

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the primary research conducted through interviews. This chapter translates these results into meaningful information to assist with the conclusions and recommendations that will be presented in Chapter 5. The information provided in the study is qualitative in nature and data analysis is limited to descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics or descriptive data entails counting how many respondents picked particular responses, and organising these responses by percentages and frequency. Ultimately, the measures of central tendency or averages were determined from the frequencies.

4.2 SECTION A

Section A consisted of four (4) biographical specific questions that were aimed at providing the researcher with an understanding of the sample type from which data was collected. The descriptive biographical information of the sample is set out in Table 3 and illustrated in Figure 2 to Figure 5

Table 3: Biographical information of the sample

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	< 25 years	2	8.00%
	25 – 34 years	10	40.00%
	35 – 44 years	9	36.00%
	45 – 54 years	4	16.00%
	> 55 years	0	0.00%
Race	Black	16	64.00%
	Coloured	3	12.00%
	Indian	0	0.00%
	White	6	24.00%
Gender	Female	25	100.00%
	Male	0	0.00%

Level of education	Below Grade 12	2	8.00%
	Grade 12	15	60.00%
	Technical certificate	2	8.00%
	Diploma/Degree	6	24.00%

The biographical data in Table 3 and Figure 2 illustrate that the majority of respondents (40%) was between the ages 25 – 34 years; 36% were between the ages 35 - 44 years, and an 8% minority was under 25 years. The majority of women employed in the mines are therefore probably between the ages 25 – 44 years.

Figure 2: Age distribution of the sample

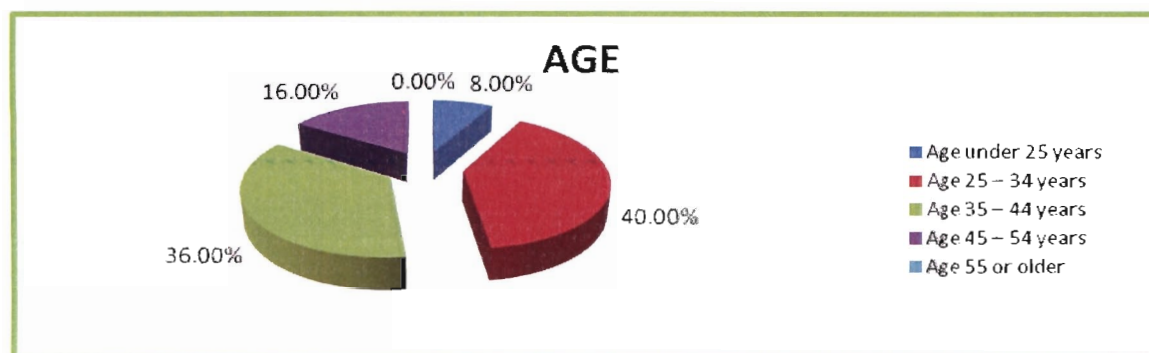


Figure 3 and Table 3 illustrate that the majority of respondents (64%) was black females and the minority was (12%) coloured females. Indians were not represented in the sample.

Figure 3: Race distribution of the sample

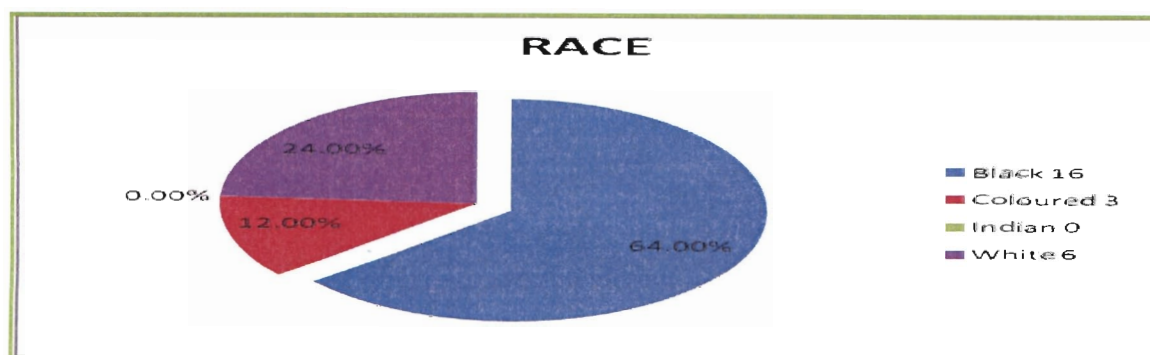


Table 3 and Figure 4 show that all (100%) respondents were females. This was done intentionally because the objective of the study was to get a female perception.

Figure 4: Gender distribution of the sample

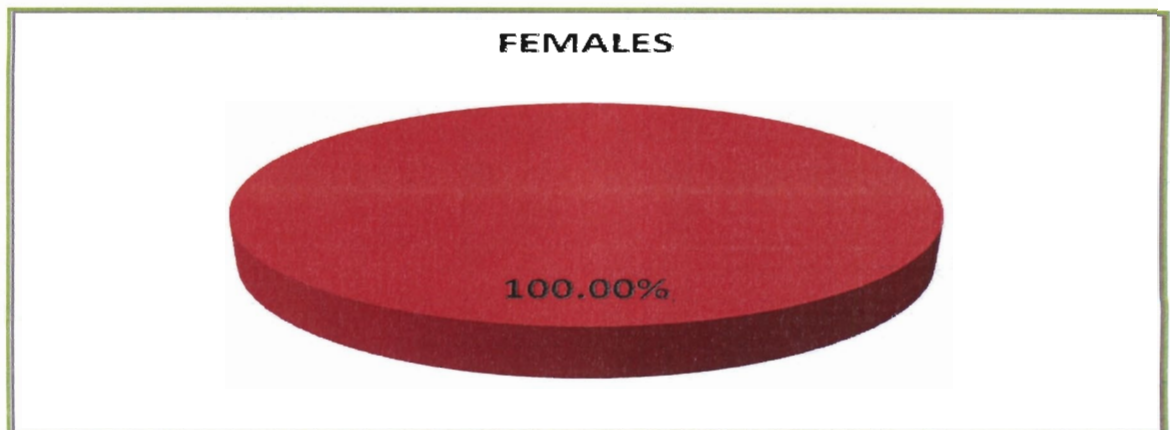
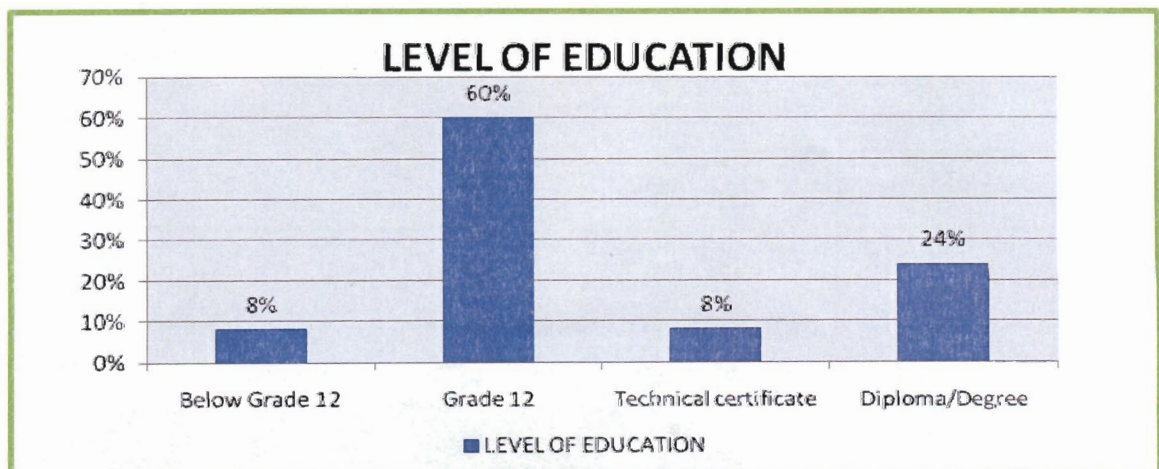


Table 3 and Figure 5 show that the majority of respondents (60%) had at least Grade 12, while 24% of respondents had a degree or a diploma and 8% a technical qualification.

Figure 5: Qualification distribution of the sample



4.3 SECTION B

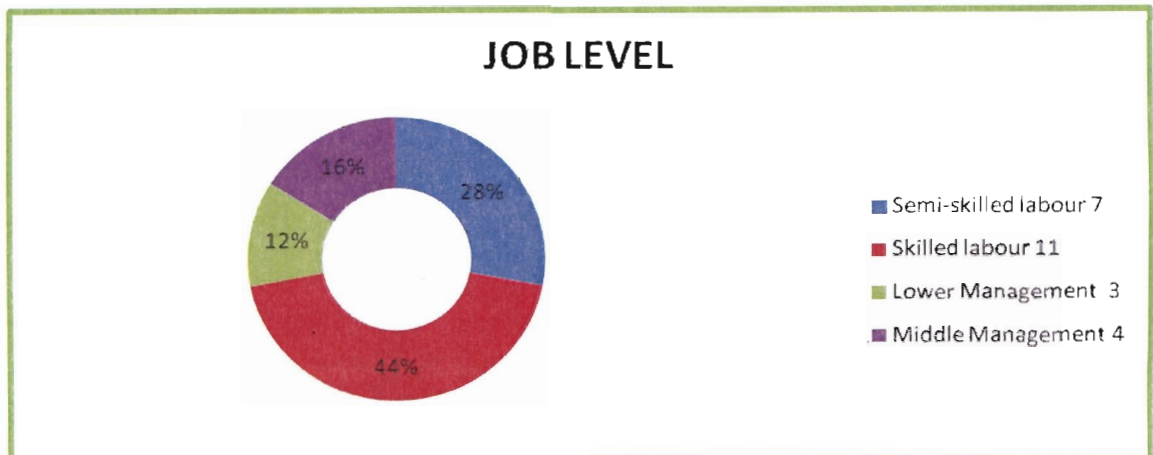
Section B contained three (3) questions about the sample's employment background. Respondents were requested to answer each question by selecting the appropriate answer. Descriptive employment details of the sample is set out in Table 4 and illustrated from Figure 6 to Figure 8.

Table 4: Work experience background of the sample

Item	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Job level and role	Semi-skilled labour	7	28.00%
	Skilled labour	11	44.00%
	Lower Management	3	12.00%
	Middle Management	4	16.00%
How long have you been in this position?	Less than 5 years	7	28.00%
	05 - 09 years	13	52.00%
	10 - 14 years	4	16.00%
	15 – 20 years	1	4.00%
How long have you worked for the mining sector?	Less than 5 years	7	28.00%
	05 - 09 years	13	52.00%
	10 - 14 years	4	16.00%
	15 – 20 years	1	4.00%

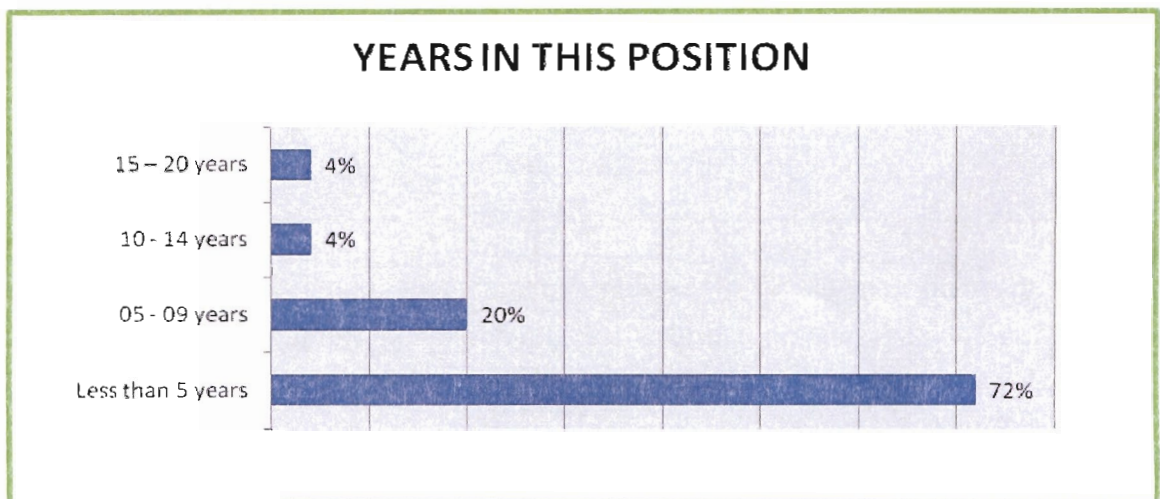
The first question was aimed at establishing the respondents' job levels and roles. Figure 5 and Table 4 reveal that 28% of the 25 respondents were general labourers who were categorised as individuals performing as semi-skilled labour. 44% were in skilled labour, 12% in low management and 16% in middle management positions.

Figure 6: Job level distribution of the sample



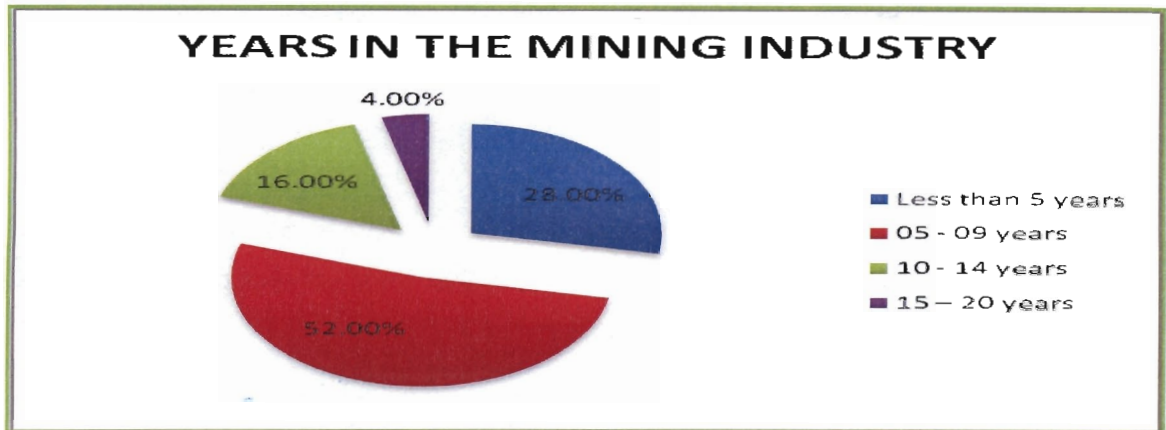
The second question intended to establish respondents' duration of service in the current position. It was found that most of the respondents had been in their current position for less than 5 years. (See Figure 7)

Figure 7: Work experience (in current position) distribution of the sample



The third question intended to establish the respondents' overall length of service in the mining industry. It was found that most respondents (52%) had between 5 and 9 years work experience in the mining industry. 28% had between 10 and 14 years work experience in this industry (See Figure 8).

Figure 8: Mining industry work experience distribution of the sample



It is important to note that from the biographical and employment information gathered from the sample, it is clear that an appropriate sample has been gathered for this study. The sample had relevant and sufficient work experience in the industry under investigation and therefore provided meaningful responses to the study.

4.4 SECTION C

Section C contained nine questions or statements that sought to understand the state of perceived discrimination in the mining industry. The findings or answers to the nine questions that were posed to the respondents during interviews were summarised and grouped into 11 themes. These themes are listed in Table 5 and explained below.

Table 5: Theme ranking

Theme		Total Respondents	Ranking
1	Presence of discrimination	25	1
2	Negative attitudes due to stereotypical beliefs	16	4
3	Different treatment	15	5
4	Harassment	24	2
5	Downgrading of women	16	4
6	Quid pro quo sexual harassment (Sexual favours for jobs)	10	7
7	Sex segregation	14	6

8	Reporting of incidences/cases to management	16	4
9	Discrimination of black women vs. white women	7	8

- **Theme 1: Presence of discrimination**

All 25 females interviewed confirmed that discrimination still exists in the mining industry and it happens on a daily base. It became clear that some of the respondents have experienced it while others have witnessed it.

- **Theme 2: Negative attitudes due to stereotypical beliefs**

16 of the 25 respondents interviewed said that negative male attitude was a problem they had to deal with on a daily basis in the workplace. They reported that the majority of men in the mining industry still believed that mining was a man's world and that there was no place for women, because they believed females cannot handle pressure like men and because females are mentally and physically weaker than men. This stereotyped belief makes it very hard for men to accept that women in the mining sector are or can be equally competent to their male counterparts. It is this belief that essentially creates their negative attitude.

To support this finding, a number of the respondents' statements will next be highlighted:

- One respondent said that some men made undermining comments about women's capabilities, such as: *"You won't manage as a woman to be a miner. Men who are miners die in such jobs and then you think you being a woman would manage."*
- Another respondent said that she had experienced negative male attitude when she started working underground and wanted to be treated equally like her equally qualified counterparts: *"There are certain sections underground which are very steep and approximately 60 meter deep, which are called box holes. Sometimes we have to work in these sections. Getting to the work station is a bit difficult because have to*

climb a steep chain ladder before we get to the work station. Although it's tough to climb those ladders, we are equipped with safety ware. Assistant surveyors climb that ladder carrying a bag (like a school bag) which has the working tools/equipment for the surveyor. These bags are heavy and when we women want to climb the chain ladder with the bag on our backs, the males offer to carry the bags for us, claiming that they want to help us. When we ask why they want to help us, they say they want to do so because we are women and would not manage to climb that ladder carrying the tools on our backs. They say we will fall. Women are not supposed to carry heavy things. The 1st day I allowed one of the males to carry the bag for me. On our way to the workstation, which is in a deep section, the man constantly asked me if I'm not tired and why I don't want to rest a little bit. They offered that I could just rest and not go up to the work station. They would collect me on the way back from the workstation. I refused. When we got to the work station, they didn't want to teach me the job, claiming that the problem is that the area is steep and that they would rather teach me once we get to a flat surface. I questioned them why they wanted to teach me at a flat surface. I wanted to know whether I was going to work on a steep surface in the future. They answered: 'No you see, you will fall here.' One of the officials said they must stop saying that. They must let me do it. This irritated some of the men and created a hostile work environment for me".

- *Some men in the mine undermine the authority and capabilities of female supervisors or managers. One interviewee said: "I have heard that women underground who are in senior positions ... like foreman... when they give instructions to the men, sometimes the instructions are not accepted in the same way as they would be if they were given by a male".*
- *Negative attitude is also experienced from male managers. One interview explained: "In our team my foreman treats me inferior compared to the men. You see that if he had his way, I would not be in his team. He treats me with disrespect. He does not talk to me the way he talks to the males. He has this attitude that I'm stupid and I am not capable of doing the job because I'm a woman". Another respondent said: "A*

female colleague was supposed to go for competency training, but her papers were not signed by her line manager because he thought that she couldn't handle the pressure of being a leader".

- Another respondent said that the males sometimes made comments such as: *"We didn't come here with kids or women, so they mustn't expect special treatment.*

- **Theme 3: Different treatment**

Comments made by 15 respondents confirm that there definitely is unequal treatment of women and men within the mining industry. The comments made were based on what the women had personally experienced or witnessed. These comments highlight that unequal treatment of women by their fellow male colleagues, subordinates and management is a common thing within the mining industry:

The following are responses from different respondents:

- *"When a woman makes a mistake in the execution of her tasks, within her work teams, men will be making comments like: 'What do you expect from a woman? They don't know what women are doing in the mines because they do not have the brains and the strength to work in the mines. The kitchen at home is waiting for them, which is where they belong. If a mistake is made by a man, he doesn't react like that. It is understandable that it's a mistake which could have been done by anyone."*
- *"In our mine, men who qualified the same time with us are ahead of us in terms of development because they are getting further training and support from our superiors, whilst we are left behind. Firstly they changed the shifts of women to night shift and men are put in the day shift. Working during the day shift has advantages because that is when most of the training takes place".*
- *"I have also witnessed it on two occasions where a male and a female applied for a job with the same qualifications ... the men end up getting the job. On one occasion it happened to one of my friends. She applied for a job of which she had experience*

and the right qualifications. She didn't get the job; it was given to a male who had less work experience in the job. The excuse she got for not getting the job is that was that she didn't have enough qualifications for the job".

- *"In 2008 I opened a case against a white male. What actually happened is that one day when I got to the main carriage (underground transport) I stood in a section where white people stood. I didn't think that this could create a problem. Even though I noticed that blacks stood together at the back and in front whites stood together. When I climbed into the carriage, apparently one white male complained to the supervisor in charge of the carriage. He then requested that we all climb out, form a line and re enter one by one. We did that, and when I got into the carriage and took the direction toward where I stood earlier, I just felt someone hitting me. It was either a smack or it was a fist... I don't know. When this person hit me, I fell down and injured my neck. No one assisted me. When I stood up and asked him what he was doing, he then said "hey you monkey, don't talk to me like that, get in and go to the back. Don't you see that this is reserved for whites? Anyway after that incident, I opened a case against this male. The handling of the case was biased. This was done in a very subtle manner. The male was found guilty, but instead of dismissal (which is the mine's policy for when you hit someone, especially underground, he was given a verbal warning. I told the person who chaired the case that I was not happy with the results and therefore I appealed the case. A new chairperson was appointed for the case. On the day of the case the male was asked whether he would apologise if he was found guilty. He made a derogatory comment in Afrikaans. When I asked what he had said, I was told that he said that he wouldn't apologise to a woman, more especially not to a black woman for that matter. Anyway, he was found guilty and was dismissed".*

- **Theme 4: Harassment**

2 of the 25 female respondents said that physical harassment does indeed exist in the mines. It is practised mostly by males in positions of power. 24 of the 25 interviewed women said that the most common form of harassment in the mines is verbal

harassment in a form of derogatory remarks. Women are subjected to derogatory remarks on a daily base. The general perception is that although physical harassment still exists, there is a decrease in its rate of occurrence. Likewise, the general perception is that harassment is now less covert. It is done in such a manner that it would be difficult to prove its occurrence. 17 of the female respondents confirmed this perception. The general perception is that harassment was more in the form of asserting dominance or discouraging females' efforts.

The following comment confirms perceptions held by females in the industry about female harassment:

- *“In our mine there is a union executive member who harasses females physically ... This man sees women as sex tools. Firstly, he would say things or make comments about women that you just don't expect from a union rep. He likes touching women, when he greets you he will not just shake your hand, he wants to hug or kiss you. When he hugs you he sort of squeezes you into his chest. He also likes fondling women. Nobody wants to stand up to him, but they complain about him behind his back. The women seem to have accepted that he is just like that and therefore they must just endure this treatment”.*

Below are various comments by respondents to confirm the existence of verbal harassment:

- *“Men like calling us names. We just have to learn to live with it because they are not prepared to change. I must say it is better now than when I started working in the mine”.*
- *“Men like making silly comments like ‘dudlu’ and names like ‘bitch’ when referring to females”.*
- *“The way the males talk to us is with disrespect. They make ugly remarks; they sometimes even swear at us”.*

The following are examples of less covert harassment experienced by some respondents:

- *“When I started working in the mine there were times when I had to perform certain difficult tasks that are part of my job. The men in the gang would discourage me and say a woman is not supposed to do difficult tasks or lift heavy objects because she will end up not being able to bear children”.*
- *“Men do execute tasks on behalf of women because they think women are the weaker sex, therefore they won’t be able to do the job.”*
- *“I questioned one of the males about why these male didn’t like the fact that I was a hard worker. He then made me aware that they didn’t want me to know the job because they fear that if I know the job I can end up being appointed as their senior.”*

- **Theme 5: Downgrading of women**

16 of the 25 female respondents reported that attempts of downgrading women are a common practice in the mines. The perceptions of these women are based on their own experiences or what they have witnessed.

The following statements by different respondents describe such attempts:

- *“In cases of jobs like operating the rock drilling machine, which is heavy and which vibrates, some men would say a woman will not be able to operate the drilling machine. But women are able to operate those machines.”*
- *“Sometimes when you are a hard worker and you don’t fall for their sexual advance, they would say you think you are better than other people and sometimes they will say you are gay and that is why you are able to do the work done by men”.*
- *“When you make a mistake, sometimes the men would make comments like: I knew that this was bound to happen soon. I don’t know what women are doing in the mines because they are not coping. This industry is no place for mistakes and weaklings; it is the industry for the strong”.*
- *“Men say women are useless, they don’t know how to do the job and they are lazy. They also say those ones who get promoted don’t get promoted because of their abilities, but because they sleep their way into the promotion”.*

- **Theme 6: Quid pro quo sexual harassment (Sexual favours for jobs)**

Comments made by 10 of the 25 female respondents confirmed that sexual favours, connections and bribes were part of the mining culture. To move up the corporate ladder or to do only the easy part of their jobs but getting the full credit, females had to give sexual favours to men in exchange for the benefit. It was found that some men who had power to appoint or to influence appointment decisions, sometimes appointed female applicants on the condition that they gave sexual favours in return.

The following statements by the respondents support this finding:

- *“If you are a hard worker and not giving sexual favours, you won’t be popular in this industry and you won’t climb quickly the corporate ladder.”*
- *“Male colleagues are sometimes also guilty of this practice. Some men offer to do certain difficult tasks on behalf of female colleagues in exchange for sexual favours.”*
- *“Some line managers are also guilty of this practice. They make the life of females who are in their gangs (work teams) easy if they get sexual favours from them”.*

- **Theme 7: Sex segregation**

14 of the 25 interviewed women confirmed that sex segregation was still a burning issue in the mining industry. The industry is still highly dominated by males. Therefore, females have the perception that there is vertical segregation (or a glass ceiling) as well as horizontal segregation in the mining industry.

The following comments by the respondents confirm the practice of sex segregation:

- *“Senior management ... it’s still highly male and pale ... and at the bottom it’s highly male and dark”.*
- *“When vacancies for senior positions are available, management always appoints men even though the woman who applied for the position had the same qualifications as the male. People in this industry still make decisions based on their feelings rather than on the available proof of what you have achieved and can achieve.”*

- *“There are cases when you apply for a vacant post, which was previously held by a man ... You will get comments from either management or male colleagues, such as: You are wasting your time, you won’t be appointed in this position because you won’t manage to do the job because you are a woman. This job is difficult, it’s for men”.*
- *“Management won’t say outright that you were not appointed because you are a female, but they will just give you some silly excuse saying maybe you didn’t have enough qualifications for the job.”*

- **Theme 8: Reporting of incidences/cases to management**

16 of the 25 interviewed females are of the opinion that gender discrimination cases are not reported to management: 10 said *cases are not reported due to the fear of victimisation*; 2 said *sometimes cases are not reported because there is a perception that management is not supportive to women. They feel that it’s no use reporting a case if nothing much is going to be done to discipline the perpetrator*; 2 said *cases are not reported because some incidences are not harassment but repayment of sexual favours or because the females want to climb the corporate ladder quickly or easily*. 3 said *cases are not reported because women don’t want to come across as cry babies, because that this will justify the stereotype male belief that women don’t belong in the mining industry*.

The following statements by different respondents confirm the practice of not reporting incidences to management:

- *“Some of the people who discriminate against women are line managers and therefore it is difficult to report them”.*
- *“The problem of reporting the cases is that you report a case and you still go back and work under the same foreman you have reported. The guilty foreman will make the work environment hostile for you. The first chance he gets of getting rid of you he will take. There are instances when a gang has more than enough members, therefore the number of team members must be reduced. Normally, in those instances the foreman will select certain individuals and take them out to another*

team. They then get placed in another team, if there is a team that needs more members. When a situation like that occurs, the guilty foreman will use that as an opportunity to get rid of his accuser. You will be the first person to be taken out from the team”.

Lack of support by management was illustrated by one of the respondents:

- *“I lodged a complaint with management regarding a discrimination incidence that I was subjected to. Management was not supportive in handling my case. What helped me is that I knew the mine laws and followed them to the letter in pursuing this case. Yes, hearings were done, but even the chairperson was biased. I would say the whole process was just window dressing, just to say the procedure was followed. After this case I was victimised by the majority of management. They even went to the extent of wanting that I must be declared unfit to work underground so that I would be regarded as a sickling. This would mean that when retrenchment came, I would be one of the first people to be retrenched. After the case, I became sick and the doctor said I had depression. He then prescribed pills that required that I had to eat regularly (6 meals per day). He said skipping meals would be very dangerous because the strength of the pills was very strong. Due to the rule which says food is not allowed underground, I requested that I be given something else to do at surface up until I finish my treatment. I also brought a letter from the doctor confirming my condition and treatment requirement. My boss's boss wanted me to go back to the doctor and request him to rewrite the letter and declare that I'm unfit to work underground. I refused because it is not that I was unfit. It was only the treatment requirements which made me not to go underground.”*

The following respondents highlighted that some incidences were not reported because they were repayment of sexual favours:

- *“Some males appoint females in positions on condition that they will be repaid with sex. Some females ask men to do them certain favours with a promise of repaying them through sex.”*

- *“Some women go to the extent of saying if the men make sexual advances verbally or physically you must not refuse. Just play dumb, or ignore him, or flirt with him a little bit, but don’t confront him, because he might come in handy when you are required to perform a difficult task or when you need a favour”.*

- **Theme 9: Discrimination of Black women vs. White women**

7 of the female respondents were of the opinion that black women experienced worse discrimination than white women. All women were being discriminated against, but white women seemed to be getting better treatment. Although this form of gender discrimination has racial connotations, it is discussed here because it emerged from the interviews as one of the burning issues.

The following comments supported these respondents’ argument:

- *“White women are not discriminated equally to black women. You will never find a white woman being a generalist. Most white women are appointed in high positions. You will never find generalist white women. A white woman who goes underground is a geologist.”*
- *“Some of the people I have worked with still think that just because they are white, they have better ideas. Even some of our managers who don’t listen to women might listen to white women simply because she is white and the assumption is that whatever she is bringing to him will be smart or intelligent”.*

4.5 THE EFFECTS OF WOMEN DISCRIMINATION

Throughout the interviews with the respondents the researcher tried to establish the effects of all the discussed forms of discrimination. The common identified finding was that women discrimination indeed affects productivity. Women discrimination affects the female victim emotionally and this is transferred to her output and productivity, which starts to suffer.

This finding is supported by the following common identified effects on the female mine worker:

- Demotivation, which causes her not to look forward to go to work;
- Disappointment, which leads her to lose her drive to perform;
- Dent of self esteem and loss of confidence, which leads her to doubt her abilities and lose confidence in executing her duties;
- Emotional hurt;
- Frustration;
- Hating her job;
- Fear of losing her job;
- Nervous breakdown;
- Depression;
- Increased stress levels.

Eliminating these factors would empower women and develop their productivity.

4.6 DISCUSSION

4.6.1 Summary and interpretation of results

The results of this study confirm that women discrimination exists in the mining industry and that most employers are not aware of its extent as most cases remain unreported.

The research indicates that the problem has existed in South African mines in the past and that it continues to exist today. The results confirms findings by Terrell (1986), which show that discrimination had already been in existence when asbestos, diamond and gold deposits were discovered in the mid 1800's. The results also substantiate the findings of the Annual Report 2009/2010 of the reviewed Commission for Employment Equity (CEE) (Dikane, 2006; Macdonald, 2003).

The results indicate the following as the high ranking forms of discrimination in this industry: Negative attitudes due to stereotypical beliefs; different treatment of women; harassment; downgrading of women; and sex segregation.

The research found that harassment was the highest ranking form of discrimination in this industry. The results confirm findings from literature that the frequency of sexual harassment, despite its occurrence in almost every occupation, along with verbal harassment, is higher where women enter traditionally male dominated fields (Coburn, 1997; Calitz, 2004; Adeokun, 1981 and Karanja, 1981 for Nigeria; Schuster, 1979 for Lusaka; Obbo, 1980 for Uganda; Dinan, 1983 for Accra).

The second highest form of discrimination prevalent in this industry was found to be negative attitudes towards women due to males' stereotypical beliefs and their downgrading of women. This finding confirms previous findings by Ranchod (2001) and Geis (1993). Women are still considered as mentally and physically weak and incapable of handling increased responsibility, authority, and autonomy (Heilman, 1983; Lazcano, 2002; Whittock, 2002).

In line with this, it was found that a significant problem in this industry is that, as a result of fear, gender discrimination cases are not reported to management. This finding confirms research by Johnson (2006) and Duguid (2003).

The third highest ranking form of discrimination found in this industry was sex segregation, which occurs both vertically and horizontally. The result of the study

confirms previous findings that sex segregation and glass ceilings essentially exist in the mining industry ((Dikane, 2006; Anker & Hein, 1986; Hemenway, 1995; Morris, 2005).

The results highlight that women discrimination is perpetuated by various factors, some of which include illegitimate social, political, economic, civil and cultural barriers acculturated attitudes, chauvinism and sexism. This confirms previous findings of studies conducted by Macdonald (2003) and Hoadley et al. (2003).

The results emphasise that women discrimination exists, regardless of the good policies in place to address transformation and women integration in the mining industry. The assumed problem lies with the implementation of these transformation policies, and with managing and monitoring the transformation process.

The significance of this study is that it highlights core problem areas and causes for the problem. It contextualises some of the areas or aspects that mining companies and government have to focus on in order to eliminate the problem of women discrimination in the mining industry.

4.6.2 Limitations of the study

The study has the following limitations:

- Only the opinions of females were considered. The exclusion of males' opinions may create biased results.
- Only the opinions of a few females from the industry were considered. The results are therefore not representative of the views of all the women in the mining workforce.
- Due to time and financial constraints the sample size was kept small. The sample was initially set at 30, but only 25 interviews were conducted due to unforeseen obstacles during the data gathering phase.

- The researcher experienced difficulties in that a number of scheduled interviews were often cancelled at the last minute. From the information obtained during telephone conversations, the researcher is of the opinion that some of the females deliberately cancelled or rescheduled these interviews. The following are assumed reasons:
 - They did not want to be associated with a research project such as this, because they did not see any benefit for themselves in the outcome of the project.
 - Because of the culture in the organisation, they were afraid of being victimised for voicing out their opinions.
 - They were afraid that their research participation might jeopardise their chances for possible future promotions and appointment in posts.
- Some respondents felt uncomfortable with the recording of the interviews, even though the researcher had reassured them that the research was strictly confidential.

4.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter analysed the research results and findings. The chapter firstly presented the biographical information of the sample in order to create a better understanding of the sample. Secondly an employment background on the sample was presented. Thereafter the findings or answers to questions that were posed to the respondents during the interviews were summarised, grouped into nine themes and discussed. This chapter was concluded by highlighting the overall effects of the identified forms of women discrimination.