roles. In the event that relevant skills and competencies are lacking, then, further training and retaining can be undertaken to improve the skills and competencies of the identified employees (Lashley, 2001:11). It is also during the control stage that management is able to assess the likely impacts of labour hiring freeze on cost reductions. This is important for assessing whether additional cost cutting strategies such as downsizing and layoffs can be undertaken (Cascio, 2009:10).

Yet, as the business follows this strategic labour hiring freeze process, there are also certain methodologies that must be used.

2.4 METHODOLOGIES OF LABOUR HIRING FREEZE

Labour hiring freeze may entail the use of methodologies that entail stopping hiring, freezing replacement of departing employees, reduction of workweek, salary reduction, benefits' reduction, temporary layoffs with defined return date, and temporary shutdowns (Babecky, Caju, Kosma, Lawless, Messina & Room, 2010:884; Behr & Potter, 2010:169; Zatzick, Marks & Iverson, 2009:78).

2.4.1 Stopping hiring

Stopping hiring is one of the methodologies for labour hiring freeze. It implies that as new vacancies emerge, new employees are not recruited to fill such vacancies. Stopping hiring is a temporary strategy for responding to the sudden economic recess. It enables a business utilise the existing employees as it waits for the recess to end (Zatzick et al. 2009:78). This tends to impact positively on employee motivation because it demonstrates the extent to which management is committed to preserving their jobs. Stopping hiring is usually applied in situations where retrenchment and layoffs are perceived to induce the undesired consequences of upsetting the existing work patterns and practices. Stopping hiring may be accompanied by a freeze on the replacement of the departing employees (Zatzick et al. 2009:78).

2.4.2 Freezing replacement of departing employees

Freezing the replacement of the departing employees is the other methodology for undertaking labour hiring freeze. This may be undertaken by refusing to hire new employees to replace the departing employees (Babecky et al. 2010:884). Generally, employees can leave for various reasons that among others may encompass changed interests, retirement, better offers from

competitors and dictate of the personal circumstances. As they leave due to such reasons, labour hiring freeze may be implemented to have such employees not replaced (Zatzick & Iverson, 2006:999). The implications are latent in the fact that the tasks that were previously accomplished by such employees are distributed among the existing remaining employees (Babecky et al. 2010:884). This enables a company save costs. However, the drawbacks are often latent in the fact that if the remaining employees cannot accomplish the unique tasks that were previously accomplished by the departing employees, the organisation may face a challenge (Babecky et al. 2010:884). This can affect performance. One of the strategies for responding to such circumstances is to create flexibility and exception where the departing employees that accomplish unique tasks can be replaced. However, even if labour hiring freeze does not involve a freeze on the replacement of the departing employees, it may also entail the reduction of workweek (Zatzick & Iverson, 2006:999).

2.4.3 Reduction of workweek

Reduction of workweek is a methodology that entails the reduction of the hours that employees work in a week or a month (Brockner, 2006:122). It is used in circumstances where the workload has reduced quite significantly due to recession. It encourages and motivates the employees on the basis that as compared to retrenchment, it tends to agitate for the retention of the existing employees. Reduction of workweek is preferable to seeing talented employees laid off (Brockner, 2006:122). However, in certain circumstances, it may tend to be viewed negatively by the employees especially if it also involves reducing the payment. This could cause dissatisfaction and defection of the employees (Cascio & Wynn, 2004:425). It also often tends to create disorders that affect the employees' confidence and trust in the business. However, one of the strategies of dealing with such circumstances is usually to clearly communicate to the employees about the motives and purpose of using reduction of workweek (Cascio & Wynn, 2004:425). It should be made clear that it is aimed at preserving the existing employees during the difficult situations that the business is facing. This could help reduce the high rate of dissatisfactions and discontent. Yet, as the reduction of the workweek is being undertaken, the business may also consider undertaking salary reduction (Cascio & Wynn, 2004:425).

2.4.4 Salary reduction

Salary reduction is the methodology that requires the reduction of the salaries for all the employees. It requires the determining of the percentage that must be cut off if the business is to meet the cost of retaining the existing employees. It is often preferred in situations where temporary aggressive cost savings is critical for enabling a business to thrive through the periods of turbulence. However, as much as its purpose may motivate the employees, its drawbacks may be reflected in reduced level of employee satisfaction. This could lure some of the employees to explore the employment opportunities in other organisations. Nevertheless, the use of salary reductions may be accompanied by benefits' reduction.

2.4.5 Benefits' reduction

Labour hiring freeze may also involve the reduction of the benefits that employees in general are entitled to (Cascio & Wynn, 2004:425). This would enable the business reduce costs to thrive through the periods of turbulence. However, just like salary reduction, benefits' reductions may also affect employee satisfaction and motivation.

2.4.6 Temporary layoffs with defined return date

The other methodology for labour hiring freeze may require temporary layoffs with defined return dates. It is the process of temporarily laying off some of the workers who are to return at later dates when the performance of the business has improved (Brockner, 2006:122). It may be for a period of the recess with the hope that if the economic conditions improve, the business can revert to its normal nature of operation. Depending on the circumstance that the business is faced with, temporary layoffs with defined return dates can be implemented throughout the organisation or in just some of the divisions or departments of the business. As compared to indefinite retrenchment, it may tend to motivate the employees (Brockner, 2006:122). However, the drawbacks are often latent in the fact that if the promise is not honoured, a business may face numerous suits for failure to honour their promise (Zatzick et al. 2009:78). This could turn to be costly in terms of the damages that the business must pay to the laid off employees. The other limitations are often latent in the fact that some of the valuable employees who are temporarily laid off may not return to work. This could cause additional costs that will have to be incurred in the recruitment of the replacements (Zatzick et al. 2009:78). Yet, if a business does not opt for temporary layoffs with defined return dates, it could opt for temporary shutdown.

2.4.7 Temporary shutdowns

Labour hiring freeze may also entail the use of temporary shutdowns. Temporary shutdowns are implemented by closing the business for a certain period of time (Messina, Duarte, Izquierdo, Caju & Hansen, 2010:487). It entails closing and opening the business after sometimes. This could enable a business avoid failure. However, the risks may be latent in the fact that some of the valuable employees may seek for alternative employment. It may also tend to be costly in terms of customer confidence and trust in the business (Messina et al. 2010:487). In the long run, such declining customer confidence and trust may cause increased customer dissatisfaction and defection. These may in turn cause loss of revenues and declining performance. Yet, as the business implements temporary shutdown, it may also expose itself to several legal suits from the employees for breach of contract (Messina et al. 2010:487). In effect, temporary shutdown should be undertaken only in the exceptional circumstances. Certainly when successful, labour hiring freeze can induce enormous values for the organisation.

2.5 VALUES OF LABOUR HIRING FREEZE

Literature suggests that the values of labour hiring freeze often encompass improved cost competitiveness, productivity and motivation (Gittonga, 2012:119; Heathfield, 2018a:2; Ladimeji, 2013:2; Madrick, 2011:5).

2.5.1 Cost Competitiveness

A company's cost competitiveness is often measured by its capabilities to uniquely control its cost variables and offer products at prices that cannot be easily matched by rivals in a particular industry (Gittonga, 2012:119). That implies a company's cost management approach is a critical determinant of its competitiveness. In the quests to control costs to gain competitive edge whether during periods of turbulence or even in the midst of superior market performance, some of the businesses often resort to labour hiring freeze as a cost cutting driver (Gittonga, 2012:119). Labour hiring freeze enables a company reduce its costs of hiring new employees, costs of advertisement as well as costs of hiring recruitment agents and consultants. It also involves freeze on pay increases that in turn enables a business save enormous costs incurred through payment of the employees' salaries (Madrick, 2011:5). That signifies during periods of turbulence, labour hiring freeze therefore enables a company to reposition itself to respond to the changes unfolding in its external business environment. In such situations, labour hiring freeze often emerges as a strategic

tool that drives a company's cost competitiveness. This is because labour hiring freeze may entail recruitment freeze, termination of agency contracts, temporary layoff and freeze on pay increases. However, Porter (1985:46) argues that it is not only a company's capabilities to control its human resource costs that determine its cost competitiveness. Instead, cost competitiveness is reiterated by Porter to also be influenced by a combination of variables. Such variables encompass a company's capabilities to control the costs of its raw-materials (Heathfield, 2018a:2). Costs of raw-materials determine the costs of each unit per output and subsequently the prices that the business charges to the final consumers. Combined with investment in the appropriate machineries and technology to drive operational efficiency, this determines a company's cost competitiveness (Heathfield, 2018a:2). Yet, besides the cost of raw-materials and automation that drive cost efficiency, cost competitiveness is also often drawn from outsourcing. Outsourcing enables companies reduce the costs of managing non-core activities. Combined with other factors such as labour hiring freeze, this drives a company's overall competitiveness. Yet, as labour hiring freeze drives a company's cost competitiveness, it may also tend to impact positively on a company's labour force's productivity (Heathfield, 2018a:2).

2.5.2 Labour Productivity

Labour hiring freeze influence a company's labour productivity (Ladimeji, 2013:2). Labour productivity is the ratio of output per employee in a given organisation. Productivity is predicted by the employee skilfulness and the work environment that he or she is exposed to. Productivity determines a company's performance and the extent to which it is able to achieve its desired strategic objectives and goals (Gwisai, 2006:435). As the business freezes recruitment of new employees, it tends to optimize the existing labour. This influences the improvement of the output that the business is able to get per each unit of labour. This influences throughput and productivity (Ladimeji, 2013:2). Labour hiring freeze encourages the existing employees to work harder if they are to retain their jobs. It instils in the employees a sense of commitment and the need to put the necessary efforts to aid the organisation to achieve its desired strategic objectives and goals. Yet, as the business opts for labour hiring freeze instead of layoff during periods of recess, labour hiring freeze may also influence the improvement of employee motivation.

2.5.3 Employee Motivation

In situations of recess and downturn, most of the businesses often opt for layoff. Yet layoff often causes anxiety, frustrations and low morale. This affects the level of employee motivation (Brockner, 2006:122). However, if labour hiring freeze is opted for, it tends to motivate the existing employees. This is attributable to the fact that during labour hiring freeze, companies often devise the best ways through which the existing employees can be optimized to achieve the desired strategic objectives and goals (Brockner, 2006:122). As compared to retrenchment and layoff, during labour hiring freeze, the existing employees are instead granted more responsibilities. This tends to influence the improvement of the existing employees' level of motivation. Improved level of motivation not only influences improved productivity, but also the quality of customer services (Brockner, 2006:122). Improved quality of customer services creates points-of-difference that not only influences increased sales and revenues, but also competitiveness. Employee motivation is therefore a critical predictor of a company's performance. It enhances the achievement of the desired strategic goals and objectives. This is attributable to the fact that labour hiring freeze unlike retrenchment enables a business build good relationship with its employees. Instead of retrenchment, hiring freezes renders the employees to feel valued. This can impact positively on their motivation to spur the improvement of a company's overall effective performance. Brockner (2006:122) posits that employees are mainly motivated in circumstances where they are recognized for their work roles. Employees are also motivated by the approach undertaken to avail them with relevant opportunities for career growth and development. Using labour hiring freeze as contrasted to retrenchment therefore offers the existing employees with the opportunities for career growth and development. As the existing employees are involved and engaged in the accomplishment of additional activities, it tends to motivate them. In line with Maslow's theory of motivation, this also responds to the employees' psychological needs and the need for safety. It also responds to the employees' needs of love and belonging, esteem and self-actualisation. As compared to retrenchment that tends to create unfavourable work environment, labour hiring freeze creates favourable work environments. This can impact on employee motivation. Such a view is accentuated in Herzberg's theory that emphasises the importance of the work environment and conditions as determinants of employee satisfaction. Kressler, (2003) hygiene factors such as company policy, interpersonal relations, working conditions and salary or job security may affect employee satisfaction and motivation. In effect, the adoption of the company policy that

encourages labour hiring freeze and not retrenchment may tend to impact positively on employee motivation. The use of labour hiring freeze as contrasted to retrenchment also creates job security for the existing employees. It is through such initiatives that labour hiring freeze influences improved employee satisfaction and motivation. However, Sullivan (2008:2) argues that as much as most companies often opt for labour hiring freeze during periods of downturn, it often induces drastic consequences on a company's performance.

2.6 DRAWBACKS OF LABOUR HIRING FREEZE

The review of literature implies that labour hiring may affect revenue generating roles, cause frustrations and discontent among employees and affect a company's brand image (Cascio, 2009:10; Heathfield, 2018b:2; Sullivan, 2000:1).

2.6.1 Distortion of Revenue Generating Roles

Labour hiring freeze may significantly affect a company's most revenue generating roles. As most revenue generating activities get accomplished by less manpower or lesser qualified manpower, their poor accomplishment tends to affect the revenue generating potential of such activities (Sullivan, 2000:1). This can significantly affect some of the most revenue generating roles. That implies loss of revenues that cannot be compensated through any drastic cost savings initiative. Signification loss of revenues may also arise from the declining level of customer satisfaction (Sullivan, 2000:1). As employees perform double roles during periods of labour hiring freeze, quality of customer services may decline to affect the overall level of customer satisfaction. Increase customer dissatisfaction may in turn induce customer defection and subsequently declining sales and revenue (Serbu, 2012:397). This may affect a company's competitiveness and its overall returns on shareholders' value as well as growth. Other costs that may also affect the values of labour hiring freeze may arise from the costs of rebuilding the dismantled recruitment system when need arises in future (Heathfield, 2018b:2). This is attributable to the fact that long term labour hiring freeze may tend to cause reduced recruitment budgets and the dismantling of the existing structures. This could turn to be costly when the need for recruitment arises in future (Heathfield, 2018b:2). Such high costs are often exacerbated by excessive early spending syndrome. In the event of the anticipated labour hiring freeze, excessive early spending syndrome often tend to arise from the managers' preponderance to over hire so as to insulate themselves from the negative effects of labour hiring freeze (Cascio, 2009:10). This causes enormous early

initial expenditures that can render labour hiring freeze rather more expensive in its early stages. Combined with the rise in the costs for administering labour hiring freeze, it is often such costs that erode the cost saving advantages of labour hiring freeze (Cascio, 2009:10). Yet, as employees are overworked by performing other additional functions, frustrations and discontent may tend to set in to affect the overall level of employee motivation.

2.6.2 Frustrations and Discontent

Quite often, labour hiring may also tend to cause employee frustrations and discontent. Labour hiring freeze is often accompanied with a freeze on promotions as well as pay increases (Nabi, Islam, Dip & Hossain, 2017:293). These tend to cause discontentment, frustrations and dissatisfactions. Yet, as employees accomplish double tasks which may certainly be new tasks that they are not abreast with, frustrations and discontent tend to set in to in turn cause low morale and motivation (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008:259). Combined with the tendencies to overwork the existing employees during the periods of labour hiring freeze, these can also cause employee burnout and turnover. High level of employee burnout causes not only high turnover, but also declining employee motivation (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008:259). Declining employee motivation may in turn cause high defections and high turnover rate. High level of discontent among the employees may also affect productivity and a company's overall throughput. In turn declining productivity and throughput may affect a company's overall performance (Formato, 2015:1). Yet, as the employees also become increasingly dissatisfied, the lesser they may also tend to refer exceptionally talented new recruits. That implies labour hiring freeze may also cause management to miss exceptionally talented new recruits who could have been instrumental for turning around a company's performance during periods of downturn (Mullins, 2005:19). Combined with its likely effects on a company's declining innovativeness capability, all these could significantly affect a company's performance.

2.6.3 May affect Brand Image

Labour hiring may also tend to affect a company's brand image (Guthrie & Datta 2008:108). This is attributable to the fact that labour hiring often sends wrong signals to the competitors about a company's capabilities to withstand the unfolding volatile changes in market trends. Using such information, competitors are often able to devise new actions on how a company's existing performance can be undermined. It is often during the emergence of such situations that labour

hiring freeze may affect a company's competitiveness (Guthrie & Datta 2008:108). Yet as the business constantly engages labour hiring freeze, its employment brand as the desired organisation to work for may also tend to be undermined. This affects the confidence and trust that the existing pool of employees may also have in such organisation (Iverson & Pullman, 2000:977). It is such declining level of trust and confidence that also usually affect the employee morale and commitment to aid a business achieve its strategic goals and objectives. Combined with negative signals to analysts, customers, suppliers and employees, frequent labour hiring may also imply that a business is in serious trouble to affect its stock price and overall value (Iverson & Pullman, 2000:977). All these imply that for labour hiring freeze to be undertaken, the use of certain strategies to improve its effectiveness is a prerequisite.

2.7 STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LABOUR HIRING FREEZE

Literature suggests that the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness often encompass assessment and identification of individual motivators, task and process re-engineering, job enrichment, training and re-training and downsizing (Baumolet, 2013:9; Jones & George, 2016:160; Ladimeji, 2013:1).

2.7.1 Assessment and Identification of Individual Motivators

In a study conducted on the strategies for raising productivity during labour hiring freeze, Ladimeji (2013:1) suggested the need for the assessment and identification of the individual motivators. The assessment and identification of the individual motivators is critical for identifying and eliminating factors that usually arise to cause low morale and motivation during the implementation of the labour hiring freeze. It helps reduce the high rate of labour turnover that usually tend to emerge during labour hiring freeze. This must be accompanied by the encouragement of creativity and innovations to enable employees cope with the new tasks that are allocated to them (Jones & George, 2016:160). This can be accomplished by replacing stale inefficient processes with innovative interventions that raise efficiency and productivity levels. The application of such strategies can be undertaken in conjunction with the use of brainstorming sessions and social media platforms to enable employees raise ideas on how to improve business processes, customer satisfaction and reduce lead time (Jones & George, 2016:160). Such initiatives can be undertaken in conjunction with task and process re-engineering.

2.7.2 Task and Process Re-Engineering

As such initiatives are being undertaken, the business must also undertake task and process re-engineering to identify and eliminate new glitches that are affecting operational efficiency in the now more complex networks of new operational systems (Baumolet, 2013:9). The management must also develop a new system for motivating the employees during the labour hiring freeze. Such initiatives may require the use of employee recognition systems, bonuses, rewards and gift vouchers as well as promise of promotion after the labour hiring freeze measures are lifted. These must be accompanied by the development of the appropriate communication mechanisms to ensure that employees are able to raise any grievances that could be affecting their performance (Baumolet, 2013:9). Such grievances must also be timely resolved if management is to stimulate improved employee motivation. Sullivan (2008:2) argues that to circumvent the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze, management must conduct analysis to identify the roles where labour hiring freeze can be applied and the others that cannot. This would enable the identification of the most essential roles that must be exempted from labour hiring freeze. It is through such initiative that a business is able to maintain its productivity and revenue generating potential during the labour hiring freeze. Yet, as such initiatives are being undertaken; Sullivan (2008:2) further suggests that management must also allow internal movements of the employees during the labour hiring freeze. Such initiatives would permit the shifting of the employees to the areas of importance as compared to the areas of less importance. This must be accompanied by retaining and reskilling of the employees to ensure that they are able to handle different emerging tasks presented by the labour hiring freeze (Serbu, 2012:397). As such initiatives are being undertaken, management must also continuously analyse their cost metrics to assess the actual impact of the labour hiring freeze on cost reductions. This must be undertaken in conjunction with frequent performance evaluation to identify and correct areas of challenges (Serbu, 2012:397). It is through such initiatives that management may be able to ensure the success of the labour hiring freeze. However, given the fact that labour hiring freeze distorts the networks of the existing work roles, it must also be accompanied by job enrichment.

2.7.3 Job Enrichment

Job enrichment is the process of designing or redesigning the existing work roles in more interesting way that require new skills as well as pay increases. In the event of labour hiring freeze, job enrichment is therefore critical for devising new ways through which work can be

accomplished. Developed by Herzberg (1968), the notion of job enrichment was extracted from the Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory. The motivator-hygiene theory holds that employee attitude and performance is predicted by two independent constructs that include intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors emerge from the actual process of the accomplishment of the job and it is influenced by achievement and advancement. While extrinsic factors are external from the actual process of accomplishing work and it is influenced by variables such as company policy and the quality of management supervision. Job enrichment therefore seeks to reduce intrinsic and extrinsic factors that affect employee's satisfaction during the accomplishment of the allocated work roles (Wall et al., 2004:88). Job enrichment is a vertical work restructuring mechanism that focuses on allocating more authority, independence and control on how tasks are accomplished. This contrasts with job enlargement that focuses on horizontal job restructuring by increasing tasks without increase in authority, autonomy and control. Enrichment of the employee's job shows the respect and value that management has for the employee (Wall et al., 2004:88). This tends to motivate the employee to pay back by working hard to improve his or her performance. During labour hiring freeze, job enrichment tends to be critical for turning employees' efforts into performance. It ensures not only that tasks are well defined, but also the objectives and goals of the organisation during the labour hiring freeze. This eliminates conflicts to improve the overall effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. It also enhances the analysis of the resources which are critical for the accomplishment of the newly designed tasks (Zatzick et al., 2009:78). This improves the allocation of sufficient resources such as finances, technology and machineries for each tasks. In that regard, it therefore reduces the risks of the emergence of employee dissatisfaction. Since job enrichment seeks to link performance to rewards, it is also most likely to develop rewards and recognition systems that motivate the employees during the labour hiring freeze (Zatzick et al. 2009:78). The use of job enrichment during the labour hiring freeze may also encourage reskilling and retaining for employees to learn new skills. This improves the ability of the employees to accomplish the new tasks and roles that have been allocated to them (Holden & Wulfsberg, 2009:605).

2.7.4 Training and Re-training

Training and re-training are some of the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. This is attributable to the fact that as labour hiring freeze is undertaken; it tends to create the need for training and re-training (Holden & Wulfsberg, 2009:605). Labour hiring freeze causes

the shifting of the existing employees to the areas that they are not conversant with. This creates the need for training and re-training to re-skill the existing employees to accomplish the newly allocated tasks. To accomplish this, training and retraining programme will have to be undertaken according to the three main steps that encompass training needs' analysis, the development of the training programme, training and evaluation of the impact of training and re-training on employee performance (Holden & Wulfsberg, 2009:605). Training needs' analysis will have to entail the evaluation of the areas and departments where training is required. This implies the departments where enormous changes have been undertaken to ensure that employees accomplish different tasks during the labour hiring freeze may require training (Behr & Potter, 2010:169). The identification of the departments that require training and re-training must be accompanied by the evaluations of the areas and tasks where training and re-training are required. This is often followed by the identification of the staffs that require training and retraining. The staffs that require training and re-training may tend to be those that have taken additional tasks or new tasks that require additional new skills (Behr & Potter, 2010:169). Comprehensive training needs' analysis may create the condition for the development of the appropriate training programmes. Depending on the identified needs, the contents of the training programmes must be developed and designed in the way that responds to the identified needs and demands (Behr & Potter, 2010:169). Following the design of the training programmes, the actual training process is often undertaken. Training can be done on-the-job or off-the-job. The on-the-job training programmes are often accomplished by assigning supervisors and managers to offer mentorship to the trainees. This improves the extent to which the trainees are able to easily grasp the critical practical skills for the accomplishment of the different required tasks (Elsby, 2009:154). However, off-the-job training programmes would require the management to develop programmes such as workshops, seminars and conferences to train the employees. It may also require the use of short courses at universities or colleges. This influences the grasping of the relevant theoretical knowledge on how the required tasks must be accomplished (Elsby, 2009:154). However, given the fact that labour hiring freeze is implemented during periods of downturn, it is recommendable that only on-the-job training programmes are undertaken. This is attributable to the fact that they are cheaper and easier to undertake as compared to the off-the-job training programmes (Elsby, 2009:154). Nevertheless, the completion of the actual training must be followed by evaluation to assess whether the newly acquired skills is being utilised in the accomplishment of different tasks. It is also important to explore whether

there is improvement in performance after the training programmes have been undertaken (Cascio & Wynn, 2004:425). During the labour hiring freeze, such evaluation is important for assessing whether the desired objectives and goals are being achieved. However, in situations where labour hiring freeze does not breed the desired cost savings, then, the alternative is downsizing (Cascio & Wynn, 2004:425).

2.7.5 Downsizing

Wayne (2009:12) argues that in instances where labour hiring freeze is not able to induce the desired cost saving advantages, downsizing can be undertaken. Downsizing is the process of reducing the scale of operation by eliminating or reducing some of the departments or divisions. It is a major restructuring process that enables a business reposition itself to respond to the changes unfolding in its external business environment. As compared to labour hiring freeze which is often temporarily undertaken, downsizing is a permanent initiative that sees the business reduce its scale of operation (Zatzick et al. 2009:78). Besides failure of the labour hiring freeze, downsizing is often motivated by the quests to respond to the protracted recession causing consistent poor performance. It is also undertaken in the event where a business is unable to realize profitability due to the extensive costs arising from the extensive expansion of the business. In the event that labour hiring freeze is unable to enable a business respond to such circumstances, downsizing often offers the solution if the recession becomes more protracted. To downsize, Wayne (2009:12) suggests that there are four main strategies that a business can use. The four broad strategies encompass attrition, voluntary termination, early retirement incentives and compulsory termination. Attrition requires the business not to replace the departing employees. This aids the reduction of the labour cost as work is distributed amongst the remaining employees (Brockner, 2006:122). Voluntary termination refers to the process where employees are offered the choice of resigning in exchange for a payment package which is being offered. It reduces the risks of distortion and low motivation that usually arises during the downsizing process. This is because employees voluntarily decide to leave (Zatzick et al. 2009:78). As compared to firing and forced layoff, it tends to offer a more dignified way of undertaking downsizing. Nevertheless, in addition to voluntary termination, a business may also opt for the use of early retirement incentives. This is often undertaken by offering a package of incentives for the employees who are willing to go into early retirement (Zatzick & Iverson, 2006:999). However, the drawbacks of voluntary termination and early retirement incentives are often latent in the fact that if the employees refuse

to leave, the business may be forced to use compulsory termination. Compulsory termination may tend to cause chaos that distorts the normal flow of work. It may also tend to cause employee dissatisfaction and low motivation (Zatzick & Iverson, 2006:999). To minimise risks of the emergence of such situations, it is advisable that management becomes transparent to the employees about the economic conditions that the business faces and its likely effects on organisational performance as well as the employees (Holden & Wulfsberg, 2009:605). This would create a situation where the employees get to understand the reasons why downsizing must be undertaken. It is also critical to treat the affected employees with respect and sensitivity to avoid upsetting some of the employees who may feel abused during the downsizing process (Holden & Wulfsberg, 2009:605). To accomplish this, it is critical for a business to use procedures that are transparent and seen as fair and just. One of such procedures would require the identification of the departments where performance is really low or the divisions that have become redundant that must be eliminated (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004:52). This must be followed by the identification of the low performing employees that must be laid off before considering the talented and best performing employees. It is also critical to give the employees the option of choosing how they can exit the organisation.

2.8 SUMMARY

Labour hiring freeze tends to be undertaken as a cost minimization quest during periods of consistently poor financial performance. Labour hiring freeze may also be undertaken during periods of a company's overcapacity or redundancy. It can also be influenced by government regulations, use of technology and the available labour pool. The motive of labour hiring freeze is usually not only to save costs, but also to avoid laying off employees. In situations where a crisis is not expected to last long, temporary halt of recruitment whilst also avoiding laying off the existing employees improves a company's responsiveness to the sudden future positive changes in market trends (Sullivan, 2019:1). Through such initiatives companies are often able to minimize costs. Strategic labour hiring freeze constitutes of three main steps that encompass analyse, freeze and control (Nyasha, 2017:17; Sutcliffe, 2013:13). Analyse process entails the evaluation of the unfolding environmental trends vis-à-vis their impacts on a company's performance. Freezing is the actual process of stopping hiring of new employees. Control is the process of ensuring that labour hiring freeze achieves the intended outcomes. Yet, as the business follows this strategic labour hiring freeze process, there are also certain methodologies that must be used. Labour hiring

freeze may entail the use of methodologies that entail stopping hiring, freezing replacement of departing employees, reduction of workweek, salary reduction, benefits' reduction, temporary layoffs with defined return date, and temporary shutdowns. Certainly when successful, labour hiring freeze can induce enormous values for the organisation. Literature suggests that the values of labour hiring freeze often encompass improved cost competitiveness, productivity and motivation (Gittonga, 2012:119; Heathfield, 2018a:2; Ladimeji, 2013:2; Madrick, 2011:5). However, Sullivan (2008:2) argues that as much as most companies often opt for labour hiring freeze during periods of downturn, it often induces drastic consequences on a company's performance. Literature implies that labour hiring may affect revenue generating roles, cause frustrations and discontent among employees and affect a company's brand image (Cascio, 2009:10; Heathfield, 2018a:2; Sullivan, 2000:1). All these imply that for labour hiring freeze to be undertaken, the use of certain strategies to improve its effectiveness is a prerequisite. Literature suggests that the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness often encompass assessment and identification of individual motivators, task and process re-engineering, job enrichment, training and re-training and downsizing (Baumolet, 2013:9; Jones & George, 2016:160; Ladimeji, 2013:1). From this summary, it is clear that the study has succeeded to respond to the first secondary research objective which is to examine the literature on the values, drawbacks and strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze. Against this theoretical background, the discussions in the next chapter offer critical insights on the research design and methodology used in the primary research process.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter elucidates on the research paradigm, design and methodology that were used in the accomplishment of the primary research process. The aim of the chapter was to reach the second secondary research objective which is to select the most appropriate methodology and design to reach the objectives. To accomplish this, the chapter offers insights on the sampling methods used as well as the methods for data collection and analysis. Later sections in the chapter examined the measures for enhancing validity and reliability as well as the ethical considerations of the study. The details are as follows.

3.2 DEDUCTIVE RESEARCH PARADIGM

This research is based on the deductive research paradigm. A research paradigm connotes the philosophical thinking and ways of reasoning that guide the entire research process (Bryman & Bell, 2007:49). A research paradigm can be deductive or inductive. A deductive research paradigm often commences with problem identification as well as hypothesis formulation and subsequently the collection of secondary and primary data to discern how such hypothesis is confirmed or disputed (Hunter, Laura, Leahey & Erin, 2008:6). In contrast, the inductive research paradigm often commences with problem identification and subsequently secondary and primary data collection and analysis to discern the theory that can be extracted to respond to the identified problem (Diriwachter & Valsiner, 2006:19; Taylor, 2007:119). The selection of the research paradigm is usually predicted by the nature of the research. In effect, this research opts for the use of the deductive research paradigm. This is explained by the fact that the study is aimed at assessing the opinions of the employees on labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry. In effect, the study aims to elicit summarised numerical responses to aid not only the analysis of the frequencies, but also the means to compare the opinions between different groups. Through such analysis, the study will be able to identify the values as well as the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze so as to discern the strategies that can be recommended for improving the implementation of labour hiring freeze in the sand minerals

mining industry. Whereas the paradigm in such analysis is deductive, the research design is exploratory.

3.3 EXPLORATORY RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design connotes a framework of critical methodologies and techniques which are used in the accomplishment of the research process (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006:12). A research design can be exploratory, co-relational, post adhoc, experimental or a case study (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2006:12). However, this research uses the exploratory research design. The use of the exploratory research design aided the analysis of the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Through such analysis, the use of exploratory research design enabled the study respond to the third and the fourth secondary research objectives which were to:

- Analyse the perspectives of the employees in the sand mining industry about the values, drawbacks and strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze.
- Recommend measures for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry.

As a result of what was refined in the literature, the process of inquiry was accomplished by asking four critical questions for the study that entailed the evaluation of:

- What are the values of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry?
- What are the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry?
- Which strategies are used for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry?
- Which measures can be recommended for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry?

By asking such four critical questions, the study was able to respond to the third and fourth secondary research objectives. However, to accomplish the entire primary research process, the study used the survey research method.

3.4 RESEARCH METHOD

A research method refers to the set of the techniques used in the accomplishment of the primary research process (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009:9). A research method can be quantitative or qualitative. Quantitative research method uses natural science to analyse the relationship between one or more sets of variables. It also aims at testing the formulated theories or hypothesis. It seeks for summarized numerical responses on the phenomenon being investigated (Teti, Bowleg, Cole & Gold, 2010:567). Quantitative research often uses experiments, surveys or statistical analysis as methodologies for reaching necessary conclusions on the phenomenon being researched. Qualitative research method emphasizes detailed in-depth non-numerical responses from the participants about the phenomenon being investigated. It uses techniques such as observation, focus group discussions, interviews and content analysis (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010:16). However, this research uses the quantitative research method. This is attributable to the fact that as the study seeks to explore the employees'/managers' opinions on labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry, the use of the quantitative research was considered critical for enabling necessary logical conclusions to be reached. To accomplish this, the study used the survey research method to explore the opinions of the respondents to be selected using the methodology discussed below.

3.5 SAMPLING

Sampling is the process of drawing the units of analysis from the larger target population (Fox, Hunn & Mathers, 2009:6). A target population refers to the subjects or units that are related to the phenomenon being researched (Bland, 2010:14). In this research, the target population constitute of 166 managers from 13 (thirteen) sand minerals mining companies in the Gauteng Province. Gauteng Province was selected due to the larger concentration of the sand minerals mining companies in Gauteng as compared to the other provinces. Since the researcher resides in Gauteng, Gauteng Province was also selected due its proximity that would render the study more cost effective. Nevertheless, the target population of 166 managers was established after a brief survey of each of the thirteen sand mining companies to establish the number of managers that each sand

mining company possesses. To determine the sample population that must be used in the research, the study uses Yamane's (1967:886) formula;

$$\text{no (Sample Size)} = \frac{N (166)}{1 + N (166) (e (\text{Precision level at 10\%}))^2} = 99.4.$$

It is evident from the application of Yamane's (1967:886) formula that the valid sample would be 99 managers, which is approximately 60 percent (99.4/166) of the population. To draw the sample units from each of the 13 sand mining companies, the study will use cluster sampling and simple random sampling. In the first instance, cluster sampling will be applied to have the sample population of 99 respondents divided by the 13 clusters or sand mining companies ($\frac{99.4}{13} = 8$) to have 8 sample units drawn from each sand mining company or cluster. The process for drawing the 8 sample managers from each cluster will be accomplished using simple random sampling. The study will focus on the managers. It is only managers from these companies that will be the focus of the study on the basis that as contrasted with the semi-skilled and unskilled ordinary miners, managers are most likely to be knowledgeable about the issue of labour hiring freeze and cost competitiveness. This will enhance the effective completion of the questionnaire. This is attributable to the fact that managers in the sand mining industries are also most likely to have access to computers that would render the completion of the survey questionnaire relatively easier. Managers are also relatively well skilled to minimise the need to have to translate the questionnaire into different languages. That implies that after the consent from the relevant mining companies is obtained, the study will only focus on the managers who are expected to spare about 10 minutes of their time to complete the questionnaire. Each of the respondents will be surveyed using the survey questionnaire.

3.6 DESIGN OF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Primary data will be collected using the survey research questionnaire (See Annexure 1). The survey research questionnaire were designed in line with the research objectives and questions (Gillham, 2008:9). This is a newly developed questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed in consultation with the literature in chapter 2 of this dissertation. In effect, it contains four sections, A to D that are drawn from the sections of the literature in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. Section A contains demographical questions. Demographical information was asked in order to assess the variance in the age, gender and experience of the respondents. It also enabled the evaluation of the

representativeness of the respondents which was critical for assessing the validity and reliability of the findings. Section B explored the values of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. This section was drawn from section 2.5 of the literature in chapter 2 of this dissertation that elucidates on the literature on the values of labour hiring freeze. The third section (C) evaluates the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. This section was drawn from section 2.6 of the literature in chapter 2 of this dissertation that deals with the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze. The fourth section (D) examines the strategies used for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. This section was drawn from section 2.7 of the literature in chapter 2 of this dissertation that deals with the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. Each statement on the questionnaire from section B, C and Section D contains five options that encompass 1- A great deal, 2- Quite a bit, 3- Some-what, 4- Very little, 5-Not at all. Measures were also undertaken to ensure that each statement in the questionnaire is unambiguous with clear meaning for the respondents to respond with relative ease. Upon completion of the design of the questionnaire, Prof Suria Ellis from the Statistical Consultation Services at NWU who is an expert on questionnaire development was consulted to assess the suitability and validity of the questionnaire. Her input led to the change of the scales for measuring the statements in the questionnaire from 1- strongly agree, 2- agree, 3-unsure, 4 disagree, 5- strongly disagree to 1-a great deal, 2- quite a bit, 3-somewhat, 4- very little, 5-not at all (See Annexure 5). Thereafter, a Cronbach alpha analysis was undertaken to test the validity and reliability of the survey questionnaire. The result of the Cronbach alpha analysis was 0.8 which in the context of Bryman and Bell's (2005) views indicated the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. This was followed by a brief pilot testing to test the suitability of the survey questionnaire. Any errors detected were corrected prior to the commencement of the actual data collection that was accomplished using personal administration.

3.7 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

In the first instance, emails were sent to each of the 166 managers in participating sand mining companies that were the target of the study, requesting them to participate in the study. The emails

informed the respective managers about the nature of the study as well as its purpose. It was indicated that the purpose of the study is mainly academic, although participation would be critical for determining how the implementation of labour hiring freeze can be improved. The letter indicated that participation in the survey is not mandatory, thus, implying that if one did not wish to participate, they were free not to do so. However, the letter further advised that even if participation is not mandatory, it is still important for discerning how the implementation of labour hiring freeze can be undertaken in the sand mining industry. This is because labour hiring freeze affects almost every employee in the sand mining industry.

After the consent from all the 13 sand mining companies was obtained, a manager was appointed in each of the 13 sand mining companies to supervise the completion of questionnaires on survey monkey. Although all the 13 sand mining companies accepted to participate in the study unconditionally, one exception only gave the permission for the questionnaire to be sent to three managers and three supervisors only. For purpose of accomplishing the study by getting the required data, such conditions were complied with. Thereafter, the Survey Monkey Link was then sent to all managers who consented to participate in the study. This was made easy by the fact that the researcher is also a manager and a previous affiliate of the association of financial administrators of the mining industry of which most managers in the mining sector affiliate to.

Nevertheless, two days after the distribution of the Survey Monkey link to questionnaire, follow up calls and emails were made to convince the respondents to complete the questionnaires via the link and urgency was explained to participants. The Survey Monkey link also had a letter explaining the purpose and nature of the study and explicitly specifying tight timelines to respond. All these processes of data collection was accomplished in the last quarter of 2019. Nevertheless, the process of data collection went on until 96 managers and supervisors had responded to the questionnaire. Since, 96 is close to the original formula/calculation of 99 in section 3.5 and no additional responses were obtained, it was the 96 sample respondents that were used in the study. It was these 96 of the sent questionnaires that were used in the study. The obtained survey data was analysed according to the process described in the next section.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

The obtained data was analysed using Statistical Programme for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 (See Annexure 2). That implies after all the data had been obtained, data cleaning was

undertaken prior to capturing raw data into the SPSS spreadsheet (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010:22; Petrie & Samib, 2005:36). This was followed by an analysis to obtain the frequency for each variable. The analysis of the frequencies was accompanied by the analysis of the mean to compare the opinions of different groups (indicated by demographic factors). The obtained frequencies for each variable were presented in charts and accompanied with the explanation and discussion of the mean. Subsequently, the findings were presented according to three sections that encompass the values of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry, the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry, and the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Such presentation aided the analysis of whether the study has responded to the critical research questions that aim to explore the values, drawbacks and strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Yet, as the study was being accomplished, initiatives were also undertaken to improve the overall validity and reliability of the study.

3.9 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Validity is the extent to which the study measures what it is intended to measure. In this research, validity was enhanced by addressing content, construct and criterion validity (Petrie & Samib, 2005:36). Content validity was undertaken by assessing whether the research instrument measures what it is aimed to measure. This was accompanied by the analysis of construct validity to explore whether inferences can be drawn from the findings of the concept studied. This was accomplished by assessing homogeneity, convergence and theory evidence. Homogeneity assessed whether the instrument measures only one construct, as convergence measured whether the instrument measures concept similar to the other instruments (Petrie & Samib, 2005:36). Theory evidence was used to assess whether the findings of the study are backed by different theoretical propositions. Criterion validity was upheld by comparing and contrasting the research instrument with any other instruments that measure the same variables (Johnson & Christensen, 2008:2). This was accomplished by assessing convergent, divergent and predictive validity. All these were accompanied by the measures for enhancing reliability of the study. Reliability measures the internal consistency of the research instrument. Besides the internal consistency, reliability was addressed by assessing item-to-total correlation, split-half reliability and Cronbach's alpha

analysis (Johnson & Christensen, 2008:2). Other measures that were used encompass test-retest reliability, parallel-form reliability and inter-rater reliability. To assess the validity of the questionnaire, Prof Suria Ellis from the Statistical Consultation Services at NWU who is an expert on questionnaire development was consulted to assess the suitability and validity of the questionnaire. This further improved the validity and reliability of the survey questionnaire.

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations were undertaken by in the first instance obtaining the ethical approval from the North-West University's Ethics Committee (See Annexure 4). This was accompanied by seeking for the letter of consent from the organisations that constituted the subjects of the study. Consent letters from the selected 13 sand mining companies were received and kept in a password protected file in case any future verification is required. During the actual research process, ethical considerations were undertaken by explaining the nature of the study to the respondents so that they could understand the nature of the study (Kasim, Alexander & Hudson, 2010:17). This was followed by soliciting the opinions of the respondents on whether they aim to participate in the study. They were however advised that participation in the study is not mandatory, though their participation was warranted for discerning how the implementation of labour hiring freeze measures can be improved. This was accompanied with further advice that the details of the identity of the participants would remain confidential. In other words, the principles of confidentiality, informed consent and anonymity were upheld throughout the research process. This is explained by the fact that since the Survey Monkey was used in data collection, it enabled the upholding of the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents. Quests for upholding confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents were further reflected in the fact that after the completed questionnaires were returned, they were kept in password protected computer that can only be accessed by the researcher. It also enhanced the maintenance of the quality of data which was used in this study.

3.11 SUMMARY

This chapter elucidates on the research paradigm, design and methodology that were used in the accomplishment of the primary research process. It also offers insights on the sampling methods used as well as the methods for data collection and analysis. Later sections in the chapter examined the measures for enhancing validity and reliability as well as the ethical considerations of the study.

Against this backdrop, it is quite clear that the chapter has been able to effectively respond to the second secondary research objective which is to select the most appropriate methodology and design to reach the objectives. The findings are presented and discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings and discussions. The analysis of the data was accomplished using SPSS version 21. The aim of the chapter is to reach the secondary research objective three which is to analyse the perspectives of the employees in the sand mining industry about the values, drawbacks and strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze. To accomplish this, four questions have been developed and extracted from the questionnaire in Annexure 1 to aid the reaching of the secondary research objective three. The first question evaluated the demographic information which are discussed in section 4.2 of this chapter. The second question examined the values of labour hiring freeze and it is discussed in section 4.3 of this chapter. The third question assessed the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze and it is evaluated in section 4.4 of this chapter. The fourth question examined the strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze and it is discussed in section 4.5 of this chapter. These questions were replicated from the research questionnaire which is contained in Annexure 1 of this dissertation. The details of the findings are as follows.

4.2 SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICS

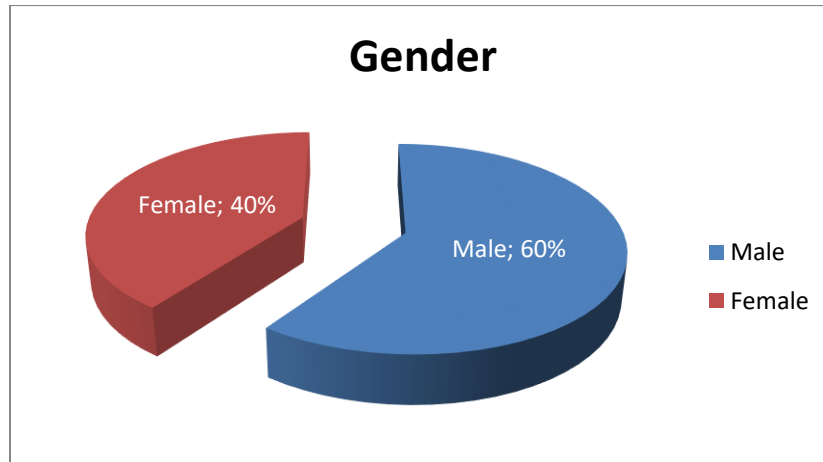
This section offers insights on the findings on demographics such as gender, age group, level of employment, years of experience and the respondents' personal experience of labour hiring freeze. The section is replicated from section A of the research questionnaire as shown in Annexure 1.

4.2.1 Gender

It emerged from the findings that of the 96 respondents that participated in the study, 60% were male and 40% were female. In line with the illustration in Figure 4.1, this demonstrates that the study was balanced as it offers insights from all gender groups. It therefore demonstrates the validity and reliability of the study on the basis that the opinions presented in this research do not represent the bias opinions of a certain group, but the opinions that represent the views of the managers and employees in the sand minerals mining industry. However, such findings still highlight the inequities that still exist in the sand mining industry. This is attributable to the fact that the mean score of 1.4 was skewed towards male which implies that most of the managers in the sand minerals mining industry are predominantly male. This implies that there is greater

preponderance to employee mainly the male population as compared to females. Reasons could be attributable to the fact that given the hardship of sand mining, there could have been greater preponderance to consider males as more suitable for the accomplishment of such tasks.

Figure 4.1: Gender



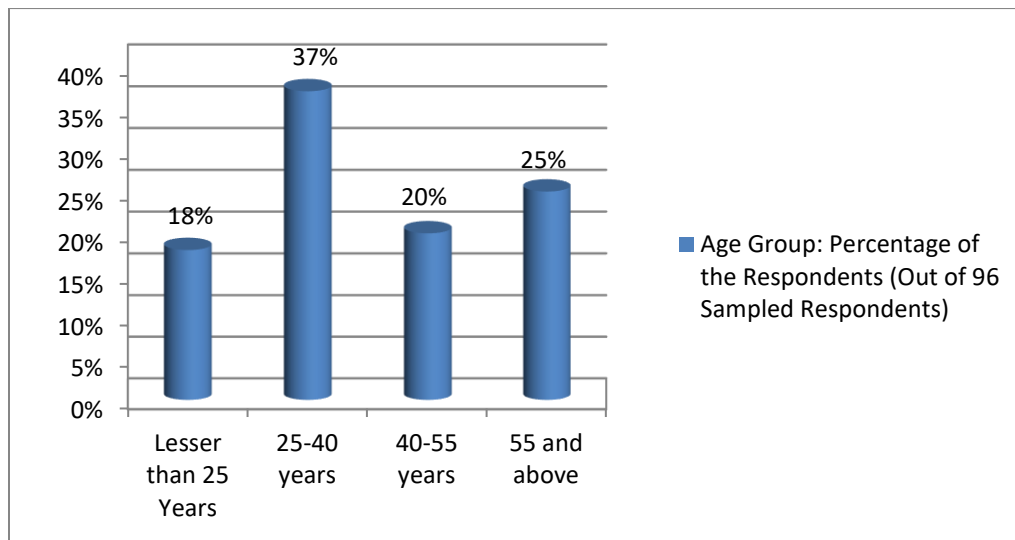
Nevertheless, the fact that both gender groups participated in the study influences the overall validity and reliability of this research. Yet, it is not only the managers from different gender groups that participated in the study, but also managers from different age groups.

4.2.2 Age Group

In the context of the illustration in Figure 4.2, findings suggest that of the 96 sampled respondents, 18% were lesser than 25 years. Of all the age groups, this represented the lowest percentage perhaps due to the fact that such years are of school/college going age. That implies that even if there is wish to employ such categories of employees, it is often not easy. The other reason is linked to the fact that since the study only focused on managers and supervisors, it is most likely that the employees in such age group has not yet gained the necessary experience to be promoted to managerial positions. Yet, as contrasted to those in the age group of lesser than 25 years that constituted of only 18%, Figure 4.2 indicates the majority of the respondents to have fallen in the age group of 25-40 years. It is indicated in Figure 4.2 that the respondents falling in the age group of 25-40 years constituted of 37% of the 96 sampled respondents. Of all categories, this represents the largest percentage perhaps due to the fact that by the age of 25 to 40 years, one would have gained the necessary experience to be promoted to the managerial positions. Since the focus of the

study was on the supervisors and managers, which explains the reason why the respondents in such age groups are more than the respondents in the other age groups. As compared to such large percentage, the managers in the age group 40-55 years only constituted 20% of the 96 sampled respondents. However, managers in the age group of 55 and above constituted of 25% of the 96 sampled respondents. This implies that it is only during the middle years that most managers spend time working for the sand minerals mining industry. This could be attributed to the fact that due to its hardship, most of the employees and managers seem not to be spending more years working for the sand minerals mining industry during older years.

Figure 4.2: Age Group

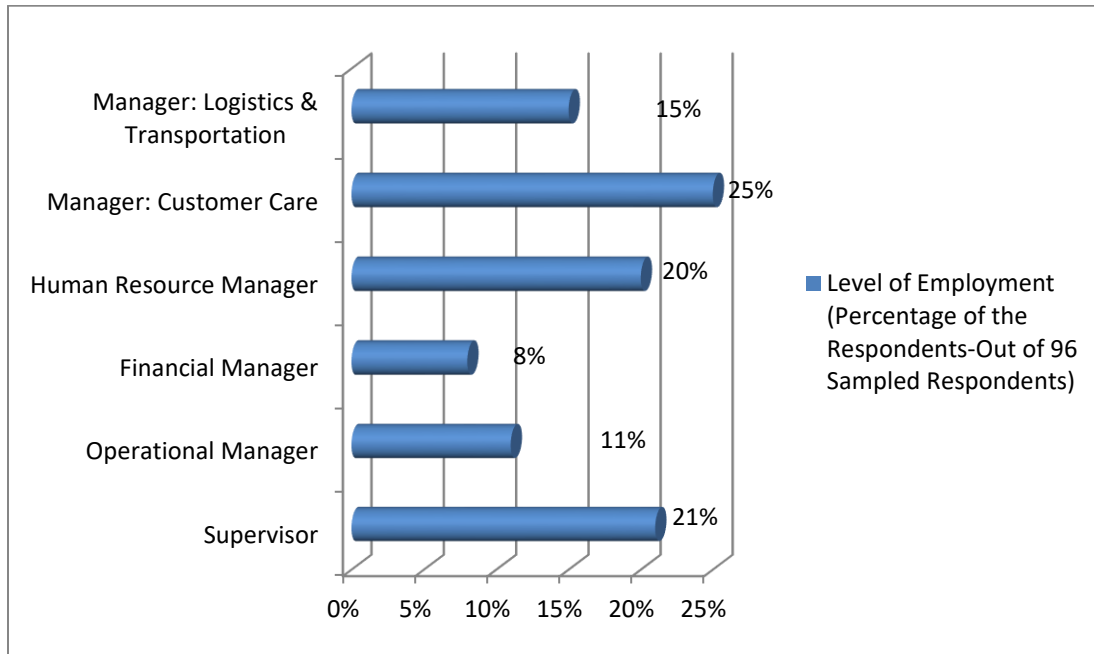


Such a view is further accentuated in the fact that the mean score was 1.8 to imply that most of the managers who participated in this research fell in the age groups of 25 to 40 years. Nevertheless, the fact that the managers of all age groups participated in the study influences the overall validity and reliability of the research findings. It demonstrates that it's only those that are experienced in the sand minerals mining industry that participated in the study. This influences the overall credibility of the research findings. Besides drawing employees from all the age groups, research findings also indicate that the respondents were also drawn from different levels of employment in the sand minerals' mining industry.

4.2.3 Level of Employment

It is indicated in Figure 4.3 that of all the 96 sampled respondents, 21% were supervisors. However, it is still demonstrate that the respondents in this research constituted of the employees who understand the nature of hiring freeze as well as how it affects cost competitiveness. In effect, the drawing of the opinions from such respondents influenced the overall validity and reliability of the research findings.

Figure 4.3: Level of Employment



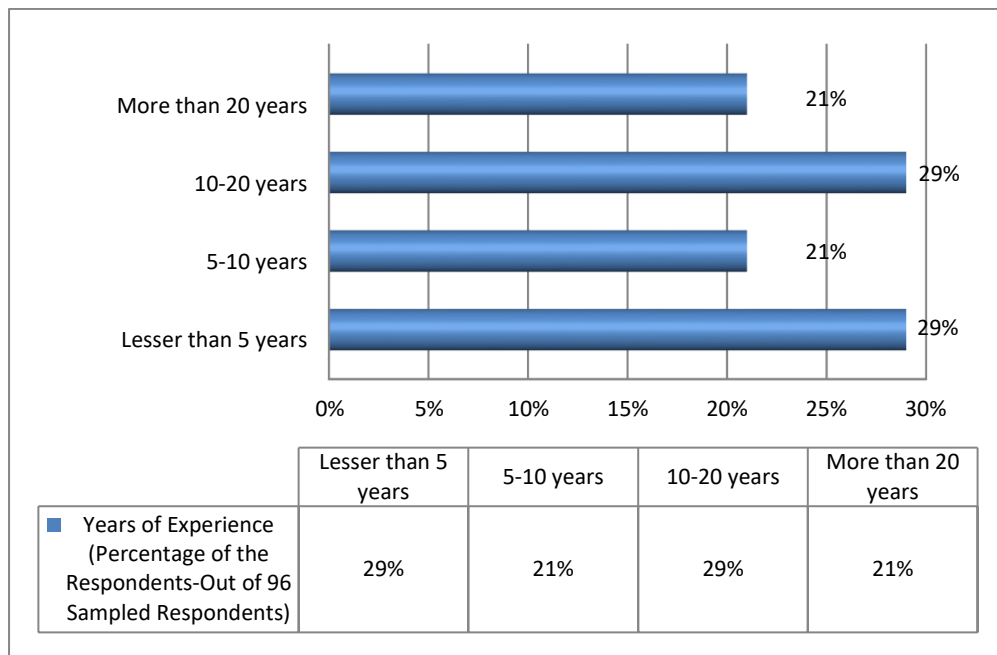
Such a view is not only accentuated in the fact that 21% of the 96 sampled respondents were supervisors, but also in the argument that of the 96 sampled respondents, Figure 4.3 illustrates that 11% were operational managers. It is also illustrated in Figure 4.3 that of the 96 sampled respondents, 8% were financial managers and 20% were human resource managers. The fact that more human resource managers participated in the study also influences the validity and reliability of the findings. This is attributable to the fact that it is the human resource managers who are charged with the implementation of labour hiring freeze. Hence, they are in better positions to explain its values and drawbacks as well as how it can be made successful. Just like the human resource managers, most of the respondents were also from the customer care department. It is illustrated in Figure 4.3 that of the 96 sampled respondents, 25% were managers from the customer care departments. Figure 4.3 illustrates that 15% of the 96 sampled respondents were from logistics

and transportation. Certainly, it is evident that views were drawn from managers from different departments about the values and drawbacks of labour hiring freeze. This implies that the views used in this research were not only from a certain section of managers, but managers drawn from across different departments. This therefore influences the overall validity and reliability of the research findings. Validity and reliability of this research finding is not only influenced by the fact that the managers were drawn from different departments, but also by the fact that they also possessed different levels of experience.

4.2.4 Years of Experience

It is evident from the illustration in Figure 4.4 that the respondents that were sampled in this research had different years of experience in the sand minerals mining industry. Figure 4.4 indicates that of the 96 sampled respondents, 29% had the experience of lesser than 5 years in managerial positions. This is followed by 21% of the 96 sampled respondents that had the work experience of 5-10 years. This contrasts with 29% that had the work experience of 10-20 years as well as the 21% that had the work experience of more than 20 years.

Figure 4.4: Years of Experience



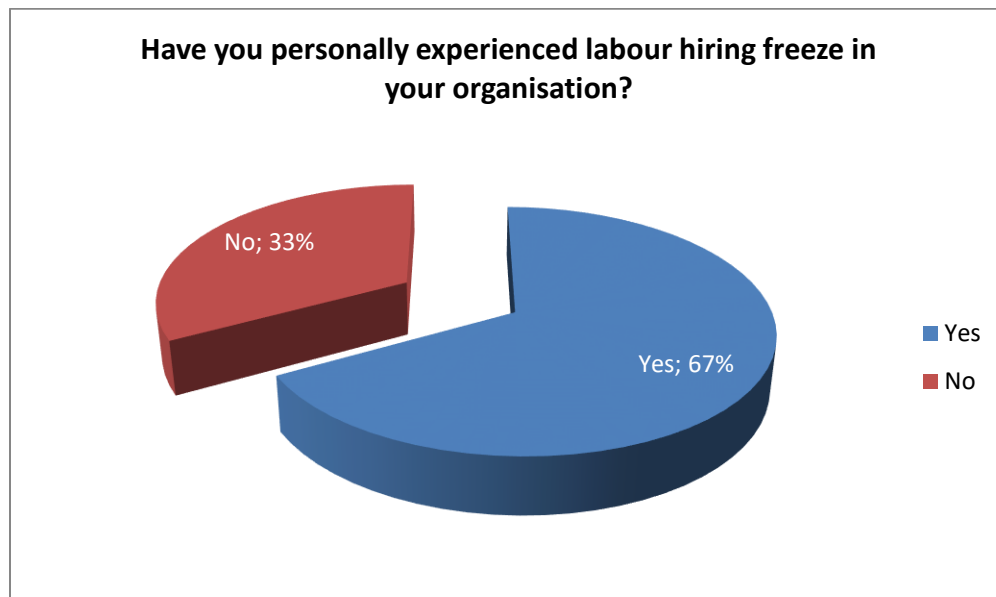
However, of all the categories, it is those with the work experience of lesser than 5 years and 10-20 years that constituted the highest percentage of the 96 sampled respondents. This is further

substantiated by the mean score of 2 which indicates that the respondents were almost evenly distributed across all categories. Certainly, such findings imply that the respondents in the study had the required experience of work in the sand minerals mining industry. Such high level of experience also suggests they are mostly to be knowledgeable about the values and drawbacks of labour hiring freeze. It is certainly therefore influences the validity and reliability of the research findings. Validity and reliability of the findings of this research is also substantiated in the fact that most of the 96 sampled respondents indicated to have experienced labour hiring freeze.

4.2.5 Have you personally experienced labour hiring freeze in your organisation?

As indicated in Figure 4.5, 67% of the 96 sampled respondents agreed that they have ever experienced labour hiring freeze. This contrasts with the 33% who indicated that they have not experienced labour hiring freeze. Such a finding echoes the views in chapter 1 of this dissertation that indicated that labour hiring freeze is a phenomenon which is commonly undertaken in the sand minerals mining industry.

Figure 4.5: Have you personally experienced labour hiring freeze in your organisation?



As companies in the sand minerals mining industry scampers to control costs to bolster their competitiveness, labour hiring freeze has often been the common options that most of the companies use to control costs. In effect, the fact that most of the 96 sampled respondents indicated that they have ever personally experienced labour hiring freeze does not only echo such a view,

but also the fact that it implies most of the participants in this research offered views that were first-hand knowledge about the values and drawbacks of labour hiring freeze. This influences the overall validity and reliability of this research finding. In a nutshell, it is therefore evident from the biographical information that respondents in this research were not only drawn from different gender groups, but also age groups. It also represented the respondents who were managers in different departments with different years of experience as well. All these validate the findings of this research as being representative of the views of the managers in the sand minerals mining industry.

4.3 SECTION B: VALUES OF LABOUR HIRING FREEZE AS A DRIVER OF COST COMPETITIVENESS IN THE SAND MINERALS MINING INDUSTRY

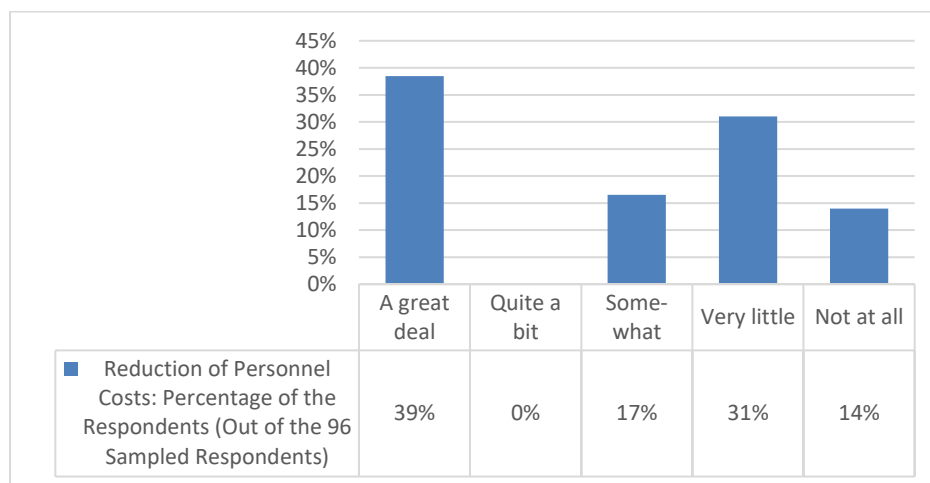
The survey evaluated whether the implementation of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry has influenced the reduction of personnel costs as well as improved cost competitiveness, better market performance, morale, motivation and productivity. The section is replicated from section B of the research questionnaire as shown in Annexure 1. The details of the findings are as follows.

4.3.1 Reduction of Personnel Costs

It was evident from literature that the main motive of labour hiring freeze is usually to reduce the personnel costs. As indicated in Figure 4.6, such views were echoed in the primary research findings that indicated that 39% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze influences the reduction of personnel costs. It implies labour hiring freeze enables a business reduce the costs of personnel by reducing the number of new recruits. It also enables the business reduce salary expenses as salary increases and promotions are also frozen. This minimises the personnel costs. In contrast to the views of the 39%, none of the respondents stated that labour hiring freeze influences the reduction of personnel costs quite a bit. However, as indicated in Figure 4.6, such views were not supported by some of the 96 sampled respondents. As it emerged from the findings, Figure 4.6 indicates 17% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that somewhat labour hiring freeze influences the reduction of personnel costs. This implies that the effect on the reduction of personnel costs due to labour hiring freeze cannot be easily established. Such views could also be arising from the respondents that have not experienced

labour hiring freeze. Figure 4.6 illustrates that 31% of the 96 sampled respondents argued that labour hiring freeze only have very little effects on the reduction of personnel costs. That implies labour hiring freeze does not significantly influence the reduction of personnel costs. It also suggests that from the implementation of labour hiring freeze in their organisations, it was not found that labour hiring freeze influences the reduction of personnel costs. Figure 4.6 indicates that 14% of the respondents stated that labour hiring freeze does not all influence the reduction of personnel costs. Such a finding is supported by the mean score of 3.2 which is skewed towards the right to indicate that labour hiring freeze does not at all influence the reduction of personnel costs. Such findings find basis in literature that indicate that even during labour hiring freeze, certain essential positions that are falling vacant may still have to be filled.

Figure 4.6: Reduction of Personnel Costs

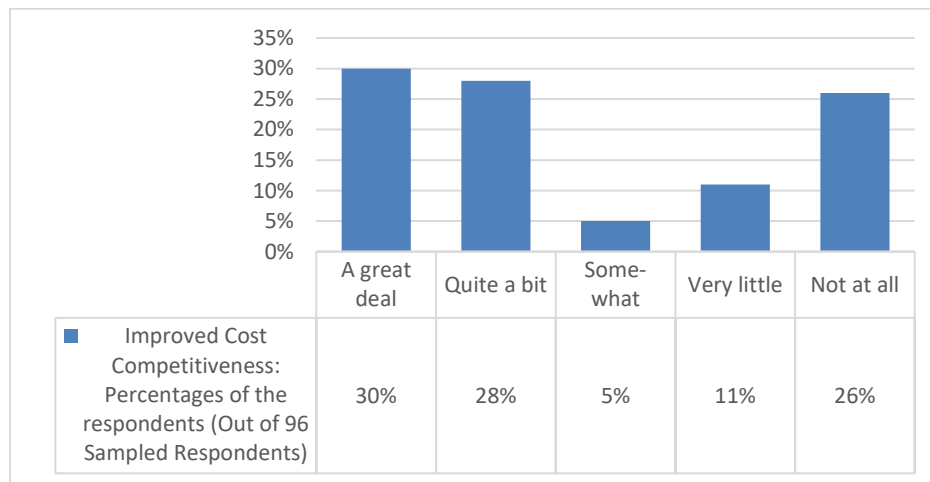


That implies even when labour hiring freeze is undertaken to minimise personnel costs, business still continues to incur costs that are arising from the need to fill the essential positions that are falling vacant be it temporal replacements or through overtime costs. Certainly therefore whether or not labour hiring freeze influences the reduction of personnel costs seem to depend on how it is implemented. Businesses that freeze all forms of new recruitments even for essential positions may realize significant reduction of personnel costs. However, the drawbacks on declining performance may not have to be ignored. Nevertheless, despite such drawbacks, it was still evident that labour hiring freeze influences the reduction of personnel costs. As labour hiring freeze influences reduction of personnel costs, it also catalyses cost competitiveness.

4.3.2 Improved cost competitiveness

Findings imply that labour hiring freeze catalyses cost competitiveness. Such a view is accentuated in the fact that it is illustrated in Figure 4.7 that of 96 sampled respondents, 30% stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze leverages improved cost competitiveness. It implies if well implemented, labour hiring freeze influences cost competitiveness. Such a finding is also supported by the mean score of 2.6 which is skewed towards the left and indicates that labour hiring freeze influence costs competitiveness. This is at tandem with the theoretical findings that imply that as personnel costs reduce during the labour hiring freeze, it also tends to catalyse cost competitiveness. This is attributable to the fact that since labour costs constitute the highest percentage of costs that a business incurs, its reduction may therefore impact positively on cost competitiveness.

Figure 4.7: Improved cost competitiveness



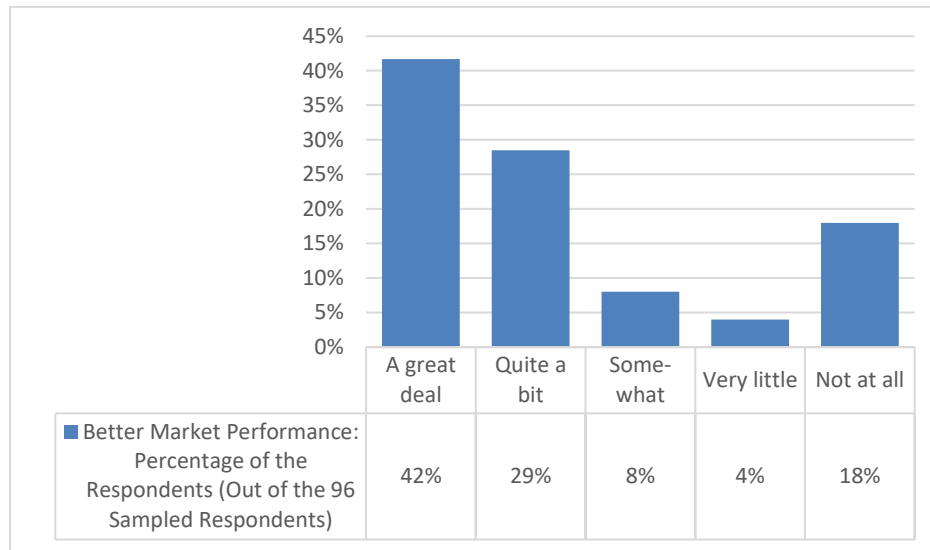
Such a view is also echoed in the opinions of the 28% of the 96 sampled respondents who are noted in Figure 4.7 to have state that labour hiring freeze contributes to improved cost competitiveness quite a bit. This implies that labour hiring freeze does not significantly influence cost competitiveness. However, in contrast to such views, Figure 4.7 indicates that 5% of the 96 sampled respondents indicated that somewhat labour hiring freeze catalyses cost competitiveness. This implies it not easy to establish whether labour hiring freeze influences improved cost competitiveness. Such a view is attributable to the fact that cost competitiveness is a multidimensional construct which is influenced among others by costs of materials, machineries, transportation and advertisement costs. That implies, the reduction of labour costs is only one of

the quests for reducing costs that may or may not impact on cost competitiveness. Such a view is accentuated in the opinions of the 11% of the 96 sampled respondents who are indicated in Figure 4.7 to have stated that labour hiring freeze has very little effects on improved cost competitiveness. Figure 4.7 also indicates that 26% of the 96 sampled respondents argued that labour hiring freeze does not at all have any positive effects on improved cost competitiveness. However, despite such a finding, it was still evident that labour hiring freeze influences improved cost competitiveness. Besides improved cost competitiveness, labour hiring freeze is also reiterated in literature to also influence better market performance.

4.3.3 Better market performance

As indicated in Figure 4.8, 42% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze is influencing the better market performance of the sand minerals mining companies. This implies as the sand minerals mining companies use labour hiring freeze to reduce personnel costs, it also enhances them to offer their products at more competitive prices. It is through such initiatives that labour hiring freeze influences their market performance. At the sametime, Figure 4.8 indicates that 29% of the 96 sampled respondents revealed that labour hiring freeze influences better market performance quite a bit. This could be attributable to the fact that better market performance is not only influenced by significant reduction of labour costs, but also by factors such as product quality. Nevertheless, such a view is also echoed in the mean score of 1.8 that indicates that most of the 96 sampled respondents seem to concur that labour hiring freeze influences better market performance. Such a finding is also accentuated in Figure 4.8 which indicates that 8% of the 96 sampled respondents indicate that somewhat labour hiring freeze influences better market performance. However, Figure 4.8 illustrates that 4% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that labour hiring freeze only has very little positive effects on better market performance. Such a view was also echoed in the opinions of the 18% of the 96 sampled respondents who are indicated in Figure 4.8 to have stated that labour hiring freeze does not at all have any desired positive effects on better market performance. This implies that despite undertaking labour hiring freeze, some of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry has not been able to realize better market performance.

Figure 4.8: Better market performance



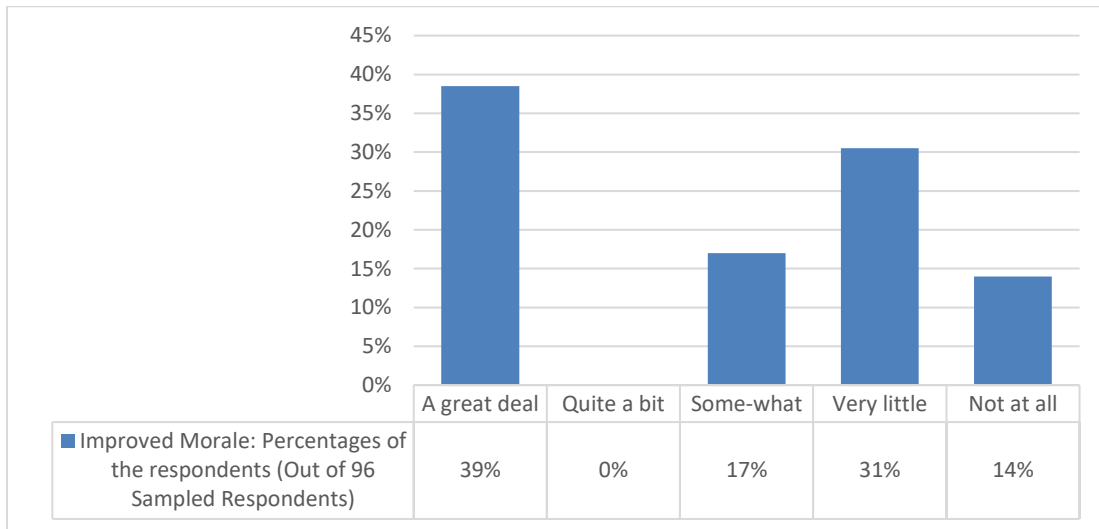
This could be attributable not only to prices, but also to quality of their products. It is better prices combined with superior quality that influence better market performance. In effect, it is not surprising that despite cost control to reduce prices, some of the companies in the sand mineral mining companies have not been able to realize better market performance. Such a finding is at tandem with the theoretical findings which indicate that better market performance is not only influenced by better prices, but also product quality as well as the quality of customer services. Nevertheless, labour hiring freeze does not only influence better market performance, but also improved employee morale.

4.3.4 Improved morale

Findings imply that labour hiring freeze influences improved employee morale. Such a view is accentuated in the fact that Figure 4.9 illustrates that of the 96 sampled respondents, 39% stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze is influencing improved morale of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry. Such a view is echoed in the mean score of 2.8 which is skewed to the left and indicates that most of the respondents construed that labour hiring freeze influences improved employee morale. This implies that as labour hiring freeze is undertaken and different tasks are transferred to the existing employees, it tends to stimulate improved employee morale. Such a finding is echoed in the literature that indicates that in situations of recess and downturn, most of the businesses often opt for layoff. Yet layoff often causes anxiety, frustrations and low

morale. This affects the level of employee motivation (Brockner, 2006:122). However, if labour hiring freeze is opted for, it tends to motivate the existing employees. This is attributable to the fact that during labour hiring freeze, companies often devise the best ways through which the existing employees can be optimized to achieve the desired strategic objectives and goals (Brockner, 2006:122). As compared to retrenchment and layoff, during labour hiring freeze, the existing employees are instead granted more responsibilities. This tends to influence the improvement of the existing employees' level of morale and motivation. Even though such views are reflected in the sand minerals mining industry, it is still evident from the findings in Figure 4.9 that some of the respondents did not concur.

Figure 4.9: Improved morale



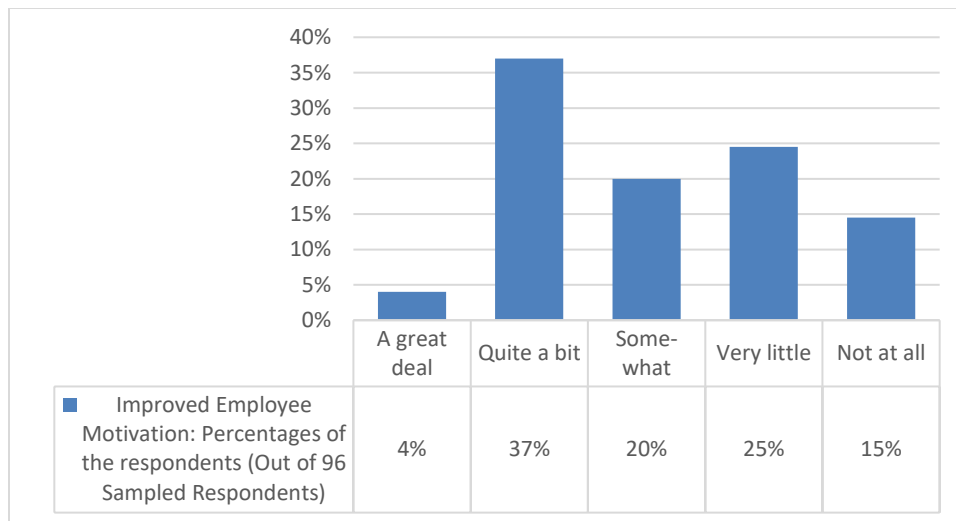
Of the 96 sampled respondents, Figure 4.9 indicates that none of the 96 sampled respondents stated that labour hiring freeze influences employee morale quite a bit. Figure 4.9 also indicates that 17% stated that somewhat labour hiring freeze influences improved morale. 31% of the 96 sampled respondents are noted in Figure 4.9 to have stated that labour hiring freeze has only had very little effects on influencing the improved morale of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry. Such a view is also echoed in the opinions of the 14% of the respondents who are indicated in Figure 4.9 to have stated that labour hiring freeze has not at all influenced improved morale of the employees in the sand mineral mining industry. This could be attributable to the fact that labour hiring freeze instead causes the overworking of the employees. Considering that salary increases are also frozen, all these could explain why some of the respondents indicated that labour hiring

freeze does not stimulate improved employee morale. Yet improved morale influences improved employee motivation.

4.3.5 Improved employee motivation

Findings imply that labour hiring freeze influences improved employee motivation. Such a view is accentuated in the fact that Figure 4.10 indicates that of the 96 sampled respondents, 4% stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze is influencing the improved motivation of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry. This implies that as companies in the sand minerals mining industry turn to the existing employees instead of recruiting new ones, it tends to cause improved morale in the organisation.

Figure 4.10: Improved employee motivation



This improved morale catalyses improved employee motivation. Such a view seems consonant with the opinions of the 37% of the 96 sampled respondents who noted that labour hiring freeze is influencing improved employee motivation quite a bit. However, some of the 96 sample respondents did not concur. This is attributable to the fact that it is indicated in Figure 4.10 that 20% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that somewhat labour hiring freeze stimulates improved employee motivation. Figure 4.10 indicates that 25% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that labour hiring freeze is causing very little effects on improved employee motivation. Such a view contradicts the opinions of the 15% of the 96 sampled respondents who are noted in Figure 4.10 to have stated that labour hiring freeze does not at all influence the improvement of the motivation

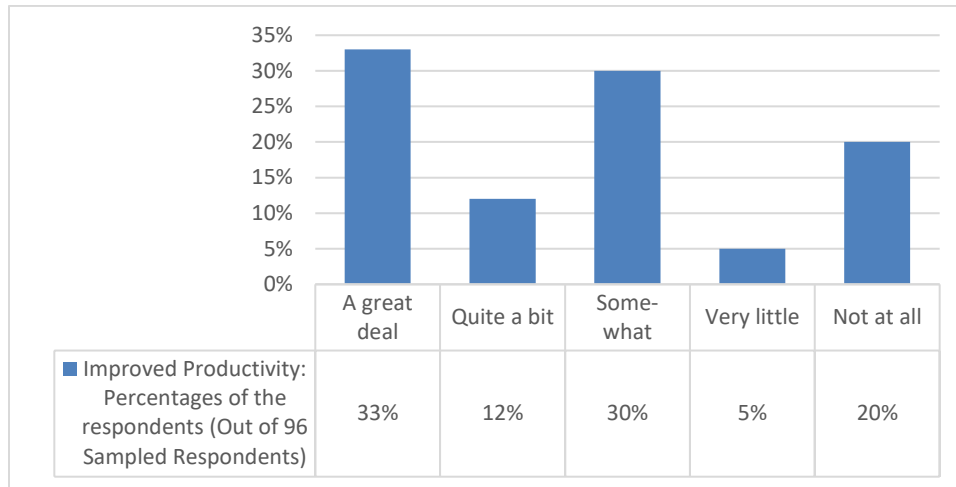
of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry. This implies that even though some of the companies aim to motivate some of the existing employees by undertaking labour hiring freeze, it is often not the case that all the employees get motivated by labour hiring freeze. As indicated in the literature, labour hiring freeze causes the overworking of the existing employees. It also causes the freeze on salary increases and promotions. This tends to de-motivate the employees. In effect, if some of the respondents disagreed, it is most likely that it could be due to such reasons. However, despite the differences in the opinions, the mean score of 3 still indicated that the respondents were almost evenly distributed across different categories. That implies that as much as some of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry find labour hiring freeze to be de-motivating, there are others who are motivated by it. Certainly, it therefore seems how it is implemented may tend to motivate or de-motivate the employees. If labour hiring freeze only entails stopping recruitment of new employees while the existing ones are utilised in the accomplishment of different tasks, it may tend to be motivating to the employees. This contrasts with if the implementation of labour hiring freeze is accompanied by salary freeze as well as freeze on promotion. In such situations, employees may tend to be de-motivated by labour hiring freeze. Yet, improved employee motivation influences improved productivity.

4.3.6 Improved productivity

Figure 4.11 indicates 33% of the 96 sampled respondents were found to state that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze has influenced improved productivity of the sand minerals mining industry. Such a view is also echoed in the opinions of 12% of the 96 sampled respondents who are noted in Figure 4.11 to have stated that labour hiring freeze has influenced improved productivity quite a bit. This implies that as the sand minerals mining companies capitalize on utilising the existing employees, it tends to improve the rate of the optimisation of the existing employees. This influences the improvement of the output that the business is able to get per each unit of labour. This influences throughput and productivity (Ladimeji, 2013:2). Labour hiring freeze encourages the existing employees to work harder if they are to retain their jobs. It instils in the employees a sense of commitment and the need to put the necessary efforts to aid the organisation to achieve its desired strategic objectives and goals. Yet, as the business opts for labour hiring freeze instead of layoff during periods of recess, labour hiring freeze may also influence the improvement of employee motivation. It is such improved level of motivation that further influences the commitment and efforts that employees are to dedicate to ensure that all the

required tasks are effectively accomplished. It is through such initiatives that labour hiring freeze influences improved productivity.

Figure 4.11: Improved productivity



Unfortunately, Figure 4.11 indicates that 30% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that somewhat labour hiring freeze has been influencing improvement of the productivity of the sand minerals mining companies. This could be attributable to the fact that since sand mining is a labour intensive activity, the reduction of labour by freezing the recruitment of new employees tend to affect productivity. It reduces the number of the required labour to undermine the initiatives of producing the required output. Such a view is also echoed in the views of the 5% of the 96 sampled respondents who are noted in Figure 4.11 to have stated that labour hiring freeze has only very little effects on improved productivity. Figure 4.11 indicates that 20% of the 96 sampled respondents noted that labour hiring freeze does not at all influence the productivity of the sand minerals mining companies. However, the mean score was 2.8 which means that most of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry has been able to realize improved productivity as a result of the implementation of the labour hiring freeze.

Although some of the respondents disagreed, it was quite evident that the implementation of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry has influenced the reduction of personnel costs, improved cost competitiveness, better market performance, improved morale, improved employee motivation and improved productivity. However, despite such values, findings imply labour hiring freeze is associated with certain

inherent drawbacks that can threaten its value as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry.

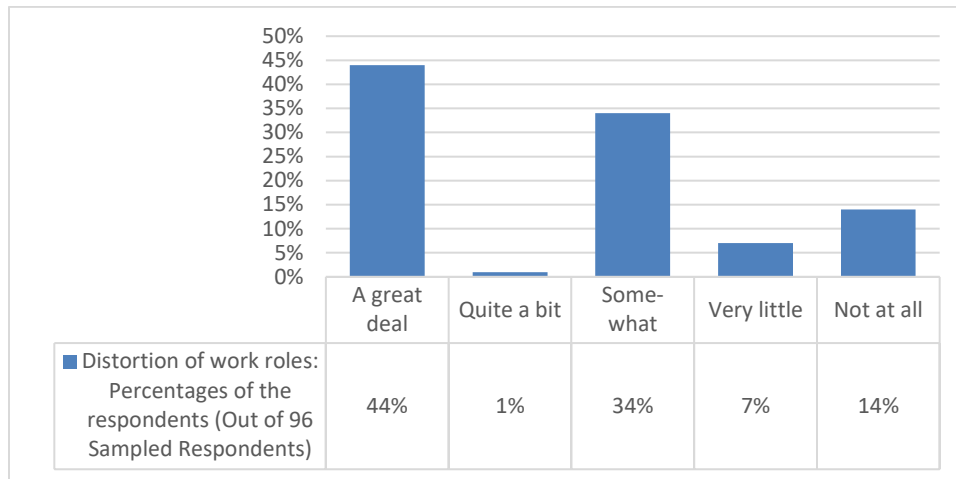
4.4 SECTION C: DRAWBACKS OF LABOUR HIRING FREEZE AS A DRIVER OF COST COMPETITIVENESS IN THE SAND MINERALS MINING INDUSTRY

The survey examined whether the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry are associated with distortion of work roles, overworking of the employees, employee dissatisfaction, low morale, low motivation, negative attitude about the organisation, high labour turnover and loss of valuable employees. The section is replicated from section C of the research questionnaire as shown in Annexure 1. The details of the findings are as follows.

4.4.1 Distortion of work roles

It is illustrated in Figure 4.12 that 44% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that it is a great deal that the implementation of labour hiring freeze by the sand mining companies has distorted work roles. However, only 1% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that the implementation of labour hiring freeze has distorted work roles quite a bit. But still, that implies that as labour hiring freeze is implemented, it tends to interfere and destroy the existing work roles. As literature indicated, labour hiring freeze causes the circumstance where the existing work roles are reviewed. Such initiatives are usually undertaken to ensure that as the recruitment of new employees is frozen, the use of the existing employees must be able to cover all the required tasks. Distortion of work roles may therefore tend to arise from where the existing work roles are recreated to have employee shifted from one role to another. This affects the existing structure of the work roles. On that basis, it is therefore understandable if the 44% of the 96 sampled respondents were found to state that the implementation of labour hiring freeze distorts work roles. However, as indicated in Figure 4.12, some of the respondents were found to have had different views. It is illustrated in Figure 4.12 that of the 96 sampled respondents, 34% were found to state that somewhat labour hiring freeze affects and distort work roles. That implies perhaps in their organizations, labour hiring freeze was implemented in the way that do affect work roles. If there is no much changing and shifting of the employees across different roles, labour hiring freeze may not affect work roles. That could explain why some of the respondents did not concur that labour hiring freeze distorts work roles.

Figure 4.12: Distortion of work roles

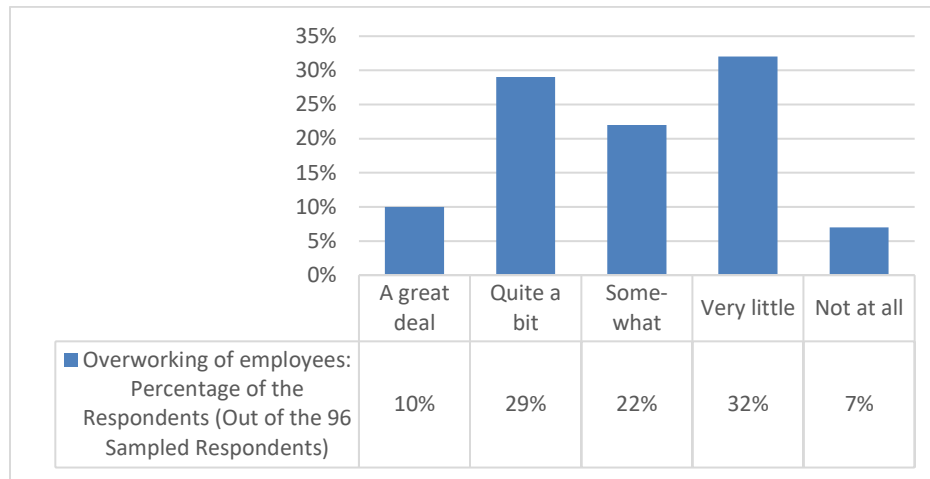


As it is illustrated in Figure 4.12, 7% of the 96 sampled respondents were found to have stated that labour hiring freeze has very little effects on the distortion of work roles. Figure 4.12 indicates that 14% of the 96 sampled respondents argued that labour hiring freeze does not at all affect work roles. However, the mean score was 1.8 and skewed towards the left to suggest that most of the respondents concurred that labour hiring freeze distorts work roles. This implies that most of the respondents concurred that labour hiring freeze distorts work roles. Such a finding seems to echo literature that indicate that labour hiring freeze may significantly affect a company’s most revenue generating roles. As most revenue generating activities get accomplished by less manpower or lesser qualified manpower, their poor accomplishment tends to affect the revenue generating potential of such activities (Sullivan, 2000:1). Yet, labour hiring freeze not only affects work roles, but also causes the overworking of the existing employees.

4.4.2 Overworking of the employees

It is illustrated in Figure 4.13 that 10% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze causes the situation that causes the overworking of the employees. It is noted that 29% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that labour hiring freeze causes the overworking of the existing employees quite a bit. Such a finding is at tandem with the literature that indicates that labour hiring freeze causes the overworking of the existing employees.

Figure 4.13: Overworking of the employees



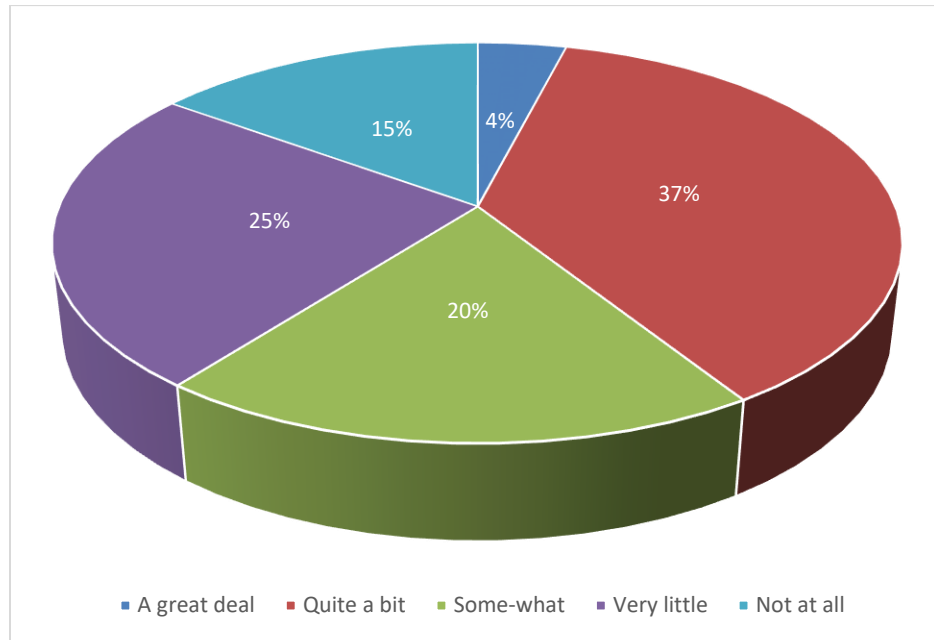
As the departing employees are not replaced, it means all the responsibilities for accomplishing different tasks are shifted onto the existing employees. This causes the overworking of the existing employees. During labour hiring freeze, all activities are accomplished by the existing employees. This causes the overworking of the existing employees. However, some of the respondents did not concur that labour hiring freeze causes the overworking of the employees. Such a view is attributable to the fact that of the 96 sampled respondents, Figure 4.13 indicates that 22% stated that somewhat labour hiring freeze causes the overworking of the employees. Figure 4.13 also clearly shows that 7% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that labour hiring freeze does not at all cause the overworking of the existing employees. Certainly, it seems to depend on how labour hiring freeze is implemented. If it is implemented by stopping all forms of recruitment, then, it will cause the overworking of the existing employees. However, if recruitment can still be undertaken for certain essential tasks, then, labour hiring freeze may not cause the overworking of the employees. That certainly explains why the mean score was 3 to suggest that the respondents were distributed almost evenly across all categories. It means that as much as some of the respondents did not concur, others also concurred that labour hiring freeze causes the overworking of the employees. Yet, as the existing employees get overworked, it also tends to cause frustration and discontentment that affect employee satisfaction.

4.4.3 Employee Dissatisfaction

Figure 4.14 indicates that 4% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze is causing dissatisfaction of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry. 37%

of the respondents are noted to have indicated that labour hiring freeze is causing employee dissatisfaction quite a bit. Findings imply that as employees are overworked, it tends to affect their satisfaction with the ways the activities are accomplished.

Figure 4.14: Employee Dissatisfaction



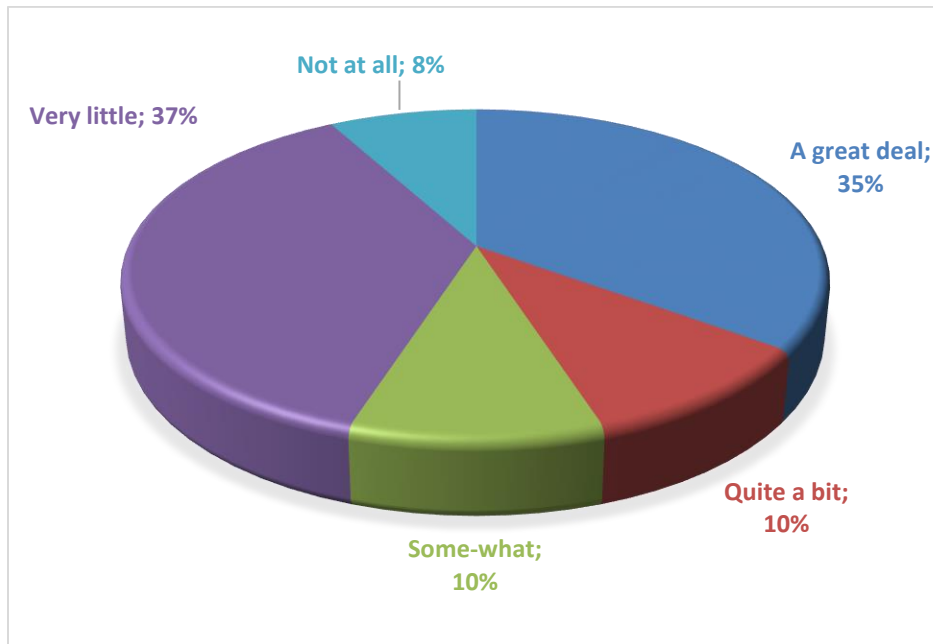
Such findings are consonant with literature articulations that indicate that labour hiring freeze is often accompanied with a freeze on promotions as well as pay increases (Nabi et al., 2017:293). These tend to cause discontentment, frustrations and dissatisfactions. Yet, as employees accomplish double tasks which may certainly be new tasks that they are not abreast with, frustrations and discontent tend to set in to in turn cause low morale and motivation (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008:259). Combined with the tendencies to overwork the existing employees during the periods of labour hiring freeze, these can also cause employee burnout and turnover. High level of employee burnout causes not only high turnover, but also declining employee motivation (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008:259). Such a view is echoed in the opinions of the 20% of the 96 sampled respondents who stated that somewhat employees are dissatisfied with labour hiring freeze. 25% of the 96 sampled respondents indicated that labour hiring freeze is causing very little effects on employee dissatisfaction. It is also indicated in Figure 4.14 that of the 96 sampled respondents, 15% stated that labour hiring freeze does not at all cause increment of employee dissatisfaction. However, the mean score was 3 to imply that as much as some of the respondents are not

dissatisfied with labour hiring freeze, there are others who are dissatisfied. This implies as much as there are some of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry who are dissatisfied with the ongoing labour hiring freeze, there also those that feel contented. Such findings seem to corroborate the opinions of the respondents on the previous variable that indicated that some of the employees are motivated by labour hiring freeze. This is because unlike retrenchment and downsizing, labour hiring freeze tends to focus on utilising the existing employees. By giving the employees more roles and responsibilities during the period of recess, it tends to motivate the employees. However, risks tend to arise from overworking that may tend to affect employee satisfaction. If such situation occurs, it may also tend to cause low morale.

4.4.4 Low morale

In terms of the sand minerals mining industry, Figure 4.15 indicates that 35% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze is causing low morale among the employees. Figure 4.15 illustrates that of 96 sampled respondents, 10% stated that labour hiring freeze is causing low morale quite a bit. Such a finding is at tandem with the literature that indicated that high level of employee burnout that may arise during the labour hiring freeze may cause not only high turnover, but also declining employee morale and motivation (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008:259). Declining employee morale and motivation may in turn cause high defections and high turnover rate. High level of discontent among the employees may also affect productivity and a company's overall throughput. In turn declining productivity and throughput may affect a company's overall performance (Formato, 2015:1). Certainly, it is quite evident that labour hiring freeze is causing low morale of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry. Such a view is also echoed in Figure 4.15 that indicates that 10% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that somewhat labour hiring freeze is causing low morale. 37% of the 96 sampled respondents are indicated in Figure 4.15 to have stated that labour hiring freeze is causing only very little effects on low morale among the employees in the sand minerals mining industry. However, as indicated in Figure 4.15, 8% of the 96 sampled respondents reiterated that labour hiring freeze does not at all cause low morale.

Figure 4.15: Low morale



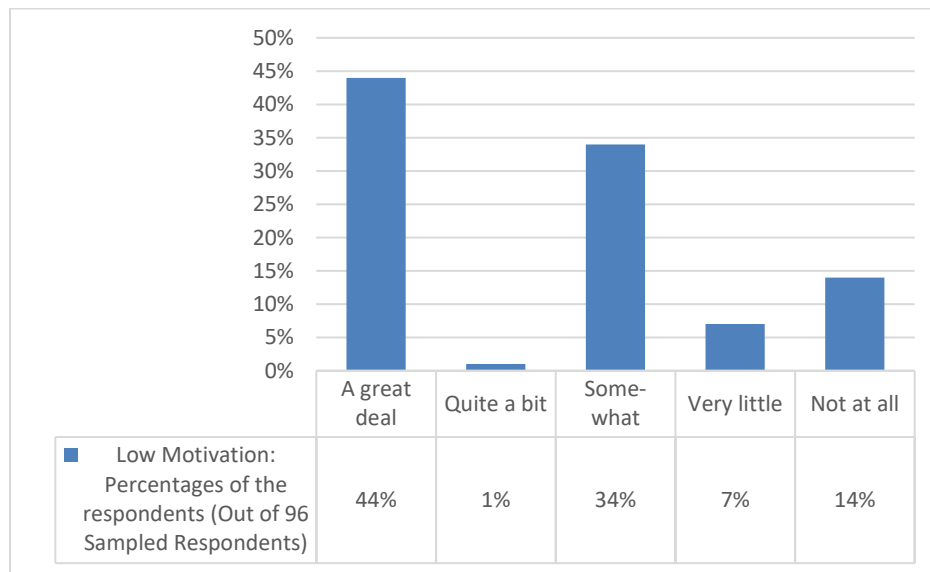
The mean score was 3 to imply the respondents were almost evenly distributed across all categories. It means that as much as there are employees who are de-moralised, there are also those that are not affected. For employees with high morale, it implies that during the implementation of labour hiring freeze, relevant measures are put in place to ensure that low morale does not set in. Such measures encompass avoiding overworking of the employees as well as avoiding the use of measures such as freeze on salary increments and promotions. This could tend to cause high morale and motivate the employees. However, findings imply that it seems such accompanying initiatives are not being used by all the companies in the sand minerals mining industry. Yet, low morale may cause low motivation.

4.4.5 Low motivation

Labour hiring freeze causes low motivation. It affects the confidence and trust that the employees are able to have in the sustainability of the business. The fact that the business is unable to run normally causes concern among the employees. It is the emergence of such situations that affects the confidence and trust that the employees are able to have in the business. This causes low motivation. Such a view was concompanied in the findings that indicated 44% of the 96 sampled respondents to have stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze is causing low motivation of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry. However, only 1% of the 96 sampled

respondents indicated that labour hiring freeze is causing low motivation quite a bit. The details are as illustrated in Figure 4.16. Such a finding echoes the findings of literature review that indicate that labour hiring freeze causes low employee motivation. However, Figure 4.16 indicates that 34% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that somewhat labour hiring freeze is causing low motivation of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry. 7% of the respondents were found to have stated that labour hiring freeze is causing only very little effects on low employee motivation, as 14% indicated that labour hiring freeze does not at all cause low employee motivation. However, the mean was 2.3 which indicates that most of the respondents feel that labour hiring freeze is causing low motivation of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry.

Figure 4.16: Low motivation

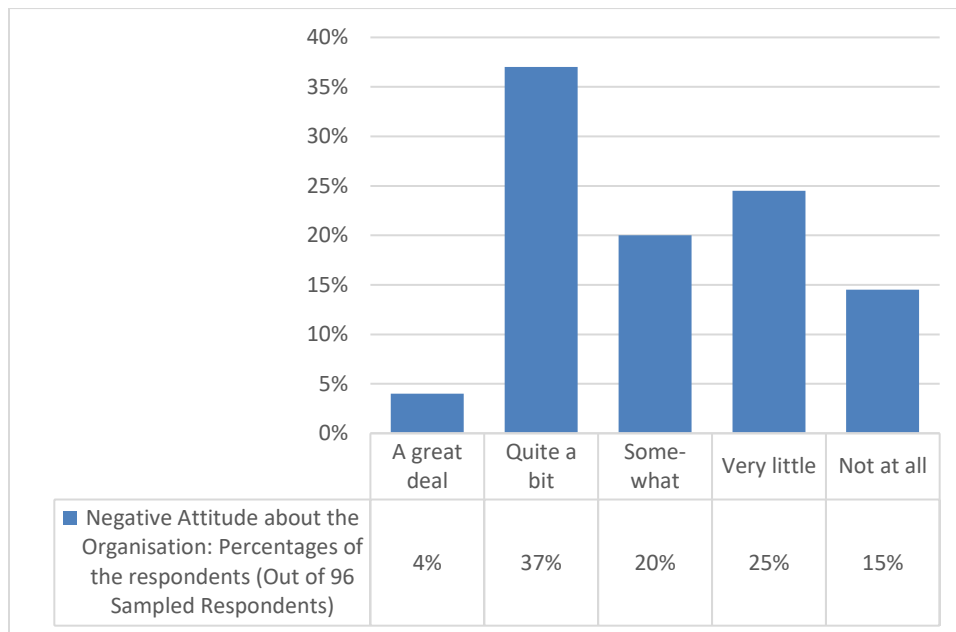


Such findings imply labour hiring freeze causes low employee motivation. It echoes literature that indicates that labour hiring freeze tend to cause employee frustrations and discontent. Labour hiring freeze is often accompanied with a freeze on promotions as well as pay increases (Nabi et al., 2017:293). These tend to cause discontentment, frustrations and dissatisfactions. Yet, as employees accomplish double tasks which may certainly be new tasks that they are not abreast with, frustrations and discontent tend to set in to in turn cause low morale and motivation (Trevor & Nyberg, 2008:259). Yet, besides low motivation, labour hiring freeze may also tend to cause negative attitudes and about the organisation.

4.4.6 Negative attitude about the organisation

It is indicated in Figure 4.17 that 4% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that it is a great deal that labour hiring freeze is causing negative attitude about the organisation. Just like the 4%, it is also indicated in Figure 4.17 that 37% of the 96 sampled respondents reiterated that labour hiring freeze is causing quite a bit of negative attitude about the organisation. It implies companies in the sand minerals mining industry are being perceived negatively as not sustainable. Such findings echo the literature which indicated that labour hiring may tend to affect a company's brand image (Guthrie & Datta 2008:108).

Figure 4.17: Negative attitude about the organisation



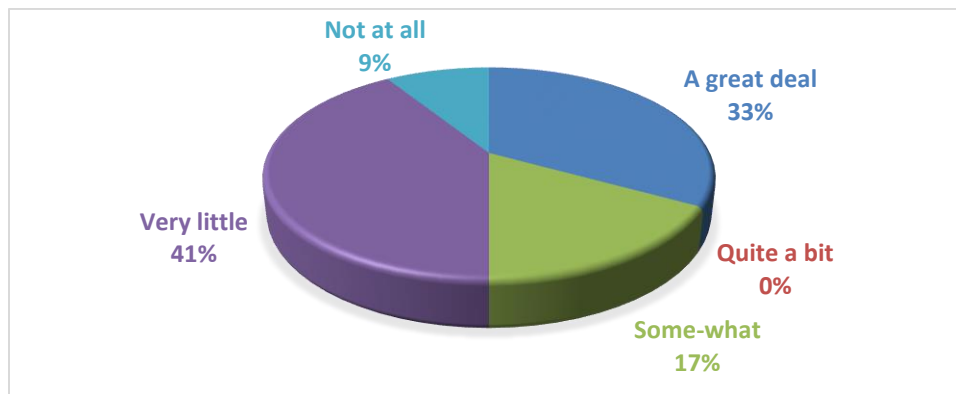
This is attributable to the fact that labour hiring often sends wrong signals to the competitors about a company's capabilities to withstand the unfolding volatile changes in market trends. Using such information, competitors are often able to devise new actions on how a company's existing performance can be undermined. It is often during the emergence of such situations that labour hiring freeze may affect a company's competitiveness (Guthrie & Datta 2008:108). Yet as the business constantly engages labour hiring freeze, its employment brand as the desired organisation to work for may also tend to be undermined. This affects the confidence and trust that the existing pool of employees may also have in such organisation (Iverson & Pullman, 2000:977). It is such declining level of trust and confidence that also usually affect the employee morale and

commitment to aid a business in achieving its strategic goals and objectives. Such a view is further echoed in the fact that Figure 4.17 indicated that 20% of the respondents were found to state that somewhat labour hiring freeze is causing negative attitude about the organisation. Figure 4.17 further shows that 25% of the respondents were found to state that labour hiring freeze is only causing very little negative attitude about the organisation, as 15% noted that labour hiring freeze is not at all causing any negative attitude. However, the mean score was three which means the respondents were almost evenly divided across different categories. It implies as much as there are employees who have developed negative attitudes, there also those that still view their organisations quite positively. Yet, as high level of negative attitudes persists, it may tend to cause high labour turnover.

4.4.7 High labour turnover

As indicated in Figure 4.18, 33% of the 96 sampled respondents reiterated that it is a great deal that most of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry are experiencing high labour turnover as a result of the implementation of the labour hiring freeze.

Figure 4.18: High labour turnover



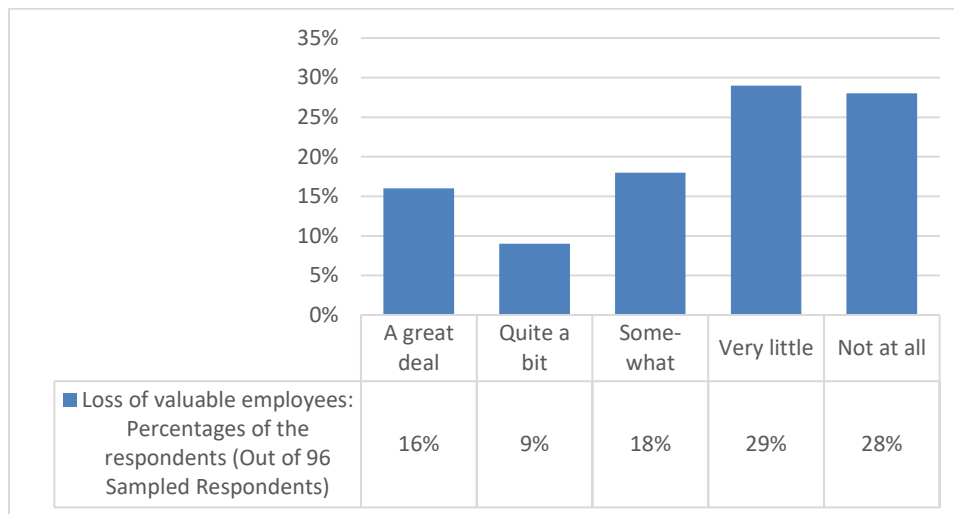
However, none of the respondents indicated that labour hiring freeze is causing quite a bit of high labour turnover. Such a finding implies that as the employees get overworked, they tend to seek alternative new opportunities in alternative organisations. It is also possible that as the employees lose trust and confidence in their organisations, they also tend to explore alternative opportunities in new organisations. Such a view is echoed in the fact that 17% of the respondents were noted to have stated that somewhat labour hiring freeze is causing high labour turnover. However, 41% of the 96 sampled respondents were found to have stated that labour hiring freeze is only causing

very little labour turnover, as 9% reiterated that labour hiring freeze does not at all cause high labour turnover. The mean score was 3.6 which suggests that most of the respondents feel that labour hiring freeze is not causing high labour turnover. This implies that most of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry are not experiencing high labour turnover. Since the rate of labour turnover is low, findings indicated most of the companies also not to experience high rate of the loss of the valuable employees.

4.4.8 Loss of valuable employees

Such a view is accentuated in the fact that of the 96 sampled respondents, 16% are indicated in Figure 4.19 to have stated that it is a great deal that most of the sand mining companies are losing most of their valuable employees as a result of the implementation of labour hiring freeze. The 9% of the 96 sampled respondents were noted in Figure 4.19 to have stated that labour hiring freeze is quite a bit causing loss of valuable employees. This implies that labour hiring freeze is upsetting the employees to cause the high turnover of the most valuable employees. It also suggests labour hiring freeze is not stimulating improved employee motivation and satisfaction. Such findings seem to echo the literature which states that if labour hiring freeze is opted for, it may tend not to motivate the existing employees. This is attributable to the fact that during labour hiring freeze, companies often devise the best ways through which the existing employees can be optimized to achieve the desired strategic objectives and goals (Brockner, 2006:122). Quests to devise the best ways through which the existing employees can be optimised can cause work overload and dissatisfaction that can cause the turnover and loss of more valuable employees (Brockner, 2006:122). Such a view is supported in the opinions of the 18% of the 96 sampled respondents who stated that somewhat labour hiring freeze is causing loss of valuable employees. However, in contrast to such a view, Figure 4.19 indicates that 29% of the respondents stated that labour hiring freeze is causing very little loss of the valuable employees. The argument that labour hiring freeze does not cause loss of valuable employees is also accentuated in the fact that 28% of the respondents were found to reiterate that labour hiring freeze does not at all cause loss of valuable employees.

Figure 4.19: Loss of valuable employees



Such a finding is also consonant with the mean score of 3.8 which means most of the respondents did not concur that labour hiring freeze is causing loss of valuable employees in the sand minerals mining industry.

Despite the fact that there are varying views, it was still quite evident from the findings that the implementation of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry is causing distortion of work roles, overworking of the employees, employee dissatisfaction, low morale, low motivation, negative attitude about the organisation, high labour turnover and loss of valuable employees. Given these findings, the survey also explored the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry.

4.5 SECTION D: STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LABOUR HIRING FREEZE AS A DRIVER OF COST COMPETITIVENESS IN THE SAND MINERALS MINING INDUSTRY

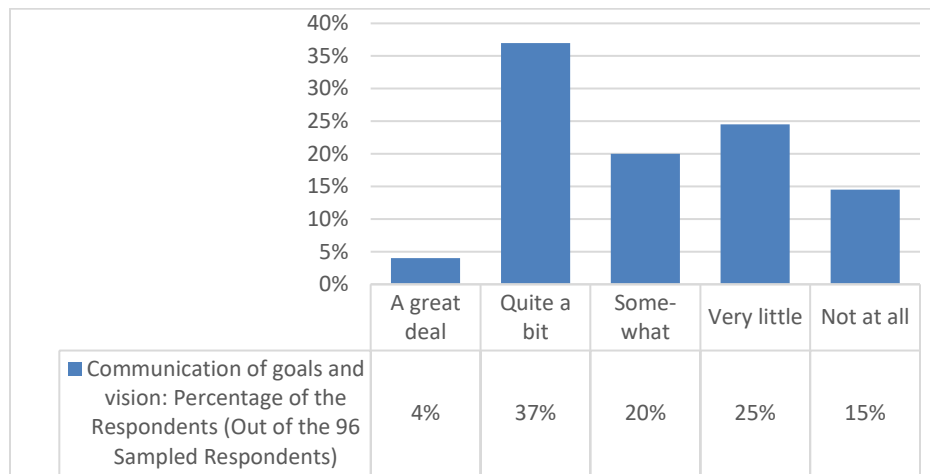
The survey evaluated whether the strategies used for leveraging the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze in the sand minerals mining industry encompass; communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze, use of job enrichment to render work more interesting, analysis and response to individual employee needs, the use of other cost cutting strategies such as the control

of raw-materials' costs, tasks and process re-engineering, the use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required and the use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance. The section is replicated from section D of the research questionnaire as shown in Annexure 1. The details of the findings are as follows.

4.5.1 Communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze

Communication of the goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze is critical for ensuring that the employees take the right direction. It eliminates anxiety and confusion that usually tend to engulf the employees during the labour hiring freeze. This influences the success of the labour hiring freeze. Good communication motivates the employees and influences the extent to which they are able to dedicate the desired level of commitment and effort to ensure that the intended goals of labour hiring freeze are achieved. In terms of the implementation of the labour hiring freeze in the sand minerals mining companies, Figure 4.20 indicates that 4% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that it is a great deal that goals and visions are effectively communicated during the labour hiring freeze. 37% of the respondents have stated that goals and vision of the company are effectively communicated during the labour hiring freeze. This implies that necessary efforts are undertaken to communicate and inform the employees about the motives and purpose of labour hiring freeze. If employees understand the goals and objectives of labour hiring freeze, it becomes easier to manage them to ensure that the desired goals and objectives are achieved. However, 20% of the 96 sampled respondents are noted to have stated that somewhat goals and visions are effectively communicated to the employees during the labour hiring freeze. That implies that there is no attempt or proper efforts to communicate to the employees about the vision and goals of labour hiring freeze. Such a finding is also echoed in the fact that Figure 4.20 indicates that 25% of the respondents reiterated that very little efforts are undertaken to ensure that the goal and vision of the company are effectively communicated to the employees during the labour hiring freeze. This contrasts with the view of the 15% who are reiterated in Figure 4.20 to have stated that goals and vision are not at all communicated to the employees during the labour hiring freeze. Yet, communication is critical for clarifying issues that may not be clear to the employees. However, the mean score of 3 indicates that as much as some of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry do not take the initiatives to effectively communicate the goals and vision of labour hiring freeze, there are others that do so.

Figure 4.20: Communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze

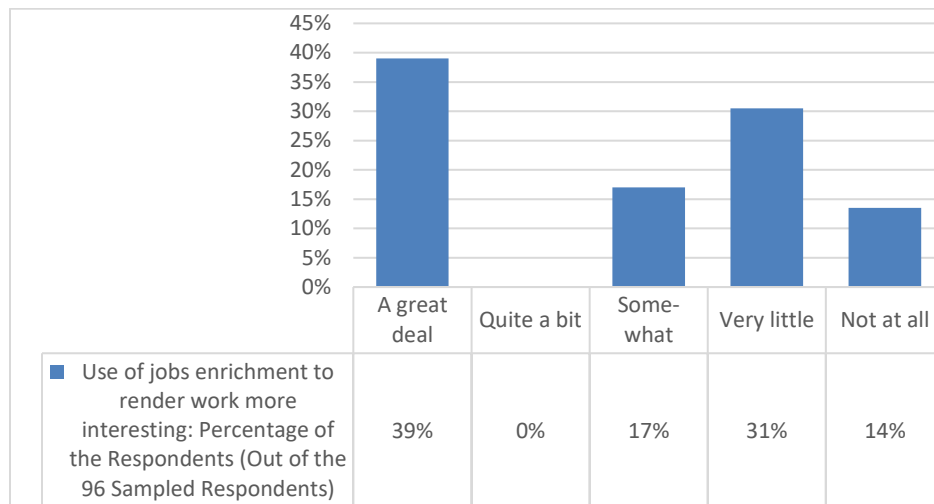


This explains why some of the employees were found in the previous variables to find labour hiring freeze to be de-motivating. This is because in the absence of communication, it remains unclear to the employees as to why labour hiring freeze is being undertaken. Unclear information tend to upset and de-motivate the employees. Nevertheless, besides clarity of communication, the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze is also influenced by the use of job enrichment to render work more interesting.

4.5.2 Use of job enrichment to render work more interesting

Findings imply that the use of job enrichment during the labour hiring freeze renders the work more interesting. This is accentuated in the fact that Figure 4.21 indicates that of the 96 sampled respondents, 39% stated that it is a great deal that the use of job enrichment during the labour hiring freeze renders work more interesting. None of the 96 sampled respondents indicated whether the use of job enrichment during the labour hiring freeze renders work more interesting. However, in contrast to this view, 17% of the respondents indicated job enrichment during the labour hiring freeze, as it renders work more interesting. This implies that some of the companies do not use job enrichment as a mechanism for making work interesting during the labour hiring freeze. Such a view is also accentuated in the opinions of the 31% who are noted in Figure 4.21 to have stated that only very little effort is undertaken to ensure that job enrichment is used during the labour hiring freeze.

Figure 4.21: Use of job enrichment to render work more interesting



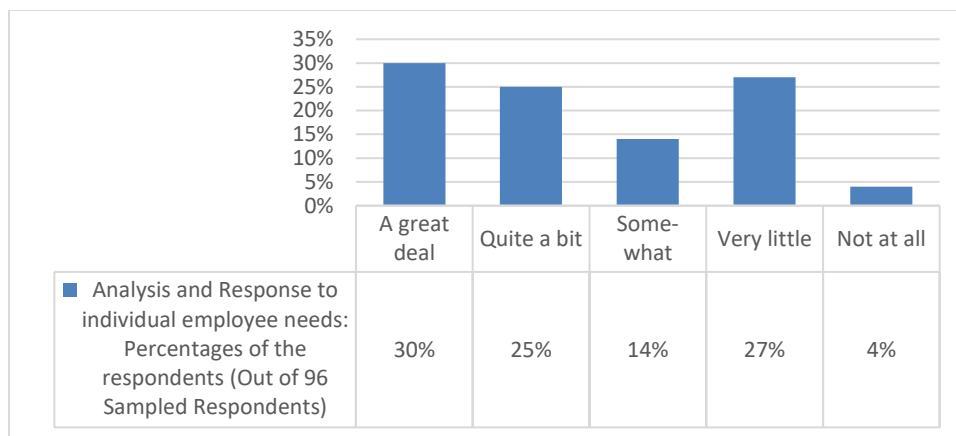
This affects the extent to which such sand minerals mining companies are able to stimulate improved employee interest and motivation. Figure 4.21 indicates that 14% of the respondents were found to reiterate that the use of job enrichment does not at all render work more interesting. The mean score of 3.1 was found to skew towards left. This implies the use of job enrichment during the labour hiring freeze does not render work more interesting. Instead, it seems to suggest that it is through job enrichment that the employees are overworked during the labour hiring freeze. This renders job enrichment as less important for motivating employees during the labour hiring freeze. Besides the use of job enrichment during the labour hiring freeze, the analysis and response to the individual employee needs is the other strategy that also influences the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze.

4.5.3 Analysis and response to individual employee needs

The analysis and response to the individual employee needs renders it possible for the business to identify and respond to the factors undermining employee motivation and satisfaction during the labour hiring freeze. Improved employee motivation and satisfaction influence the overall commitment and effort that the employees are able to engage to ensure that the labour hiring freeze is successful. Such a view was echoed in the findings of this research. It is illustrated in Figure 4.22 that 30% of the 96 sampled respondents argued that it is a great deal that the analysis and response to the individual employee needs are undertaken as part of the quests for ensuring the

successful implementation of labour hiring freeze in the sand minerals mining industry. This demonstrates the extent to which the understanding and response to the individual employee needs is critical for edifying the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. As it is illustrated in Figure 4.22, such a view is further supported in the opinions of the 25% of the respondents who are noted to have stated that quite a bit of the analysis and response to the individual employee needs renders it possible for the business to identify and respond to the factors undermining employee motivation and satisfaction during the labour hiring freeze.

Figure 4.22: Analysis and response to individual employee needs



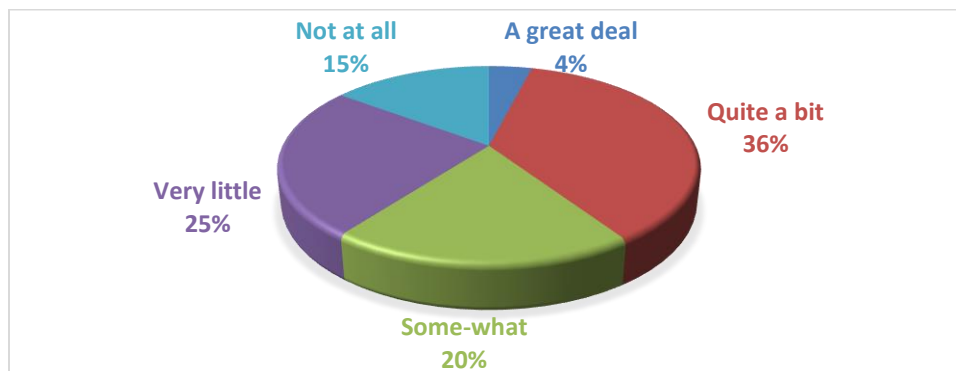
However, Figure 4.22 indicates that of the 96 sampled respondents, 14% of the respondents stated that somewhat individual employee needs are analysed and responded to as part of the quests for ensuring the success of labour hiring freeze. This is implying that some of the sand mining companies do not effectively undertake the analysis of the individual employee needs as part of the strategy for ensuring the successful implementation of labour hiring freeze. Such a view is also supported in the views of the 27% who stated that only very little efforts are undertaken to analyse and respond to the individual employee needs as part of the strategy for ensuring the successful implementation of labour hiring freeze. Yet, as some companies only undertake little efforts, Figure 4.22 reveals that 4% of the respondents indicated that some of the companies do not at all bother to analyse and respond to the individual employee needs as part of the strategies for rendering labouring hiring freeze successful. Failure to understand individual employee needs and demands affects the extent to which the executives are able to ensure that the implementation of labour hiring freeze is successful. However, the mean score was 2.8 and it implies that most of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry undertake relevant analysis and response to the

individual employee needs as part of the initiatives for ensuring the successful implementation of labour hiring freeze.

4.5.4 Use of other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs

In the event that labour hiring freeze is unable to induce the desired cost savings, other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs can be used. Combined with the reduction of personnel costs, this induces the desired cost advantages that would spur a company's cost competitiveness. The application of such strategies was found to be evident in the findings on labour hiring freeze in the sand minerals mining industry. As indicated in Figure 4.23, 4% of the 96 sampled respondents were found to state that it is a great deal that the other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs are used during the implementation of the labour hiring freeze in the sand minerals' mining industry. While 37% of the respondents stated that quite a bit of cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs are used during labour hiring freeze. Such approach influences the overall effectiveness of the labour hiring freeze. Unfortunately, findings indicated that not all companies in the sand minerals mining industry are using such accompanying cost cutting strategies. As indicated in Figure 4.23, 20% of the respondents were found to have stated that somewhat other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs are used during the implementation of labour hiring freeze. While 25% of the respondents also stated that very little of the other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw materials' costs are used. It is also illustrated in Figure 4.23 that 15% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that the other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs are not at all used during the labour hiring freeze. This implies that some of the businesses tend to only focus on the minimisation of the human resource costs.

Figure 4.23: Use of other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs

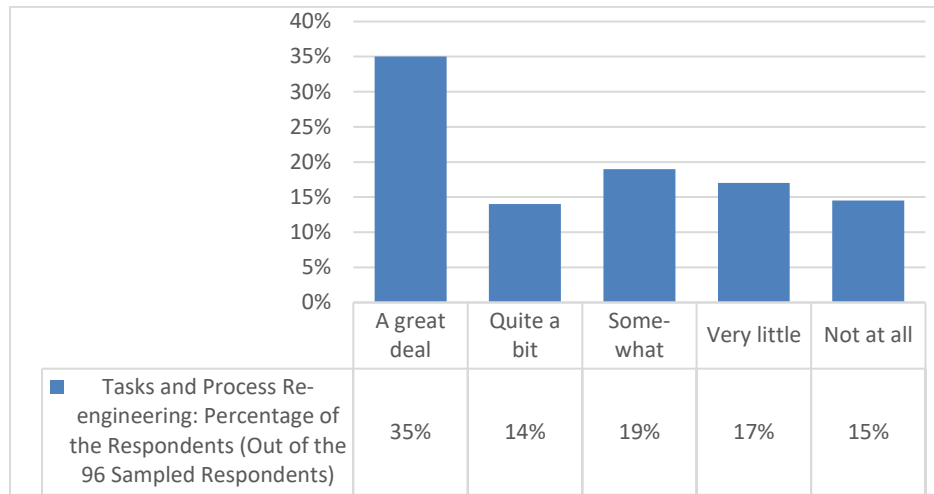


This undermines the extent to which the implementation of the labour hiring freeze is able to induce the desired cost advantages. However, the mean score was also 3 which means as much as some of the businesses use such accompanying cost cutting strategies, there are others that do not do so. This affects the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. There is not only a challenge of using other accompanying cost cutting strategies, but also the application of the strategies such as task and process re-engineering.

4.5.5 Tasks and process re-engineering

As it is illustrated in Figure 4.24, 35% of the 96 sampled respondents stated that it is a great deal that task and process re-engineering are undertaken to improve the overall effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. As reflected in figure 4.24, 14% indicated that quite a bit of task and process re-engineering are undertaken to improve the overall effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. This implies that task and process re-engineering are critical for leveraging the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. As labour hiring freeze is undertaken, it tends to distort the existing tasks and processes. In effect, task and process re-engineering are critical for improving the smooth flow of activities to leverage the overall effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. The view that task and process re-engineering are critical for leveraging the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze was also echoed in the opinions of the 19% of the respondents who stated that somewhat task and process re-engineering are used to leverage the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. However, it also implies that there are some of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry that do not undertake task and process re-engineering when undertaking labour hiring freeze. Nevertheless, it is illustrated in Figure 4.24, 17% of the respondents stated that very little task and process re-engineering are undertaken to leverage the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze, as 15% indicated that task and process re-engineering are not at all undertaken during labour hiring freeze. In line with the literature in chapter 2 of this dissertation, this affects the extent to which the implementation of labour hiring freeze can be successful.

Figure 4.24: Tasks and process re-engineering



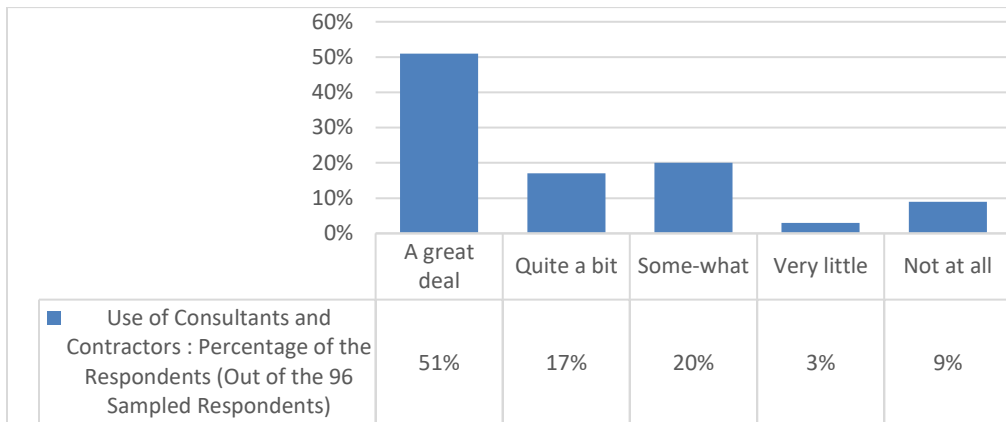
However, the mean score of 2.7 seems to support the view that task and process re-engineering are undertaken to improve the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. Such findings seem to echo the literature that indicates that as labour hiring freeze is being undertaken, the business must also undertake task and process re-engineering to identify and eliminate new glitches that are affecting operational efficiency in the now more complex networks of new operational systems (Baumolet, 2013:9). However, besides task and process re-engineering, findings also indicated some of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry to use consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required.

4.5.6 Use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required

The use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required is critical for ensuring the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. It means as hiring freeze is undertaken, avenues are provided for consultants and contract workers to be recruited to fill the emerging vacancies. This aids the reduction of the workload on the existing employees. Work overload is usually the cause of employee low motivation and dissatisfaction during the labour hiring freeze. In effect, the use of consultants and contract workers renders it possible for labour hiring freeze to be successfully implemented. Such a view is strongly supported in the findings in Figure 4.25, which indicate that of the 96 sampled respondents, 51% stated that it is a great deal that companies

in the sand mineral mining industry use contract workers to support the employees where it is required.

Figure 4.25: Use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required



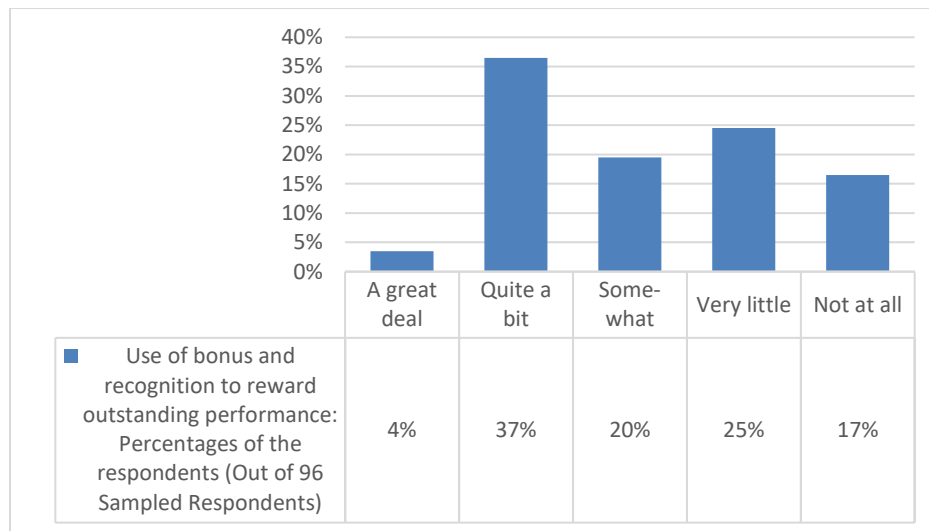
This minimises the risk of the emergence of work overload. At the same time, it is also noted in Figure 4.25 that 17% of the respondents revealed that quite a bit of consultants and contract workers are used to support the employees where it is required. This implies that the use of consultants and contract workers is critical for enhancing the successful implementation of labour hiring freeze. The use of consultants and contract workers enables management to avoid the circumstances where the employees are overworked during the implementation of labour hiring freeze. Such a view is also accentuated in the opinions of the 20% of the 96 sampled respondents who are noted to have stated that somewhat consultants and contract workers are used to support the employees during the implementation of labour hiring freeze. However, as findings indicated, it seems not all the companies in the sand mineral mining industry use consultants and contract employees to support the existing employees during the labour hiring freeze. This is attributable to the fact that Figure 4.25 indicated that of the 96 sampled respondents, 3% indicated that some of the companies make very little use of the consultants and contract workers during the implementation of the labour hiring freeze. 9% of the respondents are noted to have stated that consultants and contract workers are not at all used during the implementation of labour hiring freeze. However, despite such a finding, the mean of 1.7 was skewed towards the right to mean that even during the labour hiring freeze, some of the companies continue to hire consultants and contract workers. Such a strategy is critical for ensuring the success of the labour hiring freeze

since it reduces on the workload. However, besides the use of consultants and contract workers, labour hiring freeze is also influenced by the extent to which bonuses and recognitions are used to reward outstanding performance.

4.5.7 Use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance

As indicated in Figure 4.26, 4% of the respondents stated that it is a great deal that the implementation of labour hiring freeze is accompanied by the use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance. 37% of the respondents argued that quite a bit of bonuses and recognitions are used to reward outstanding performance during the implementation of labour hiring freeze.

Figure 4.26: Use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance



This implies the use of bonuses and recognitions is critical for ensuring the successful implementation of labour hiring freeze. The use of such bonuses and recognitions would enable manage respond to the challenge of low motivation that usually affect employee satisfaction during the labour hiring freeze. Such a finding is at tandem with the literature that emphasises that management must also develop a new system for motivating the employees during the labour hiring freeze. Such initiatives may require the use of employee recognition systems, bonuses, rewards and gift vouchers as well as promise of promotion after the labour hiring freeze measures are lifted. These must be accompanied by the development of the appropriate communication mechanisms to ensure that employees are able to raise any grievances that could be affecting their

performance (Baumolet, 2013:9). Such grievances must also be timely resolved if management is to stimulate improved employee motivation. However, 20% of the respondents were found to state that somewhat such bonuses and recognitions are used during the implementations of the labour hiring freeze, as 25% reiterated that only little efforts are undertaken to use such bonuses and recognition schemes. 17% of the 96 sampled respondents were found to state that such bonuses and recognitions are not at all used to reward outstanding performance during the labour hiring freeze. This implies that there are some of the companies that do not use such bonuses and recognition schemes during the implementation of labour hiring freeze. However, the mean score was 3 to imply that whereas some of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry use such bonuses and recognitions, others do not use them at all. For those that do not use such bonuses and recognitions, they may face risks of employee low motivation and dissatisfaction setting in to undermine the overall effectiveness of labour hiring freeze.

Although some of the respondents concurred, it seems there is a challenge of using strategies like communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze, use of job enrichment to render work more interesting, analysis and response to individual employee needs, the use of other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs, tasks and process re-engineering, the use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required and the use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance.

4.6 SUMMARY

The motive of the third secondary research objective was to analyse the perspectives of the employees in the sand mining industry about the values, drawbacks and strategies for undertaking labour hiring freeze. On that basis the study has succeeded in researching the secondary research objective three. This is attributable to the fact that the chapter explored four questions about the demographics, values, drawbacks and strategies for the implementation of labour hiring freeze. This enabled the study to respond to the third research objective. Although the chapter has responded to the third research objective, the fourth research objective will be addressed in chapter five of this dissertation. Nevertheless, it was quite evident from the findings that the implementation of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry has influenced the reduction of personnel costs, improved cost competitiveness and better market performance. It has also influenced improved morale, improved employee

motivation and improved productivity. However, despite such values, findings imply labour hiring freeze is associated with certain inherent drawbacks that can threaten its value as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. It was quite evident from the findings that the implementation of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry is causing distortion of work roles, overworking of the employees, employee dissatisfaction, low morale, low motivation, negative attitude about the organisation, high labour turnover and loss of valuable employees. Given these findings, the survey also explored the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. However, findings indicated that it seems there is a challenge of using strategies like communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze as well as the use of job enrichment to render work more interesting, and analysis and response to individual employee needs. There is also a challenge of using the other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs. Other limitations were identified in the use of tasks and process re-engineering, the use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required and the use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance. Against this backdrop, the discussion in the next chapter documents the general conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter documents the general conclusions and recommendations of the study. The motive of the chapter is to respond to the fourth secondary research objective which is to recommend measures for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. To accomplish this, the summary of the key secondary and primary research findings is presented according to the four questions cited in chapter 3 of this dissertation to entail the evaluation of:

- What are the values of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry?
- What are the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry?
- Which strategies are used for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry?
- Which measures can be recommended for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry?

It is from this summary that the conclusion is drawn to provide critical insights on the key secondary and primary research findings. Against the key primary research findings, the recommendations are drawn to highlight the strategies that the executives in the sand minerals mining industry must adopt to improve the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness. The details are as follows.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE KEY FINDINGS

This section provides the general summary of the key secondary and primary research findings. The details are as follows.

5.2.1 Secondary Research Findings

This section offers the key secondary research findings on the values, drawbacks and strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. The details are as follows.

5.2.1.1 Values of Labour Hiring Freeze

This subsection provides a summary of the findings for the first question that sought to evaluate the values of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Literature suggests that the values of labour hiring freeze often encompass improved cost competitiveness, productivity and motivation (Gittonga, 2012:119; Heathfield, 2018b:2; Ladimeji, 2013:2; Madrick, 2011:5). According to the literature the values of labour hiring freeze are;

- a) Reduction of personnel costs.
- b) Improved cost competitiveness.
- c) Better market performance.
- d) Improved morale.
- e) Improved employee motivation.
- f) Improved labour productivity.

5.2.1.2 Drawbacks of Labour Hiring Freeze

This subsection provides a summary on the findings for the second question that sought to evaluate the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Literature implies that labour hiring may affect revenue generating roles, cause frustrations and discontent among employees and affect a company's brand image (Cascio, 2009:10; Heathfield, 2018b:2; Sullivan, 2000:1). The drawbacks of labour hiring freeze are;

- a) The distortion of work roles.
- b) Overworking of employees.
- c) Employee dissatisfaction.

- d) Low morale.
- e) Low motivation.
- f) Negative attitude about the organisation.
- g) High labour turnover.
- h) Loss of valuable employees.

5.2.1.3 Strategies for Improving the Effectiveness of Labour Hiring Freeze

This subsection provides a summary on the findings for the third question that sought to evaluate the strategies used for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Literature suggests that the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness often encompass assessment and identification of individual motivators, task and process re-engineering and job enrichment (Baumolet, 2013:9; Jones & George, 2016:160; Ladimeji, 2013:1). The strategies are summarised as follows;

- a) Communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze.
- b) Use of job enrichment to render work more interesting.
- c) Analysis and response to individual employee needs.
- d) Use of other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs.
- e) Tasks and process re-engineering.
- f) Use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required.
- g) Use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance.

5.2.2 Primary Research Findings

This section offers the key primary research findings on the values, drawbacks and strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. The details are as follows.

5.2.2.1 Values of Labour Hiring Freeze as a Driver of Cost Competitiveness in the Sand Minerals Mining Industry

Primary research findings indicated that labour hiring freeze does not significantly influence the reduction of personnel costs. Such a finding is supported by the mean score of 3.2 which is skewed towards the right to indicate that labour hiring freeze does not at all influence the reduction of personnel costs. This implies that unless the recruitment of new employees is completely banned, it may not influence the reduction of the personnel costs. Such a view supports the literature that indicates that even during labour hiring freeze, businesses are often still forced to hire consultants and employees for unique vacant positions. This leads to the circumstance where labour hiring freeze does not significantly influence the reduction of personnel costs. However, in contrast to such finding, it emerged from the primary research that labour hiring freeze influences cost competitiveness. Such a finding is supported by the mean score of 2.6 which is skewed towards the left and indicates that labour hiring freeze influence costs competitiveness. It implies as companies cut off the personnel costs, it tends to impact positively on cost competitiveness. This is attributable to the fact that as businesses cut off the costs of recruitment, advertisements and other personnel related costs, it tends to spawn a company's overall cost competitiveness. As it emerged from the primary research findings, improved cost competitiveness tends to influence a company's better market performance. Such a finding is supported by the mean score of 2.6 which is skewed towards the left and indicates that labour hiring freeze influence costs competitiveness. It implies labour hiring freeze has direct positive effects on improved better market performance. This is attributable to the fact that as companies reduce personnel costs; it tends to translate into lower costs and lower prices that influence a company's competitiveness among its rivals. Labour hiring freeze does not only influence better market performance, but also improved employee morale. Such a view is echoed in the mean score of 2.8 which is skewed to the left and indicates that most of the respondents construed that labour hiring freeze influences improved employee morale. Such a finding seems to echo the previous findings that indicated that labour hiring freeze influences better market performance. Better market performance arise arises from the fact that improved employee morale tends to translate into better quality of customer services. In turn better quality of customer services tends to create points-of-difference that set the business apart from rivals. This subsequently influences a company's improved competitiveness and better market

performance. However, even if it is established from the findings that labour hiring freeze influences improved employee morale, it was found that it does not have direct positive effects on employee motivation. This is attributable to the fact that with a mean score of 3, labour hiring freeze was found not to have direct positive effects on all the employees. It implies that as much as some of the employees are motivated by labour hiring freeze, there are those that are not motivated. However, for those that are motivated, the direct positive effects seem to get reflected in improved productivity. Such a view is echoed in the fact that with the mean score of 2.8, it was interpreted that most of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry has been able to realize improved productivity as a result of the implementation of the labour hiring freeze. It is therefore quite evident from the findings that labour hiring freeze influences a company’s productivity. The details of the findings on the values of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand mineral mining industry are summarised in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Summary of the findings on the values of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand mineral mining industry

		A great deal	Quite a bit	Some-what	Very little	Not at all
1	Reduction of personnel cost	39%	0%	17%	31%	14%
2	Improved cost competitiveness	30%	28%	5%	11%	26%
3	Better market performance	42%	29%	8%	4%	18%
4	Improved morale	39%	0%	17%	31%	14%
5	Improved employee motivation	4%	37%	20%	25%	15%
6	Improved productivity	33%	12%	30%	5%	20%

Table 5.1 is a snapshot which summarises the study outcomes on the values of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand mineral mining industry.

5.2.2.2 Drawbacks of Labour Hiring Freeze as a Driver of Cost Competitiveness in the Sand Minerals Mining Industry

Labour hiring freeze distorts work roles. As the business engages in the reduction of personnel and the review of all work roles, it tends to interfere with the established patterns of the existing work roles. Such a view is echoed in the mean score of 1.8 which is skewed to the left to imply that labour hiring freeze distorts work roles. However, in contrast to such a finding, it was found that labour hiring freeze does not cause the overworking of the existing employees. This is attributable to the fact that with a mean score of 3, it was interpreted that as much as there are employees who find that they are overworked during labour hiring freeze, there are also others that get instead motivated. Such a finding seems to support the findings on the previous variables in which it was found that labour hiring freeze influences improved employee morale and motivation. However, just like the findings on labour hiring freeze and overworking of the employees, it was also found that not all the employees get dissatisfied with labour hiring freeze. Such a view is supported by the fact that the mean score was 3 to imply that as much as some of the respondents are not dissatisfied with labour hiring freeze, there are others who are dissatisfied. This implies as much as there are some of the employees in the sand minerals mining industry who are dissatisfied with the ongoing labour hiring freeze, there also those that feel contented. The same also applied to the findings on low morale where with a mean score of 3, it was found that whereas labour hiring freeze cause low morale among some of the employees, there are also others who are not affected. However, in contrast to the findings on low morale, the mean score for low motivation was 2.3 to suggest that most of the employees indicated that labour hiring freeze is causing low motivation among the employees in the sand mineral mining industry. This echoes the findings in the previous variables that indicated that labour hiring freeze causes the distortion of work roles as well as the overworking of the existing employees. As work roles are distorted and the existing employees are overworked, it tends to cause low morale and motivation. This affects employee satisfaction. It also causes the employees to develop negative attitudes about the organisation that they work for. Such a view was accentuated in the mean score of 3 which implies that whereas some of the employees tend not to develop negative attitude about the organisation, there are those that do so to affect their effective performance. However, as contrast to such a finding, labour hiring freeze was found not to cause high labour turnover. Such a finding is supported by the mean score of 3.6

which suggests that most of the respondents feel that labour hiring freeze is not causing high labour turnover. Due to low labour turnover, labour hiring freeze was also not found to cause the loss of valuable employees. Such a view is echoed in the mean score of 3.8 which suggests most of the respondents did not concur that labour hiring freeze is causing loss of valuable employees in the sand minerals mining industry. The details of the findings on the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand mineral mining industry are summarised in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Summary of the findings on the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand mineral mining industry

		A great deal	Quite a bit	Some-what	Very little	Not at all
1	Distortion of work roles	44%	1%	34%	7%	14%
2	Overworking of the employees	10%	29%	22%	32%	7%
3	Employee Dissatisfaction	4%	37%	20%	25%	15%
4	Low morale	35%	10%	10%	37%	8%
5	Low motivation	44%	1%	34%	7%	14%
6	Negative attitude about the organisation	4%	37%	20%	25%	15%
7.	High labour turnover	33%	0%	17%	41%	9%
8.	Loss of valuable employees	16%	9%	18%	29%	28%

Table 5.2 is a snapshot which summarises the study outcomes of the drawbacks of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry.

5.2.2.3 Strategies for improving the effectiveness of Labour Hiring Freeze as a Driver of Cost Competitiveness in the Sand Minerals Mining Industry

Communication of goal and vision during the labour hiring freeze influences its successful implementation. However, the mean score of 3 indicates that as much as some of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry do not take the initiatives to effectively communicate the goals and vision of labour hiring freeze, there are others that do so. This implies that there are some of the companies in the sand mineral mining industry that do not bother to effectively communicate the goal and vision of labour hiring freeze during its implementation. Such approach undermines the successful implementation of labour hiring freeze. Yet, as the findings revealed, it is not only communication of goal and vision that render labour hiring freeze successful, but also the use of job enrichment to render work more interesting. However, the mean score of 3.1 was found to skew towards left. This implies the use of job enrichment during the labour hiring freeze does not render work more interesting. It also suggests that there are some companies in the sand mineral mining industry that do not use job enrichment to render work more interesting during the labour hiring freeze. In contrast to such a finding, most of the companies in the sand mineral mining industry were found to undertake analysis and response to individual employee needs during the implementation of the labour hiring freeze. Such a view is attributable to the fact that the mean score was 2.8 and it implies that most of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry undertake relevant analysis and response to the individual employee needs as part of the initiatives for ensuring the successful implementation of labour hiring freeze. However, not all the companies in the sand mineral mining industry were found to make use of the other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw materials' costs. This is attributable to the fact that the mean score was 3 to imply that as much as some of the businesses use such accompanying cost cutting strategies, there are others that do not do so. In terms of tasks and process re-engineering, the mean score was 2.7 to support the view that task and process re-engineering are undertaken to improve the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. This render labour hiring freeze more successful. Companies in the sand mineral mining industry were not only found to use tasks and process re-engineering, but also to use consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required. Such a view is echoed in the fact that the mean of 1.7 was skewed towards the left to mean that even during the labour hiring freeze, some of the companies continue to hire consultants and contract workers. This renders labour hiring freeze successful. However, in terms of the use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance, some of the companies were found to do so as others do not use such approach. Such a view was attributable to the fact that the

mean score was 3 to imply that whereas some of the companies in the sand minerals mining industry use such bonuses and recognitions, others do not use them at all. The details of the findings on the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand mineral mining industry are summarised in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Summary of the findings on the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand mineral mining industry

		A great deal	Quite a bit	Some-what	Very little	Not at all
1	Communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze	4%	37%	20%	25%	15%
2	Use of job enrichment to render work more interesting	39%	0%	17%	31%	14%
3	Analysis and response to individual employee needs	30%	25%	14%	27%	4%
4	Use of other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs	4%	37%	20%	25%	15%
5	Tasks and process re-engineering	35%	14%	19%	17%	15%
6	Use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required	51%	17%	20%	3%	9%
7.	Use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance	4%	37%	20%	25%	17%

Table 5.3 is a snapshot which summarises the study outcomes on the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand mineral mining industry.

5.3 CONCLUSION

Findings imply that labour hiring freeze is undertaken as a strategy for avoiding lay off and retrenchment. Instead of lay off and retrenchment, labour hiring freeze focuses on devising how the existing employees can be optimised to influence the achievement of the desired outcomes. Yet, as the organisation strives to devise how the existing employees can be utilised rather than laid off, it tends to motivate the existing employees. It influences improved employee motivation and commitment to ensure that the business achieves its desired strategic objectives and goals. This can impact positively on the improved performance of the business. The values of labour hiring freeze are not only reflected in the fact that it stimulates employee motivation and commitment, but also in the leverage of a company's cost competitiveness. As the company stops the recruitment of new employees as well as salary increment, it tends to influence the reduction of personnel costs. This can impact positively on the significant reduction of the human resource costs. In turn, this influences the achievement of improved cost competitiveness. However, unless such initiatives are accompanied with the use of other aggressive cost reduction strategies, findings imply that it is unlikely to adduce the desired effects on improved cost competitiveness. To impact on improved cost competitiveness, labour hiring freeze must be accompanied with the use of aggressive cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw materials' costs as well as the improved level of the optimisation of the existing resources. The combined effects of such cost cutting strategies catalyse the extent to which labour hiring freeze may influence improved cost competitiveness. Yet, labour hiring freeze not only influences cost competitiveness, but also improved employee morale, motivation and productivity. Improved productivity results from the fact that as labour hiring freeze seeks to improve the optimisation of the existing employees; it tends to catalyse improved productivity. Improved productivity also often results from the fact that as the employees become more motivated and committed, it tends to influence the efforts that they are to put to ensure that the allocated tasks are effectively accompanied. This influences increment in each unit of labour which is used and subsequently the improved productivity of the employee. However, despite such values, findings imply labour hiring freeze is associated with certain inherent drawbacks that can threaten its value as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Despite the fact that some of the respondents had different views, it was quite evident from the findings that the implementation of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry is

causing distortion of work roles, overworking of the employees, employee dissatisfaction, low morale, low motivation, negative attitude about the organisation, high labour turnover and loss of valuable employees. Given these findings, the survey also explored the strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. However, findings indicated that it seems there is a challenge of using strategies like communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze as well as the use of job enrichment to render work more interesting, and analysis and response to individual employee needs. There is also a challenge of using the other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs. Other limitations were identified in the use of tasks and process re-engineering, the use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required and the use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance. It is against such findings that it is argued in the recommendation section that the executives in the sand mineral mining industry need to devise and utilise better measures for influencing the successful implementation of labour hiring freeze.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This section is aimed at responding to the fourth question that sought to assess which measures can be recommended for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. To respond to this question, it is argued that to effectively undertake labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness, the executives in the sand minerals mining industry must consider using the following strategies:

5.4.1 Use accompanying Cost Cutting Strategies

It is critical that the executives in the sand minerals mining industry use the accompanying cost cutting strategies. This is attributable to the fact that findings indicate the sole application of labour hiring freeze without the accompanying cost cutting strategies may not impact quite positively on improved cost competitiveness. In effect, the application of the accompanying cost cutting strategies would enable significant reduction of the operational costs to spur improved cost competitiveness. Such accompanying cost cutting strategies may encompass the reduction of the cost of raw-materials, investment in better machineries to leverage operational efficiency and outsourcing of non-core activities. Reduction of the cost of raw-materials such as the chemicals

used in the processing of sand and tiles would reduce the cost of inputs. Combined with the significant reduction of personnel costs, this would improve cost competitiveness. However, the investment in superior sand extraction and processing machineries would spur operational efficiency to minimise wastes and cost. Combined with the outsourcing of non-core activities such as transportation, these would all catalyse improved cost competitiveness. These results therefore suggests that as labour hiring freeze reduce personnel costs, the use of the other cost cutting strategies aid the reduction of costs in the other areas to spur a company's improved cost competitiveness. However, as such measures are being used; it must also be accompanied by the use of the effective communication as a strategy for influencing improved employee morale and motivation.

5.4.2 Communication as a Strategy for Influencing Improved Employee Morale and Motivation

The use of the appropriate measures for influencing improved employee morale and motivation is critical for edifying the effective implementation of labour hiring freeze. This is attributable to the fact that findings indicated most of the employees to face low morale and motivation during the implementation of the labour hiring freeze. To deal with such situations, some of the strategies that can be used include good communication. In the application of such strategies, good communication is critical for ensuring that the employees understand the purpose and the motives of labour hiring freeze. When labour hiring freeze is undertaken, some of the employees may think that the company is closing. In effect, if the employees are not properly informed, it tends to affect their confidence and trust in the organisation. Some of the reasons that can be given in such communications are that the company is undergoing a difficult time, and therefore as a temporary strategy, labour hiring freeze is being undertaken to enable the business sail through such turbulence until the situation improves. This will enable the employees understand the motives and purpose of why labour hiring freeze is being undertaken. Since when labour hiring freeze is undertaken, most of the employees often think that the company is closing, the use of such communication strategy will help boost the confidence and trust of the employees as well as their morale. Yet, as such as a strategy is being used, it is critical that good communication is accompanied with the use of incentives and recognitions to reward the outstanding performance.

5.4.3 Use Incentives and Recognitions to Reward the Outstanding Performance

The use of incentives and recognitions to reward outstanding performance is one of the strategies that can be used to leverage the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. This is because findings indicated that during the implementation of the labour hiring freeze, employees tend to be overworked for no additional pay. This tends to cause employee dissatisfaction and poor motivation. To deal with such situations, the executives in the sand minerals mining industry must consider the development of incentive schemes and recognitions that are used to reward good performance. This implies that although labour hiring freeze often entails the freeze of salary increments and promotions, there must be exceptions where salary increments and promotions can be undertaken to reward exceptionally good performance. Apart from using cash incentives, a promise can also be made to outstanding employees that they will be promoted when labour hiring freeze comes to an end. This will influence improved employee satisfaction, morale and motivation during the labour hiring freeze. Yet, as such a strategy is being used; it must be accompanied with the development and use of the strategy that renders it possible for the exceptional recruitment of talented employees during the labour hiring freeze.

5.4.4 Use of Exceptional Recruitments for Unique Essential Positions

It is critical that the management devises a system where unique essential positions that are falling vacant during the labour hiring freeze are replaced. This is attributable to the fact that when labour hiring freeze is being undertaken, certain unique essential positions may tend to fall vacant. If there is no existing employee who can accomplish such unique tasks, then, labour hiring freeze must permit exceptions where new recruitments are undertaken to fill such positions. This would improve the continuity of the business as labour hiring freeze is being undertaken. Yet, if the organisation experiences high labour turnover during the implementation of labour hiring freeze, management should also permit consultants and temporary contract workers to be recruited. The use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required is critical for ensuring the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze. It means as hiring freeze is undertaken, avenues are provided for consultants and contract workers to be recruited to fill the emerging vacancies. This aids the reduction of the workload on the existing employees. Work overload is usually the cause of employee low motivation and dissatisfaction during the labour hiring freeze. In effect, the

use of consultants and contract workers renders it possible for labour hiring freeze to be successfully implemented. The implementation of such a strategy must be accompanied by the analysis and response to individual employee needs.

5.4.5 Analysis and Response to Individual Employee Needs

The assessment and identification of the individual motivators is critical for identifying and eliminating factors that usually arise to cause low morale and motivation during the implementation of the labour hiring freeze. It helps reduce the high rate of labour turnover that usually tend to emerge during labour hiring freeze. This must be accompanied by the encouragement of creativity and innovations to enable employees cope with the new tasks that are allocated to them. The analysis and response to the individual employee needs renders it possible for the business to identify and respond to the factors undermining employee motivation and satisfaction during the labour hiring freeze. Improved employee motivation and satisfaction influence the overall commitment and effort that the employees are able to engage to ensure that the labour hiring freeze is successful.

5.5 AREA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research can use a qualitative approach to explore the values and constraints of labour hiring freeze.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this research was to explore the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. This objective has certainly been achieved. This is reflected in the fact that it was quite evident from the findings that the implementation of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry has influenced the reduction of personnel costs, improved cost competitiveness and better market performance. It has also influenced improved morale, improved employee motivation and improved productivity. However, despite such values, findings imply labour hiring freeze is associated with certain inherent drawbacks that can threaten its value as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Findings imply that the implementation of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry is causing distortion of work roles, overworking of the employees, employee dissatisfaction, low

morale, low motivation, negative attitude about the organisation, high labour turnover and loss of valuable employees. According to Sthapit, (2018:), the concept of labour hiring freeze is of great value to company management in companies with excessive workforce, in case of merging companies, companies adopting automation of their processes and outsourcing of some of their operations. Given these findings, executives would have been expected to adopt the appropriate strategies for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry. Unfortunately, it seems not much is being done. It seems there is a challenge of using strategies like communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze, use of job enrichment to render work more interesting, and analysis and response to individual employee needs. There is also a challenge of using the other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs. Other limitations were identified in the use of tasks and process re-engineering, the use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required and the use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance. To effectively undertake labour hiring freeze as a driver of cost competitiveness, it is argued that the executives in the sand minerals mining industry must consider using the accompanying cost cutting strategies like the minimisation of raw-materials' costs. It must also consider developing and using communication as a strategy for influencing improved employee morale and motivation. These must be undertaken in conjunction with the use of incentives and recognitions to reward the outstanding performance, the use of exceptional recruitments for unique essential positions, and analysis and response to individual employee needs. Future research can use a qualitative approach to explore the values and constraints of labour hiring freeze.

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ANNEXURE 1: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Labour hiring freeze refers to the process of temporarily banning the recruitment of new employees. It may also entail the ban on promotion and pay increases for the existing employees.

Section A: Demographics

Demographic data will provide information data regarding the participants and will be used for the determination of whether the participants represent sample of the target population. This data will use be used to break down survey responses into meaningful groups.

Gender

1.	Male	2.	Female
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Age Group

	Age Group	Tick as appropriate
1.	Less than 25 years	
2.	25-40 years	
3.	40-55 years	
4.	55-and above	

Level of Employment

	Level of Employment	Tick as appropriate
1.	Supervisor	
2.	Operational Manager	
3.	Financial Manager	
4.	Human Resource Manager	
5.	Manager; Customer Care	
6.	Manager: Logistics and Transportation	

Years of Experience

	Years of Experience	Tick as appropriate
1.	Less than 5 years	
2.	5-10 years	
3.	10-20 years	
4.	More than 20 years	

Have you personally experienced labour hiring freeze in your organisation?

1.	Yes	2.	No
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Labour hiring freeze refers to the process of temporarily banning the recruitment of new employees. It may also entail the ban on promotion and pay increases for the existing employees.

Section B: Benefits (Values) of Labour Hiring Freeze as a Driver of Cost Competitiveness in the Sand Minerals Mining Industry

Mark with an *x* to indicate the extent to which any of the following benefits (values) have been realized as a result of the implementation of labour hiring freeze in your organisation

		A great deal	Quite a bit	Some-what	Very little	Not at all
1	Reduction of personnel cost					
2	Improved cost competitiveness					
3	Better market performance					
4	Improved morale					

5	Improved employee motivation					
6	Improved productivity					

Section C: Disadvantages (Drawbacks) of Labour Hiring Freeze as a Driver of Cost Competitiveness in the Sand Minerals Mining Industry

Mark with an *x* to indicate the extent to which any of the following disadvantages (drawbacks) have been induced by the implementation of labour hiring freeze in your organisation

		A great deal	Quite a bit	Some-what	Very little	Not at all
1	Distortion of work roles					
2	Overworking of the employees					
3	Employee Dissatisfaction					
4	Low morale					
5	Low motivation					
6	Negative attitude about the organisation					
7.	High labour turnover					
8.	Loss of valuable employees					

Section D: Strategies for improving the effectiveness of Labour Hiring Freeze as a Driver of Cost Competitiveness in the Sand Minerals Mining Industry

Mark with an *x* to indicate the extent to which any of the following strategies are being used for improving the effectiveness of labour hiring freeze in your organisation

		A great deal	Quite a bit	Some-what	Very little	Not at all
1	Communication of goals and vision during the labour hiring freeze					
2	Use of job enrichment to render work more interesting					
3	Analysis and response to individual employee needs					
4	Use of other cost cutting strategies such as the control of raw-materials' costs					
5	Tasks and process re-engineering					
6	Use of consultants and contract workers to support the employees where it is required					
7.	Use of bonuses and recognitions to reward outstanding performance					

End of questions (The Questionnaire was developed by the Researcher)

ANNEXURE 2: RESULTS OF THE ANALYSIS USING SPSS

SAVE OUTFILE='C:\Users \Documents\Labourhiringfreeze '+

'companies.sav'

/COMPRESSED.

SAVE OUTFILE='C:\Users \Documents\labourhiringfreeze '+

'companies.sav'

/COMPRESSED.

/ORDER=ANALYSIS.

Frequency Table

Q1

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	59	60	60.3	60.3
	2.00	41	40	39.7	100.0
	Total	96	100.0	100.0	
Missing System					
Total			100.0		

Q2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	18	.9	18	18
	2.00	36	8.0	36.5	55
	3.00	18	4.4	19.8	75
	4.00	24	5.5	25.0	100.0
	Total	96	18.8	100.0	
Missing System					
Total			100.0		

Q3					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	20	5.0	21	21
	2.00	10	3.0	10.9	32
	3.00	8	.9	8	40
	4.00	19	4.4	19.8	60
	5.00	25	5.5	25.0	85
	6.00	14	3.2	14.6	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing	System				
Total			100.0		

Q4					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	28	9.2	28.6	29
	2.00	20	4.2	20.5	50
	3.00	28	1.7	28.6	79
	4.00	20	6.4	20.5	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing	System				
Total			100.0		

Q5

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	68	72.7	66.7	66.7
	2.00	32	27.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	96	100.0	100.0	
Missing System					
Total			100.0		

Q6

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	37	8.5	38.5	38.5
	3.00	16	3.7	16.7	55.2
	4.00	30	6.9	31.3	86.5
	5.00	13	3.0	13.5	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
Total			100.0		

Q7

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	1.00	29	6.7	30.2	30.2
	2.00	27	6.2	28.1	58.3
	3.00	5	1.1	5.2	63.5
	4.00	10	2.3	10.4	74.0
	5.00	25	5.7	26.0	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
	Total		100.0		

Q8

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	40	9.2	41.7	41.7
	2.00	28	6.4	29.2	70.8
	3.00	7	1.6	7.3	78.1
	4.00	4	.9	4.2	82.3
	5.00	17	3.9	17.7	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
	Total		100.0		

Q9

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	37	8.5	38.5	38.5
	3.00	16	3.7	16.7	55.2
	4.00	30	6.9	31.3	86.5
	5.00	13	3.0	13.5	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
Total			100.0		

Q10

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	4	.9	4.2	4.2
	2.00	35	8.0	36.5	40.6
	3.00	19	4.4	19.8	60.4
	4.00	24	5.5	25.0	85.4
	5.00	14	3.2	14.6	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					

Total		100.0	
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Q11

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	32	7.3	33.3	33.3
	2.00	11	2.5	11.5	44.8
	3.00	29	6.7	30.2	75.0
	4.00	5	1.1	5.2	80.2
	5.00	19	4.4	19.8	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
	Total		100.0		

Q12

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	42	9.6	43.8	43.8
	2.00	1	.2	1.0	44.8
	3.00	33	7.6	34.4	79.2
	4.00	7	1.6	7.3	86.5
	5.00	13	3.0	13.5	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					

Total		100.0	
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Q13

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00	31	7.1	10.3	32.3
2.00	28	6.4	29.2	61.5
3.00	21	4.8	21.9	83.3
4.00	10	2.3	32.4	93.8
5.00	6	1.4	6.3	100.0
Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System				
Total		100.0		

Q14

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00	4	.9	4.2	4.2
2.00	35	8.0	36.5	40.6
3.00	19	4.4	19.8	60.4
4.00	24	5.5	25.0	85.4
5.00	14	3.2	14.6	100.0
Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System				
Total		100.0		

Q15

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	34	7.8	35.4	35.4
	2.00	9	2.1	9.4	44.8
	3.00	10	2.3	10.4	55.2
	4.00	35	8.0	36.5	91.7
	5.00	8	1.8	8.3	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
Total			100.0		

Q16

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	42	9.6	43.8	43.8
	2.00	1	.2	1.0	44.8
	3.00	33	7.6	34.4	79.2
	4.00	7	1.6	7.3	86.5
	5.00	13	3.0	13.5	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					

Total		100.0	
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Q17

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00	4	.9	4.2	4.2
2.00	35	8.0	36.5	40.6
3.00	19	4.4	19.8	60.4
4.00	24	5.5	25.0	85.4
5.00	14	3.2	14.6	100.0
Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System				
Total		100.0		

Q18

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00	4	.9	4.2	4.2
2.00	35	8.0	36.5	40.6
3.00	19	4.4	19.8	60.4
4.00	24	5.5	25.0	85.4
5.00	14	3.2	14.6	100.0
Total	96	22.0	100.0	

Missing System				
Total		100.0		

Q19

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	15	3.4	15.6	15.6
	2.00	9	2.1	9.4	25.0
	3.00	17	3.9	17.7	42.7
	4.00	28	6.4	29.2	71.9
	5.00	27	6.2	28.1	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
Total			100.0		

Q20

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	4	.9	4.2	4.2
	2.00	35	8.0	36.5	40.6
	3.00	19	4.4	19.8	60.4
	4.00	24	5.5	25.0	85.4
	5.00	14	3.2	14.6	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	

Missing System				
Total		100.0		

Q21

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	32	7.3	33.3	33.3
	3.00	16	3.7	16.7	50.0
	4.00	39	8.9	40.6	90.6
	5.00	9	2.1	9.4	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
Total			100.0		

Q22

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	29	6.7	30.2	30.2
	2.00	24	5.5	25.0	55.2
	3.00	13	3.0	13.5	68.8
	4.00	26	6.0	27.1	95.8
	5.00	4	.9	4.2	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					

Total		100.0		
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Q23

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	37	8.5	38.5	38.5
	3.00	16	3.7	16.7	55.2
	4.00	30	6.9	31.3	86.5
	5.00	13	3.0	13.5	100.0
	Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
	Total		100.0		

Q24

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	34	7.8	35.4	35.4
	2.00	13	3.0	13.5	49.0
	3.00	18	4.1	18.8	67.7
	4.00	16	3.7	16.7	84.4
	5.00	15	3.4	15.6	100.0

Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System				
Total		100.0		

Q25

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	49	11.2	51.0	51.0
	2.00	16	3.7	16.7	67.7
	3.00	19	4.4	19.8	87.5
	4.00	3	.7	3.1	90.6
	5.00	9	2.1	9.4	100.0
Total		96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System					
Total			100.0		

Q26

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	4	.9	4.2	4.2
	2.00	35	8.0	36.5	40.6
	3.00	19	4.4	19.8	60.4
	4.00	24	5.5	25.0	85.4

5.00	14	3.2	14.6	100.0
Total	96	22.0	100.0	
Missing System				
Total		100.0		

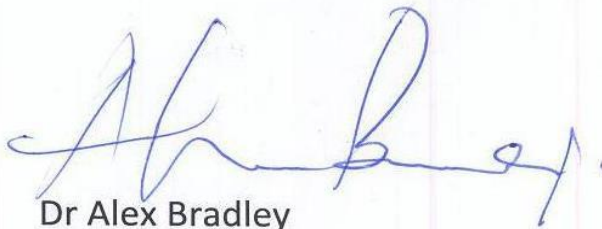
ANNEXURE 3: CERTIFICATE OF EDITING

Bradley Editors & Publishers
Delheim Village
Auckland Park
Johannesburg-South Africa

Date: 17/02/2020

Certificate of Editing

This is to confirm that the dissertation titled **“Analysing labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving competitiveness in the sand mineral mining industry in Gauteng”** authored by Innocent Thembinkosi Nzuza has been edited and it is good for publication.



Dr Alex Bradley

Editor

Bradley Editors & Publishers, Delheim Village, Auckland Park, Johannesburg-South Africa

ANNEXURE 4: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: 018 299-1111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Economic and Management Sciences Research
Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Tel: 018 299-1427
Email: Bennie.Linde@nwu.ac.za

25 October 2019

Prof M Oberholzer
Per e-mail
Dear Prof Oberholzer

EMS-REC FEEDBACK: 25102019

Student: Nzuzo, IT (29330505)(NWU-01399-19-A4)

Applicant: Prof M Oberholzer – MCom in Management Accountancy

Your ethics application on, *Analysing labour hiring freeze as a strategic tool for driving competitiveness in the sand minerals mining industry in Gauteng*, that served on the EMS-REC Round-robin, refers.

Outcome:

Approved as a minimal risk study. A number NWU-01399-19-A4 is given for three years of ethics clearance.

Kind regards,



Prof Bennie Linde
Chairperson: Economic and Management Sciences Research Ethics Committee (EMS-REC)
Potchefstroom Campus

ANNEXURE 5: COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS - PROF. SURIA ELLIS

Health Research Ethics Application

Study Leader
(Title, Initials & Surname)

Prof M Oberholzer

Study Title

Analysing labour hiring freeze in the Sand Mineral Industry in South Africa

NWU Ethics Number

N	W	U	-	0	1	3	9	9	-	1	9	-	A	4
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8.2 Sec 8b: Statistical Consultant (If applicable)

The statistician of the Statistical Consultation Service of the North-West University completes this section (where applicable).

8.2.1 Have you ascertained that the statistical analyses to be used in this study is justifiable according to your judgement?

Please mark with X in the appropriate box and provide details.

Yes No

Name (Title, Full Names & Surname)

Prof Susanna Maria Ellis Pr Sci Nat

Qualifications

PhD (Statistics)



Signature

2	0	1	9	-	0	7	-	1	6
c	c	y	y		m	m		d	d

Date

Remember to save your document regularly as you complete it!