



GREAT ZIMBABWE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES

THE IMPACT OF PRODUCTION GOALS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN  
THE MINING INDUSTRY IN ZIMBABWE

BY

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*This Research Project is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the  
Bachelor of Commerce Honours Degree in Business Management at Great  
Zimbabwe University*

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**APPROVAL FORM**

I, the undersigned certify that I have read and recommended to Great Zimbabwe for acceptance; a project entitled "The Impact of Production Goals on Employee Performance in the Mining Industry in Zimbabwe",in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the **Masters of Commerce Degree in Strategic Management** at Great Zimbabwe University.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Simeon Manjonda, without his support, I wouldn't have been able to complete my studies. A special dedication goes to my sons Kayden, Kyle and Kendrick whom I believe in and wish for them to follow suite. I also dedicate to my late father Christopher Sajeni, who was and remains my mentor for giving me direction in life and I have reached higher lengths because of him.

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. Despite implementing goal setting strategies to enhance employee performance, the management at Trojan Nickel Mine (TNM), Freda Rebecca Gold Mine (FRGM) and Shamva Mining Company to a lesser extent involve employees in the goal setting process, causing a discrepancy between theory and practice. Furthermore, goals set by a group of TNM senior managers are not aligning with the goals of the organization as a whole, leading to potential conflicts between individual employee goals and the employing organization. This results in a distinction between formal goals (officially stated goals) and informal goals (actual goals pursued), which may be inferred from decisions made and actions taken within the organization. The research objectives sought to explore the relationship between team goal setting, goal clarity, participative goal setting, and goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining industry. The study employed a sample size of 200 respondents, who participated in data collection through structured questionnaires. Both stratified and simple random methods were used to select the sample. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential analysis. The study results revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry. The statistical analysis shows a t-statistic of 7.943 ( $p > .001$ ) indicating that the relationship between these two variables is strong and statistically significant. The research results indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between goal clarity and employee task proficiency in the mining industry. The statistical analysis showed a t-statistic of 8.486 and a p-value of .004, indicating that the effect of goal clarity on task

proficiency is statistically significant. The results of the statistical analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between goal setting ( $p = .010$ ) and employee task proficiency. The results showed that there is a positive relationship between goal timeframe increases and task proficiency, indicating that as goal timeframe increases, task proficiency is estimated to increase as well. However, the statistical analysis revealed that the relationship is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.071 > 0.05$ ). The study recommended that mining companies in Zimbabwe should implement team-oriented goal setting practices that actively involve employees in the goal formulation process and managers in the mining sector in Zimbabwe should provide teams with autonomy to determine the strategies and action plans for achieving the set goals.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

In modern times, managers of both public and private enterprises are increasingly concerned about the performance of their employees, recognizing the pivotal role that employee performance plays in the success of an organization. As performance management has gained traction, the nature of work in the mining sector has undergone significant changes, with a greater emphasis on output and decentralization, as well as more horizontal organizational management. These developments are exemplified by the setting of performance goals and working in teams. Despite the existence of an extensive literature on goal setting, there has been a dearth of research on goal setting in teams and empirical studies on the mining industry. Therefore, the current study aimed to investigate the impact of production goals on employee performance in the Zimbabwean mining sector.

#### **1.1 Background of the study**

The primary objective of any formal organization worldwide is to accomplish specific goals and objectives through the efficient utilization of available human resources. In modern times, nearly every organization has implemented some form of goal-setting framework (Pervai, Li & He, 2021). As highlighted by Saleem, Malik and Qureshi (2021), contemporary organizations are increasingly prioritizing employee involvement in the goal-setting process. By involving employees in setting goals, organizations can stimulate intrinsic motivation and foster a desire to achieve these goals, thereby positively impacting organizational performance in the long run

(Hemakumara, 2020). Although goals have long been used as a quantitative measure for employee performance, many organizations face significant challenges in the goal-setting process, which can be time-consuming and often ineffective (Hashiguchi et al, 2021). However, when implemented correctly, goal setting can significantly enhance employee engagement, leading to improved performance and benefiting the organization as a whole (Ekhsan, Aeni, Parashakti&Fahlevi, 2019).

Uka and Prendi (2022) posited that a goal is a well-defined statement outlining a particular action to be accomplished within a specified timeframe. Goal setting, on the other hand, is a process of establishing specific, measurable, and role-oriented objectives that employees strive to attain while working for an organization (Surapto, Putri & Elizabeth, 2023). This process takes into account the employee's personal growth targets, future desired role requirements, and resource availability (Janovac, Virijević Jovanović, Tadić, Tomić&Ćufalić, 2021). It is essential for employers to provide a clear direction to employees when it comes to goal setting to ensure that management objectives are achieved (Saadouli& Al-Khanbashi, 2021). The use of goals has a significant impact on individuals, whether they are individual or work-related goals, as highlighted by Aldoseri and Almaamari (2020). Goal setting can positively affect employee performance in numerous ways if the goals set are relevant to the company, realistic, and attainable by the workers (Sumayya, Tariq & Butt, 2022). Chen and Yao (2022) posited that employee performance is a measure of the outcomes and achievements attained by an employee at work, which can have financial or non-financial implications. Kuzior, Ober and Karwot (2022) have

identified several non-financial key indicators of employee performance, including task performance, behavior towards customers, individual task proficiency, organizational task proficiency, and adaptability as a team member.

Numerous investigations on the subject of goal setting (Zhang, Xu, Reniers& You, 2020) have demonstrated that setting objectives can be utilized to enhance the performance of staff members at both individual and organizational levels within the mining sector. Suprpto, Fadah, Priyati, and Usman (2022) affirmed that progress towards achieving goals needs to be monitored and renewed at regular intervals, particularly in cases of long-term goal setting, to ensure that both employer and employee remain on track and up-to-date. In order to guarantee that goals are understood in the same way by both employer and employees, precise communication is fundamental to successful goal setting, as it leads to successful goal attainment (Keosouvanh, 2019). The mining industry relies heavily on objective setting (Pervai et al, 2021). The mining industry is one that is fraught with danger, yet it is a crucial driver of the economy with a central role to play in the financial well-being of nations across the globe (Zhang et al, 2020). As the labor market exerts a significant influence on the sustainability of the mining sector, the importance of implementing sustainable human resource management strategies at the strategic level of mining and safety management cannot be overstated (Saleem et al, 2021).

An abundance of research has consistently demonstrated that high and specific goals are associated with increased task performance, persistence, and motivation, compared to goals that are vague or easy (Pervaiz et al, 2021; Uka&Prendi, 2021;

Aldoseri&Almaamari, 2020; Ekhsan et al, 2019). Based on this empirical evidence, setting high (i.e., challenging) and specific (i.e., clearly defined) goals has become a widely recommended motivational and leadership tool in organizations (Hemakumara, 2020). Despite the benefits of goal setting, recent studies have raised concerns about potential negative effects. For instance, goals may lead to a narrowing of attention on goal-related activities, causing other important issues to be overlooked (Suprpto et al, 2022). Additionally, goals may encourage risk-taking and unethical behavior (Kuzior et al, 2022), impede learning, or foster an excessively competitive environment (Chen et al, 2022). Consequently, the current research therefore will attempt to fill that research lacuna.

The mining sector in Zimbabwe has adopted participative goal setting through performance contracting, which involves a hybrid system derived from international best practices and the Balanced Score Card. However, despite significant efforts to enhance mine safety, accidents continue to pose a threat to the sustainability of the industry, as they can result in worker fatalities, property damage, and environmental harm (Basera, Mwenje&Ruturi, 2019). The primary causes of accidents are reported to be the violation of operating rules or labor discipline and poor production environments, according to statistical data (Singo et al, 2022). Unsafe behaviors of miners account for 97% of mining accidents and have been linked to unrealistic goal setting (Mabika, 2018).

Trojan Nickel Mine (TNM), Freda Rebecca Gold Mine (FRGM) and Shamva Mining Company (Pvt) Ltd are part of Kuvimba Mining House (Private) Limited (Kuvimba

Mining House) is a State-Owned Enterprise located in Zimbabwe, Africa. It is a leading diversified Zimbabwean mining company with a high-quality portfolio of operations and projects that produce predominantly gold, nickel, and chrome ([miningzimbabwe.com/kuvimba](http://miningzimbabwe.com/kuvimba)). Government of Zimbabwe owns 21, 5% shareholding in Kuvimba Mining House. In Mashonaland Central province, TNM, FRGM, and Shamva Mining Company are among the main employers, with a total workforce of 4,000 individuals, including both permanent and seasonal employees. Over the past five years, these organizations have implemented various strategies to improve employee performance, including goal setting. However, the management at these three mining companies does not involve employees in the goal setting process, creating a disparity between the perceived importance of goal setting in enhancing performance and actual practice. Against this backdrop, this study aims to examine the impact of production goals on employee performance in Zimbabwe's mining industry.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Despite implementing goal setting strategies to enhance employee performance, the management at TNM, FRGM and Shamva Mining Company to a lesser extent involve employees in the goal setting process, causing a discrepancy between theory and practice (*internal company files, 2022*). As noted by Suprpto et al (2022), one of the major issues facing organizational goal setting is a lack of mutual interest. Furthermore, goals set by a group of senior managers are not aligning with the goals of the organization as a whole, leading to potential conflict between

individual employee goals and the employing organization. This results in a distinction between formal goals (officially stated goals) and informal goals (actual goals pursued), which may be inferred from decisions made and actions taken within the organization. It is against this background that the study sought to explore on the impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe.

### **1.3 Main Objective**

To explore the impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe.

### **1.4 Specific objectives**

1. To determine the relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.
2. To establish the effect of goal clarity on employee task proficiency in the mining industry.
3. To assess the link between participative goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.
4. To evaluate the nexus between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.

### **1.5 Research hypotheses**

*H<sub>1</sub>*: There is a positive and significant relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.



*H<sub>2</sub>*: There is a positive and significant relationship between goal clarity and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.

*H<sub>3</sub>*: There is a positive and significant relationship between participative goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.

*H<sub>4</sub>*: There is a positive and significant relationship between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

The significance of the study on the impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry lies in its potential to contribute to the understanding of goal setting in the workplace. By examining the relationship between production goals and employee performance in the mining industry, the study can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of goal setting as a tool for improving employee performance. The results of the study will inform the management at TNM, FRGM and Shamva Mining Company and other organizations in the mining industry about the importance of involving employees in the goal-setting process and how it can impact employee performance. This can help organizations to design more effective and efficient goal-setting strategies, which can ultimately lead to improved employee performance, increased productivity, and better overall outcomes for the organization.

The study can make a valuable contribution to the academic literature on the topic of goal setting and employee performance by offering empirical evidence on the impact

of production goals in the mining industry context. This can serve to broaden the existing understanding of the role of goal setting in enhancing employee performance and inform future research in this area. Moreover, the study findings can furnish managers, human resource professionals, and policy makers in the mining industry with valuable insights to guide their decision-making and improve the workplace environment. In essence, the study's significance lies in its potential to make significant contributions to the fields of management, human resources, and organizational behavior, and to inform practical applications in the mining industry.

### **1.7 Research Gap**

One potential research gap that emerges from the reviewed literature is that majority of the studies (Andharoe and Rustandi, 2023; Jar & Sayeed, 2020; Soltani et al., 2018; Procházková, Vochozka and Caha, 2022; Zahars 2022; Chowdhury & Monsen, 2022) were conducted in different mines outside Zimbabwe. While the findings are valuable for mining organizations, it remains unknown whether the same positive relationship would apply in other contexts such as the Zimbabwe mining sector. Additionally, some studies (Chen & Yao, 2022; Pervai et al, 2021; Zhang et al, 2020; Saleem et al, 2021) have examined the moderating effects of other variables in the relationship between production goals and employee performance, more research could further scrutinize the specific factors that can impact this relationship. Exploring these research gaps would support a better understanding of employee performance and their effects on employee performance across diverse industries and organizations. The current study examined the specific dimensions of production

goals namely team goal setting, goal clarity, participative goal setting and goal timeframe.

### **1.8 Delimitation of the study**

Regarding theoretical delimitations, the research concentrated on nexus between production goals and employee performance in the mining industry only and it is going to be guided by Goal Setting Theory and Social Cognitive Theory. The theories are relevant as they helped to explain on issues concerning employee performance. On both geographical and population delimitations, the study was carried out at TNM, FFRGM and Shamva Mining Company in Mashonaland Central Province and targeted all workers and managers. The study was covered for a period of 6 months. Regarding the study's methodological limitations, a quantitative research design was employed. In terms of participant sampling, the researcher utilized both stratified and simple random sampling methods to select individuals with expertise in the area under examination. Data for the study was acquired through the use of structured questionnaires.

### **1.9 Organisation of the study**

The study was structured into five well-defined chapters. The initial chapter functions as an introduction and sets the tone for the research. The second chapter, referred to as the Literature Review, scrutinizes the existing literature that is pertinent to the research. This literature is then employed to critically evaluate the study's findings. The third chapter, methodology, offers a comprehensive explanation of the methods employed to carry out the study. The fourth chapter, results and discussion, reveals

the findings of the research and initiates a discussion on the results. Lastly, the fifth chapter summarizes the conclusions and recommendations that have been drawn from the research findings and proposes potential areas for future research.

### **1.10 Chapter Summary**

In the previous chapter, the background of the study, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, research hypotheses, and the study's significance were all addressed, as well as the study's limitations. The subsequent chapter will concentrate on prior research conducted by other scholars on the topic being investigated.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

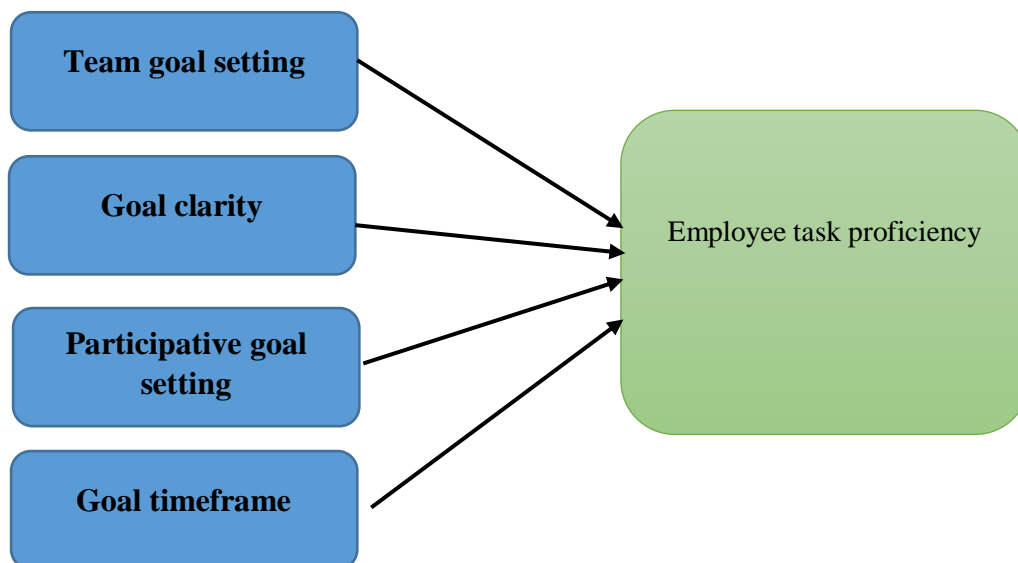
#### 2.1 Introduction

In this section, the literature related to the influence of production goals on employee performance in the Zimbabwean mining industry was critically examined. The conceptual and theoretical framework of the study was introduced and discussed, followed by an exploration of relevant literature in line with the research objectives.

#### 2.2 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a visual representation of the variables that are considered in the study. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2009), a conceptual framework is a proposed model that outlines the dependent and independent variables and their interrelationships.

Independent Variables (Goal setting)      Dependent variable (Employee performance)



## **Fig 2.1 Conceptual Framework**

Employee performance is the dependent and its sub-variables employee task proficiency will be used. Employee task proficiency refers to an individual's level of skill and ability in performing specific job tasks (Uka and Prendi, 2022). It is a measure of how well an employee performs the specific duties and responsibilities required in their role (Surapto et al, 2023). The independent variable is goal setting and its sub-variables namely team goal setting, goal clarity, participative goal setting and goal timeframe are going to be considered. Team goal setting refers to the practice of engaging departmental or team members and their respective leaders, such as section heads or department heads, in the process of establishing goals (Janovac et al, 2021). Goal clarity pertains to the level of comprehension and lucidity of a particular goal, while participative goal setting denotes the involvement of at least two individuals, such as an employee and their supervisor, in the process of establishing goals. This approach provides them with an opportunity to influence their performance, as opposed to a goal set by representatives (Aldoseri&Almaamari, 2020). Goal timeframe is the time frame in which the goal is to be achieved (Saadouli& Al-Khanbashi, 2021).

## **2.3 Theoretical framework**

The study was informed by Goal Setting Theory (Locke & Latham, 2002) and Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1977).

### 2.3.1 Goal Setting Theory

The theory proposes that goals serve as a means of directing and energizing behaviour and that goal difficulty is a key determinant of motivation and performance. According to the theory, the process of setting goals serves as a way of focusing attention and effort, increasing persistence and effort, and promoting learning and improvement (Saadouli & Al-Khanbashi, 2021). Locke (1996) put forth the notion in the late 1960s that the intention to strive toward a goal is a significant driver of work motivation. According to Locke, goals provide employees with a clear understanding of what needs to be accomplished and the level of effort required (Pervai, Li & He, 2021). Locke's goal setting theory, developed in 1996, posits that specific goals enhance performance and that challenging goals, when embraced, lead to higher levels of performance.

The rationale for employing goal setting theory in the study of the effects of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry is justified by the extensive research conducted on it, which has demonstrated its positive influence on employee performance. Furthermore, the theory is germane to the study since it centers on the correlation between goal setting and employee performance, which is the primary objective of the investigation. By utilizing the goal setting theory, the researcher will be able to understand how the process of goal setting can positively impact employee performance in the mining sector, which is of particular interest in the context of the TNM, FRGM and Shamva Mining Company. The use of goal setting theory will provide a theoretical framework to guide the study, and the

findings can then be compared to the existing literature on goal setting and employee performance to determine the extent to which the theory is supported in this particular context.

### **2.3.2 Social Cognitive Theory**

The theory emphasizes the role of social and situational factors in shaping behaviour. Social Cognitive Theory proposes that individuals have cognitive, behavioural, and environmental influences on each other, and that these influences interact to determine behaviour (Hemakumara, 2020). The theory suggests that individuals learn by observing and imitating the behaviour of others, and that they use their past experiences to guide their behaviour in new situations (Saadouli& Al-Khanbashi, 2021). It also highlights the role of self-efficacy, or an individual's belief in their ability to perform a task, in shaping behaviour and motivation (Aldoseri&Almaamari, 2020).

The use of the theory in the study of the impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining sector is justified because it provides a framework to understand how individuals learn from the environment and from each other, and how they use that knowledge to guide their behaviour. Social Cognitive Theory is particularly relevant to the study because it focuses on the role of social and situational factors in shaping behaviour. This is important in the context of the TNM, FRGM and Shamva Mining Company, where lack of employee involvement in the goal setting process can be seen as a social or situational factor that affects employee behaviour. By utilizing Social Cognitive Theory, the researcher will be able



to understand how the social and situational factors within the organization influence employee behaviour, and how these factors may impact the effectiveness of the goal setting process.

#### **2.4 The relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in mining sector**

The mining sector plays a crucial role in the global economy, providing essential resources for various industries and contributing to economic growth and development (World Bank, 2020; Geoscience Australia, 2020). In this dynamic and challenging industry, ensuring that employees possess the necessary skills and proficiency to perform their tasks is crucial for operational success (Soltani et al., 2018). As such, understanding the factors that can influence employee task proficiency in the mining sector is of significant interest to both scholars and practitioners (Jha & Sayeed, 2020; Soltani et al., 2018). One such factor that has been widely explored in the literature is team goal setting.

Goal setting is a fundamental concept in organizational management and involves the process of establishing clear and challenging objectives that guide employees' efforts towards achieving desired outcomes (Locke & Latham, 2019; Matthews et al., 2019). Goal setting has been found to positively impact employee motivation and performance across industries (Locke & Latham, 2019; Willem et al., 2020). However, the effects of team goal setting on task proficiency in the mining sector remain understudied (Jha & Sayeed, 2020). As noted by Jha and Sayeed (2020), the

relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency has been a topic of interest in various industries, including the mining sector.

Goal setting is considered a critical component of organizational management as it helps in providing a sense of direction and purpose to employees, leading to increased motivation and performance (Locke & Latham, 2019; Matthews et al., 2019). The central idea behind team goal setting is that it can enhance employee motivation and performance by providing a clear sense of direction, purpose, and accountability (Broadly et al., 2018; Ogbonna & Harris, 2020). On the other hand, task proficiency refers to the extent to which an employee can perform a job or task effectively and efficiently (Chen & Klimoski, 2019; Soltani et al., 2018).

Some empirical studies (Chen, Xu, & Yao, 2022; Willem, Gemmel & Van den Broeck, 2020; MacDougall, 2019) have examined the relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in various industries. While there is evidence to suggest that team goal setting can positively impact employee task proficiency (Bajic et al, 2023), the findings are not always consistent, and there are factors that may moderate this relationship. Therefore, a comprehensive literature review is needed to analyse and synthesize existing research on this topic, with a specific focus on the mining sector. The section aims to fill this gap by examining and comparing scholarly ideas, findings, and trends related to the relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining sector.

Several theoretical perspectives have been proposed to explain the mechanisms through which team goal setting can influence employee task proficiency (Mishra et al, 2022). One of the prominent theoretical frameworks in this area is Locke and Latham's (1990) goal-setting theory. According to this theory, setting specific and challenging goals can enhance employee motivation and performance by directing their attention and efforts towards goal-relevant activities (Kuzior, Ober & Karwot, 2022). Furthermore, goal-setting theory suggests that team goals can foster a sense of collective effort and cooperation among team members, leading to increased coordination and collaboration, and ultimately improving team performance (Locke & Latham, 1990). This implies that team goal setting can not only impact individual task proficiency but also influence the performance of the entire team in the mining sector.

Several studies have investigated the relationship between team goal setting and task proficiency. For instance, Procházková, Vochozka and Caha (2022) found that goal setting in teams leads to increased performance in comparison to individual goal setting. Additionally, Andharoe and Rustandi (2023) provided empirical evidence supporting the relationship between team goal setting and task proficiency, indicating that teams with specific, challenging goals outperformed those with ambiguous or easy goals. A study by Zahars (2022) conducted in a large mining company in Australia found that teams that had clear and challenging goals had higher levels of task proficiency compared to teams with vague or no goals. The study also found that teams with participative goal setting, where employees were

involved in the process of setting team goals, had higher levels of task proficiency compared to teams with autocratic goal setting, where goals were imposed by management. Similarly, a study by Sánchez (2022) in a mid-sized mining company in South Africa found that teams with well-defined and measurable goals had higher levels of task proficiency compared to teams with poorly defined or no goals. The study also found that teams with regular feedback and progress monitoring on their goals had higher levels of task proficiency compared to teams with no feedback or monitoring. These findings suggest that team goal setting can positively impact employee task proficiency in the mining sector.

Furthermore, research has also highlighted the importance of aligning team goals with organizational goals. A study by Broadly et al (2018) in large mining companies in Ghana found that teams whose goals were aligned with the overall strategic goals of the organization had higher levels of task proficiency compared to teams with misaligned goals. This suggests that the alignment of team goals with the broader organizational goals can enhance employee task proficiency in the mining sector. The mining sector presents unique challenges regarding employee performance due to the nature of its work environment, such as the need for effective coordination and communication among team members (Chen & Klimoski, 2019). Consequently, effective goal setting becomes more critical in this sector (Geoscience Australia, 2020).

### **2.4.1 Challenges and Limitations of Team Goal Setting in the Mining Sector**

While team goal setting has been shown to have a positive impact on employee task proficiency in the mining sector, there are also challenges and limitations that need to be considered. One of the challenges is the potential for conflicting goals among team members or between different teams within the organization (Locke & Latham, 2021). In the mining sector, teams may have different priorities or interests that can create conflicts in goal setting, leading to reduced employee task proficiency (Yoro & Traveling, 2020). For example, a study by Jha and Sayeed, L. (2020) found that conflicting goals among different mining teams led to a lack of coordination and collaboration, resulting in decreased task proficiency and operational inefficiencies. Another challenge is the potential for unrealistic or overly challenging goals that can negatively impact employee task proficiency (Chowdhury & Mosen, 2022). Research has shown that setting overly challenging or unattainable goals can lead to increased stress, frustration, and decreased motivation among employees, which can ultimately result in reduced task proficiency (MacDougall, 2019). In the mining sector, where safety and operational risks are high, setting unrealistic goals can have serious consequences, such as accidents or errors, which can impact task proficiency and overall performance (Matthews et al, 2019).

Furthermore, the leadership style and communication practices of managers can also influence the effectiveness of team goal setting in the mining sector (Locke & Latham, 2019). Research has shown that supportive and empowering leadership that involves employees in the goal-setting process can enhance employee

motivation and performance (MacKenzie, 2021). On the other hand, autocratic leadership that imposes goals on employees without their input can lead to decreased motivation and reduced task proficiency (Anderson, 2020). Similarly, effective communication practices, such as regular feedback, progress monitoring, and clarification of expectations, are crucial in ensuring that team goals are understood and aligned with employee tasks, which can impact task proficiency (Roussin & Martin, 2022).

Organizational culture also plays a significant role in the effectiveness of team goal setting in the mining sector (Yoro & Traveling, 2020). A culture that promotes openness, collaboration, and accountability can facilitate the successful implementation of team goals and enhance employee task proficiency (Lam & Haper, 2022). On the other hand, a culture that promotes individualism, competition, and secrecy can hinder the effectiveness of team goal setting and reduce task proficiency (Harty & Caillier, 2022). Therefore, it is essential to consider the organizational culture and ensure it supports team goal setting practices in the mining sector. Additionally, the nature of the mining industry itself presents unique challenges to team goal setting (Ogbonna & Harris, 2020). The mining sector is often characterized by complex and dynamic work environments, with factors such as remote locations, hazardous conditions, and tight deadlines (Zimitat & Storm, 2019). These factors can impact the feasibility and relevance of team goals, as well as the ability of teams to adapt and respond to changing circumstances (Soltani et al, 2018). For example, unforeseen changes in mining regulations or market conditions

may require teams to adjust their goals or strategies, which can affect task proficiency and performance (Willem, Gemmel & Van den Broeck, 2020).

## **2.5 The effect of goal clarity on employee task proficiency in the mining sector**

Across many sectors, the importance of setting clear and unambiguous goals is well documented in the scholarly literature and industry practice (Anderson, 2020). Goal clarity is defined as how well the aims, objectives, and expectations are communicated and understood enhances motivation, focuses effort, reduces ambiguity and obstacles, and makes it easier to monitor progress (Chowdhury & Mosen, 2022). However, within the mining sector, the role of goal clarity has received limited attention compared to other goal attributes, despite the many hazardous, high-risk tasks where clear objectives are obviously crucial (World Bank, 2020).

Several theoretical viewpoints can be used to explain the relationship between goal clarity and employee task proficiency in the mining sector. One such perspective is the goal-setting theory, which posits that setting clear and specific goals can motivate employees to perform better (Lam & Haper, 2022). According to this theory, when employees have a clear understanding of their tasks and performance expectations, they are more likely to exert effort and take appropriate actions to achieve those goals, leading to higher levels of task proficiency. Another theoretical perspective that can be applied to this topic is the social cognitive theory, which emphasizes the importance of social influences in shaping individual behavior (Locke & Latham, 2021). In the context of goal clarity and task proficiency, this

theory suggests that when employees receive clear communication from their supervisors and peers regarding their tasks and responsibilities, they are more likely to develop a strong self-efficacy belief, which in turn can enhance their task proficiency.

Several studies point to a significant influence of goal clarity on employee outcomes in mining. For instance, MacDougall (2019) found that underground mine workers who reported higher goal clarity achieved 17% higher productivity over a 3-month period, even after controlling for experience, job role, and work conditions. They argued that unambiguous goals led to greater confidence, optimism, and persistence in the face of obstacles or setbacks. However, their reliance on self-reported survey measures, small sample, and short timeframe limit the conclusions that can be drawn. Likewise, MacKenzie (2021) studied four open-cut mine sites in Australia over six months and found that teams provided with structured, specific, and measurable key performance indicators (KPIs) and targets showed 9 to 15% higher task proficiency and 21% fewer lost time injuries than those given only general guidance. They theorized that clear short-term objectives focused effort, encouraged cooperation, and made monitoring easier, enabling more rapid feedback and adjustments. However, variations in leadership, team dynamics, and baseline performance across sites made it difficult to isolate the unique contributions of goal clarity.

In contrast, other research has found negligible or mixed effects of goal clarity on outcomes in mining. For example, Roussin and Martin (2022) collected survey data



from 562 employees across 11 underground mines but found no direct effect of perceived goal clarity on self-rated task proficiency, work quality, or job satisfaction over a 3-year period. However, goal clarity interacted with job autonomy, such that clarity only impacted performance significantly when employees had higher control over their tasks and workflows. This suggests that multiple factors may need to align for goal clarity to strengthen motivation and achievement. Similarly, a meta-analysis of 67 studies in mining, petroleum, construction, and related sectors found a small but significant effect of goal clarity on productivity and a non-significant relationship with occupational health and safety outcomes like fatality and injury rates (Yoro &Traveling, 2020). The impacts of goal clarity varied widely in different contexts, leading the researchers to call for more focused studies to determine moderating influences like national culture, organizational climate, task interdependence, and leadership factors.

### **2.5.1 Factors associated with goal clarity**

Several factors can influence the level of goal clarity and, in turn, employee task proficiency in the mining sector. One such factor is leadership style. Research has shown that supportive and participative leadership styles are positively associated with goal clarity (Zimitat& Storm, 2019). When leaders provide clear and consistent communication, set specific goals, and involve employees in the goal-setting process, it can enhance employees' understanding of their tasks and responsibilities, leading to higher levels of task proficiency (Pervai, Li & He, 2021). Another factor that can impact goal clarity and employee task proficiency is organizational culture.

Studies have shown that organizations that prioritize clear communication, employee involvement, and performance feedback tend to have higher levels of goal clarity among their employees (Saleem et al, 2021). In contrast, organizations with a lack of communication, unclear expectations, and ambiguous performance feedback can hinder employees' understanding of their tasks, leading to lower levels of task proficiency (Hemakumara, 2020).

Furthermore, individual characteristics of employees, such as their education, experience, and cognitive ability, can also influence their perception of goal clarity and task proficiency (Hashiguchi et al, 2021). For instance, employees with higher levels of education and experience may be better able to comprehend complex tasks and performance expectations, leading to higher levels of goal clarity and task proficiency (Ekhsan et al, 2019). Similarly, employees with higher cognitive ability may be better equipped to understand and interpret task-related information, leading to higher levels of task proficiency (Uka and Prendi, 2022). It is crucial for organizations in the mining sector to prioritize goal clarity as a key factor in enhancing employee task proficiency (Surapto et al, 2023). Organizations can achieve this by providing clear and consistent communication to employees regarding their tasks, responsibilities, and performance expectations (Janovac et al, 2021). This can be done through regular feedback sessions, setting specific and measurable goals, involving employees in the goal-setting process, and promoting a supportive leadership style that encourages open communication (Saadouli& Al-Khanbashi, 2021).

In summary, while goal clarity is intuitively appealing, empirical evidence for its effects on employee task proficiency and performance in mining remains limited and mixed. At best, there appears to be a small positive relationship that depends heavily on various moderating conditions. More rigorously designed research across diverse types of mining sites and contexts is still needed to develop a comprehensive theory and evidence-based model for when and how goal clarity may contribute to employee motivation, productivity, wellbeing, and safety outcomes. Thus, the current study also sought to establish the effect of goal clarity on employee task proficiency in the mining sector in Zimbabwe.

## **2.6 Impact of participative goal setting on employee task proficiency in the mining sector**

An enduring question in organizational research concerns the extent to which employee involvement in decision making contributes to motivation, performance, and other outcomes (Aldoseri&Almaamari, 2020). In the mining sector, employee tasks often involve a high degree of difficulty and physical demands, and participation and inclusiveness have been found to strengthen goal commitment and reduce resistance (Sumayya, Tariq & Butt, 2022). However, the impacts of participative versus manager-directed goal setting on employee task proficiency remain unclear (Chen & Yao, 2022). Participative goal setting, which involves employees being actively involved in the process of setting their own goals and performance expectations (Saadouli& Al-Khanbashi, 2021).

There are multiple theories that can explain the relationship between employees actively participating in setting their goals and increased competence in performing their tasks, especially in the mining industry. An example of a theory that supports this notion is the goal-setting theory, which posits that when employees are given specific and unambiguous goals, it serves as a motivator for them to perform at a higher level (Locke & Latham, 1990). According to this theory, when employees are involved in developing their own goals, they feel more ownership over the goals and are more committed to achieving them. This can lead to improved competence in their tasks. Another theory is the self-determination theory which emphasizes that having the freedom to make choices and being self-motivated drives human behavior (Chen & Yao, 2022). In the context of employees participating in goal setting and task competence, this theory suggests that when employees are given the freedom to set their own goals and have a supportive work environment, they are motivated to perform well and demonstrate greater competence in their tasks. The two theories propose that employees actively participating in setting their goals can motivate them to perform their tasks more proficiently.

Some studies have found a positive influence of participative goal setting. For example, Kuzior et al (2022) studied six underground mining teams in Western Canada and found that teams with higher levels of participation in setting production targets reported greater task proficiency and work quality over a 6-month period. They argued that shared goal setting led to more realistic goals, stronger cooperation, and heightened motivation within the teams. Equally, Zhang et al

(2020) found that frontline mining staff who took part in departmental goal setting demonstrated 12% higher task proficiency and 14% higher output over a 12-month timeframe compared to employees in units where goals were assigned, not negotiated. Survey results indicated that participative staff perceived goals as fairer and motivating, fostering greater effort and persistence. However, the narrow employee sample, potential selection bias, and lack of randomization limit the conclusions that can be drawn.

On the other hand, several studies have found negligible or even negative effects of participative goal setting on employee outcomes in mining. For example, Suprpto et al (2022) found no significant differences in task proficiency or productivity among 328 frontline staff from six open-cut mines over an 8-month period, regardless of whether individuals took part in setting their own goals or were simply assigned goals. They noted considerable variability in how participation opportunities were implemented across sites, suggesting the need to account for mediating factors like leadership, group dynamics, and company culture. In the same way, in a meta-analysis aggregating 53 studies in mining and related sectors, Keosouvanh (2019) found only a small positive correlation between participative goal setting and task proficiency, and a non-significant link with productivity. They noted stronger relationships when participation was direct rather than representative, when it was accompanied by additional leadership support, and when employees had greater control over goal adjustments during implementation and review.

### **2.6.1 Factors associated with participative goal setting**

Several factors can influence the extent to which employees participate in setting their goals and their competence in performing their tasks, especially in the mining industry. One such factor is leadership style. Research shows that leaders who adopt an empowering leadership style that involves employees are more likely to engage employees in developing their goals (Pervai et al, 2021). Leaders who are supportive, open to feedback and encourage employee participation are more likely to create an environment conducive for employees to actively participate in setting their goals. This can lead to higher competence among employees in the mining sector (Zhang et al, 2020). On the other hand, autocratic leaders who do not involve employees in the goal-setting process may diminish employees' sense of ownership over their goals and commitment to achieving them. This can potentially result in lower competence in performing their tasks (Saleem et al, 2021).

The proficiency of employee tasks and the ability to set participative goals can be impacted by the organizational culture (Pervaiz et al, 2021). Organizations characterized by openness, inclusivity, and collaboration are inclined to support participative goal setting (Uka&Prendi, 2021). While an organization culture steeped in hierarchy and authoritarianism may restrict employee involvement in goal setting, leading to suboptimal levels of proficiency in task performance (Ekhsan et al, 2019). The characteristics of an employee such as their level of education, job experience, and position also play a role in participative goal setting and proficiency in task performance (Hemakumara, 2020). Based on research, employees with higher

levels of education and experience are more likely to engage in participative goal setting and exhibit greater levels of proficiency in task performance (Kuzior et al, 2022). Furthermore, higher job positions can afford employees with more authority and opportunities to set their goals, further impacting their proficiency in task performance (Chen et al, 2022).

Moreover, factors beyond an organization's control, including industry regulations and market dynamics, can influence the participative goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining sector (Ekhsan et al, 2019). To illustrate, in heavily regulated industries where safety and compliance are key concerns, corporations may have pre-established goals and objectives that permit limited employee involvement in goal setting (Singo et al, 2022). Similarly, in a competitive market where emphasis is placed on meeting short-term performance targets, organizations may prioritize short-term goals over allowing employees to engage in participative goal setting, which could potentially impact the proficiency of employee task performance (Hemakumara, 2020).

## **2.7 Relationship between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency**

In the realm of organizational behaviour and management literature, the correlation between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency has garnered significant attention (Chen et al, 2022). Goal timeframe pertains to the duration allocated for accomplishing a specific objective, ranging from short-term to long-term objectives (Singo et al, 2022). In regard to the mining sector, where safety, performance, and efficiency assume critical import, comprehending the impact of goal timeframe on

employee task proficiency is essential (Soltani et al., 2018). In the mining sector, goals are typically structured in terms of operational parameters, which can be quantified and tracked. Because of this, Goal-setting theory has been utilized to examine the impact of goals on employee task proficiency in mining contexts. In line with this, Jha and Sayeed (2020) found that goals aligned with specific and challenging standards had a positive impact on task proficiency, while softer, more general goals did not enhance performance. The positive impact of short-term goals on employee task proficiency can be attributed to several factors. First, short-term goals provide a sense of urgency that can motivate employees to focus on specific tasks (Matthews et al., 2019). In doing so, employees can expend their effort and time more purposefully, resulting in better performance. Second, short-term goals are more targeted, which makes tracking progress and measuring outcomes more feasible (Broadly et al., 2018). Thus, short-term goals can contribute to an increased level of accountability and transparency, which can impact task proficiency positively (Chen & Klimoski, 2019).

Past empirical studies have highlighted the relationship between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining sector. Iverson and McIntosh (2017) evaluated the impact of goal timeframe on the task proficiency of miners. By analysing data from an underground mining operation in Western Australia, the study revealed that shorter goal timeframes had a consistent positive impact on employee task proficiency. The study attributed this result to the fact that short-term goals offer employees more immediate feedback. With this feedback, miners can quickly identify



and address any issues that may arise, leading to an increase in proficiency (Chen & Klimoski, 2019). Mishra et al (2022) also found that short-term goals had a positive impact on performance in the mining sector.

A study by Andharoe and Rustandi (2023) found that short-term goals were positively associated with higher levels of task proficiency among mining employees. In contrast, a study by Zahars (2022) found that long-term goals were positively associated with higher levels of task proficiency among mining employees. Another study by Sánchez (2022) found that the relationship between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining sector was contingent upon the nature of the task. The study found that short-term goals were more effective for tasks that required immediate action and quick results, while long-term goals were more effective for tasks that required sustained effort and planning over an extended period of time. This study highlighted the importance of considering the nature of the task when determining the appropriate timeframe for goals in the mining sector. In addition, a study by Chowdhury and Monsen (2022) examined the role of goal commitment as a mediating factor in the relationship between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining sector. The study found that short-term goals were positively associated with higher levels of goal commitment, which in turn, were positively associated with higher levels of task proficiency. This study suggested that goal commitment plays a significant role in mediating the relationship between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining sector.

Anderson (2020) found a curvilinear effect in a study of 400 participants from mining companies, whereby moderately difficult goals set over a medium timeframe of 4 to 12 months were associated with the highest task performance, compared to more proximal or distant timeframes. They theorized that more immediate goals may induce greater stress and less thoughtful problem-solving, while distant goals could lead to reduced motivation and procrastination. Conversely, Ogbonna and Harris (2020) analysed survey data from 700 employees across three open-cut mines and found a linear positive correlation between shorter goal timeframes (less than 5 months) and self-reported task proficiency. They argued that more proximal goals may provide greater clarity and urgency, spurring focused effort and persistence. However, their reliance on self-reported rather than objective or manager-rated measures of proficiency may have influenced these results. Chowdhury and Monsen (2022) conducted a meta-analysis to reconcile conflicting findings by reviewing 42 mining sector-related studies in the past 15 years. Their results suggested an inverted U-shaped relationship, with the strongest links between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency, work quality, and other performance metrics featured by goals due in 3 to 9 months. Goals with either longer timeframes (over 12 months) or shorter durations (less than 1 month) were linked with noticeably lower outcomes.

## **2.8 Chapter Summary**

This literature review evaluated the nexus between production goals (team goal setting, goal clarity, participative goal setting and goal timeframe) and employee task proficiency in the mining sector. The review highlighted the critical role of goal-setting

theory and social cognitive theory in understanding the relationship between production goals and task proficiency. The review has implications for theory and practice, suggesting that management should consider these factors when setting goals for employees. In addition, this review identifies three critical factors for goal setting in the mining sector, specificity, timeframes, and management oversight. The next chapter is going to cover the research methodology of the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

The primary aim of the study is to investigate the influence of production goals on employee performance in Zimbabwe's mining industry. This chapter addresses significant considerations in the data collection process, including the methods and techniques employed to conduct the research. After reviewing the pertinent literature, the chapter focuses on the research design, research population, sample size, sampling procedures, and data collection instruments. It also evaluates the validity and reliability of the research instruments, as well as the process of data analysis.

### **3.1 Research Design**

The study utilized explanatory research design (casual). Causal research is a technique that seeks to comprehend a phenomenon by using conditional statements in the form of "If X, then Y" (Creswell and Poth, 2018). This method is utilized to assess the impact of a specific alteration on existing norms and assumptions. In general, social scientists seek causal explanations that validate hypotheses. The present investigation analyzed the influence of production goals on employee performance within Zimbabwe's mining industry. The causal effect, or nomothetic perspective, occurs when changes in an independent variable (such as production goals) lead to, on average, changes in another phenomenon, namely, the dependent variable (employee performance). The study adopted this research methodology as its conclusion hinges on establishing a correlation between the independent and dependent variables. There is non-spuriousness on the relationship between production goals and employee performance.

### **3.2 Research Philosophy**

The research philosophy adopted by the study was positivism, which is a belief system pertaining to the gathering, analysis, and utilization of data regarding a phenomenon. According to positivism, only empirical knowledge, obtained through observation (including measurement) of the senses, can be deemed reliable (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2019). In positivist research, the researcher's role is confined to objective data collection and interpretation. In such research, the findings are generally observable and quantifiable (Creswell and Creswell, 2017), as is the

case with the current investigation into the impact of production goals on employee performance in Zimbabwe's mining industry. The research takes an atomistic, ontological viewpoint, which perceives the world as comprising distinct, observable components and occurrences that interact in a recognizable, deterministic, and systematic fashion. The correlation between production goals and employee performance in the mining industry can be quantitatively observed and measured. Additionally, the study adopted this philosophy since it aimed to employ inductive reasoning to formulate statements (hypotheses) that would be tested during the research process.

### **3.3 Research Methods**

The study adopted the mono-method. It involved using one research approach for the study as the study only made use of one type of information from quantitative that was gathered by a point Likert questionnaire and extraction technique for secondary data. The aim of this study is to determine whether production goals have an impact on employee performance. Given the researcher's aim to maintain objectivity, a quantitative approach was deemed appropriate. This approach operates under the assumption that there is an objective reality to be observed, and that rational observers, when examining the same phenomenon, will generally agree on its existence and its properties. Standardized questionnaires and other quantitative measuring instruments are frequently employed to carefully assess observations. In evaluating findings, statistical criteria are utilized to draw various conclusions.

### **3.4 Research Approach**

The study adopted the deductive approach. Saunders, et al. (2019) suggest that research methodologies are largely derived from research philosophies. Researchers with traditional natural scientific views (positivism) typically use the deductive approach, while the inductive approach is frequently grounded in phenomenology (interpretivism). The present study employed a deductive approach since the conceptual framework was created and tested using empirical observation.

### **3.5 Research Strategy**

The survey was deemed to be the appropriate research strategy for this investigation. A research strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal. According to Saunders et al. (2012), a research strategy outlines how a researcher intends to answer the research question. As such, it serves as a bridge between the philosophy and the subsequent selection of methods for data collection and analysis. Given the nature of the research question, a single research instrument was designed for data collection. Survey strategies are suited for addressing questions relating to "what," "who," "where," "how much," and "how many." Survey strategies are generally associated with a deductive research approach (Saunders, et al., 2012) and are commonly used for explanatory and descriptive research (Baskarada, 2014). Various techniques can be employed for data collection, with the utilization of questionnaires being the most prevalent (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The questionnaires employed in the present study enabled the collection of standardized data from a large population in a cost-effective

manner that facilitated easy comparison. This suggests that surveys were suitable for obtaining responses pertaining to the investigation of the impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry.

### **3.6 Population and Sampling**

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a study population refers to all members of a specific group of individuals, objects, locations, or events that are pertinent to the research question at hand. The study population targeted in this investigation comprised 989 employees from TNM, 560 employees from FRGM, and 451 employees from Shamva Mining Company.

The research utilized stratified sampling, which involved dividing the members of the identified population into strata based on the mining company. To guarantee that all units in the population had an equal opportunity of being chosen, a stratified random selection approach (Baskarada, 2014) was employed, wherein a disproportionate sample from each stratum was randomly selected. Following this, simple random sampling was employed to select respondents from each stratum (mining company).

#### **3.6.1 Sample Size**

According to Bazeley's (2015) definition, a sample pertains to a limited group of participants chosen from a larger population. For this particular research, a sample of 200 respondents (equivalent to 10% of the population) was employed. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) suggest that a sample size equivalent to 10% of the target population is usually considered to be adequately large. The size of the sample is

influenced by various factors, including the research objectives, available resources (such as time time, finances, and personnel), and other pertinent considerations.

**Table 3.1 Sample Matrix**

Company	Population size	Sample (10% of the population)
TNM	989	99
FRGM	560	56
Shamva Mining Company	451	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>200</b>

*Source: Primary source data (2023)*

### 3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection refers to the procedure of acquiring pertinent information related to the research topic. In this research, primary data was gathered by means of questionnaires. The survey technique was considered suitable for this investigation, as it allows for the quantitative depiction of the attitudes, experiences, and opinions of the sample population.

#### 3.7.1 Primary Data

Raw data refers to the unprocessed information gathered by the researcher from various data collection methods (Saunders et al., 2019). This information is collected from the field to address a particular problem or issue. In this study, the researcher obtained primary data by means of structured questionnaires.



### **3.7.2 Secondary Data**

The information at hand is pre-existing and was originally procured for a disparate objective than the one the researcher seeks to employ it for (Hancock and Algozzine, 2016). Annual employee performance reports obtained from the three mining companies were consulted during the research.

### **3.7.3 Questionnaires**

The study administered a total of 200 structured questionnaires electronically using the mobile application called KoBo Collect. KoBo Collect comprises a comprehensive set of instruments tailored for gathering field data, specifically designed to function efficiently within the challenging parameters presented by the current Covid-19 pandemic. The questionnaires utilized in the study employ a Likert scale with five points, which ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The researcher disseminated the questionnaires using KoBo Collect, which was chosen due to its several benefits as outlined by Saunders et al. (2019). These benefits include economical use of resources since there is no need for interviews, the ability to reach dispersed populations and facilitate easy comparison of the gathered data, minimal expertise required for administration, elimination of interview bias (i.e., halo effect), and respondents can answer the questions at their own convenience.

### **3.8 Pilot Study**

The researcher conducted a pilot test of the research questionnaires on a group of ten employees. Pilot testing, also known as pretesting, involves administering the research instrument to a limited number of respondents to detect and rectify any

defects or restrictions in the questionnaire (Coghlan and Brannick, 2005). While it is challenging to determine the precise size of the pilot group, Gliem and Gliem (2013) suggest that researchers should pilot between 5-10% of the final sample. In accordance with Bryman and Bell's (2010) explanation, conducting a pilot study can provide insight into potential areas of failure for the primary research project, including whether research protocols are being followed and if the proposed methods or instruments are suitable or overly complex. Following the pilot study, the questionnaires were revised by eliminating questions that generated superfluous or insignificant data.

### **3.9 Validity and reliability of the instrument**

As explained by Bell (2005), validity refers to the quality standard that measures the precision and reliability of inferences drawn in a research study, as well as the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Content validity was utilized in this research, which assesses the extent to which the research questions and objectives are reflected in the study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2009). To ensure the relevance of the items included in the instruments, the researcher sought the expertise of professionals in the research field to evaluate and provide feedback, suggestions, and clarifications, which were incorporated to improve the instruments. Afterwards, the instruments were tested on a pilot group of ten employees, and modifications were made to evaluate the questionnaires in relation to the study's objectives.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) posit that reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. The possibility of random errors arising due to unclear instructions or ambiguous questionnaires was mitigated by cross-checking the questionnaires during the pilot study. The test-retest technique was utilized in this research to ascertain the reliability of the research instruments. Moreover, the questionnaire's reliability was assessed using Crocbach's Alpha value, computed by SPSS Version 25.0.

### **3.10 Data Analysis and Presentation**

The data analysis process commenced with the careful editing of the data, which was done to safeguard the accuracy and integrity of the data, ensuring that only relevant data was coded for analysis (Silverman, 2011). According to Kerlinger's (2006) definition, data analysis involves organizing, manipulating, and summarizing data to obtain answers to research questions. The researcher ensured the completeness of the questionnaires and performed editing, coding, and data cleaning. The data collected was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 25.0) program. Descriptive analysis was carried out employing measures such as mean, mode, variance, and standard deviation to determine the level of agreement or disagreement of the respondents concerning the statements made under each variable. Additionally, inferential statistics were utilized to examine the relationship between the independent variable, production goals, and the dependent variables, namely, employee performance.

Various visual aids, such as pie charts, bar graphs, and tables, were employed to present the data, which were generated using SPSS. Tables were chosen as the preferred tool for data presentation due to their ability to effectively classify diverse sets of data. On the other hand, the utilization of pie charts and bar graphs was primarily based on their visibility, as they can clearly illustrate trends.

### 3.11 Operationalization of Study Variables

A multiple regression model was used to establish the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. Employee task proficiency (ETP), the dependent variable is represented by (Y) while production goals, the independent variable (X), team goal setting, goal clarity, participative goal setting and goal timeframewere represented by  $X_1, X_2, X_3 \& X_4$

The multiple regression model takes the following form;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 \dots \beta_n X_n \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Multiple linear regression model used to establish the direct relationship between the independent variables and dependent variables:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Where:

Y = ETP

$\beta_0$  = Equation constant

$\beta_1 - \beta_n$  = Regression coefficients (The estimated change in the dependent variable for a unit change of the independent variable).

$X_1 - X_3$  = Independent variables

$\mu$  = Error term

$$ETP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 TGS + \beta_2 GC + \beta_3 PGS + \beta_4 GTF + \mu$$

Where; **ETP**=Employee Task Proficiency

**TGS**=team goal setting

**RET** = Restricted Tendering

**GC**= goal clarity

**PGS**= participative goal setting

**GTF** =goal timeframe

$\mu$  error term

### 3.12 Ethical Considerations

Mugenda and Mugenda (2009) underscore the significance of ethical considerations in all research endeavors. According to Kothari (2014), there are four fundamental categories of ethical issues in research, which include safeguarding participants from harm, obtaining informed consent, respecting the right to privacy, and maintaining honesty with professional colleagues. In this study, ethical guidelines were strictly followed to ensure that ethical values were not compromised. The research received approval from the University Research Ethics Committee, and both the mining companies and the respondents themselves granted permissions for the study. Prior

to their participation, the respondents were provided with written informed consent forms to sign, and verbal information was given to them regarding the purpose of the study. Prior to data collection, debriefing or disclosure ethics were utilized, wherein prospective participants were informed of the researchers' identity, the objectives of the study, potential benefits, and expected outcomes. Furthermore, participants were informed of their voluntary right to participate or withdraw from the study.

### **3.12 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has outlined the methods and instruments utilized by the researcher to gather data relevant to the study. It has also explored the research design, population and sample size, sampling technique, and data presentation and analysis approaches. The following chapter will concentrate on presenting, analyzing, and discussing the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

This chapter focuses on presenting the findings of a study that aimed to examine the impact of production goals on employee performance in Zimbabwe's mining industry. The data is presented in a manner that aligns with the study's objectives. To enhance the presentation of data, a combination of tables, pie charts, and bar

graphs were utilized to showcase the results obtained through SPSS analysis. The data analysis process included both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques.

#### 4.1 The Response Rate of Questionnaires

In this study, data was collected from a unit of 200 participants. To gather the necessary information, questionnaires were disseminated among the designated sample size.

**Table 4.1: Responses rate**

**Table 4.1: Percentage distribution of responses ( $n=200$ ).**

	Frequency	Rate
Questionnaires administered	200	100%
Questionnaires returned	190	95%

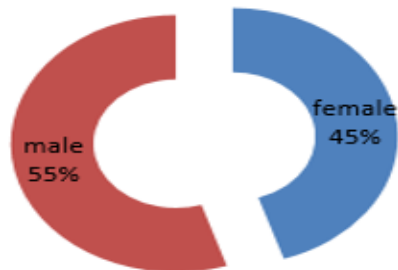
*Source: Primary Data 2023*

The study involved distributing 200 questionnaires to the participants, out of which 190 were returned and completed, resulting in a high response rate of 98%. The response rate is indicative of the suitability of the sample size for the conclusive analysis of the study. The exceptional response rate can be attributed to the regular follow-up with the participants via telephone. The response rate was evaluated based on the standards established by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) and Bailey (2000), which deemed it adequate for the analysis, presentation, and interpretation of the gathered data.

## 4.2 Demographics characteristics of respondents

The demographic information collected during this exercise included the respondents' gender, age, academic qualifications, and length of experience.

### 4.2.1 Gender of respondents



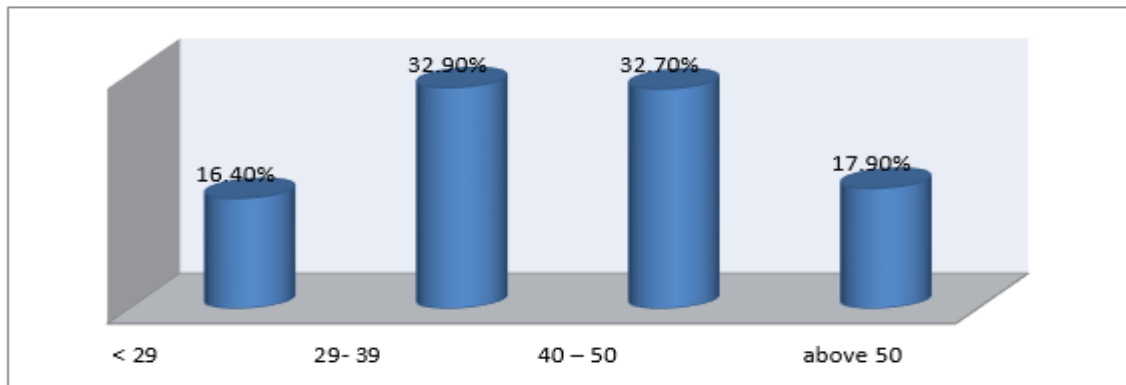
*Source: Primary Data 2023*

**Figure 4.1 Gender of respondents**

Gender refers to the biological and social characteristics that differentiate individuals as either male or female. In this study, the researcher aimed to determine the gender distribution of the participants, as illustrated in Figure 4.1. The findings reveal that 55% of the respondents were male, whereas 45% were female. These results indicate that the study was predominantly male-oriented.



#### 4.2.2 Age of respondents



*Source: Primary Data 2023*

**Figure 4.2 Age of respondents**

The findings presented in Figure 4.2 reveal that a greater number of the participants (32.9%) fell within the age group of 29-39 years. The second largest age group comprised respondents between 40-50 years, accounting for 32.7% of all participants. Additionally, the results indicate that 17.9% of the respondents were aged above 50 years. The age group with the least number of participants was those below 29 years, representing only 16.4% of the total sample.

#### 4.2.3 Level of Education

The study gathered information regarding the level of education of the respondents and figure 4.3 showed the results.

### 4.2.3 Level of education

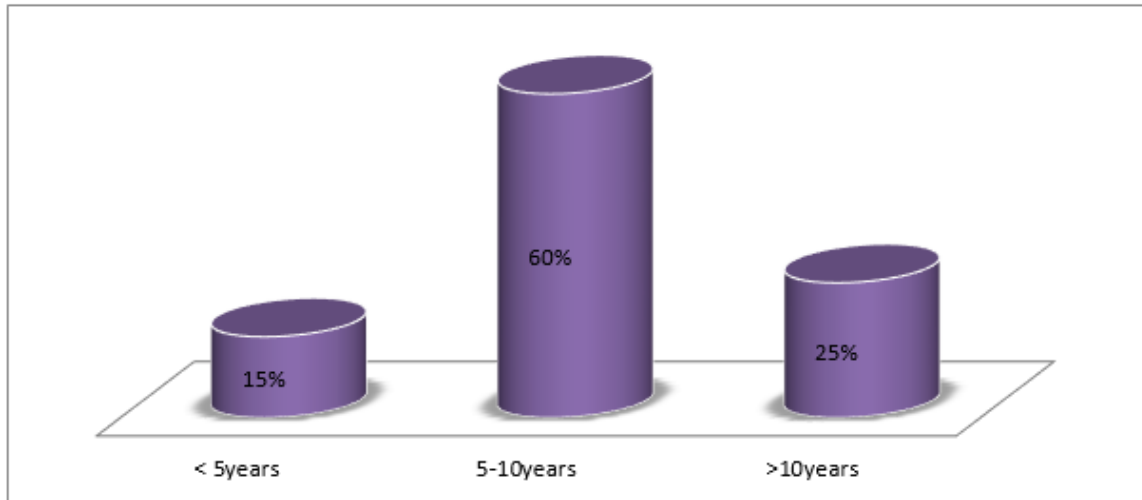


Source: *Primary Data 2023*

**Figure 4.3 Level of education**

Amongst the group of respondents, a substantial 70% have an academic background at the undergraduate level, while 20% had attained a master's degree. The remaining 10% were classified under the category of 'others,' which encompasses individuals holding certificates and diplomas. As a result, the majority of the participants were highly educated, thereby possessing the ability to comprehend and interpret the contents of a questionnaire. Furthermore, their proficiency in reading and comprehending the questions posed by the researcher enabled them to effectively convey their opinions and insights through the meticulous completion of the questionnaire.

#### 4.2.4 Period of Service



Source: *Primary Data 2023*

Source: *Primary Data 2023*

#### Figure 4.4 Period of Service

As depicted in the visual representation presented in Figure 4.4, a significant proportion of the participants, constituting 60%, possessed a work experience ranging from 5 to 10 years, thereby emerging as the largest segment. The subsequent highest proportion, comprising 25% of the respondents, had garnered over a decade of experience in their respective fields. On the contrary, the remaining 10% of the respondents had relatively less experience, having served within the organization for a duration of less than 5 years.

### 4.3 Reliability Statistics

Table 4.2 Reliability Statistics

Dimension	Reliability coefficients (Alphas)	Number of items
Goal setting	0.75	5
Goal clarity	0.88	5
Participative goal setting	0.81	5
Goal timeframe	0.89	5

Source: *SPSS Output Version (2023)*

Following the questionnaire administration, the reliability test generated Cronbach alpha values of 0.75, 0.88, 0.81, and 0.89 for the categories of goal setting, goal clarity, participative goal setting, and goal timeframe. The reliability of a measuring instrument is a crucial factor that determines the consistency and stability with which the developed instrument measures the concept at hand (Sekaran and Bougie, 2013). Typically, computed Cronbach alpha values range between 0 (denoting no internal reliability) and 1 (denoting perfect internal reliability) (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Hair et al. (2010) suggest that an instrument should have a minimum acceptable level of Cronbach's alpha of 0.60 to be considered reliable. After a thorough review of the results, the researcher chose to retain all the questions to maintain the value of Cronbach's alpha. This decision is consistent with Smith et al. (2011), who consider a reliability coefficient of 0.60 and above to be acceptable. However, De Vaus (2002) and Bryman and Bell (2011) recommend a minimum

alpha value of 0.70. The results obtained from the reliability test have provided valuable insights into the stability and consistency of the developed instrument.

#### 4.4 The relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry

The objective was to examine the correlation between team goal setting and employee task proficiency within the mining sector.

**Table 4.3 Model Summary of the link between team goal setting and employee task proficiency**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.791 <sup>a</sup>	.753	.651	.02767

a. Predictors: (Constant), goal setting

Source: SPSS Output

Table 4.3 presents the model summary, which provides information on the fitness of the regression model. The correlation coefficient (R) indicates the magnitude and direction of the linear relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The coefficient of determination (R Square) represents the percentage of variability in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variable. The Adjusted R Square considers the number of variables in the model. Lastly, the Standard Error of the Estimate is a measure of the accuracy of the model's predictions.

The data shows that a strong positive correlation exists between the goal timeframe and employee task proficiency, as evidenced by the R value of 0.791. The R Square value of 0.753 indicates that 75.3% of the variation in employee task proficiency can be explained by the goal timeframe. Furthermore, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.651 demonstrates that the model fits the data well, even when considering the number of variables in the model. Lastly, the Standard Error of the Estimate, with a value of 0.276, suggests that the model's predictions are reasonably precise.

**Table 4.4 ANOVA of the link between team goal setting and employee task proficiency**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	36.582	1	36.582	63.091	.001 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	202.361	188	.580		
Total	238.943	189			

a. Dependent Variable: task proficiency

b. Predictors: (Constant), goal setting

Source: SPSS Output

The ANOVA on table 4.4 provides information on the significance of the regression model. The table shows the sum of squares, degrees of freedom, mean square, F-value, and p-value for the regression and residual errors. The F-value of 63.091 and the p-value of 0.001 indicate that the regression model is statistically significant at the 0.05 level of significance, meaning that the relationship between the goal timeframe and employee task proficiency is not due to chance.

**Table 4.5 Beta Coefficients of the link between team goal setting and employee task proficiency**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.133	.212		10.064	.000
goal setting	.726	.054	.701	7.943	.001

a. Dependent Variable: task proficiency

Source: SPSS Output

The findings on table 4.5 revealed regression coefficients of the relationship between two variables: task proficiency (the dependent variable) and goal setting (the independent variable). The unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.726 indicates that for

every 1 unit increase in goal setting, task proficiency increases by 0.726 units, holding all other predictors constant. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.701 indicates that goal setting has a large effect on task proficiency in terms of standard deviation units. The t-statistic of 7.943 and p-value of .001 show that the effect of goal setting on task proficiency is statistically significant. Since the coefficients are positive, there is a positive relationship between goal setting and task proficiency: as goal setting increases, task proficiency tends to increase as well.

#### 4.5 The effect of goal clarity on employee task proficiency in the mining industry

The study examined the effect of goal clarity on employee task proficiency in the mining industry.

**Table 4.6 Model Summary of the link between team goal clarity and employee task proficiency**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.614 <sup>a</sup>	.571	.569	.15335

a. Predictors: (Constant), goal clarity

**Source:** SPSS Output

Table 4.6 presents the results of a regression analysis that investigated the relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency. The R-squared value of 0.571 suggests that 57.1% of the variation in employee task proficiency can be accounted for by team goal setting. The adjusted R-squared value of 0.569 indicates that 56.9% of the variation in employee task proficiency can be explained by team goal setting, even after considering the number of variables in the

model. The standard error of the estimate, with a value of 0.15335, suggests that the average error in predicting employee task proficiency is 0.15335.

**Table 4.7 ANOVA of the link between team goal clarity and employee task proficiency**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	40.874	1	40.874	72.020	.004 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	198.069	188	.568		
	Total	238.943	189			

a. Dependent Variable: task proficiency

b. Predictors: (Constant), goal clarity

Source: SPSS Output

Table 4.8 shows the results of an ANOVA analysis for a regression model with "task proficiency" as the dependent variable and "goal clarity" as the predictor. The model explains a significant amount of variance in task proficiency, as indicated by the F-statistic of 72.020 ( $p < .05$ ). The regression sum of squares is 40.874, which represents the amount of variance in task proficiency that is explained by the predictor variable.

**Table 4.8 coefficient of the link between team goal clarity and employee task proficiency**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.852	.231		8.008	.000
	goal clarity	.503	.059	.414	8.486	.004

a. Dependent Variable: task proficiency

Source: SPSS Output



The results on table 4.9 reveal that the coefficient for goal clarity is .503, indicating that for every one-unit increase in goal clarity, task proficiency is predicted to increase by .503 units, holding all other variables constant. The standardized coefficient (beta) for "goal clarity" is .414, indicating that a one-standard deviation increase in goal clarity is predicted to result in a .414 standard deviation increase in task proficiency. The intercept coefficient is 1.852, indicating that when goal clarity is zero, task proficiency is predicted to be 1.852 units. Both coefficients are statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ), as indicated by their t-values and associated p-values.

#### 4.6 The link between participative goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry

The study investigated the link between participative goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.

**Table 4.9 Model Summary of link between participative goal setting and employee task proficiency**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.594 <sup>a</sup>	.444	.442	.02041

a. Predictors: (Constant), participative goal setting

Source: SPSS Output

The model summary indicates that there is a moderate positive relationship ( $R = .594$ ) between participative goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry. The R square value of .444 indicates that 44.4% of the variance in employee task proficiency can be explained by participative goal setting. The adjusted R square value of .442 suggests that the model is a good fit for the data and that the inclusion of participative goal setting as a predictor variable has

improved the model's fit. The standard error of the estimate of .02041 indicates that the model's predictions of employee task proficiency are reasonably accurate.

**Table 4.10 ANOVA of link between participative goal setting and employee task proficiency**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	58.319	1	58.319	112.369	.010 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	180.610	188	.519		
	Total	238.929	189			

a. Dependent Variable: task proficiency

b. Predictors: (Constant), participative goal setting

Source: SPSS Output

The ANOVA table reveals that the model is statistically significant ( $F = 112.369$ ,  $p < .01$ ), indicating that the addition of participative goal setting as a predictor variable has significantly enhanced the model's capacity to predict employee task proficiency in the mining industry. The sum of squares for the regression is 58.319, indicating that participative goal setting explains a substantial portion of the variation in employee task proficiency. The mean square for the regression is 58.319, suggesting that the model's predictions are dependable and precise.

**Table 4.11 Coefficients of link between participative goal setting and employee task proficiency**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.797	.192		9.384	.015
	participative goal setting	.472	.435	.494	10.600	.010

a. Dependent Variable: task proficiency

Source: SPSS Output

The results on table 4.11 reveal that the unstandardized coefficient (B)

for participative goal setting is .472, indicating that for every one-unit increase in participative goal setting, task proficiency increases by .472 units. The standard error for this coefficient is .435, which suggests that the coefficient estimate is reliable. The standardized coefficient (Beta) for participative goal setting is .494, indicating that participative goal setting has a moderate positive effect on employee task proficiency in the mining industry. The t-value for the coefficient is 10.600, which is statistically significant ( $p=0.010 < .01$ ), suggesting that participative goal setting is a significant predictor of task proficiency.

#### 4.7 The nexus between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining industry

The study sought to establish the nexus between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.

**Table 4.12 Model Summary of nexus between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.237 <sup>a</sup>	.191	.188	.74433

a. Predictors: (Constant), goal timeframe

Source: SPSS Output

According to the model summary, there is a marginal positive correlation ( $R = .237$ ) between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency within the mining industry. The R square value of .191 implies that only 19.1% of the variance in employee task proficiency can be explained by goal timeframe. The adjusted R square value of .188 indicates that the model may not be a good fit for the data, and the inclusion of goal

timeframe as a predictor variable may not have enhanced the model's appropriateness.

**Table 4.13 ANOVA of nexus between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	45.586	1	45.586	82.281	.042 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	193.357	188	.554		
	Total	238.943	189			

a. Dependent Variable: task proficiency

b. Predictors: (Constant), goal timeframe

Source: SPSS Output

The ANOVA table shows that the model is marginally statistically significant ( $F = 82.281, p < .05$ ). This indicates that the inclusion of goal timeframe as a predictor variable may have improved the model's ability to predict employee task proficiency in the mining industry to some extent.

**Table 4.14 Coefficients of nexus between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.420	.156		15.539	.181
	goal timeframe	.256	.028	.337	9.071	.071

a. Dependent Variable: task proficiency

Source: SPSS Output

The unstandardized coefficient (B) for goal timeframe is .256, indicating that for every one-unit increase in goal timeframe, task proficiency increases by .256 units.

The standard error for this coefficient is .028, which suggests that the coefficient estimate is reliable. However, the p-value for the standardized coefficient is .071, which is greater than the conventional threshold of .05, indicating that the relationship between goal timeframe and task proficiency may not be statistically significant.

#### **4.8 Discussion of Results**

**The relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry.**

The results derived from the analysis of the relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry are statistically significant, with a t-statistic of 7.943 and a p-value of .001. These findings indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between goal setting and task proficiency, meaning that as team goal setting increases, employee task proficiency tends to increase as well. The positive relationship between goal setting and task proficiency found in this study aligns with prior research in the field. Several studies (MacKenzie, 2021; Chowdhury & Monsen, 2022; Lam & Haper, 2022;) have demonstrated that setting specific and challenging goals leads to better performance across various industries, including the mining sector. For instance, Locke and Latham (2021) goal-setting theory emphasizes the motivational effects of goal setting on performance, suggesting that employees who are given clear and challenging goals are more likely to be engaged and perform better in their tasks. Moreover, previous empirical

evidence has showcased the benefits of team goal setting on overall team performance and cohesion. For instance, Roussin and Martin (2022) found that team goal setting positively influenced team performance in their study on industrial work teams. Similarly, Saadouli and Al-Khanbashi (2021) discovered that teams with specific, challenging goals performed better than those with vague or easy goals. In the context of the mining industry, the results of this study are particularly relevant due to the hazardous nature of the work environment and the importance of employee proficiency in ensuring safety and productivity. The positive relationship between goal setting and task proficiency suggests that the mining industry can benefit from investing in goal-setting initiatives to enhance employee performance and reduce potential risks.

### **The effect of goal clarity on employee task proficiency in the mining industry**

The t-statistic of 8.486 and p-value of .004 indicate that the effect of goal clarity on task proficiency is statistically significant. Based on the results, it is clear that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between goal clarity and employee task proficiency in the mining industry. This finding is consistent with past research that has found a positive link between goal setting and employee performance and productivity across various contexts (Aldoseri&Almaamari, 2020; Saadouli& Al-Khanbashi, 2021; Chen & Yao, 2022). Specifically, clear and challenging goals have been found to lead to higher task performance by directing attention and effort, enhancing persistence, and stimulating strategy development (Kuzior et al., 2022). The results of this study extend the goal setting literature to the mining industry

context and provide further evidence for the benefits of setting unambiguous goals. Mining work often involves repetitive and physically demanding tasks, so goal clarity is particularly important for focusing effort and maintaining motivation. The alternative explanation that the relationship found was due to chance can be ruled out based on the p-value and t-statistic. The finding highlights the importance of setting unambiguous and meaningful targets to direct and motivate effort for optimizing performance and productivity. However, it is important to note that the relationship between goal clarity and task proficiency is not always linear. As noted by Zhang et al (2020), in some cases, goal clarity may have a curvilinear relationship with task proficiency, meaning that there is an optimal level of goal clarity for maximizing task proficiency.

### **The link between participative goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry**

The results indicate that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between participative goal setting and task proficiency for employees in the mining industry. The t-value of 10.600 shows that this finding is very unlikely to have occurred by chance, with a p-value of 0.010 confirming this. This is consistent with prior research showing that participative or team goal setting leads to higher performance compared to assigned goals (Suprpto et al., 2022). When team members are involved in the goal setting process and mutually agree on targets, goals are more likely to be accepted and commitment is enhanced (Pervai et al, 2021). This leads to greater effort and persistence, as well as cooperation, to

achieve the goals. The mining industry context requires coordinated teamwork and collaboration to optimize productivity, so participative goal setting is particularly impactful. The interdependent nature of mining tasks means that overall team performance depends on each member's contribution. Therefore, when the team as a whole sets goals together, individuals are motivated not only by their own goals but by supporting their team members in achieving the goals. This social motivation and accountability contribute to higher task proficiency (Zhang et al, 2020). Similarly, a study by Hemakumara (2020) found that participative goal setting was positively related to task performance among employees in the Chinese manufacturing industry. However, it is important to note that there may be other factors that influence this relationship, such as the specific types of goals that are set and the level of employee engagement in the goal-setting process. Further research is needed to explore these issues in more detail.

### **The nexus between goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining industry**

The results indicated that there is a positive relationship between goal timeframe and task proficiency indicating that as goal timeframe increases, task proficiency is estimated to increase as well. However, the relationship is not statistically significant as p-value is .071. This means that the results of the study could be due to chance. The results indicated that there is a positive relationship between goal timeframe and task proficiency indicating that as goal timeframe increases, task proficiency is estimated to increase as well. However, the relationship is not



statistically significance as p-value is .071. Therefore, while the direction of the finding is consistent with goal setting theory and some past research indicating longer timeframes can enhance goal effects (Soltani et al., 2018), the results of this study are inconclusive. Longer timeframes provide more opportunity to develop effective strategies, receive feedback and adjust behavior, which may facilitate persistence and greater ultimate performance (Singo et al, 2022). However, in this mining industry context, the demands of the work may be better suited to more immediate or short-term targets. Some limitations that may have contributed to the non-significant finding are lack of control over extraneous variables that could influence the relationship, a small sample size, unreliable measures or a weak effect size. Further research with a larger sample, refined methodology and more objective measures of performance could help clarify whether longer goal timeframes do positively and meaningfully relate to employee productivity in mining roles. Moderators such as task complexity or worker experience may also interact with timeframe effects. However, there have also been some studies (Chen & Klimoski, 2019; Anderson, 2020; Chowdhury & Monsen, 2022) that have failed to find a significant relationship between goal setting and task performance, suggesting that the effects of this practice may depend on a variety of factors, such as the complexity of the task, the individual characteristics of the employees, and the organizational context in which the goals are set.

## **4.9 Chapter Summary**

The chapter presented a comprehensive study finding after analysis and showed the major results on the study on the impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. The next chapter is going to cover the study conclusions and recommendations.

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.0 Introduction**

The chapter study presents the conclusions and recommendations based on a critical analysis of the research findings on the impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. The study aimed to explore this topic and provide insights for organizations operating in the mining industry. After presenting the research findings and reviewing the relevant literature, this chapter draws conclusions and makes recommendations that can inform future decision-making in this field. The conclusions and recommendations provided in this chapter are based on a rigorous analysis of the data and are intended to guide organizations in improving employee performance and achieving production goals.

### **5.1 Study Summary**

This study aimed to investigate the impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. The research objectives sought to

explore the relationship between team goal setting, goal clarity, participative goal setting, and goal timeframe and employee task proficiency in the mining industry. The study employed a sample size of 200 respondents, who participated in data collection through structured questionnaires. Both stratified and simple random methods were used to select the sample. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics and inferential analysis. The findings of the study provide insights into the relationship between production goals and employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. The study's results could inform decision-making mining industry, particularly in the areas of team goal setting, goal clarity, participative goal setting, and goal timeframe and employee task proficiency.

## **5.2 Summary of study findings**

The study results revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency in the mining industry. The statistical analysis shows a t-statistic of 7.943 ( $p > .001$ ) indicating that the relationship between these two variables is strong and statistically significant. This suggests that as team goal setting increases, employee task proficiency tends to increase as well.

The research results indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between goal clarity and employee task proficiency in the mining industry. The statistical analysis showed a t-statistic of 8.486 and a p-value of .004, indicating that the effect of goal clarity on task proficiency is statistically significant. These

findings suggest that when employees have a clear understanding of their goals, they are more likely to perform their tasks proficiently.

The results of the statistical analysis revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between participative goal setting ( $p = .010$ ) and employee task proficiency.

The results showed that there is a positive relationship between goal timeframe increases and task proficiency, indicating that as goal timeframe increases, task proficiency is estimated to increase as well. However, the statistical analysis revealed that the relationship is not statistically significant ( $p = 0.071 > 0.05$ )

### **5.3 Conclusions**

The study confirmed that there was a positive nexus between production goals and employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between production goals and employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. The positive nexus observed between these two variables suggests that setting clear and achievable production goals can significantly improve employee performance in this context. This study has important implications for managers and policymakers operating in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. It highlights the importance of setting and communicating clear production goals to employees, as well as providing them with the necessary resources and training to achieve these goals. It also suggests that companies should consider implementing performance-based incentives to further

motivate employees and encourage them to achieve production targets. Furthermore, the findings of this study have broader implications for the management of employee performance in other industries as well. The positive relationship observed between production goals and employee performance may also hold true in other sectors, and managers can use this knowledge to improve employee productivity and motivation across a range of contexts. However, it is important to note that the study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. Firstly, the study was conducted in the mining industry in Zimbabwe, and it is unclear whether the findings can be generalized to other industries or contexts. Secondly, the study relied on self-reported data from employees, which may be subject to bias and may not accurately reflect their actual performance. Finally, the study did not examine the specific mechanisms through which production goals influence employee performance, and further research is needed to explore these mechanisms in more detail.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study in the Zimbabwe mining sector, the following are two recommendations for each of the four findings:

1. Mining companies in Zimbabwe should implement team-oriented goal setting practices that actively involve employees in the goal formulation process. This will increase employees' commitment to the goals and enhance task proficiency.

2. Managers in the mining sector in Zimbabwe should provide teams with autonomy to determine the strategies and action plans for achieving the set goals. This empowerment will motivate teams to improve their task proficiency.
3. Mining organisations in Zimbabwe need to focus on setting clear and specific goals that provide employees with a transparent set of objectives and key results expected of them. This clarity will leave no room for ambiguity and help employees to focus their efforts on the activities that will lead to increased task proficiency.
4. Managers in the mining sector in Zimbabwe must ensure that goals are communicated effectively to all employees. One-on-one sessions should be used to discuss goals and provide clarification. This will ensure that each employee understands exactly what is required of them to achieve high task proficiency.
5. Mining companies in Zimbabwe should develop structured and consistent goal setting practices across the organisation. This could include goal setting training for all managers and the development of standardised goal templates to prompt comprehensive and aligned goals. Managers in the mining sector in Zimbabwe should set a combination of outcome-based and behaviour-based goals. Outcome goals should focus on objectives, while behaviour goals should focus on the key competencies and skill requirements that will drive task proficiency improvements.

## 5.5 Areas of further studies

Based on the findings of the study, there are several areas of further research that could be explored in the context of the Zimbabwe mining sector. These include:

- The impact of individual goal setting on employee performance: While the study found a positive relationship between team goal setting and employee task proficiency, further research could explore the impact of individual goal setting on employee performance. This could help to identify whether individual goal setting is more effective than team goal setting in improving employee performance.
- The role of leadership in goal setting and employee performance: The study did not examine the role of leadership in goal setting and employee performance. Further research could explore the impact of leadership styles on goal setting and employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe.
- The relationship between goal setting and employee well-being: While the study focused on the relationship between goal setting and employee task proficiency, further research could examine the impact of goal setting on employee well-being in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. This could help to identify whether goal setting has a positive or negative impact on employee well-being and inform the development of interventions to promote employee well-being alongside productivity.

- The influence of cultural factors on goal setting and employee performance: The study did not explore the influence of cultural factors on goal setting and employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe. Further research could examine the impact of cultural factors, such as collectivism or individualism, on goal setting and employee performance. This could help to identify whether cultural factors play a role in the relationship between goal setting and employee performance and inform the development of culturally sensitive interventions to improve productivity in the mining industry.

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## Appendix 1: Questionnaire

My name is VIMBAI NICOLE SAJENI; I am a postgraduate student at Great Zimbabwe University pursuing a Master's Degree in Strategic Management. I am required to carry out a research project in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree. As such the student is carrying out research on *"The impact of production goals on employee performance in the mining industry in Zimbabwe"*. The researcher is kindly asking for your assistance as respondents to the research under study by filling in the questionnaire. The responses you will provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used solely for academic purposes. Your co-operation will be greatly appreciated.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Please answer all the questions honestly.
- Please kindly indicate your answers by ticking where appropriate in the boxes and writing in the spaces provided.



- Your name or identity is not required.

## SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

### 1.1. Gender

Male

Female

### 1.2. Age of respondent

< 29       29- 39       40 – 50       above 50

### 1.3 Period of working experience

< 5years       5-10years       >10years

### 1.5 Level of Education attained

Undergraduate Level       Master's Level       Others

## SECTION B: TEAM GOAL SETTING

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree about team goal setting at your

o  sation.

**Strongly Disagree=1; Disagree =2; Neutral =3; Agree =4; Strongly Agree= 5**

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Team have specific, measurable goals that are written down and shared with all team members.					
2	Team goals are linked to higher-level organizational goals.					
3	Team members understand how their individual work contributes to achieving the team goals.					
4	Our team regularly monitor progress toward goals and make adjustments as needed.					
5	Team members are recognized and rewarded for achieving team goals.					

### SECTION C: GOAL CLARITY

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree about goal clarity at your organisation.

**Strongly Disagree=1; Disagree =2; Neutral =3; Agree =4; Strongly Agree= 5**

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Are your goals and objectives clearly defined?					
2	Do you understand exactly what is expected of you to achieve your goals?					
3	Are there any ambiguities or uncertainties about your goals or					

	key performance indicators?					
4	Do you know the specific timelines associated with achieving your goals?					
5	Do you receive regular feedback on your progress toward achieving your goals?					

#### **SECTION D: PARTICIPATIVE GOAL SETTING**

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree about participative goal setting at your organisation.

**Strongly Disagree=1; Disagree =2; Neutral =3; Agree =4; Strongly Agree= 5**

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Were you involved in setting your own work goals?					
2	Did you have the opportunity to provide input into defining your key performance indicators?					
3	Do you feel like you had a voice in determining what you need to accomplish in your role?					
4	Was setting goals a collaborative process between you and					

	your manager?					
5	Do the goals that have been set feel realistic and meaningful to you?					

### SECTION E: GOAL TIMEFRAME

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree about goal timeframe at your organisation.

**Strongly Disagree=1; Disagree =2; Neutral =3; Agree =4; Strongly Agree= 5**

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Do you set specific deadlines or timeframes for accomplishing work goals?					
2	When deadlines are set further in advance (3-6 months+), does it impact your ability to focus on the tasks and stay proficient?					
3	Do tighter deadlines (1 week to 1 month) make you feel more proficient and focused, or do they reduce your proficiency?					
4	Longer term goal timeframes are most effective for maintaining a high level of proficiency and focus in your work.					

5	Shorter term goal timeframes are most effective for maintaining a high level of proficiency and focus in your work.					
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**SECTION E: EMPLOYEE TASK PROFICIENCY**

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree about employee task proficiency at your organisation.

**Strongly Disagree=1; Disagree =2; Neutral =3; Agree =4; Strongly Agree= 5**

		1	2	3	4	5
1	There is high employee task proficiency.					

//The End

Thank you.

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