Stakeholder management as a conflict resolution mechanism within mining host communities

28136404

A research project submitted to the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration

01 November 2023

ABSTRACT

Mining host communities are directly impacted by the mining companies' actions or their lack of concern for them, resulting in protest actions that in turn, hinder the mines' operations. Causes of conflict between mining companies and the host communities had been studied in detail regarding such causes of conflict. However, within a South African context, little was known as to whether these sources of conflict differ across various host communities. There was also limited research conducted regarding the current engagement frameworks.

The purpose of this research was to garner an understanding of whether these sources of conflict differ across the mining communities living in different provinces in South Africa and which frameworks and models have been utilised by various mining companies to address conflicts between the communities and the mines. The aim was to identify which engagement frameworks worked and which ones did not work.

Through qualitative analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 participants from various mining communities and mining company representatives. This study found that the main sources of conflict include challenges caused by poor communication and lacking engagement, insufficient alignment within communities' needs, the provision of education and training opportunities, unmet expectations regarding employment opportunities, environmental challenges, and lacking government support and support for businesses within the communities. These sources of conflict do not differ across the interviewed host communities. Additionally, regarding the currently utilised engagement frameworks and how mining companies manage stakeholders, gaps were identified related to stakeholder identification, understanding of stakeholders' needs and developing suitable engagement principles. Most mining companies do not seem to embed the stakeholder management framework and related outcomes into their overall business strategies. The result of the study provides an overarching framework that addresses the gaps in prior studies and provides key learnings.

This contributes towards literature through stakeholder theory and stakeholder management, as well as to business strategies through the development of a framework that supports improved relationships between mining companies and mining host communities, reduces conflicts and thereby enhances the sustainability of businesses.

Keywords: Host mining communities, stakeholder theory, mining companies, stakeholder management, stakeholder engagement framework

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

1 November 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

Mining activities commenced on a larger, more formal, and commercial scale in South Africa in the 1960s, following the earlier diamond explorations in Kimberley and the gold rush on the Witwatersrand. In 2022, revenue from the top 40 mining companies across the globe was US$711 billion, with EBITA margins at 29%. These top 40 mining companies had a combined market capitalisation of US$400 billion, which in 2022 tripled to US$ 1.2 trillion (Bendall et al., 2023). In these companies' published integrated reports, they show how they work with the affected communities to ensure the sustainability not only of the companies, but also that of the communities.

When mining activities commenced in the 1800s and 1900s, not much consideration was given to the communities living around the mining fields, or even those who had to be removed from their original places of living to make way for the mining activities. However, by the 1990s, mining activities had generated significant destabilisation among the affected communities that did not benefit from such activities. The result was social conflict, and protest actions among these communities, demanding to be included as stakeholders in the decision-making processes affecting their communities and to derive benefits from the mining activities (Bebbington, 2011; Collins, 2009). This has become one of the more significant challenges for mining companies, resulting in loss of revenue and challenges related to the sustainability of the organisations (Prno, 2013).

In South Africa, the mining industry is a major positive contributor to the economy, contributing between R78 billion in taxes and R480.9 billion towards the country's GDP in 2021 (The Minerals Council, 2023). In addition, as indicated by Ngomane (2019), at least ten people per household depend on a wage paid by the mining industry to an employee. Such significant contribution to the country's economy, as well as the sector's job creation means that sustainable operations of this industry is critical.

However, Fraser (2021) and Bezzola et al. (2022) highlight that conflicts in the mining communities continue to spread, even though significant progress has been made in advancing the mining sector's adherence to good corporate governance, the triple bottom line, and efforts to keep the mining activities sustainable. Addressing the conflicts and resistance from the community and finding solutions that are optimal for the mining

companies as well as the communities is critical in the successful operation and sustainability of the organisation. While many communities resorted to violence instead of dialogue (which does not yield any positive results), the solutions would ideally be found through stakeholder management and winning the consent of the various affected mining communities (Costanza, 2016).

Considering the importance of the mining sector to South Africa's economy, and the equally importance of the sector's sustainability, the researcher had proposed to conduct a study into the key sources of conflict, and to delve deeper to understand whether these sources of conflict differ across the host mining communities. This necessitated that the study would also assess what stakeholder management frameworks are being utilised by the various mining companies, and the gaps identified within these models.

Stakeholder management is a tenant of stakeholder theory, and stakeholder theory is a profound theory in business operations. Critically reviewing the various dynamics that emerge when dealing with host mining communities across South Africa, this study assessed what frameworks would be the most viable within a South African context. This study explored the concept of stakeholder management within the host mining communities and how South African mining companies can utilise this to minimise conflict. The study also explored what key learnings can be obtained from the various mining companies to allow for the development of an overarching stakeholder management framework that would work within a South African mining environment.

This chapter provides the background to the research study, outlining the challenges that exist between mining organisations and host communities. The exploration of the background is followed by the research problem statement, the purpose of the research and how the research contributes to the body of knowledge regarding the stakeholder theory and to the mining sector.

1.2 Background

For mining companies to achieve long-term success and remain sustainable, they need to have mutually satisfactory relationships with all stakeholders, and these include the host communities (Clarkson Centre for Business Ethics, 1999). Mining companies are major contributors to South Africa's economy; however, they are also a source of concern as they continue to face challenges related to how they interact with their local host communities. One of the most significant cases involved mining employees who were also

part of the host community in Marikana, where 34 people tragically lost their lives in 2012 during protests that had erupted (Ndlovu, 2013). Since this incident, there have been several more protest actions, following unresolved conflicts. Bezzola et al. (2022) and Sexton (2020) highlight that as mines develop across communities, the risk of conflict grows, threatening the viability of the mining operation.

Nearly all countries with extractive industries experience such conflicts. Some of the protests that have occurred historically include the 2015 violent protests at Anglo American's Mokgalakwena Platinum mine, where the community blocked the roads that lead to the mines and disrupted the mining activities. They were frustrated by the mine's blasting activities, which had resulted in their children having to be moved to a different school. This forced move caused the parents having to pay for extra transport for their children to get to the new school. The communities also complained that the mining companies were not hiring local miners, and there were no or not enough clinics available to the local community.

In Xolobeni, the community remains divided on issues around jobs being created by the mines and the impact of mining on the environment. Protests reached a stage, where police had to fire tear gas to disperse the crowds, in an effort to avoid an escalation of the conflict that could have resulted in a loss of lives (Ngcukana, 2018). Mining companies within the Phola community in Mpumalanga have also continuously been challenged by violent protests since 2012. Numerous attempts have been made to resolve these challenges; however, the solutions seem to be short-termed. More recently, residents have blamed the mines' blasting activities for damaging their homes (Mahlangu, 2022). According to the *Emalahleni News* (2020), community protestors gathered outside the Berryl coal mine in Phola to protest against illegal mining activities around the Phola area. They were also unhappy with the conditions of the acquisition of South32 by Seriti Resources, and local police had to disperse the crowds by using tear gas. Local communities also protested over Seriti's employment strategy (Goldswain, 2022). Lali (2022) cited a gathering just outside Parliament of communities from various parts of South Africa who demanded that mines should consult them more meaningfully. Between 2012 and 2019, there were at least 64 reports and newspaper articles regarding community unrests and conflicts between them and the mining sector (Thaba, 2021). Rio Tinto's Richards Bay Minerals (RBM) had to shut down production on numerous occasions over protests by the communities related to land, claimed corruption and the lack of the mines hiring local workers (Harper, 2022). Thus, all these incidents highlight that

community protests remain a key challenge for South Africa and they are among the top 10 key challenges having an impact on the mining industry, with the potential of having a negative influence on economic growth (The Minerals Council, 2023). According to Cooney (2017), it is important for mining companies not only to meet the legislative requirements set for the mining sector, but to engage the host communities that are directly affected by the mining activities in a meaningful manner in order to avoid conflicts and ensure positive relationships.

A number of academic researchers conducted studies on mining investments and how some of the mines incited protest actions by the host communities. Christensen (2019), Berman et al. (2017), Sexton (2020) and Haslam et al. (2016) stated that although there are significant economic gains derived from mining activities in many developed, developing and even under-developed countries, mining and extractive activities are continuously associated with growing social conflict. Such conflicts threaten the mines' productions, profit levels and sustainability, but also negatively affect the lives of the local communities. Christensen (2019) further states that these conflicts are partly referred to as the "local resource curse" and explains that areas with a high concentration of costs can lead to greater grievances, which cannot be offset by benefits to society. Arce (2016) considered "the political consequences of mobilisations against resource extraction". However, Sexton (2020) provided the example of Peru, where only 20% of the mining regions experience conflicts, while other do not. Thus, one could ask why certain mining communities in South Africa experience such high levels of conflict, while others do not. What works within the communities that do not experience conflicts? What are the key learnings that can be taken from them? Second, are their reasons for the presence of conflicts similar? Is this partly due to how these communities are managed as stakeholders or are there any other factors that play a major role in the absence of conflicts between the mines and the affected communities?

1.3 Research Problem

Conflicts between the mines and the affected mining communities have been studied in detail with various limitations cited. Bezzola et al. (2022) conducted research on conflicts between the mines and the mining communities and stakeholder management strategies. In the research, Bezzola examined whether Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plays a role in conflicts between the mines and the host mining communities, determining that the effects of CSR were limited. However, the research itself had limitations, some of

which related to the data set and available time for the investigation, and the researcher suggested that another study should be conducted that were to evaluate the relationship between the level of stakeholder engagement and conflicts, and whether a better stakeholder engagement creates a positive outcome regarding the reduction or avoidance of community protests. Humby (2016) conducted an investigation into redressing mining legacies, considering how the mining industry can engage stakeholders more constructively. The researcher examined conflicts in mining areas and concluded that the mining industry should be more attentive, considering many forms of engagement to address key legacy issues.

In a study focused on "mapping literature on social responsibility and stakeholder pressure", Rodrigues et al. (2022) indicate that mining activities are good for local communities; however, the negative impacts have created pressure from the related stakeholders on the mines. They also cite the criticality of engagements between mining companies and the stakeholders, which, if not dealt with appropriately can create challenges related to sustainability. The study's limitation was the limited database used for the research, and most of the articles studied were not sourced from highly-rated journals. The second limitation was the ability to search through Boolean operators, which can create challenges.

Kougiannou et al. (2020) examined the relationship between legitimacy and corporate hypocrisy within the context of CSR. Their research examined the detail of trust and community engagement, considering the local community as a key stakeholder. The qualitative analysis examined community engagement strategies and how they have an impact on the trust between the mines and the communities. As part of the findings, the authors state that when companies fail to strategically engage communities, this erodes trust and legitimacy. They suggested that future research should include an analysis of community stakeholder management strategies and whether good strategies have an impact on the community's response.

Masuku (2021) also conducted research related to conflict between the mines and the mining communities and stakeholder engagements; however, the author admitted that the study was focused on only one mining company in Zimbabwe, making the study difficult to extrapolate and recommended the stakeholder management framework be considered across various mining communities.

The abovementioned limitations can be summarised as relating to insufficient data, insufficient time, and analysis focused on specific mining companies that cannot be extrapolated beyond that company or community. There has been a noteworthy amount of research conducted on stakeholder management as a tool to manage conflicts between the mines and the host communities in Africa and South Africa. However, these studies have focused on specific areas or specific mines and have not been conducted across various mines in South Africa, which would allow for extrapolation. To address this research gap, a study was required to review stakeholder management practices across various mining companies in South Africa.

1.4 Research Purpose

Given the challenges experienced by mining companies and communities in South Africa, the purpose of this research was to review and understand the key sources of conflict between the mines and the host communities and whether these sources of conflict differ across mining communities. The purpose of this research was also to garner an understanding of which frameworks and models have been utilised across various mining companies, what has worked and what has not worked, including the related gaps identified within these frameworks. The overarching purpose of the research was to utilise these learnings and develop a key framework that can be utilised within a mining context.

1.4.1 Contribution of the research to academic knowledge

Engaging meaningfully with communities through dialogues builds relationships between the affected parties; it also allows the parties to get to know each other better. When mines are socially accepted and conflict is limited, they can operate consistently, removing one hindrance to sustainability. Mercer-Mapstone et al. (2018) and Bowen et al. (2010) stated that through stakeholder engagement strategies and a well defined framework, operating costs can be reduced, and community demands can be reconciled well while maintaining trust between the affected parties. This stakeholder management framework will add to the body of knowledge within stakeholder theory as defined by Freeman (2010).

This report aims to contribute to the greater understanding of stakeholder theory and stakeholder management in one or more of three frameworks, namely normative, descriptive, or instrumental stakeholder management frameworks. Through understanding these three frameworks, one can develop an overarching framework that

can work effectively within a South African context. Understanding the gaps and key learnings of various strategies employed by mining companies is a critical aspect of developing the framework, similar to the work of O'Riordan et al. (2014),stating that understanding the gaps and key learnings allows for the development of a practical and meaningful stakeholder management framework.

1.4.2 Contribution of the research to business

The challenges mines have been confronted with by the mining communities have contributed to threatening the efficient operations, profit margins and sustainability of mining organisations. Many mining companies have either had to shut down indefinitely or for a prolonged period of time. Tloubatla (2020) indicates that during the 2019 protests at RBM, some protesting employees were shot at during payment disputes. Days in production were lost, and the mine was shut for a period of time and RBM failed to deliver some products to customers, which not only resulted in revenue loss, but also in reputational damage as customers lost confidence in RBM's ability to deliver. RBM indicated that they experienced significant losses to the business, which forced them to declare force majeure to customers. In a separate incident in 2017, equipment was burnt down. These incidents occurred more frequently over the years, resulting in significant revenue and production losses. These incidents have not only been common at RBM, but were also experienced at companies such as the Berryl Coal Group (Emalahleni FM News, 2020), Anglo American (Reuters, 2017), and South32 (Mckay, 2019). Given the importance of mining companies in the South African economy, the consequences of the mining companies' inability to ensure the absence of conflicts and protest actions, and thus their operational sustainability, are not only important considerations for the host communities, but also for the country's economy (Dikgwatlhe & Mulenga, 2023).

Understanding the key sources of conflict raised by these host mining communities should enable the mines to ensure that the solutions that mining companies develop, for example, social labour plans, answer the concerns of the local communities, as studies have found that when the communities are satisfied, protests reduce (Thaba, 2021). In addition, awareness of the reality related to stakeholder management within mining host communities should contribute towards a paradigm shift within the mining sector, recognising the critical importance of working towards sustainable relationships with the host mining communities. It is important to understand the sources of conflict and problems to determine solutions that can yield substantive results.

1.5 Layout of the Research Report

This research report started in Chapter 1 with a brief introduction to the problem, including the explanation of why the research is required. This was followed by the stated research problem, questions and aims of the research. This was followed by the research purpose, and the key reasons explaining why the research is important and how this research will contribute meaningfully to business and the theory of knowledge.

Chapter 2 is an outline of the literature review, positioning the problem within literature. This reviews includes the highlight of key gaps, comparing articles and establishing a golden thread.

Chapter 3 defines the purpose of the study through outlining the key research questions that the study aims to answer, this includes the key sub-questions that aim to find the answers and solution to the overarching question. The chosen research methodology is outline in Chapter 4, including the design of the research.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of the research methodology, detailing the reason for the choice of methodology. This addresses key items such as population, unit of analysis, sampling method and the sampling size, as well as the measurement instrument and analysis approach.

Chapters 5 and 6 outline the findings and results of the research study, and how these findings link with key literature, concluding with Chapter 7, which presents the key conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Informal mining activities on the African continent commenced centuries ago. Over the years, the mining sector has grown exponentially, and mining has accounted for significant economic output by many countries; it has also contributed to economic growth, and wealth as well as job creation. However, mineral exploration comes at a cost (Bird, 2016). Most mining processes require a large amount of land and water to be utilised, and where land and water are, people usually reside within these areas. This can lead to the two parties clashing over their rights and needs. In the communities, where these mines are situated, there has been significant conflict, which is well documented throughout literature. These conflicts can be costly, creating significant safety challenges caused by environmental destruction and pollution, and resulting in a negative reputation for the mining company. All disputes and conflicts also have an impact on the host communities, and they can, at times, have an impact on the company's ability to obtain the necessary mining licenses. This, in turn, can threaten the organisation's existence or sustainability (Maher, 2019; Pereira et al., 2021). As a result, efficient stakeholder management of the host mining communities has become increasingly critical for the mining companies' effective operations and survival. In South Africa, there has been limited research conducted on the application of stakeholder management principles to host mining communities. This omission left a gap in knowledge regarding the question of whether these principles would not only be applicable within a South African context, but also whether they would assist in minimising conflict. In this chapter, a review of theory related to mining companies, host mining communities, conflict, conflict management, stakeholder theory and stakeholder management is discussed in detail. It largely focuses on the South African mining sector.

This chapter begins with an overview of the relationship between mining companies and mining communities, with key highlights on challenges that each face. This is followed by an exploration of conflict, conflict management and why conflict within mining communities is a concern and how effective stakeholder management can assist in resolving conflicts. This examination then leads to the stakeholder theory and stakeholder management, and how this theory was applied to this research study.

2.2 The Relationship between Mining Companies and Mining Communities

The South African mining industry emerged in 1856, when Phillips and King discovered copper deposits in Namaqualand. At the same time, gold mining took place already in 1852, and later included diamond discovery and mining in the 1860s, manganese and coal mining in the 1870s, and platinum mining in the 1920s (Davenport, 2013). Over the years, mining contributed immensely to the South African economy (GDP – Gross Domestic Product), with the latest estimates from 2021 being recorded at 7.53% of the country's GDP (Minerals Council South Africa, 2023). According to Cole and Broadhurst (2020), South Africa is the world's biggest producer of Platinum Group Metals (also referred to as PGMs), Chromium and Manganese ore, and it also contributes significantly towards the production of minerals such as gold, iron ore, diamonds, and coal. Although in the early days, mining operated differently, where the mining companies focused primarily on the stockholder and not the stakeholder (no other stakeholders were considered, and this includes employees), in the 21st century, this has changed significantly. The political, social, and economic conditions have shifted through the addition of various legal acts and regulations. In addition, host mining communities have become outspoken stakeholders in mining operations and influence the mines' ability to secure a license to operate (Cole & Broadhurst, 2020).

South Africa consists of nine provinces and over 30 000 settlements. Within these settlements, there are about 84 host mining communities; this includes cities, towns, and villages, which are home to roughly 5.4 million people, representing about 9% of the nation's total population. These communities are primarily found in coal mining, platinum mining, gold mining and diamond mining areas (Cole & Broadhurst, 2020). According to the Department of Mineral Resources (2010a), a community is defined as a group of people who have an interest in the rights of a specific land. Mine communities are defined as those communities where mining takes place, including areas where mining companies source the majority of their mine workers ("labour-sending areas"). Host mining communities are defined by a set of parameters as developed by Cole and Broadhurst (2020) to include the duration of the mining taking place in these areas, the proximity to the mine, how far the community is from the nearest city and the number of mines that operate within that area. Cole and Broadhurst state that small mining towns, large mining towns and co-established cities tend to have a larger impact and influence on mining activities, with specific emphasis on those with a population size of less than 200 000.

Over the years, the rate of conflict between the affected communities and the mining companies has increased; this is largely related to varying and conflicting interests between the stakeholder groups. Given the influence that mining communities have on mining activities, it is crucial for mining companies to always be aligned with their communities to avoid any conflict that could potentially impact the effective operation, profitability, and sustainability of the company (Costanza, 2016) . Therefore, it is crucial for host communities and mining companies to work closely with each other, ensuring that each stakeholder's needs are addressed, and conflict is reduced or avoided, and especially, conflict that leads to protests, which hamper the ability of the production-related activities to occur.

Community protests are defined by Alexander et al. (2018) as those related to the geographical location where a collective group puts forward their demands, either supporting or defending the specific community. Protests can either be orderly, disruptive, or violent. Violent protests are the extreme end of protests and result in damage to property or people. Orderly protests are tolerable and approved in advance by the relevant authorities. Protests turn violent when protestors see violence as the only solution to their grievances. Thaba (2021) conducted a study to understand the reasons for conflict and protests surrounding mines. The study focused on an analysis of published newspaper articles on protest, removing duplication of published stories. The study found that there are four main types of protests within a South African context: union-related protests, community-related protests, mine worker-related protests and others (which are a combination of the more minor reasons for protests). The main reasons for protests include wage negotiations by unions (43% of protests), followed by community protests at 31% of protests. Within community protests, Thaba states that the key reasons for protests include the lack of community or enterprise development, unemployment, and land disputes.

Some of the reasons for protests have, over the years, been addressed through various mining legislatures. Mining legislature falls under the control of the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE), which aims to promote economic development within South Africa, social equity, and the environmental sustainability of South Africa. The Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (The Presidency, 2002) governs all mining activities and sets out frameworks for the regulation of exploration, exploitation as well as beneficiation. Mineral rights and permits are also required for exploration and

production-related activities as granted by the DMRE. Of importance for the purpose of this study are the environmental regulations, which are aimed at mitigating the impact of mining activities on the environment, and the social and labour considerations, which are meant to promote local employment and development of communities within the mine's geographical location. It includes Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) legislation, which is meant to emphasise the inclusion of groups that were historically disadvantaged through increasing their economic participation (Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, 2017). Despite their positive intentions, the implementation of these laws and regulations has contributed to conflict between host communities and mining companies.

While Thaba (2021) conducted research on the possible causes of conflict, it is worth noting that the study was based on newspaper articles (secondary data) and not on discussions with any of the affected people in those communities or with the related mining companies. Given the tendency of these protests turning violent, it is important to understand the nature of conflict and conflict management.

2.3 Conflict and Conflict Management

Conflict is defined as protracted misalignment or disagreement between parties (Kilmann & Thomas, 1977). The concept of conflict management was published by Blake and Mouton (1985). It was originally developed by Kilmann and Thomas (1977), who defined conflict management as the ability to utilise various tools and techniques to manage conflict in an environment. Specifically in the mining industry, conflict can occur due to a strained or failed relationship between a mining company and the relevant and affected communities, emanating from misconceptions, a lack of awareness or disregard of important issues, and the lack of decision-makers taking cognisance of the impact the mine's operations have on key stakeholders.

It is critical to deal with conflict in a thorough and effective manner as this can improve the relationship between the mines and host communities, resulting in a suitable environment that allows for operational efficiencies (Ngomane, 2019). Omisore (2014) determined three effects of conflict; these are psychological, behavioural, and physiological responses, where employees become less interested in their work, or they are anxious and become estranged or disconnected from their work or the employer.

Conflict within global mining communities has been studied in detail, with some researchers such as Banerjee (2018), Kapelus (2002), Szablowski (2002), Bebbington et al. (2008), Kemp et al. (2011) and Newenham-Kahindi (2011) providing findings on the topic, while some developed a view on some potentially applicable frameworks. Saenz (2019) conducted a study in Peru and considered that to deal with social conflict in the mining industry, it was necessary to develop a framework that integrated best practices across mining industries. In this research, he identified the main causes of social conflict as stemming from the distribution of benefits between communities and the mining industry, the impact of mining activities on the environment, the need for access to land, and the rights of other individuals in the communities. The key findings in the study included the importance of establishing a framework that could potentially be used to identify and diagnose the different types of conflicts. He also stated the criticality of building strong relationships between the community and the mining company. Given that a smaller sample (two mining companies) was used in the research, the author suggested increasing the sample size to give validity to the framework. Saenz highlighted the importance of exhibiting a positive attitude by the mining company towards the community as a start, which should already be extended towards the community while the company was still aiming to obtain the required mining permits.

In researching the politics of obtaining a license to operate a mine, Costanza (2016) states that most of the mineral resources were found in developing countries and for mining companies to be able to operate and obtain the best of these mineral resources, they needed to engage with the communities in these areas. Constanza (2016) highlights that these mining activities tended to destabilise the host communities, generating intense conflict, and resulting in protests. Part of the reasons for these protests included the potential threat to the communities' environment, the threat to their ways of life, and losing control over what these communities believed belonged to them. Organisations deal with conflict in different ways, with some resorting to aggression and others seeking to peacefully obtain support from the communities. The ability to obtain support peacefully not only assists the companies in avoiding potential delays in the start of their mining operations, but it also improves the organisation's public image or reputation. Through qualitative research, Costanza (2016) conducted a study in Guatemala to determine how mining companies were able to operate with and among these communities. Part of the findings included the requirement for collaboration between the mining companies and the government, which allowed the communities to participate. It also promoted the idea of

mining and development going hand in hand. When government and mining companies work together, transparency and accountability also improve, as well as the provision of services within the community. The study suggests that given that it is not only the mining company that benefits from the mining activity but also the whole country, this collaboration is crucial to ensure a continuing contribution to economic growth. The author's suggestions for future research include examining the motive for creating spaces for participation and the reason for discourse and resulting impact. In addition, Costanza (2016) suggests continued study into the conditions where decentralisation and community participation would facilitate the ability for mining companies to operate.

In Africa, Bezzola et al. (2022) and Warnaars (2012) determined that mines increase the risk of protests and conflicts caused by the host mining communities. Bezzola et al. (2022) analysed a dataset of 292 mining companies across Africa over a period of eight years. This study determined that merely making payments towards CSR requirements does not reduce the level of conflict, compared to communities that have never been exposed to CSR initiatives. The study also states that mining companies tend to only increase their contribution towards CSR when they are exposed to conflict. Mining companies should aim to understand what the relevant communities need or expect from the mine's management, and this can be achieved through meaningful stakeholder relationships. Given the data set used, the author suggested a focus on what would happen if the private sector were to increase the level of engagement with local communities and whether this would create positive outcomes.

In South Africa, Ngomane (2019), Mnwana and Bowman (2022) reviewed conflict caused by host communities in the Barberton area and host communities in the platinum belt. Ngomane utilised a qualitative approach (supported by interviews) to conduct the analysis. The analysis was aimed at understanding the communities and why they were unhappy with the mining companies. The study indicated the need to conduct more research related explicitly to unskilled labour and the cause of tensions between unskilled labour and mining companies. Mnwana and Bowman (2022) also aimed to gain an understanding of the sources of conflict by the platinum belt communities and why these conflicts increased over the last few years. A key determinant was around the connection of the structure of power, as well as the role of the local institutes.

The ability to manage conflict well was found to be linked to leadership style. Pless et al.

(2022) examined the linkage between conflict management and responsible leadership in UAIL (The Utkal Alumina International Limited product), a Bauxite mining company in Odisha (Asia). The mine had obtained all required legal and regulatory confirmations and clearances; however, mining could not progress because of community protests following resistance from the community near the mining area. In addition, various NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) and social activists were supporting the communities' cause. The reasons for conflict included the lack of the mine affording sustainable development and the potentially negative environmental impacts of the mining activities (including disturbances of tribal lands). This was also highlighted by Ansu-Mensah et al. (2021) indicating that the mining company had been working to resolve challenges related to avoidance of chemical spillages, reclaiming disturbed land and afforestation activities in an effort to restore the environment. Eventually, in one of the protest actions in December 2000, three tribal people lost their lives when police fired rubber bullets. This protest action affected not only the ability of the business to generate revenue, but also the employees and the families they support. The study indicated that some of the contributors to ineffective stakeholder management included inadequate regulations and the organisation's primary focus on the main stockholder or shareholder. To de-escalate the situation required a leader willing to take on the role of communicator, initiating dialogue with all stakeholders, speaking their language, and communicating with them with respect and openness. Pless et al. (2022) recommended the use of an integrative responsible leadership approach to resolve conflict.

Effective management is a critical solution to resolving conflicts. This relates to stakeholder management and the overall stakeholder theory. This was further supported by Boadi et al. (2019) who indicates that effective stakeholder management can contribute to reducing the trust deficit that is created when mines fail to engage effectively with communities. In a study conducted by Kilajian and Chareonsudjai (2021) on conflict resolutions and the community engagement, the gaps identified were that the community was not well informed of what was happening, the mine's plans or intended actions and the effect on the communities. This is where the stakeholder theory concept is critical. To ensure a smooth operation with limited or no conflict, communities need to be involved and informed of what is happening on an ongoing basis, including any changes within the mining environment and how these might affect them. A more active collaboration should exist between mining companies and the host mining communities. Stakeholder theory provides guiding principles that are key to ensuring that the mining companies are able to

manage and engage stakeholders in a more meaningful way. They also support the fact that mining companies should ensure continuous collaboration (and an equally weighted two-way communication) between the mining companies and their host communities.

2.4 The Stakeholder Theory

2.4.1 Definition

The concept of stakeholder theory was first published in 1984. Friedman (1970) argued that a firm's only purpose is to make a profit for its shareholders. His view was that the business exists to serve only its shareholders, as long as it works within the boundaries of the law and ethical standards. He argued that businesses should only engage in activities that contribute directly to the business' profit margin, and any other activities, such as those related to social and environmental causes, would not contribute to maximise profits. However, a new theory was developed in 1984, which contradicted Friedman and argued that a firm not only creates value for its shareholders but also its stakeholders; shareholders form part of these stakeholders; however, there are many other stakeholders (Freeman, 2010).

In line with Freeman (1984), Mahajan et al. (2023) suggest that the history of stakeholder theory traces back to the 1960s in the Stamford Research Institute; this is where the emphasis was shifted towards the fact that not only shareholders, but all stakeholders enable organisations to thrive. This can be achieved by maximising shareholder value, as well as satisfying stakeholders' needs. The theory of stakeholder theory within a business context became popular in businesses in the 2000s. Stakeholder theory encourages acknowledgement and consideration of internal and external stakeholders by businesses, it aims to encourage businesses to understand and manage stakeholders' needs and demands, and provides a framework that represents a holistic view focused on the required decisions for shareholders. It is assumed to enable businesses to maximise their value creation and ensure the safeguarding of the business' sustainability and long-term success. Mahajan et al. (2023) also agree that the origins of stakeholder theory can be traced back to Freeman's 1984 book, which is titled "*Strategic Management: A stakeholder approach*". Freeman(1984) defined a stakeholder as an individual or organisation that can influence or is influenced by any work conducted by an organisation. Freeman's work was expanded on by researchers, such as Donaldson and Preston (1995), who focused on the concepts, evidence, and implications for stakeholder theory. Mitchell et al. (1997) also

added to the concept. Their focus was the identification of stakeholders and their salience, defining what counts (key aspects) in stakeholder management. Jones and Wicks (1999) focused on the bookends of stakeholder theory with a detailed focus on what stakeholder theory is not. Parmer et al. (2010) focused on the state of stakeholder theory, how it was applied across different fields and how stakeholder management not only contributed to corporate social responsibility, but also towards sustainability and ethical conduct.

Stakeholder theory is the foundation of how various stakeholders can be managed and how these implications can be extended to other aspects, such as those related to corporate social responsibility, sustainability, and ethics. The various strategies developed within stakeholder management have been developed across various countries across the globe. However, these authors had not yet researched whether these strategies can suit the South African mining communities' context, especially so, if one considers that the needs of communities differ across countries, regions, and continents. Mahajan et al. (2023) state that stakeholder management is the core knowledge within the file of stakeholder theory, and emerging areas include stakeholder management and assessment frameworks. Stakeholder engagement has become increasingly important as stakeholders are now forcing organisations to become more responsible and they are holding them accountable for their actions. At times, businesses are forced to downsize and they are disrupted, further affecting communities and employees. Therefore, it is important that sound stakeholder assessment frameworks focus on the issues that enable the effective execution of stakeholder management.

Stakeholder theory argues that anyone who is affected by the business, or is invested in the business, or is involved in the business is a stakeholder, and for a company to achieve long-term value, all stakeholders' needs have to be addressed and satisfied. In addition, the stakeholder theory argues that businesses have an ethical obligation to consider all stakeholders and that the decisions of businesses affect multiple groups (stakeholders). Clarkson (1999) stated that a stakeholder is a voluntary risk-bearer (due to investment such as capital or employment), or involuntary risk-bearer (bearing the risk due to activities that the business takes part in, for example, a mining activity within a community). Freeman (2010) identified communities as primary stakeholders in relation to the mining company, together with customers, suppliers, employees, and financiers (see Figure 1). This implies that they play a critical role in a company's ability to operate and their level of influence on mining activities and the overall sustainability within the mining environment

(Cole & Broadhurst, 2020). According to Freeman (2010), while the firm remains key, primary stakeholders such as communities are equally as important. Primary stakeholders are defined as those stakeholders who can influence, or can be influenced by, the organisation's actions and can be impacted by or impact the organisation's performance.
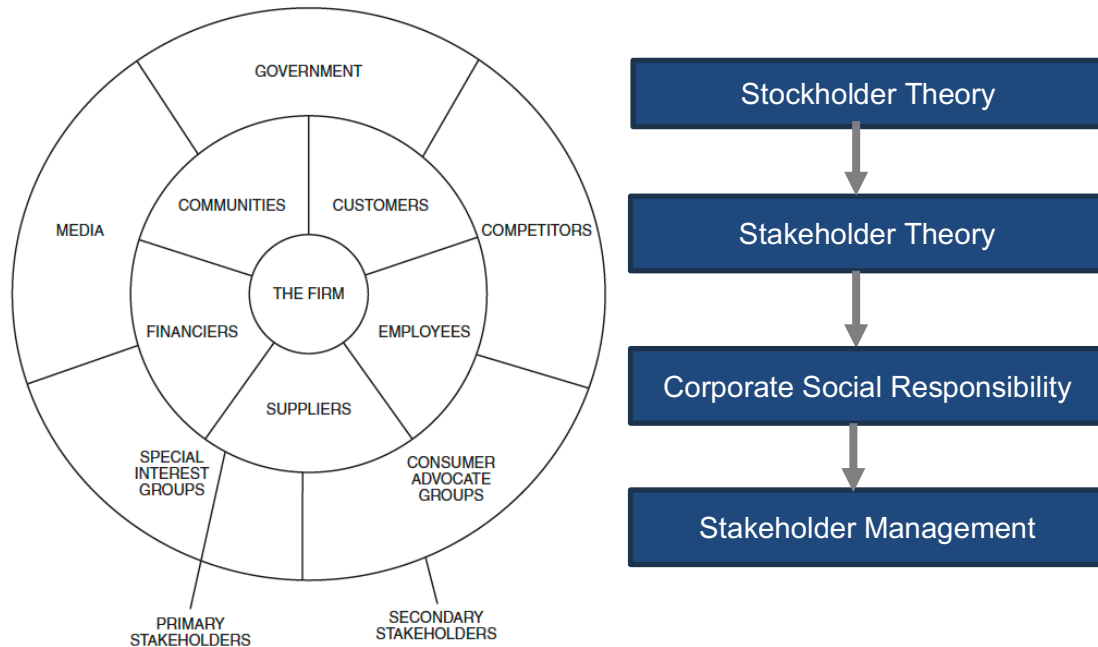
Figure 1: Where the community fits in regarding the company's stakeholder analysis (Freeman et al., 2010)

Freeman (2010) further argued that ensuring the interests of all stakeholders can lead to long-term value creation, mitigate risks, and ensure or at least contribute to a positive relationship with society. Within the stakeholder theory lies the impact of CSR and stakeholder management, which is the basis of this research study, where host communities are referred to as primary stakeholders. This is because host communities have the power to influence the organisation's decisions and actions. They can also be influenced by the activities of the organisation and the decisions of these communities impact the overall performance of the organisation. When the organisation succeeds or fails, communities are directly affected.

2.4.2 Communities as stakeholders

Communities have legitimacy, power, and influence, and they emerge as one of the mining business' crucial stakeholders. Hence, it is important for companies to create an environment, where they can communicate with community leaders and community representatives in an effective manner. In addition, it is important to consider the

sociocultural aspects of the community (Boadi et al., 2018).

Further to Freeman's theory and based on Freeman's theory, Mitchel et al. (1997) and Ranangen (2017) highlighted that primary stakeholders can be classified according to three attributes: (1) The legitimacy of the relationship between the business and the stakeholder; (2) the ability of the stakeholder to utilise their power to influence the firm; and (3) the urgency of the claim the stakeholder has on the firm. Stakeholders, such as host communities, own all three factors, the power, legitimacy, and influence. They are definitive stakeholders and should receive attention and even be seen as a priority by the mining companies. This is in line with the salience model, which assumes that stakeholders who possess power, legitimacy and urgency have high levels of salience, while those with only two of the three attributes have a medium to low level of salience. However, stakeholders who do not hold one of the three attributes or two of the three, could still obtain the remaining or required attributes through forming alliances with those who have these attributes. This would then increase their level of salience. These results are important when one aims to critically identify all stakeholders and their potential to move and increase salience through influence (Chowdhury, 2021).

Stakeholders with a lower level of salience are considered to be marginalised groups, and Chowdhury suggests that Mitchell et al.'s 1997 theory has some flaws, in that marginalised stakeholders can, at times, possess influence that affect organisations significantly. The author states examples, such as those of Shell settling a US$55 million claim by a family as compensation related to environmental damages. Another example is that of Tata moving their factory from one region to another because of the farmers' influence in the area and their resistance towards the factory. Also, a British mining firm had to place its operations on hold because of resistance from the affected community. These examples indicate how marginalised groups can obtain significant self-representation and achieve salience by driving their agenda and obtaining significant capabilities to mobilise against anything they may be perceived as injustice. This gains them all three requirements for salience: urgency, legitimacy and influence and results in a higher level of salience. In line with Figure 2, Mitchel et al. (1997) indicated that stakeholders with high salience (with urgency, legitimacy, and influence) are referred to as definitive stakeholders.

Seven other stakeholder types exist within this framework, and those who possess a single attribute, either power, or legitimacy, or urgency, are low-salience stakeholders or

latent stakeholders. Those possessing power (referred to as dormant stakeholders) are able to or have the ability to impose their will on the organisation, even if they do not have a legitimate relationship, legitimate reason, or a legitimate claim. Those posing legitimacy only are referred to as discretionary stakeholders. Given their positioning within the stakeholder maps, they lack power and urgency and as such, engaging them is never of the highest priority. Those classified possessing merely a sense of urgency are referred to as demand stakeholders, they hold no power or legitimacy. They are not deemed as potentially dangerous, but "more of a bother". They would need to acquire either power or legitimacy to move their claim to a position of higher salience. Stakeholders who possess two out of the three attributes are referred to as expectant stakeholders. They are referred to as dominant stakeholders, dangerous stakeholders, and dependent stakeholders. Dominant stakeholders are powerful and hold legitimacy, and they are able to act on the claims they lodge against the organisation. Dependant stakeholders rely on other stakeholder groups to give them the power to be able to act on their legitimacy and urgency, while dangerous stakeholders possess a sense of urgency and power, they do not possess legitimacy. Their power is coercive in nature. Although stakeholders can be grouped in these framework, as Chowdry (2021) indicates, some stakeholders are able to gain influence through increasing their salience, which allows them to impact the organisation's sustainability.
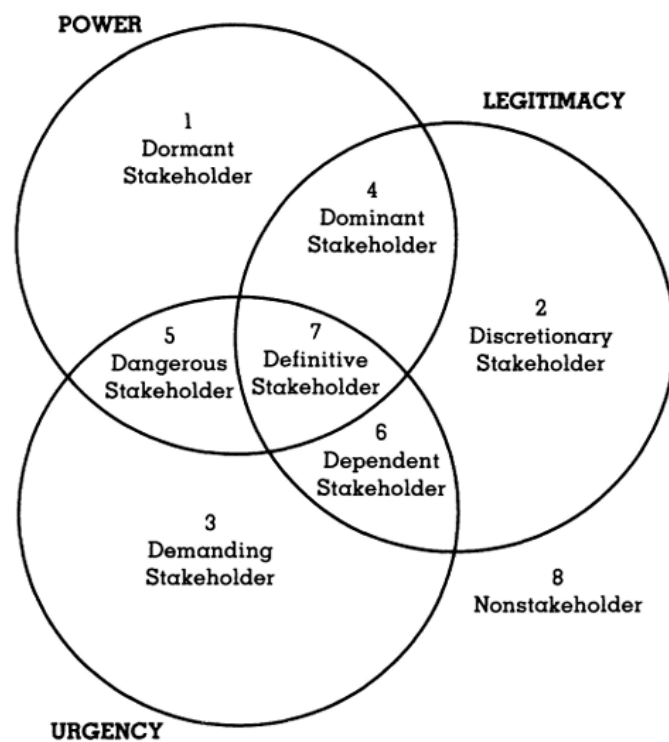
Figure 2: Stakeholder analysis (level of salience). Mitchel et al. (1997)

Phiri et al. (2019) conducted a study to explore how interactions between stakeholders influence the nature of the relationships. The study was conducted by utilising a framework that considers formal and informal interactions between stakeholders, regarding stakeholders as part of the web of varying relationships within the organisation. The study considered the relationship between stakeholders and their desire to achieve legitimacy through those relationships. The stakeholder framework, as developed by Mitchell et al. (1997), Neville and Menguc (2006) and Neville et al. (2011), was utilised to understand why mining companies focus on some stakeholder groups within the communities but not on others. The assessment was focused on legitimacy, urgency and power and is depicted in Figure 3, regarding the stakeholder interactions in the copper mining sector. Phiri et al. (2019) indicated that whether an organisation interacts with a stakeholder or not is determined by four critical conditions. These conditions are the stakeholder salience, whether there is a potential for the collaboration; whether the organisation is dependent on the stakeholders; or whether the stakeholders are a potential surrogate for accountability. These stakeholder interactions can occur through the state, local communities, or civil society.
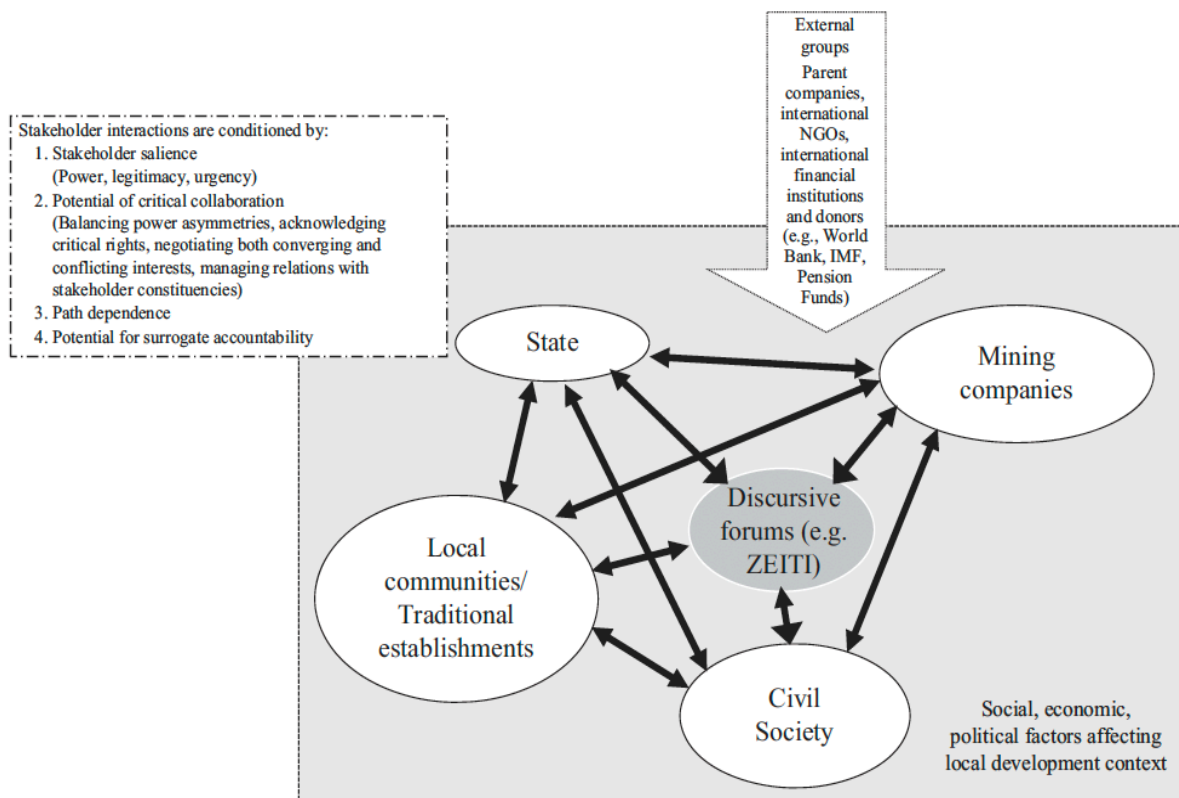
Figure 3: Stakeholder interactions in the copper mining sector, Phiri et al. (2019)

Phiri et al. (2019) utilise varying degrees of stakeholders' salience or criticality to conduct interviews with stakeholders in the mining sector in Zambia. The findings state that even within the varying stakeholder groups, including the communities, there exists division. Power imbalances exist within and between these varying stakeholder groups. In addition, the varying stakeholder groups within the stakeholder groups are unable to collaborate, often because of varying imbalances of power. As an example, within the community, one would find varying groups with varying interests and varying levels of power, legitimacy, and urgency. A further hindrance to collaboration is the inability to have common and acceptable (by all stakeholders) frameworks focused on the environment, transparency, and accountability. The present study aimed to determine these factors through the research questions.

Stakeholders can be primary or secondary stakeholders. Primary stakeholders have a direct influence on the firm's strategic decision-making process and can either obstruct or impede the access firms could potentially have to resources. Secondary stakeholders, on the other hand, have indirect influence. This is achieved through developing certain alliances with stakeholders deemed as being powerful enough to obstruct or impede the firm's strategic decision-making. Secondary stakeholders have the ability to build strong alliances that can severely affect a business's ability to operate successfully and sustainably. In addition to alliance-building, these stakeholders can use various other strategies that include lobbying and writing campaigns targeting media (Chowdhury, 2021; Hendry, 2005; King & Soule, 2007; Rowley & Timothy, 1997).

A study conducted by Altman (1998) and Waddock et al. (1995) determined that organisations were re-orientating their community relations departments. Their goal was to fit in with their overall strategic plans, as community involvement became imperative to the businesses, especially when aiming to create a competitive advantage. A good relationship with the community allows organisations to obtain (or retain) a competitive advantage through the enhancement of their sustainability and the ability to work effectively. As such, effective stakeholder management is key. This was also supported by Berman et al. (1999) who discussed the contributions of different stakeholders to the stakeholder theory, distinguishing between the realms within stakeholder theory. Berman et al. (1999) determined that it can be a challenge to prioritise and address stakeholders' interests. Their study aimed at comparing two prominent models of stakeholder management, one where managerial concerns for stakeholders were based on the

potential to improve financial performance, and one that posits a moral commitment to positive stakeholder treatment, affecting the financial performance. The researchers determined that good relations with the community can provide a significant competitive advantage through factors such as tax benefits, a decrease in regulatory burdens and improved quality of local labour. Understanding what currently works and what does not work within the stakeholder frameworks that various mining companies have should assist in addressing Berman et al.'s (1999) request for more research.

2.4.3 Stakeholder management

Freeman (1984) and Clarkson (1999) suggested that stakeholder management was required and a premise that suggested that firms consist of interdependent relationships and that because of such interdependent relationships, firms should have and have a responsibility that these relationships are managed strategically to meet their objectives. Remme et al. (2020) indicate that an organisation is not only managed in the interest of shareholders, given that there are many stakeholders who have an interest in the organisation, in addition to the shareholders. This was already raised by Freeman (1984) who emphasised the importance of stakeholder management in reducing conflicts and optimising complex relationships. As a definition, stakeholder management relates to how relationships with stakeholders are managed (Freeman, 1984). There are three types of stakeholder management models: descriptive, normative, and instrumental.

Normative stakeholder management is focused on ethical principles. It emphasises the organisation's moral and ethical obligations towards its stakeholders. This model assumes that stakeholders have intrinsic value and that they deserve respect as they are affected by the activities that the organisation embarks on to generate value. According to normative stakeholder management, organisations are required to consider the stakeholders' interests, rights, as well as their needs during their decision-making process. This approach is more rooted in CSR, ensuring that these actions create positive environmental and social results. Organisations that consider and follow this approach make ethical behaviour and long-term sustainability a priority (Freeman, 2010). Freeman et al. (2007) already dealt with this topic in the book "*Managing for stakeholder: survival, reputation, and success*" and through Jones and Wicks (1999) in the article "*convergent stakeholder theory*", which explored how stakeholders can be managed from a normative perspective. The main focus was on ethical and moral responsibilities that should be shouldered by organisations regarding their varying stakeholders. This implied delving into

the details of how organisations should always consider and prioritise the interests of stakeholders in their decision-making process and that this would result in long-term success and survival of the business. This is unlike the concept of a company following an approach of merely observing and describing stakeholders' behaviour or actions, which is linked more to descriptive stakeholder management.

Descriptive stakeholder management considers the empirical approach. Its purpose is to observe, analyse and describe how organisations can engage with stakeholders in practice. This stakeholder management approach requires studying interactions, behaviours and relationships between the organisation and its stakeholders. It typically involves analysing the organisation's corporate policies and procedures, communications, decision-making processes, and reports with the aim of understanding how these organisations respond to the concerns of stakeholders. It is focused on documenting and analysing the existing dynamics between the different stakeholders and related organisation (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). This was supported by Mitchell et al. (1997) and Harrison et al. (2013), who examined how organisations identify and prioritise their stakeholders through the introduction of stakeholder salience, referring to how important and relevant the stakeholders are. They concluded by proposing frameworks that allow organisations to prioritise stakeholders on the basis of power, legitimacy, and urgency. They stated that through prioritising stakeholders' interests, organisations can enhance their financial performance.

Another approach is one of strategy and perspective, which would be linked to the instrumental stakeholder analysis. *Instrumental stakeholder analysis* is focused on strategic and pragmatic perspectives. Through this approach, organisations consider stakeholders as a tool to achieve their own strategic goals and achieve long-term success. Utilising instrumental stakeholder analysis assumes that these stakeholders are resources that can be used to improve and achieve the organisation's objectives, which include profitability and success. This approach considers assessing the impact that the different stakeholder groups have on the performance of the organisation, and it utilises this understanding to make decisions that are aligned with the strategic interests of the organisation. Organisations tend to prioritise stakeholders on the basis of their influence and the potential contribution they may have towards the success of the business. These two considerations differ, based on their philosophies, approaches, and objectives (Clackson, 1995). Donaldson et al. (1995) and Freeman et al. (2001) also discussed

instrumental aspects of stakeholder management within a strategic management context, and highlighted the benefits of considering the stakeholders' interests to achieve better financial results. Although achieving financial results remains critical, ethical considerations are imperative when dealing with stakeholders.

Maher (2019) conducted an analysis of the ethics of community management and dialogue, which indicates that stakeholder management and stakeholder engagement are key to resolving conflicts. This is supported by numerous guidelines developed by various committees, for example, the International Council on Mining and Metals, and the World Bank's International Finance Corporation, which intended to provide guidance on best practice related to community engagement. Greenwood (2007) developed a guideline for stakeholder management for corporate–community engagements, where Greenwood identified the type of transactions between corporates and the community. The author also identified the tools that could be utilised to engage the community (for example, stakeholder dialogues, town hall meetings, public consultations), and what the outcomes could be (for example, joint ownership, joint decision-making, funding, community–corporate integration). Maher (2019) states that because the extraction of minerals requires land and water, these have become a source of conflict, and mining companies have made various attempts to resolve these conflicts. When engaging with communities, and especially when aiming to address or resolve conflict, companies should avoid co-opting community representatives, as this would hinder key debates from occurring, paying off local leaders and not speaking about what they have not honoured. This is further described in Table 1 below.

In this analysis, Maher describes three types of approaches to stakeholder engagements: transactional, transitional, and transformational. *Transactional* stakeholder engagement refers to an engagement where the corporate stance is that of giving back, while *transitional* engagement involves building bridges, and *transformational* engagement aims to change society. For each of the three types of engagement approaches, there are varying views on the corporate stance, exemplary tactics, and communication, as well as attempts of having control over process.

Table 1: Approach to stakeholder engagement (Maher, 2019)

	Transactional	**Transitional**	**Transformational**
Organisation stance on community	Investing in communities "giving back"	Involving communities "Building bridges"	Integrating with communities "Changing society"
Examples of tactics implored	Hosting information sessions Making donations Building required infrastructure	Dialogues with stakeholders Formation of committee (Murphree et al., 1996; Reed, 2002;(Harowitz, 2015;Li, 2016) Hosting of public consultations Hosting of townhall meetings Having informal discussions and coffee sessions (Zandvliet & Anderson, 2009)	Jointly managing projects and making decisions (Fujimoto et al., 2019; ICMM, 2015) Co-owning Engaging transparently Utilising memorandum of understanding to endorse funding requirements (O'Faircheallaigh, 2015)
Communication plan	One-way communication termed as firm-to-community	Sided Two-way: Weighted more towards firm to community with company showing humility (Wheeler et al., 2002)	Equally weighted two-way: Company shows humility (Wheeler et al., 2002) Equivalence community chain (Passetti et al., 2019)
Who controls process	Firm	Firm	Shared
Foundation pillar: respecting the psychological freedom of participants' within the community (Keller & Brown, 1968)			

The South African mining sector has not been spared being confronted with problems and conflicts, and challenges related to stakeholder management through its evolution. These challenges increased as a result of the country's poor economic growth, uncertainty around mining policies, and labour unrest affecting the mining companies. Makoni and Onojaefe (2020) conducted a study with the use of a framework for stakeholder relationships in the mining industry. The purpose of their study was to derive a framework aimed at achieving the harmonisation of the various stakeholders' interests through a different approach to stakeholder management. The investigation provides insights on the management of stakeholder relationships by considering four perspectives: (1) Group dynamics (interrelationships within the social groups); (2) context (what forms the settings of the engagement environment); (3) strategy implementation (considering the who, how, when the company reaches its objectives); and (4) the outcomes (the ability to articulate the reason for engagement and what the potential benefits could be). This was elaborated on through a stakeholder relationship management framework. The results of the study

indicate that the stakeholder relationship framework meets the objectives of achieving community engagement and community development. This is illustrated in Figure 4 below.

As presented in Figure 4, Makoni (2020) identifies four variables that consider context, group dynamics and implementation strategy. Context is defined as the prevailing conditions that form the setting or influence the economic and environmental setting. The term group dynamics describes the relationships that exist within the varying social groups or between the varying social groups. It is critical to understand the existing group dynamics of communities, as it allows the proactive management of problems and of any existing expectations. Strategy implementation refers to what is critical to the success of the company as this is what addresses the 'who, what, where, and how' of ensuring the objectives related to communities are met. It further defines how these interventions can be sustained.

The outcomes of these engagements is their benefits from an economic, social, and environmental perspective.
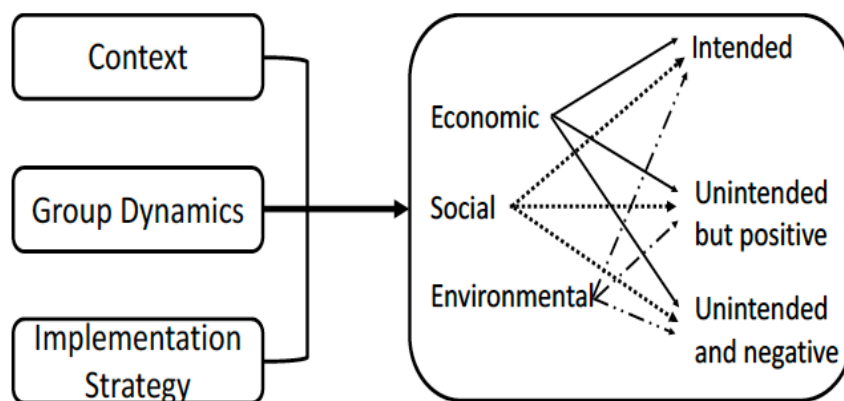
Figure 4: Stakeholder management approach (Makoni et al., 2020)

A critical aspect in stakeholder management is that it is a tenant of CSR. Stakeholder management has been explored thoroughly over the years. However, stakeholder engagement with the mining communities has not been investigated as much. Masuku (2021) studied a mining community near the Unki mine in Zimbabwe, where the mine has commenced engaging communities in an effort to understand better how effective their stakeholder management is. Using a qualitative case study method and snowball sampling, the study showed not only the challenges the mine faced, but also the

importance of addressing the needs of the community, presenting an understanding of legitimately handling stakeholder relationships in developing countries that are similar to South Africa. One of the limitations of the study was that it was only focused on one mine, and thus, results cannot be generalised. Masuku recommended that future research should consider reviewing the practices and strategies that various mining companies use to engage with the host communities. Makoni (2018) developed a community engagement framework in the extractive sector in the Western Cape in South Africa and recommended that the study be replicated in other provinces. A key component in engaging communities in line with any engagement framework, is identifying stakeholders and understanding their perceived stakes.

In order for an organisation to effectively manage its stakeholders, it needs to have an understanding of three critical concepts. These include first, stakeholder identification (who are the stakeholders?) as defined by Fassin (2009) and in line with Figure 5 below.
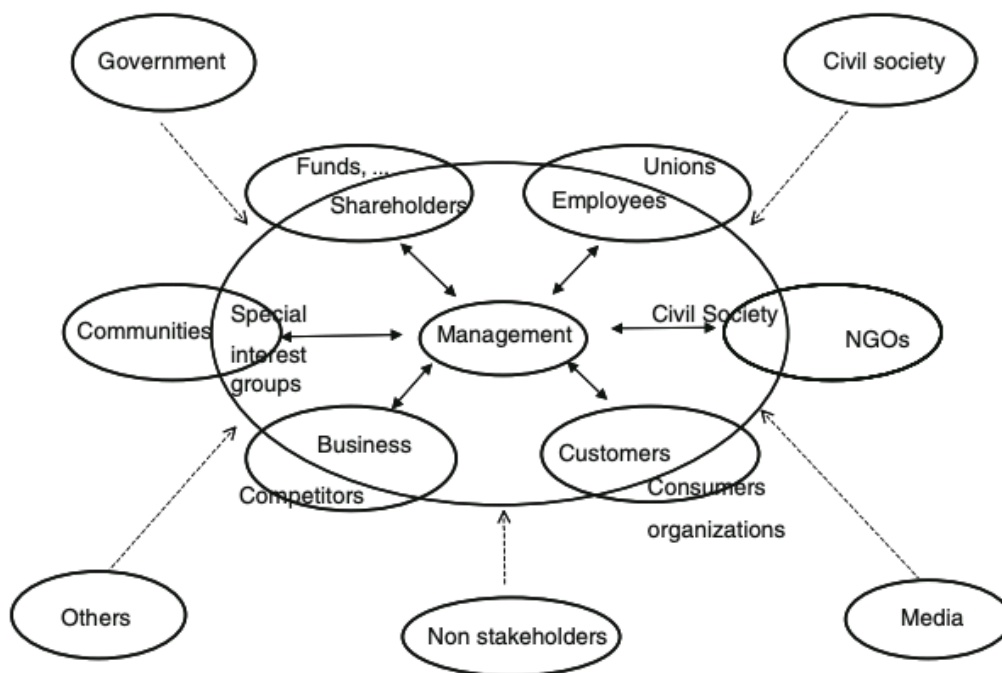
Figure 5: Stakeholder identification model (Fassin, 2009)

It is important to firstly determine the threats and opportunities, while considering the organisation's responsibilities towards each of the identified stakeholders. It is equally important to note that, even within the affected communities, there are stakeholder groups within stakeholder groups, all with differing levels of threats as discussed earlier in this

report (Phiri, 2019). This highlights the need for businesses to develop an appropriate response for each of the potential threats.

Secondly, companies have to understand the perceived stakes and what is required to manage these stakeholders, as well as the bargains or transactions among and between the organisations and these identified stakeholders. Organisations that have good stakeholder management capabilities tend to have a set of processes that take stakeholder groups into consideration. They also consider their stakes and how to manage them through a routine of standard operating procedures, implementing bargains and transactions that aim to balance the interests of these identified stakeholders to achieve the purpose of the organisation (Sautter & Leisen, 1999).

Understanding how to manage community relationships is critical. Blesia et al. (2021) conducted a qualitative research study to increase their knowledge regarding community relationships and community development. Their findings indicate that collaboratively working together with the communities results in a reduction of challenges experienced in the community, and of potential conflict. Enabled collaboration is a critical element of effective stakeholder management.

2.4.4 The application of stakeholder theory to the current research study

The literature work is summarised in the table below, which lists the importance of stakeholder identification, understanding their perceived stakes and needs, and developing engagement principles based on these needs. These principles can be embedded in the overall company strategy.

Table 2: How the theory links to the current research (compiled by author)

Research questions 1 & 2	Research questions 1 & 2	Research questions 2 & 3	
Stakeholder identification	**Understanding stakeholders' needs**	**Engagement principles**	**Company strategy**
•Which stakeholders have power, legitimacy, urgency? •Which ones are at risk of shifting or gaining one or the other? •Understanding group dynamics	•Perceived stake •Understanding context	•Transactional vs transitional vs transformational •Engagement forums •Tactics, communication, process	
Freeman (2010) Mitchell et al. (1997) Ranangen (2017) Chowdhury (2021) Harrison et al. (2013)	Chowdhury (2021) Berman et al. (1999) Maher (2019) Blesia et al. (2021)	Phiri et al. (2019) Altman (1998) (Waddock & Boyle, 1995) Maher (2019)	**Reduced conflict**

The works of Masuku (2021) and Makoni (2018) are underpinned by the earlier works of the Clarkson Center for Business Ethics (1999) and those of Freeman et al. (2010) who defined the seven principles of stakeholder management, defined as follows:

a) Acknowledging and ensuring the active monitoring the concerns of all legitimate stakeholders, and taking their interests into account when decisions are made

b) Listening and communicating openly with stakeholders regarding their concerns, contributions, and potential risks

c) Adopting processes and behaviours that show sensitivity to the concerns of the stakeholders as well as their capabilities

d) Recognising the interdependence as well as the rewards with the aim of achieving a fair distribution of benefits and burdens

e) Working collaboratively to minimise risks and harm that could potentially arise

f) Avoiding activities that could impact human rights negatively

g) Acknowledging any potential conflicts between the role of companies as corporate stakeholders and their legal and moral responsibilities, which can be managed through open communication and incentive systems.

These principles formed the basis of the present research as mining companies were

measured against the seven principles to assess their status quo with regard to stakeholder management. The study also examined what approaches worked and which did not work, and whether the application of these principles resulted in a better outcome. It was crucial to gain an understanding of which of the three models (normative, descriptive, or instrumental) most of the mining companies utilised and how effective these models have been so far. Part of the critical aspects of the stakeholder management theory is the ability to legitimise an organisation's relationship with a multitude of stakeholders, including communities (Adams et al., 2017). Therefore, it was important to assess whether the mining companies utilised the correct or optimal models to ensure sustainability.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature review highlighted that due to the required resources, such as water and land, as well as the disturbance to communities and their way of life when mining activity takes place or increases, so does the potential for conflict. At times, these conflicts can turn violent, where protestors block entrances to mines, impact the actual mining activity and thus, the company's sustainability. According to the literature, mining companies utilise a number of ways to minimise the risk of potential conflict. Their efforts can at times be aggressive and even enhance violence, such as calling police officers who sometimes utilise excessive force to disperse the crowds, while other mines prefer to work through negotiations, and aim to resolve the conflict together with the protesting communities by utilising various stakeholder management frameworks.

Stakeholder management is rooted in the stakeholder theory framework, which highlights that businesses exist to serve not only for the benefit of stockholders, but for all stakeholders. Effective stakeholder theory allows the businesses to obtain a social license to operate, and to enable the daily business operations to take place, which ensures sustainability not only of the business, but also the surrounding community.

Although theory explores stakeholder management as a way to manage conflict in various parts of the world, the South African context had not been studied in depth. In the present study, stakeholder theory was used to understand how to effectively manage stakeholders in the form of host mining communities to minimise conflict and allow for the mines' and the communities' sustainability.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTION

3.1 Introduction

The literature review evaluated the concept of conflict in mining communities and how effective stakeholder management can be utilised as a tool to manage conflicts. Stakeholder management is a tenant of stakeholder theory and hence, stakeholder theory was studied in detail in the present study. As defined by Clackson Centre of Business Ethics (1999) and Freeman (2010), stakeholder theory was examined in the present study. Therefore, the research question was:

> "How can the stakeholder management principles be utilised as a conflict management tool in host mining communities?

To answer this question, a few sub-questions needed to be answered and these are defined in the next sections.

When new mines are launched within the confines or the environment of existing mining communities, or dormant mines are re-opened, or mining activities are expanded, this creates the basis for potential conflicts between the mines and the affected communities. Some of the key sources of conflict relate to land use and the utilisation of resources such as water. Freeman (2010) and Mitchel et al. (1997) highlighted that communities are the primary stakeholders regarding the mining operations as they are directly affected. Therefore, it is important to understand whether these communities are stakeholders who have power, legitimacy, and urgency. Phiri et al. (2019) emphasise that to be able to understand the salience of stakeholders, one has to get to know these stakeholders and understand what is important to them. Constanza (2016) highlights that mining activities tend to destabilise the affected host communities in these areas, generating the potential for intense conflicts of interest. The various sources of conflict have been studied in various works.

Saenz (2019) conducted a study on the best practice approach for dealing with social conflict in the mining sector in Peru, citing a number of sources for the emergence of conflict. However, identifying and understanding such sources of conflict is only the first of a number of steps to be taken to possibly reducing the number of protests. To apply a best practice approach, one would need to understand the different sources of conflict that

communities and mining companies face. This was the basis of the first research sub-question.

Research sub-question 1:

"Do these sources of conflict differ across host mining communities?"

The aim of this question was to understand whether different host communities experience different causes of conflict or if causes of conflict remain largely similar across mining communities. If they were to remain largely similar, there might be a potential to apply similar principles in addressing, avoiding, or resolving the conflict.

In the research study on whether payments towards CSR initiatives reduce the level of conflict in mining communities, Bezzola et al. (2022) suggest that a study should be conducted on what happens when the private sector increases the level of engagement with local communities and whether this would create positive outcomes. This led to research sub-question 2.

Research sub-question 2

"What are the current (knowledge) gaps in various stakeholder management frameworks that are utilised by different mining companies in South Africa?"

The aim of this question was to draw from the experiences of individuals who have had the opportunity to engage and work with mining communities, and those who have resided within mining communities to understand the (knowledge) gaps that exist across various mining companies.

It was important to identify the knowledge gaps that will provide critical insights into the topic of conflict and mining communities, and towards the development of the overarching stakeholder management framework that would work within a South African context. It was equally important to identify what was a successful response by mining companies that achieved a positive outcome in South Africa and what was not successful. This led to research sub-question 3, aimed to draw from the communities' lived experiences by engaging with them and identifying some of the key learnings.

Research sub-question 3

"What learnings can be utilised to develop an overarching stakeholder management framework that would be applicable within a South African context?

The next chapter outlines the research design and methodology that was utilised to answer these research questions.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This research methodology chapter outlines the methodology and research design utilised to answer the research questions discussed in Chapter 3. This study was focused on stakeholder management as a tool to manage conflict in host mining communities. The literature review evaluated the concept of conflict in mining communities and how effective stakeholder management can be utilised as a tool to manage conflicts. Stakeholder management is a tenant of stakeholder theory and hence, stakeholder theory was studied in detail in the present study. South Africa has over 84 host mining communities, which are home to over 5.4 million people (Cole & Broadhurst, 2020). Host mining communities are those communities where mining takes place. In line with Constanza (2016) and Bezzola (2022), the rate of conflict between communities and mines has increased over the years, with some of these conflicts leading to protest action. A qualitative research approach was utilised to determine the use of stakeholder management principles as a tool to manage conflict between host communities and mining companies in South Africa. Semi-structured interviews were utilised to collect the data. This data was analysed and categorised through themes in line with the literature review. The research methodology considered challenges related to data reliability and data validity associated with qualitative research and the strategies available to mitigate any potential risks were developed and implemented to address these concerns.

4.2 Choice of Research Methodology

Two key factors were considered for this research; this includes the host communities and mining companies. Host communities are defined as communities where mining activity occurs. This includes communities living in towns, villages, and any informal settlements that are situated adjacent to the mining area and are directly affected by any element of the mining activity. A mining company, on the other hand, is an organisation that is involved in the extraction activities of minerals (Department of Mineral Resources, 2010b).

The research questions discussed in Chapter 3 focus on stakeholder management principles and whether learnings and gaps from various mining companies can be utilised to determine an overarching stakeholder management framework that would work well within a South African context. This is based on community based research. Community-

based research methodologies are based on community psychology and they seek an approach that will unearth an understanding of human behaviour. Both quantitative and qualitative methods can be utilised as methodology analysis in a community-based context (Brodsky et al., 2016). However, qualitative methods assist in a deeper search for meaning, understanding, or discovery. Brodsky et al. (2016) define discovery as the development of a holistic description that comprises the identification of systems and theories. The authors state that this goes beyond type I and II errors, but also includes type III and IV errors, where decision-makers aim to address problems, which talks to them either solving the incorrect problems or problems that should not be solved. Qualitative research aims to identify in-depth social phenomena and utilises research to describe or explain specific actions; hence, the study utilised the qualitative, exploratory research methodology.

4.2.1 Research philosophy

As described by Saunders et al. (2019), the research philosophy refers to the foundation upon which this research was designed and conducted. Saunders et al. (2019) state that there are overall five different research philosophies, referring to positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism and pragmatism. This research was based on interpretivism, as the study's aim was to gain an understanding of the difference between groups of people as defined by Saunders et al. (2012) and thereby identify and understand their experiences, sources for emerging conflict and their specific context. This is a similar approach as the one used by Tshehla (2018) in trying to understand sources of conflict within host communities. This research relied on the participants' reported views and allowed the participants to construct meaning from their experiences. The use of open-ended, probed questions allows one to understand or address the process of interactions between the individuals in the community, the community as a group and the mining companies in an effort to try and make sense of how others see the world (Creswell et al., 2018). Similarly, in developing strategies to gain a social license to operate within the mining industry, Llaque (2021) determines that qualitative analysis is the best method to use when one considers that the research requires interviewing the various community members, as well as the mining company representatives.

4.2.2 Approach to theory development

The research aimed to answer questions pertaining to the challenges that were

experienced between the host communities and the mining companies, and by utilising the understanding of these challenges to develop a framework within a South African context, based on existing frameworks that are utilised by various organisations in the mining Industry. Saunders et al. (2012) defined the three approaches to theory development as deduction, induction, and abduction. Deduction is considered the opposite of induction, while abduction is considered a mix between induction and deduction. Deduction is an approach involving an assumed theory proposition. An inductive approach looks at specific observations, develops patterns and behaviours, and through these steps, formulates a hypothesis or a proposition, with the clear objective of this approach being to develop a theory or a conclusion. Abduction tends to move from theory to data and from data to theory in somewhat of a back-and-forth pattern. It is seen as a combination of the inductive and deductive approaches. For the purpose of this research, an inductive approach was followed. This is supported by Hlatshwayo (2019), who utilises an inductive approach in rethinking Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the mining industry as seen from the recipients' perspective. The study of academic literature as depicted in the Literature Review in Chapter 2 provided an understanding of the existing theories regarding stakeholder management in mining communities.

4.2.3 Purpose of the research design

Three types of research studies were identified by Saunders et al. (2012), who stated that they could be exploratory, explanatory, and descriptive. Given that the present study aimed to uncover or understand information that was not known, the study was based on the exploratory research design. This design allowed for the collection of probed information, garnered through open-ended questions, and through this, the enhancement of existing concepts or the development of new concepts (Stebbins, 2008).

4.2.4 Methodological choice

A mono-method qualitative study was utilised to answer the research questions that address a gap analysis regarding the available frameworks, as well as to understand whether, and if so how, the current frameworks are effective and which elements thereof, approaches or implementations are not successful and why. Bell et al. (2019) define mono-qualitative research as research that has one method of data collection and analysis.

4.3 Research Strategy

The research strategy was guided by the research questions discussed in Chapter 3 (Wisker, 2008). For the purpose of this research, phenomenology was utilised. Wisker (2008) defined phenomenology as a framework that allows for a focus on interactions and experiences of the research subjects, with the aim of recognising influences and interpretations. A key consideration of phenomenology is the assessment of the experiences, feelings, situations, preconceptions, and interactions of people. In the words of Spiegelberg (1994), it aims to understand the "deeper concerns of man". Phenomenology is used to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of individuals and societies and provides a deep, rich view of these lived experiences. Specific research questions were used to dig deeper into the participants' views and their experiences regarding stakeholder engagement between the mining companies and the host mining communities. Thus, it was important to ensure that preconceived notions and assumptions or researcher's biases were set aside, allowing for an open mind. Through these questions, participants described their experiences as opposed to the experiences being interpreted by someone else, based on theoretical assumptions.

4.4 Time Horizon

In instances where there are time constraints similar to this study's restrictions, a cross-sectional study is conducted. In this case, the data was collected only once in August and September 2023. Interviews with individuals were collected only once. Due to time limitations, the study's findings are a snapshot of a situation that is perceived to be ongoing for an extended period of time (Hussey & Hussey, 1997).

4.5 Population

This study's population was the mining companies and related host communities, and these are a set of groups or people utilised for the purposes of this study. Given that the research was aimed at mining companies across South Africa and minimising conflict within the related host communities, the target population was communities living in an environment of a higher density of mines that contribute significantly to the country's GDP (Gross Domestic Product). These, according to the DMRE (2022) and the Minerals Council (2023), include:

- North-West/Limpopo, where South Africa's Platinum Group Metals (PGMs) are found. This is also the world's number one exporter of PGMs, contributing 47.4%

of the overall mining contribution towards South Africa's economy in 2021.

- Mpumalanga, where the coal industry largely mines, ranking 6th in the world overall, and the presence of a rail line that has the capacity to export 81 metric tonnes of coal and contributes 23.4% towards the overall mining sector's contribution to South Africa's economy.

- Northern Cape, where South Africa's manganese reserves are found, and where government and private companies are investing significant amounts of money to upgrade the rail and port facilities. This area and its manganese reserves contribute about 8% towards the mining sector's economic contribution in South Africa.

4.6 Unit of Analysis

A unit of analysis, as defined by Hussey et al. (1997), is what the research study refers to, which could be an individual, an event, an object, a group of individuals, or a relationship between two or more objects or elements. For the purpose of this research, the unit of analysis was individual people within host communities and mining companies.

The level of analysis was at the individual level. This could be attributed to the fact that individuals working in mining and individuals who represent companies and communities were interviewed. Interviews were designed to gain an understanding of how mining organisations approach stakeholder management, and to identify the lived experiences of stakeholder management of mining companies and those of the host communities.

4.7 Data Sampling Method and Size

Determining the optimal sample size for a study can be a challenge, given the nature of qualitative analysis, and considering that saturation of new emerging data can be reached. Saturation, according to Bell et al. (2019) is when during the interview process, no new data emerges apart from what has been noted already in the previous interviews. It could refer to the stage where there are clear dimensions to demonstrate variation, or there is a well-established relationship among the categories. There is essentially no firmly prescribed sample size, and guidelines in accordance with the definition of saturation point would be followed. However, Saunders et al. (2012) stated that given that the sample was to be collected from a heterogenous population, such as various members of the communities and various mining companies, the recommendation is the sample size

should be between 12 and 30 individuals. In line with the recommendation, Hlatshwayo (2019) selected a sample of 15 participants for the purposes of conducting interviews conducted to understand Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the mining sector.

Non-probability sampling was utilised for the present study. This was defined as a sampling method used when the total number of the population is unknown (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Within non-probability sampling, purposive sampling was utilised with specific sampling criteria established.

Sample criteria for participant selection were:
   a) Employees of mining companies as described above who were closely involved in community-related engagements; these included:
      aa. Executive heads of corporate affairs
      bb. Social performance managers
      cc. Mine general managers
      dd. Social performance specialists in mining companies
         i. Years of experience had to be over two years and samples were split across various years of experiences ranging from low, to medium to high
   b) Employees of mining companies who reside in mining companies
      aa. Employees who grew up within mining communities and currently still reside in those communities or
      bb. Employees who have resided in mine communities for longer than five years
      cc. Community representatives who are perceived to have influence with the government or mining companies
   c) Those elected to represent communities when engaging with mining companies
      aa. Community representatives who have stayed in mining communities for three or more years of life of mine
      bb. Those elected to represent communities when engaging with mining companies
   d) People who stay in host mining communities who are directly affected by the activities of the mining companies, but are not employed by mining companies.

Purposive sampling is defined by Brodsky et al. (2016) as a sampling method where the first set of participants is determined or identified based on a set of criteria as they are directly linked or have information related to the phenomenon of interest. Finding the

correct participants for the research study was a challenge and not only took it a long time, but it was difficult. A total of 60 potential participants were found through recommendations and research. Post contacting the potential participants, only 20 of these potential participants showed an interest in being interviewed, with the remainder either not responsive or not having time to engage. One of the participants did not suite the inclusion requirements as they had stayed in a township near the mining communities but were not residing in mining communities. A total of 20 participants were interviewed between 22 August and 23 September 2023.

4.8 Measurement Instrument

The measurement instrument utilised for this study was an interview guide that comprised open-ended questions and was utilised in semi-structured interviews. Interview questions were selected, which were linked to the specific research questions. As the participants answered the questions, this uncovered more questions, based on their responses. The themes of the questions remained the same; however, discussions within each theme or within each question varied, depending on the responses received from the participants. Considering that the participants were selected through purposive sampling, the data was grouped post-interviews; however, representatives from both, the mining companies and the host communities were interviewed who fitted the qualifying criteria.

Interview questions were grouped and linked to the research questions as per below Table 3:

Table 3: Linking interview questions to research questions

Interview questions for mining company representatives	Link to Research question		Interview questions for community representatives	Link to research question
1, 3,4,5,16	1		1,2,3,4	1
2,4,6,7,8,9,10,11, 12, 13, 14,15, 16, 17, 18	2		5, 6,7,8,9,10,11	2
6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19	3		12,13	3

Given the nature of qualitative analysis, the researcher who was also the interviewer, was the measurement instrument and developed the interviewing guide as a tool to use for the purposes of the interviews. A separate set of interview questions was set up for interviewing community representatives and interviewing mining company representatives. A total of 20 participants were interviewed: 12 mining company

representatives, and 8 community representatives or members of the communities. Although the questions were very similar, they allowed the respective participant to have better context when responding to the questions. In order to strengthen the effectiveness of the interview guide, a pilot interview was performed prior to the official interviews. This pilot interview was conducted with a mine representative who interacts with the community. The purpose of the pilot interview was to ensure that the interview questions addressed the research questions and that the questions were easy to understand from a participant's perspective. Post the pilot interview, questions were added to the interviewing guide, which were deemed to allow for better context, while questions deemed as confusing were removed. The pilot interview was not included in the study's data; however, the data obtained through the pilot interview was of good quality and could be included if required.

4.9 Data Collection

For the purpose of this research, primary data was utilised. Myers (2020) defines primary data as the data that the researchers gather themselves instead of relying on secondary data such as published data sources. Data was collected by means of listening as well as engaging with the research participants through the semi-structured and probed interviews of individuals. Semi-structured interviews are considered to be positioned halfway between structured and unstructured interviews. Structured questionnaires have formulated closed-ended questions that are strictly regulated. Unstructured interviews have a limited number of questions, and the interviewee is given free rein to say what they want to say without any time limitations (Myers, 2020). As described by Brodsky et al. (2016), semi-structured interviews allow for the interviewer interspersing with additional questions that are based on how the participants responded. While it is critical to allow for openness and trust during the interviewing process, the relationship with the participants is key to achieving honest and in-depth information. As suggested by Easterby-Smith et al. (2012), semi-structured interviews are appropriate to use in instances when one requires an understanding of the participants' worldviews in order to examine it individually or collaboratively. Matsimela (2020) used semi-structured interviews to evaluate various co-management practices across mining companies and the local communities, and described semi-structured questionnaires or guidelines as a good fit for research studies. Similarly, Llaque (2021) utilised semi-structured interviews in data collection, having identified it as a significant source of enhancing engagements with participants.

Although Myers (2020) acknowledges that interviews are a great tool for qualitative analysis, there is also an acknowledgement of some of the pitfalls of qualitative methods and interviews. These include the potential of a lack of trust between the interviewer and interviewee because both are strangers to each other. Not having sufficient time for the interview can result in not concluding the interview or not garnering all the data that would be possible to collect from a participant. And lastly, if the researcher enters the organisation at a more junior level, it could be difficult to interview more senior people. It is possible that the interview could lose its momentum or even be abandoned if the interviewer unintentionally were to say something that offended the interviewee. Myers (2020) highlights some of the ways how interviewers can overcome these challenges, and these include viewing the interview as a drama where quality impacts the extent of engagement with the interviewee. It is thus important to thoroughly prepare for the interview.

The following approach was utilised for this study's data gathering process:
a) Sourcing participants according to the set of qualifying criteria: Sending out email requests for interviews, calling potential participants and sending WhatsApp messages and LinkedIn messages;
b) Scheduling the interviews: Considering the time constraints and that some participants were staying in different provinces, they were provided the option of a video interview, Audio interview or an in-person interview. This was also chosen in an effort to ensure the participants were as comfortable as they needed to be to allow for open and honest conversations;
c) Conducting the interview: Fieldnotes and recordings were taken throughout the interview with the consent of the participants having been obtained prior to the recordings taking place;
d) Transcribing the interviews: The interviews were transcribed verbatim from the recordings;
e) Analysis of the data: Concurrently with the interviews being conducted, themes were generated and questions on the interview guide adjusted as new themes emerged.

It was critical throughout the data collection phase that the researcher had to ensure that included participants came from different companies or different areas (localities). When the interviews were conducted, in line with the interview guide, the researcher started by

explaining the purpose of the research study to the participant. This was followed by an outline of the voluntary, informed consent form, which indicated anonymity and confidentiality and that consent could be withdrawn at any time should they wish to do so without any penalty. The researcher obtaining the consent from the participants to take voice recordings of the interviews. For in-person interviews, the participants were provided with a voluntary, informed consent form for their signature. For online interviews, the participants' consent forms were loaded on docu-sign for their consent signature. The researcher asked interview questions in line with the interview guide and follow-up questions, based on the participants' responses.

4.10 Data Storage

The nature of interviews, and especially those conducted either face-to-face in person or online, resulted in the names of the participants being known to the researcher. However, anonymity was maintained through ensuring that the data was stored without names or identifiers, and this will remain in effect in perpetuity. Participants were notified prior to the interviews taking place that their data was to be kept anonymous at all times and that their names were replaced with coded data.

The gathered data was then password protected and stored on a personal cloud storage and on the researcher's student drive. No recordings were done on teams as this would result in a video recording, all recordings were maintained using a voice recording device.

4.11 Data Analysis

During the analysis process, a saturation point was identified. This started to emerge at around interview number 11 for mining company representatives and interview number 8 for community representatives. The saturation point is defined by Riger et al. (2016) as the point at which the answers gathered by the next interviews are more or less the same as those in the previous interviews, and continuing the interview process will not yield any additional data that is different from the data received so far.

Once data collection had ended, the analysis process included transcribing the interview recordings into a coding format and ensuring that all the information received was linked to the specific themes related to the research questions. Thematic analysis was utilised to analyse the data. Riger et al. (2016) define thematic analysis as a method involving

searching for recurring ideas within a set of data. Braun and Clark (2006) indicated that that thematic analysis is useful, especially when conducting research in behavioural sciences. This enabled the inductive identification of ideas common across the interviews. Thematic analysis allows for interpretation of textual and visual data to identify any underlying patterns and themes within the data.

It is most useful in analysing or exploring and identifying meanings and experiences that are obtained through the use of interviews or focus groups. For the purpose of this research study, semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore and identify meaning and experiences.
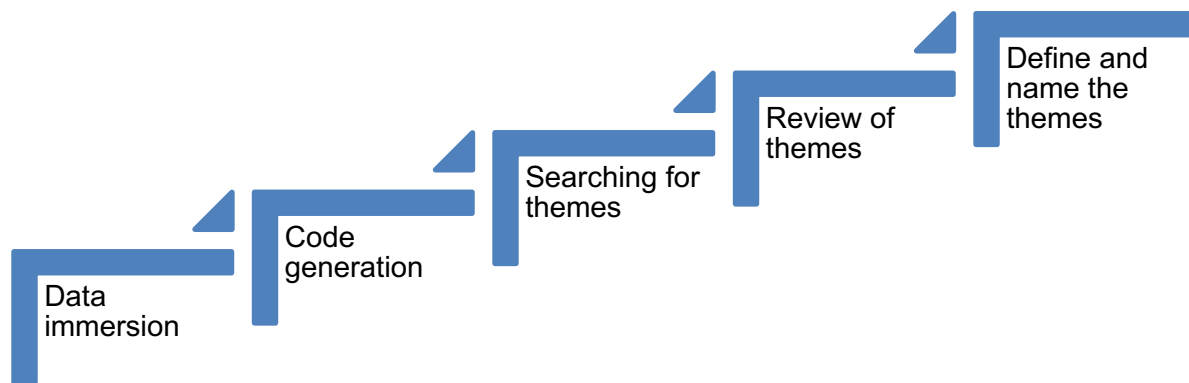
Figure 4: The process of thematic analysis as defined by Riger (2016)

This process involved the researcher's **immersion** of self into the data through continuously reading and analysing the data. This is essential when one aims to familiarise oneself with the data to gain a deeper understanding and identify meaning. Braun and Clarke (2022) define this process as becoming deeply and intimately familiar with the data through immersion. This step also involved a rigorous process of reading and listening to the recordings more than once, noting any additional ideas and insights.

This was followed by using the data to **generate codes** to enable organising the data into a meaningful information as defined by Braun and Clarke (2006). This was a systematic process of working through the data set, and identifying segments of the dataset.

This was followed by **identifying and placing codes** into themes and reviewing these themes to ensure cohesion, identifying shared patterns and meanings across the interviews and data sets. These themes were then **defined and named**. Prior to providing

a report, these themes were continuously refined through a second round of analysis to ensure consistency. The final thematic map is presented in the data analysis chapter.

4.12 Data Quality

Data quality speaks to the validity, assumptions, and reliability of the data. Given that it could be challenging to confirm if participants were being honest in their responses, the assumption in this research was that the participants will provide honest answers. Data validity is an important element and the researcher has to ensure that the information received is accurate. Triangulation was used to validate the data. Creswell (2018) defines triangulation as using examined evidence to ensure that there is coherent justification for the chosen themes. When several sources of data converge, the data is presumed accurate. Data triangulation is an ideal tool to utilise in overcoming the bias of a single methodology approach. The data was collected from different sources in this study. Research studies on conflict experienced in mining communities was obtained from reputable journals and authors such as:

a) Costanza (2016) on "Mining conflict and the politics of obtaining a social license to operate";
b) Bezzola et al. (2022) on "CSR and local conflicts within African mining communities";
c) Maher (2019) on "Squeezing psychological freedom in corporate-community engagement";
d) Blesia et al. (2021) on "Corporate community relations and development: engagement with indigenous peoples";
e) Phiri et al. (2019) on "Stakeholder interactions and corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices".

These sources were utilised to cross-validate the findings from the research study.

Participant bias can occur if it is caused by their interpretation of their lived experiences or those of their friends, families, or people they work with, which could impact how trustworthy the data is. These could potentially influence how the participants respond. Through reflexivity, the researcher was aware at all times of potential biases and remained open-minded and objective throughout the interviewing process, as well as during the analysis and interpretation process.

Part of ensuring the validity and reliability of the data was that the researcher maintained the additional controls of member-checking and peer-debriefing. The findings of this research study were also discussed with participants for their feedback and validation of the interpretations. This ensured alignment of perspectives. Additionally, given the fact that the researcher works in the mining industry, the findings were discussed with colleagues and peers experienced in this field. Their insights provided valuable feedback and ensured the interpretations were reasonable.

4.13 Research Limitations

Wiersma (1995) defined limitations as something that could potentially impact the outcome of a research study, but something that was not within the researcher's control. In the case of this study, there were communities that were unreachable because of the nature of their conflicts with the related mining companies, which created an unsafe environment in which to conduct interviews. This limited the scope of the final sample. Participation bias was also an inherent limitation of this study. Below outlines the limitations identified:

4.13.1 Researcher bias

The researcher has been working in the mining industry for nine years and has noted from time to time the impact of conflict in the mining communities and the impact on the mining businesses. Therefore, the researcher could be prone to bias and assumptions, which have a potential to impact the results. The researcher aimed to ensure that no assumptions were made during the interviewing process to avoid any potential bias. In addition, the researcher was constantly aware of potential bias and therefore ensured that all transcripts were verbatim and complete.

4.13.2 Access to certain locations

Given the conflict that was present in some of the communities at the time, such as Richards Bay (Kapelus, 2002; Magwaza, 2016; Tloubatla, 2020), for safety reasons, the researcher opted to limit interviews in the area; however, the researcher also made some employees aware of the research in case they would like to know more about the findings and how these can assist them in reducing mining conflict in the area.

4.13.3 Time Horizon

Given the time limitation of the study, interviews were only conducted in August and September 2023. Only 20 interviews were conducted. It is possible that there could be changes to conflict and causes of conflict at a later stage and in the future.

4.13.4 Cultural and language differences

South Africa has 12 official languages (English, Afrikaans, Sesotho, Sepedi, Tshivenda, Xhosa, Zulu, Swati, sign language, Xitsonga, isiNdebele, SeTswane). The participants' home languages spanned across these languages, but all interviews were conducted in English, which is not everyone' home language. The potential of misunderstandings was mitigated through the validity processes of member-checking and peer-debriefing processes.

4.14 Ethical Considerations

Leavy (2017) defines ethics as a character; it talks to morals, fairness, and integrity, not only knowing what is right, but also acting on the knowledge. It is important for a researcher in any study to consider all ethical issues. This includes ensuring voluntary and informed consent is received from all participants, and that they are fully aware of what the study aims to do (American Psychological Association, 2010). In addition, the well-being of those who participate in the study had to be respected at all times during the interview process. Brodsky et al. (2016) highlight the importance of understanding how one enters the communities and how one leaves the community.

The subject of ethics is involved from the beginning when a topic is selected, deciding on what to study, how participants will be selected, how those participants will be interacted with, how the research data will be analysed and interpreted, and the research components involved. Leavy (2017) explored three types of ethical dimensions; these are (1) philosophical, based on values systems; (2) praxis dimensions, based on what one does; and (3) the reflexivity dimension, which is based on a combination of philosophical dimension and praxis dimension. Prior to any study taking place, the researcher had to obtain approval from the University's Ethics Committee, which was granted to the researcher and being aware of all the dimensions of such ethical clearance, the researcher adhered to all parts.

In practice, and prior to the interviews taking place, it was important to ensure that participants knew and understood what the interview was for and what the interview material will be used for. This gave participants the option to decide whether they would like to take part in the study or not.

4.14 Conclusion

This chapter presented the research methodology of this research study. The chosen research design and methodology was qualitative research because it assists in the discovery and understanding of the topic under investigation. Qualitative research is exploratory in nature, which was the purpose of the research study. The research philosophy followed was based on interpretivism, aiming to identify and understand the differences between varying groups of people based on their lived experiences and worldviews. Semi-structures interviews were conducted to allow for participants to respond fully. Additional questions were asked to develop in-depth information based on the participants' response.

The mining communities comprise an unknown population, and as such, purposive sampling was utilised to identify the participants. Interviews were conducted using MS Teams and face-to-face in person and online interviews, although recordings were done by using the phone.

The next chapter presents the findings of this research study.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

5.1. Introduction

Sources of conflict within mining communities continue to increase with the increase of mines or identification of minerals in areas in South Africa (Warnaars, 2012). Therefore, it has become of key importance to understand whether stakeholder management principles, as defined by the Clarkson Centre of Business Ethics (1999), were employed by the mining companies and if these efforts were successful or not. To answer the research questions related to whether sources of conflict differ across host communities, what gaps currently exist in various stakeholder engagement frameworks utilised by different mining companies and what the key learnings are, qualitative analysis was the chosen research methodology.

This chapter provides an overview of the key findings that emerged from the semi-structured interviews conducted. A total of 20 interviews were conducted, split between in-person interviews and interviews conducted through Microsoft Teams or Zoom, depending on the method the interviewee preferred. The researcher gave the participants the choice to decide which approach was most suitable for them, as it allowed them to participate in the manner that was most comfortable for them.

This chapter starts by providing an overview of the participants' demographics to ensure the validity of the data presented. This is followed by the qualitative analysis data, indicating key codes and themes.

5.2. Overview of Interview Participants' Demographics

During the period 17 August to 14 September 2023, a total of 60 requests for interviews were sent out either via email, text message or phone calls. From those requests, 31 individuals did not respond at all, and nine responded by citing that they did not have time for interviews, given their challenging schedules. However, a total of 20 individuals availed themselves for the interviews, of whom eight were community representatives, and 12 were employees/company representatives. Figure 5 below provides a summary overview.

Overview of interviews

Figure 5: Overview of participants approached and interviewed

Given that the total number of the mining community members as the population is unknown, non-probability sampling was used, as guided by Saunders and Lewis (2012). As proposed by Brodsky et al. (2016), purposive sampling was utilised to find the first set of participants. Finding participants through purposive sampling was successful initially; however, it became increasingly challenging to reach the 20 target participants as some potential candidates did not respond at all. Therefore, snowball sampling was used, replacing the initial attempt by asking the already selected participants to identify other individuals who could potentially fit the sample requirements. Snowball sampling is defined by Brodsky et al. (2016) as a sampling method where the first set of participants suggest or recommend others who could participate in the study based on those specific participants' willingness to participate in the research as well as their suitability for inclusion in the study.

The initial intent was to ensure that the participants would be selected from various parts of the country where mining occurs, with specific focus on coal (Mpumalanga), platinum group metals (North-West and Limpopo) and Manganese (Northern Cape). The selected participants either stayed within the indicated mining communities or worked at the indicated mining companies, dealing with communities within those areas at some point throughout their careers, in line with Chapter 4 of the research study. Figure 6 illustrates the mining areas and the number of participants per area. For Limpopo, a total of five participants were obtained, with three of the participants representing mining companies and who worked with communities in Limpopo, while three of the participants stayed in mining communities in Limpopo. In North-West, a total of seven participants were

selected. Four of the participants represented mining companies, while three of the participants stayed in mining communities. For Mpumalanga, nine of the participants had experience dealing with communities in Mpumalanga, and four of the community members stayed in Mpumalanga.
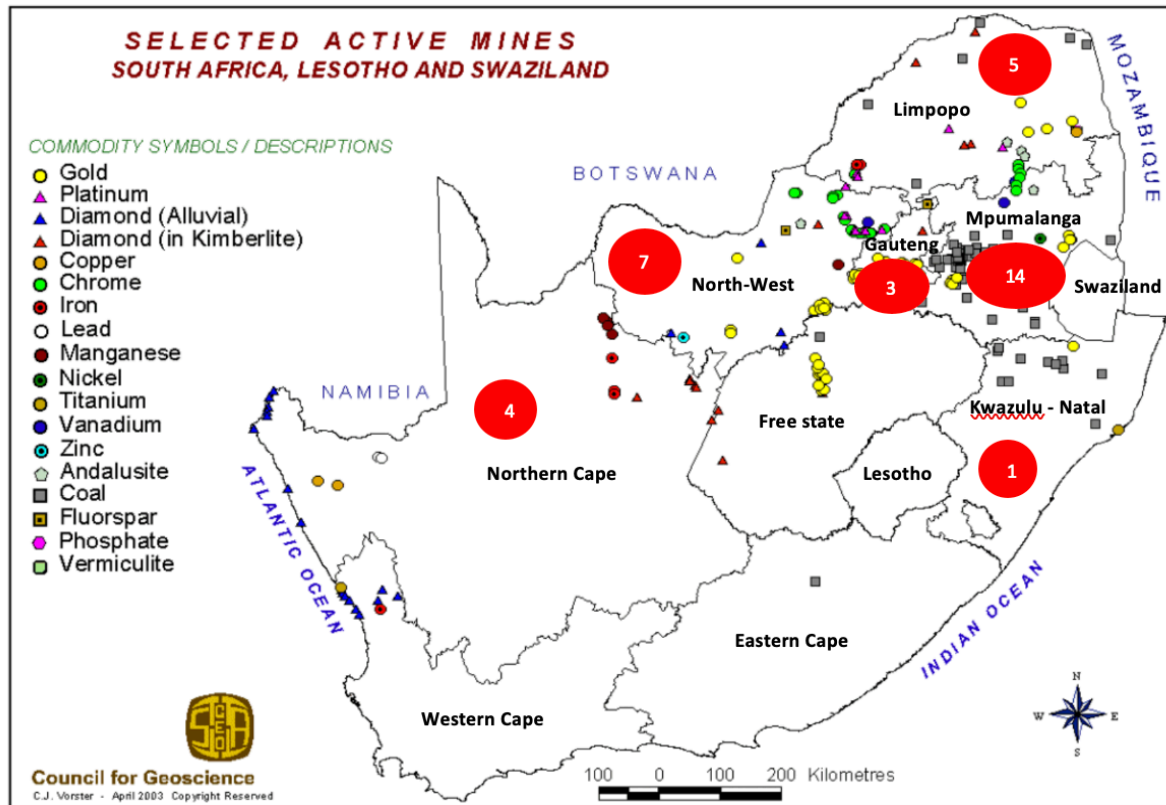
Figure 6: South African mines indicating mines and locations where participants were selected (map compilation is a combination of Council for Geoscience (2003) and author)

The figure above focuses on the areas where each of the participants have lived and worked and experienced mining conflicts and hence, the totals are above 20, as some participants have experience in at least three different provinces and related communities given the high years of experience in the industry.

The below table provides an overview of the mining representatives interviewed. All participants were either mine general managers, social performance managers or head of or ESD (Enterprise Supplier Development) managers. A general manager is responsible for ensuring that mining operations remain successful, and part of that role includes addressing environmental, social, and economic challenges. Social performance managers and heads of social performance are the key interaction points with the mining

communities. They spend the bulk of their role on gaining an understanding of the various role players within the mining communities and identifying the community's challenges. ESD managers are responsible for ensuring the small to medium-sized enterprises within the host mining communities have been provided with sufficient support so that they can grow and succeed. Overall, the participants had a minimum of 10 years experience working within a mining environment.

Table 3: Overview of company representatives as compiled by author

Participant number	Role	Gender	Locations of experience	Commodity	Years in Mining
1	Mine general manager	Female	Mpumalanga	Coal	19
2	Head social performance	Male	Northwest, Limpopo, Northern Cape	Platinum, Vanadium, Manganese	26
3	Social performance manager	Female	Mpumalanga	Coal	11
4	Head of social performance	Female	Mpumalanga	Coal	10
5	Mine general manager	Male	Gauteng, Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North-West, Limpopo	Gold, coal, iron ore, platinum	14
6	Mine general manager	Male	Mpumalanga, Zambia, Mali, Lesotho, Namibia	Coal, gold	12
7	Mine general manager	Male	Mpumalanga	Coal	15
12	Social performance manager	Male	Mpumalanga	Coal	18
14	Mine general manager	Female	Mpumalanga, Richards Bay	Coal, Mineral Sands	16
17	Mine general manager	Male	Mpumalanga, Northern Cape	Coal, Manganese	18
18	Head of social performance	Female	Northern Cape	Manganese	25
19	ESD manager	Female	Mpumalanga, Northern Cape, North-West	Coal, Manganese, Vanadium	15

Codes were generated from the above interviews, reducing gradually and by interview 12, coding saturation was reached, as indicated in Figure 7. As a result, interviewing stopped.

New codes - Mine representatives

A total of 82 codes generated
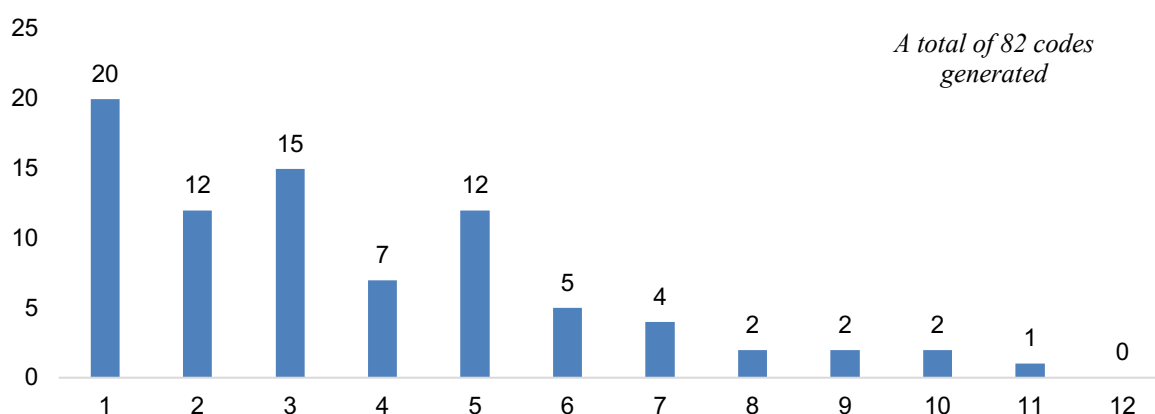
Figure 7: New codes generated for mine representatives/employees

Community members are represented in the table below. Community members from Mpumalanga represented 50% of the participants, while the remaining 50% represented North-West, Northern Cape and Limpopo. Some of the community members run businesses within the communities, while some represent the community.

Table 4: Community members and community representatives

Participant number	Years residing in mining communities	Role	Gender	Location	Commodity
8	26	Community member	Female	Mpumalanga	Coal
9	25	Community member	Male	Mpumalanga	Coal
10	30	Community member	Male	Limpopo, North-West, Northern Cape	Coal, gold, Manganese
11	45	Community member	Female	North-West	Platinum
13	30	Community member/business owner	Male	Mpumalanga	Coal
15	30	Community member/mine employee	Female	Mpumalanga, North-West	Coal, Platinum
16	5	Community member & representative	Female	North-West, Limpopo	Platinum
20	15	Community member/mine employee	Female	Limpopo	Platinum

As highlighted through Chapter 4 (methodology section), thematic analysis was used to analyse the data. This was guided by Riger et al. (2016). This includes a process of data immersion, coding the data, searching for themes, reviewing the themes, and naming them. From the above interviews, new codes being generated reduced gradually, and coding saturation was reached at interview eight; thereafter, interviews stopped. Figure 8 highlights the new codes generated.

New codes - community members
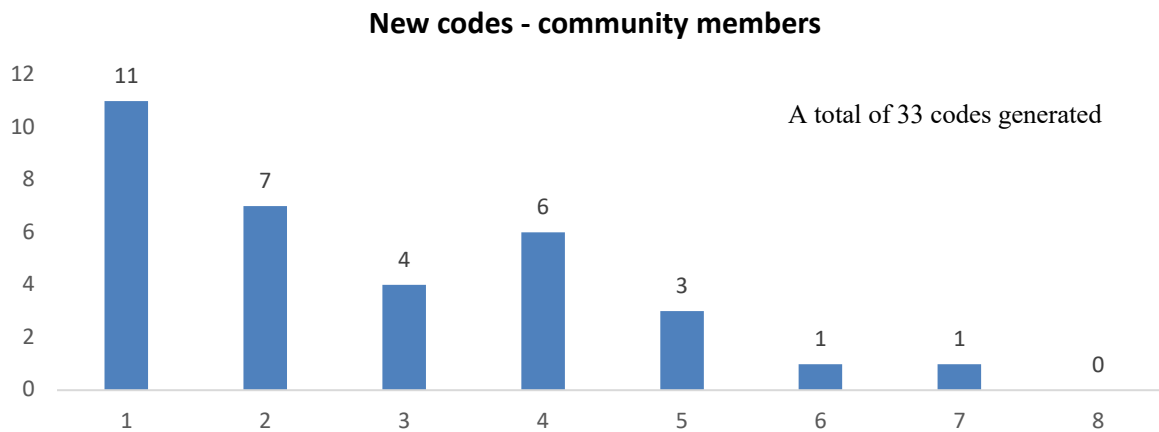
Figure 8: New codes generated- community members/representatives

5.3. Data analysis Approach

As the interviews were conducted, they were recorded (post receiving consent from participants). The recordings were transcribed through an external transcriber who signed an NDA (Non-Disclosure Agreement). When the recordings were shared with the transcriber, a secure and password protected process was followed. The transcriptions were then loaded onto Atlas.ti for analysis.

An inductive approach was followed, whereby the interview transcripts were reviewed several times and then analysed. The review was conducted multiple times as the codes were condensed upwards. The codes were assigned on the basis of the core constructs that emerged. Given the high number of codes obtained from the interviews, open coding was used in the beginning, followed by axial coding and then selective coding, where codes were reduced to themes. The next section highlights the findings from the interviews.

5.4. Research sub-question one (1)

"Do these sources of conflict differ across host mining communities?"

This question was aimed at gaining an understanding of whether different host communities require a different stakeholder management approach in managing conflict. Ngomane (2019) highlighted the causes of conflict. However, this was focused on the Barberton area in Mpumalanga, where gold mining occurs. In this study, the focus is on various areas within South Africa where the majority of mining activity occurs across Platinum Group Metals (PGMs), Coal, Gold, and Manganese. The responses from the mining company representatives are highlighted below, followed by the response from the community representatives and a consolidated view.

5.3.1. Response from the mining company representatives

The following interview questions were linked to RQ1:
  a) What is your view on mining companies and their impact on the community?
  b) Can you tell me about protests within the community related to the surrounding mines?
  c) What, in your view, are the main reasons for protests?

When mining companies were interviewed and asked these questions in relation to research question one , a total of 40 codes were generated through open coding. A review of the interview transcripts and codes was again conducted to reduce the number of codes during axial coding. This reduced the code numbers to 18. It involved a process of merging duplicate codes and codes that have the same meaning but are labelled differently. These codes were converted to themes, and below highlights the key themes on the causes of conflict.

The following themes, as highlighted in Figure 9 emerged from the research question. The number in brackets indicate how often this specific theme was cited during the interviews. The themes include how mining companies engage the communities, alignment with communities, challenges related to education and training around the mining communities, employment opportunities, challenges related to the impact of the mining activities on the environment, support provided by Government and State owned entities (SOEs) and Support that SMMEs are provided by mining companies.

	Causes of conflict	

Communication and engagement (45)	Alignment within communities (10)	Education and training (13)
Employment opportunities (32)	Environmental challenges (4)	Government and SOE support (8)
SMME support and development (12)		
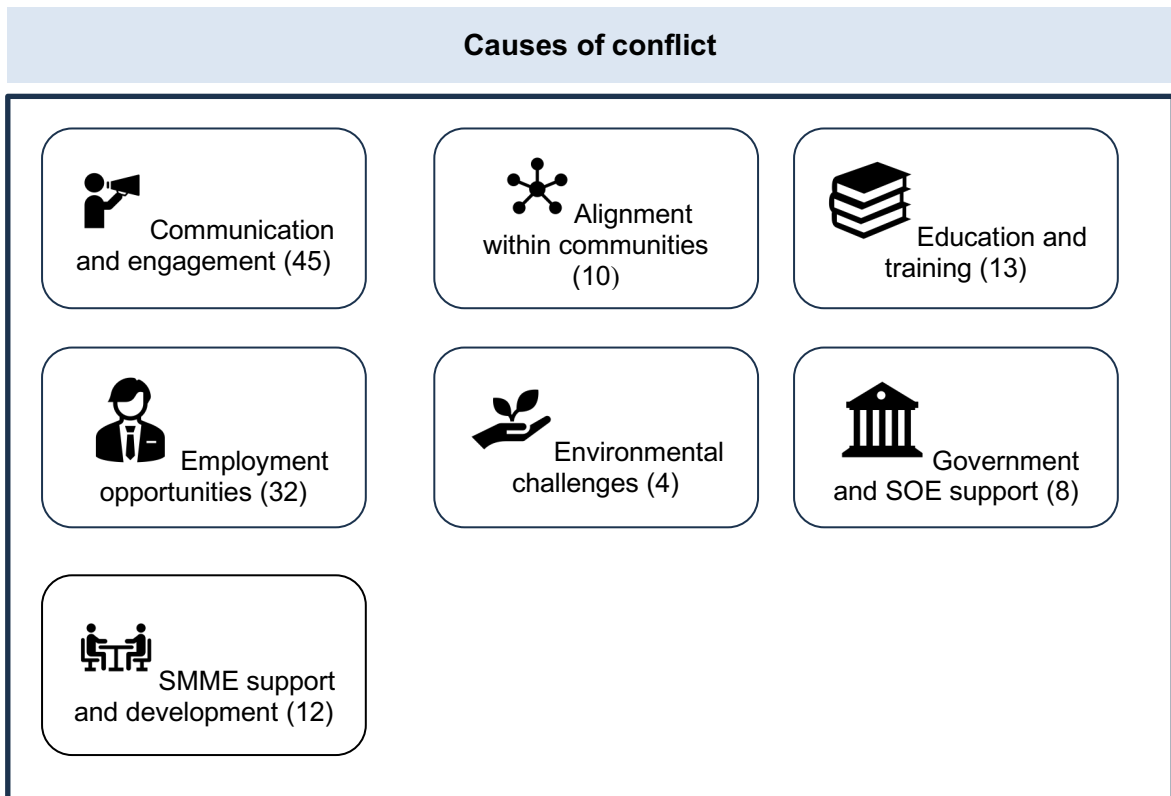
Figure 9: Key themes that emerged from research question (one) 1

The details around the individual themes obtained and as defined in Figure 9 are outlined below:

- **Communication and engagement**

Key comments and codes that emerged and were grouped under communication engagement include the following:

i. Although there are engagement forums, they are not well structured. This emerges 11 times during the interviews. Participants with experience of working within communities in Mpumalanga, Gauteng, Northern Cape, Limpopo, North-West and KwaZulu-Natal indicate this as a problem.

One key challenge indicated by Participant 18 is that there are just too many forums. The Northern Cape is cited as having about 40 community forums spread across three local municipalities. Participant 17, who has worked in both the Northern Cape and Mpumalanga provinces, comments:

> *"It is highly ineffective, it is highly resource draining. It also means, you know, that everybody has a different need and therefore, if someone has a hearing, then they want a hearing as well. Forum 26 also wants it – so before you know it, you have got people whose job is just to talk every day. They are not doing anything else but talking to business forums."*

Engagement structures are also not well defined and can be challenging to engage with. Participant 7 comments that with some of these engagement structures, meetings are not honoured, and this also contributes to the trust deficit between mining companies and mining communities.

> *"For me, the biggest failing is when communication is not structured and it is not honoured. If there is a forum to be attended, if there is a format to lodge a complaint or engage, it needs to be respected and honoured by both parties and get the necessary support that it needs. If a meeting is scheduled, make sure it is attended, do not postpone, or reschedule as this sends the wrong message." Participant 7*

In addition to having many forums and not meeting the commitments and agreements according to set timelines, some mining companies appoint people who are not well trained to run these forums or to manage the engagements with communities. At times, the structures and forums will take place, but the mine representatives will not be trained enough to run these engagements effectively and ensure that outcomes emerge that will be attended to. When this occurs, it creates frustration among the affected communities. It gives the communities the impression as if the mining companies are engaging with them through these forums for the sake of engaging, to tick a box, but not for the sake of achieving positive outcomes.

> *"Sometimes, to have dedicated structures that deal with this thing also helps so that when you deal with on the gate uprisings, you are ready and you have a structured way and people who are trained for it – because part of our problem sometimes is people who are not trained and they rock up to meet with people and then the stakeholders get aggravated and temperatures overcook." Participant 17*

ii. Mining companies are believed to be inconsistent about what they say and commit to when communicating with the communities. This emerged 13 times during the

interviews. Participants within communities in North-West, Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Gauteng, the Northern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal all indicate this as a common issue and challenge between mining companies and host communities.

Some key learnings and reflections emerging from the interviews relate to honesty and commitment and how different engagements would have different responses. Some of these different responses are caused by having different mining companies' representatives. Participant 4 highlights how mining companies always go into the engagements and promise to be fair and transparent, but what the community sees is believed by them to be totally different.

> *"We do have the engagements, we have them in place, we have promised we will be transparent in our information, but more and more, as they come to the engagements, they prove to us that we are not transparent. And they prove to us that we are not consistent, because we keep telling them 'No, it must be fair, transparent, shared with everyone'. And tomorrow, there is a new contractor appointed and he is working. You know? And you do not know about it, but you have to answer for it."* Participant 4

Participant 4 also states that many individuals from the mining houses tend to avoid saying what some people might not want to hear as opposed to committing to something that will never happen or something that will create inconsistencies.

iii. Some of the mining companies do not engage directly with the communities at all but only focus on engagements through representatives. This emerges 11 times during the interviews. Participants from communities in Mpumalanga, North-West, Gauteng, Limpopo, the Northern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal indicate this as a key challenge.

Another frequently stated comment is that mining companies engage through community representatives who, at times, have their own interests, and as such, the messages never trickle down to the communities. Based on such delegation, where most mining companies choose to communicate only with communities' representatives and never directly with the communities, results in situations where the communities do not know what the mining companies are planning or doing and whether such plans are "good or bad for the communities". Participant 1 indicates this

in the below comment

> *"I see conflicts brewing, because ja, we don't speak with the masses, we speak to the representative and we just do not know what their intentions are most of the time."*

Participant 5 elaborates on this by stating,

> *"Where I see community engagements really work well is when that communication is open and not just via the forums; the forums are very important, do not get me wrong - so your forums, your set meetings, calendar invites, and so forth is very important. But on top of that you need the informal communication."*

iv. There is no service delivery or understanding of service delivery requirements for the communities. This emerges six times during the interviews. Participants in Mpumalanga, Gauteng, the Northern Cape, Limpopo, and North-West report this problem as being among the key challenges.

In addition to poor or absent direct communication, communities expect some form of service delivery from the mining companies. They expect mining companies to not only know what services they require in their area but to also deliver on these services in a consistent manner.

> *"But around our communities, we struggle to build just one road, but we can build a road that goes to our mine and even inside our mine, we can make sure that there is infrastructure, there will be water. In the olden days, you will even have a hospital inside those mining places. But we want to justify that we cannot really do those basic things."* Participant 5

v. There is little or even no trust between the mining companies and the host communities. This emerges four times during the interviewing process, especially raised by participants from Mpumalanga, Gauteng, the Northern Cape, Limpopo, and North-West provinces.

The lack of trust is a result of the issues explained in points (i) to (iii). There is no trust

between mining communities and the mining companies because of the lack of transparent and honest communication, the mining companies not dealing directly with the affected communities, and the lack of service delivery. Participant 3 explains this through the following comment:

"And then there is generally the issue of the trust deficit between the mining company and the community, and that is mostly created by messaging, how we engage, making promises that we know we either have no intention of fulfilling, or someone making a promise when they are not supposed to be making that promise on behalf of the mine, on behalf of an operation – that creates the mistrust because 'you were going to give us a road'."

▪ **Alignment within communities**

At times, community representatives have their own agendas and interests, which vary significantly from what the communities want or need. Some communities are represented by ward chancellors, while others are represented by traditional authorities. Some look after their own personal interests and act according to their own interpretation of the communities' requirements, depending on how they engage with the communities.

"But unfortunately, at times it happens that those who are representing there have the responsibility to take it back to the community to say 'We were at Mafube, this is what we were given, these are the opportunities that we were given, or there is no opportunities, or whatever.' What happens is that sometimes those guys do not go back there and do that." Participant 6

Some of these misaligned communication challenges between the mines' representatives and the communities, at best, results in a misinformed community, at worst, in communities that are not informed at all. This is highlighted by Participant 1:

"I think having to deal with communities, I realised that communities are misinformed in terms of what is expected or what they can expect from the businesses and also I have realised that sometimes, the communities … you probably need to look at … they have different driving forces for them when they are engaging with the mines. There are people who are looking for a solution, there

are people who are looking for an opportunity, and ultimately those who are looking for personal gains become disruptive towards the business."

Sometimes, the intentions of the delegations that are representing the communities are not very clear. Some of the representatives see opportunities and "grab them for themselves" and the communities assume that the mining companies are not doing anything for them.

- **Education and training**

Participants' comments concerning the need for efficient education or training focuses on three aspects: (1) What happens in the communities regarding their children's primary school stage, (2) what happens regarding the secondary school stage, and (3) what happens regarding their children's tertiary education. They question what kind of support mining companies should be providing or supporting (and in what manner) for the host communities for these different educational stages. The participants' view is that the mining houses should provide such support, and the lack thereof is one of the reasons communities protest because they expect mining companies to at least support the communities through building schools (high schools or primary schools) and funding tertiary studies through offering bursaries to those who cannot afford university fees.

"There are always issues around education; you go to schools, I stay in Centurion and my kids attend some of the best schools I have ever seen – but you go to a community where there is a big asset like a mine that is turning billions of rands, you go to those schools and it is embarrassing. So, we should not really have those things around those mines where we are extracting billions of billions worth. So we should actually focus on educating the people around the mine. We should make sure that they have [good education]." Participant 7

While most mining companies tend to offer some university bursaries, the communities' view is that this is probably not all that should be done by the mines regarding education of the local communities. Besides providing or supporting the provision of primary school, high school and tertiary education, there are learners who do not qualify for entry into universities or universities of technology, and the communities' view is that there should also be opportunities available for those who want to go to college or to train to become artisans, boiler makers, and so forth.

"Probably the last one, the 5th one, is around people who probably actually feel like the mines should provide opportunities for bursaries, for training, and so forth, for the youth in the communities and therefore, they will feel aggrieved if the mine does not take the youth, if it does not supply bursaries for people in the community."
Participant 17

▪ **Employment opportunities**

Although only 12 participants were interviewed, they speak about the desperate need for employment, mentioned at least 31 times across all interviews. Given the current high unemployment rate in South Africa, most communities suffer from family members not finding any employment, which results in ongoing poverty. Communities do not believe that the mining companies are doing enough for their communities or that they are giving preferential job opportunities to the local communities. Participant 17 highlights this in the below comment:

"And the second group of community concerns is those who view mines as a potential opportunity for employment, and therefore that the mines do not offer employment and given South Africa's unemployment rate, there is always the demand for jobs and therefore local communities would always view the mines as a place for them to get jobs there and they view it as their exclusive right to be employed by the mine vis a vis if you come from elsewhere."

However, Participant 1 states that it is not always the case that mining companies are not employing people and that once local people are employed, their economic status improves, and they leave the community and move to an upper-class or middle-class area. This often results in someone else taking over their home in the local community. The employment numbers within that community do not reduce because of such changes, but the communities keep growing.

"The interesting part that we have observed previously is that for a mine like ours, which is, let's say, next to Clewer and Schoongezicht, when we started we would then employ people from Clewer. With time, once their financial status improves, they then move towards the affluent parts of Witbank and new people will come in. Those people, when they come in, there is also an expectation of employment. We have got a community on the other side, which is called Ngewane, previously it

used to be the farm labourers' settlement – and it previously had less than 20 households and it has since grown and this is people that see an opportunity, they come in and they want to be close to the mine and from growing to a 20 people household to something else. So that is basically that. So, people want employment and there is only so many people that we can employ." Participant 1

▪ **Environmental Challenges**

Over the years, environmental challenges related to mining have become a major issue. Participants comment on challenges related to water; for example, in Witbank, residents have to buy drinking water. Some communities also believe that the air they breathe in their mining areas is polluted. Environmental challenges are raised four times during the interviews.

"It is an environment problem, because people are saying 'your dust, we are cleaning the house today and the next moment it is dusty. But we are not benefitting out of you. We are actually getting sick because your fumes or your chemicals that you are using have affected us." Participant 2

This is also elaborated on by Participant 17, as per below:

"Therefore, mining companies cannot get away with creating an environment where it is unsafe for community members to continue living or exercising their day-to-day activities."

▪ **Government and SOE support**

The role the government or SOEs are supposed to play to support the communities is also mentioned as a key issue. The communities believe that some of the challenges that cause conflicts between the mining companies and communities is that politicians communicate with the communities and tend to send out different versions of how to view the mine, creating confusion for the communities. Often, political parties or unions will make promises or statements regarding what the communities should get or have, merely to get these communities' election support, without having to provide any monetary support for these communities themselves.

"The biggest thing that I always say is our political climate. Our politicians send

out a different vision in terms of how to view the mine – so how to view mining operations. I mean if a minister would sit out there and say that a Mining Charter is there and a Mining Charter is there to provide 30% to the communities, that is what the communities will come and want from the mines, you know? Not really understanding what the legislation is saying." Participant 4

- **SMME (Small Medium and Micro Enterprises) support and development**

The challenges related to how mining companies handle their enterprise supplier development are referred to at least 13 times during the interviews. Although mining companies have started an enterprise development programme, the communities' view is that the "uptake" tends to be high, but the numbers taper off during the process, because the process is long and finding business opportunities is difficult. This creates frustration among the community members, consequently causing conflict. Participant 1 highlights this through the following comment:

> *"What the company has started recently is the enterprise development or supply development programme. We have since realised that we have a high uptake of the programme, but we ultimately have a low success rate, purely because people come in and when they realise that there is a couple of modules that they need to do before they can really establish their business and be ready to supply the mines – they then drop off. So, it then poses the question: Is everybody else ready to be in business with us, or are people just looking for a quick win by virtue of them being closer to the operation – do they just want to register their company, want to come, and provide a service and still not run the business quite well?"*

However, Participant 2 provides a different view, stating that the communities feel that mining companies keep them in this constant cycle of "training and training and training", without actually giving them any physical opportunities to earn an income.

> *"People commit, you know, people commit, but you know, it takes time for them to believe in that training. Because they have this mentality or this notion that companies are just training and training them, but not giving them opportunities."*

Mining company representatives seem to hold a clear view on the underlying causes of conflict between them and the communities. Section 5.3.2 presents the communities'

views on the causes of conflict**s.**

5.3.2. Response from the communities

To understand the communities' perspective, similar questions were asked, but obviously with a community perspective in mind. Below table 5 highlights the questions that were asked.

Table 5: Interview research question (one) 1 (community representatives' perspective)

Questions
What is your view on mining companies and their impact on the community?
Can you tell me about protests within the community related to the surrounding mines?
What, in your view, are the main reasons for protests?

A similar coding process was utilised in 5.3.2 as in 5.3.1, where 39 codes were initially generated, and the codes were then reduced to 19, and renamed for clarity. These codes were then grouped and themed. Similar themes occurred as per Figure 9, although there are some differences in views, and these are described below.

▪ **Communication and engagement**

Mining communities state quite a number of problems related to poor or lacking communication and engagement, which is largely aligned with the views held by the mining companies. Their biggest challenge seems to be around the following key points:

i.   Communication channels are not effective. This emerges four times during the interviews. The current representatives do not share information and as such, it does not trickle down to the community. Participant 10 states the following:

> *"I do not think the information properly trickles down, right, so if you are not in proximity with a councillor or with the various community leaders, you probably will not get the various information that 'oh, the mine is providing schooling, or a clinic is being built here'."*

ii.   However, the communities and the mining companies agree that the messages shared by mining companies are usually inconsistent. This emerges six times during the interviews. This also includes commitments the mining companies make to communities through SLPs (Social Labour Plans).

"I think consistency in actually sticking to their SLPs – if they have a plan to provide something for five years, do they stick to that plan, do they provide for schools? If they have a commitment to do the road, for example, how long do they actually take to get that initiative implemented?" Participant 15

This creates frustrations among the mining communities, and especially so among communities where infrastructure is not being installed or maintained and unemployment rates are high.

iii. Mining companies are not transparent about what they are planning or doing, and their promises made to the communities. They do not hold open and honest conversations with the communities, and this leads to further resentments and frustrations. Participant 8 cites the below comment in relation to lacking transparency and honesty.

"I think there was not enough transparency about what was being done, up until it is being used as a reason for 'No, we are doing 1-2-3,' whereas throughout the year, there isn't transparency in terms of what we are actually doing in the communities."

The view held by many communities is that instead of transparency, the mining companies focus on "who complains the loudest and tell the complainant what they want to hear to keep them quiet for a while". This leads to those communities believing that "things are okay"; however, when it is time for the mining companies to deliver, nothing actually happens and this is where the conflicts arise, based on broken or false promises.

▪ **Alignment within communities**

Similar to the mining companies, mining communities agree that there is division within the communities, where sub-groups or splinter groups have their own goals, views, and agendas. They also agree that such division is probably caused by these varying interests within the many forums that exist within the mining communities. Participant 16 highlights this point of view:

"I am also part of some community forums that have been created, although I find it very difficult because there are lots of communities surrounding

> *those mines and lots of those community forums as well, and usually we all*
> *have different needs; we are not aligned with what we need as part of*
> *development in our various areas, so it also gets complicated sometimes*
> *for mining companies to be able to address those issues because we*
> *ourselves as communities are not aligned and not in agreement with what*
> *we all need."*

In addition to the challenges related to the many forums that exist, there are also instances where individuals who were not elected then form their own forums and use those for their personal goals and benefit.

- **Education and training**

A key concern that emerges when interviewing the communities is similar to the view held by the mining companies. Among the communities, their requests regarding education is not just about offering bursaries, but offering a programme that leads to employment post the completed studies. Participant 13 highlights this view:

> *"If they are focusing on let's say youth from giving them bursaries, they must also*
> *focus on job opportunities; there is another age of people who have already*
> *graduated, but they are sitting at home and the job opportunity part must be*
> *covered."*

Regarding the same view held by the mining companies, communities also raise the issue of training for those who do not qualify for bursaries and who should be trained in colleges or training centres so that they can be employed not only by the mining company offering the training, but also by any other surrounding mining companies or other industry sector.

- **Employment opportunities**

Participants from the mining communities are very interested in being given job opportunities and this is highlighted across all eight interviews and mentioned 16 times during the interviewing process. This is in line with feedback received from the mining companies' representatives. Host communities highlight that they regularly see jobs being offered to people staying outside of the communities, while those living in the communities remain unemployed. Unfortunately, they do not realise that there are specific skills required for the vacant job, and therefore, they believe that the hiring practices seem unfair

to the local communities.

> *"I think right now … currently … is the rate of unemployment. Ja, we have got youth and many people who are not employed and yet, we stay in a mining environment and then you get that the mine hires every day and then when you try to find out how do they hire, their process of hiring, you just do not get a straight answer, you know? They will just send you around in circles and say 'no, do this, and do that', but it takes so long and then, you know, people do not get jobs, but they stay in the mining area, which is a bit unfair for them."* Participant 20

- **Environmental challenges**

Environmental challenges are regarded as being more serious among the host communities than they do for mining companies. Across all community interviews, the environment is mentioned as a key issue. The view is that mining companies "take from the ground" and they create environmental challenges for the communities, including polluted water or reduced water access and dust or polluted air challenges. Participants 8 and 9 hold very similar views to all other participants.

> *"The quality of the air, after they blast – like the one time I was going home, driving, and one of the mines was finished blasting. The quality of the air, especially in August, is terrible. The visibility, during the day, like at 3.00 o'clock, it is difficult to see because of all that dust every day."* Participant 9

Not only the poor water and air quality are listed as key concerns, but also the blasting activity itself and the impact it has on the infrastructure, causing cracks in their houses or their windows breaking. Participant 9 sums this up by saying:

> *"So, being in a mining town, the impact, when the mines blast … the houses get cracks."*

- **SMME (Small, Medium and Micro Enterprises) support and development**

The key concern around communities launching SMMEs is associated with the perceived current "unfair" supply chain processes. Participant 8 states that it does not seem as if the supply chain or buying processes committed by the mining companies are fair as they believe that the communities' small businesses are not given any indication or clarity of

how the process is followed and thus, how they could benefit from it:

"And then also things like suppliers, where you find they get a supplier, but again, they feel that the process was not fair, and that [another] person would end up with the job. So, they would strike around that."

5.3.3 Summary of results

Both, the mining communities, and the mining companies agree that the key themes around causes of conflict include:

a) Challenges faced because of poor or absent effective communication and engagement; the manner in which mining companies engage with the mining communities, the excessive number of forums and the types of engagement, as well as the reliance by the mining houses on engaging with community representatives who often do not have the best interest of the communities at heart.

b) Alignment with and within the communities, which results in infighting between the various community groups as there are conflicting interests, agendas, and requirements.

c) A misalignment regarding education and training is stated, where the communities want to see people within their space being given opportunities for bursaries, as well as the building of or the improvements of the communities' primary schools and secondary school. Moreover, for those who do not qualify for bursaries or university education, communities want these learners/students to be given the opportunity to be trained at colleges that are geared towards finding them job opportunities.

d) Lacking employment opportunities and the perceived 'unfair' hiring processes at the mines seem to be the major cause for dissatisfaction among the communities, especially if one considers the high unemployment rate in South Africa. Communities want to see employment opportunities to be granted to their own communities, even if it means that special training is given by the mines for aspirant employees in the communities. Not understanding fully, the requirements for many of the jobs that become available at the mines, they believe that the current hiring practices are not fair, transparent, or honest as they exclude the local population.

e) Environmental challenges are raised by the communities as the mining activities

have caused significant impact on the environment. Some of these include the poor water quality in Witbank, the poor air quality, and the dust level in the mining host communities. They are also concerned about the blasting causing damage to houses and other infrastructure.

f) Government and SOEs are seen as not providing enough meaningful support for the mining communities. Both, the mining communities, and the mining company representatives believe that government does not ensure that the mines deliver according to the commitments made to the communities through their SLPs. They also believe that politics are used to making promises of better support, although delivery fails.

g) Regarding the formation of SMMEs and their support by the mines, all the communities see is that the mines' supply chains pretend to have favourable conditions when appointing businesses, but that these processes are not open and fair. Small businesses seem to remain in the development phase and are not given business opportunities by the mines.

Both, the mining company representatives, and the community members agree on what the underlying issues or causes of conflict are. This holds true even across the comments from participants living or working in the different areas/provinces of South Africa. Understanding the causes of conflict and whether they differ across various provinces is only the first step. The next steps is understanding whether in resolving these problems through utilising stakeholder management principles, what gaps exist that result in mining companies struggling to reduce conflict. This is addressed through research question 2.

5.5. Research sub-question 2

"What are the current gaps in various stakeholder management frameworks as utilised by different mining companies in South Africa?"

This question aimed to identify whether there are gaps in the current stakeholder management approach that mining companies or communities have noticed. Because communities are key primary stakeholders within mining communities, Freeman (2010) highlights that ensuring that the interests of these stakeholders are understood and supported can lead to long term value ad mitigate key risks within the business operating environment. Understanding the gaps would assist the researcher in gaining an understanding of which approaches do not work with regard to engaging the mining

communities.

5.5.1. Response from mining company representatives

The following interview questions in table 6 were linked to RQ2:

Table 6:Interview questions for research sub-question (two) 2 (mining company representatives)

Questions
Who are the key community stakeholders for your mine?
How often have you had stoppages due to community protests? Can you tell me more about these stoppages and some of the causes?
What is your view of the role the mining companies play in the community?
What is your view on collaboration between mining companies and government?
What is the mining company doing to ensure enhanced stakeholder relationships with the community? And are these working?
What is your view on government and mining company collaboration efforts and challenges?
How much money is budged for employee−community engagements and CSR
How often do you engage with the community and why?
What initiatives are the mining companies conducting within the communities?
What is your view of what mining companies should do for the community and how government can support and assist?
Does the mining company currently have a relationship with the community?
What programs are available and being implemented to ensure good relationships are maintained with the community?
What challenges do you experience when dealing with the community and government entities aimed at supporting mining companies and communities?
Does your company use a top up or bottom approach to engage communities?
Does your company have a community engagement framework?

A total of 34 codes emerged from the interviews. A process of merging duplicate codes was followed for codes that have the same meaning but are labelled differently. This was followed by the process of converting the codes into themes.

Five key themes emerge from the interviews with mining company representatives, and these are highlighted in figure 10 below. Gaps can be identified in:

a) Business strategy: This is related to how mining companies build the community's requirements into their overall strategy.

b) Government: These are gaps related to the current laws and regulations. Communicating the regulations effectively, ensuring that mining companies, through these laws and regulations deliver on their promises, and all relevant parties are held accountable.

c) Stakeholder engagement plans: This concerns the question of how the

engagement plans are developed, what is considered or included, what is not considered and why is something not working.

d) Social labour plans: Where do the social labour plans fit, and how are they communicated and implemented.

e) Collaboration efforts: This element focuses on collaboration efforts between the different mining companies, between government and the mining companies, and within government.

Gaps identified

Business strategy (5)

Government (37)

Stakeholder engagement (26)

Social labour plans (11)

Collaboration efforts (10)
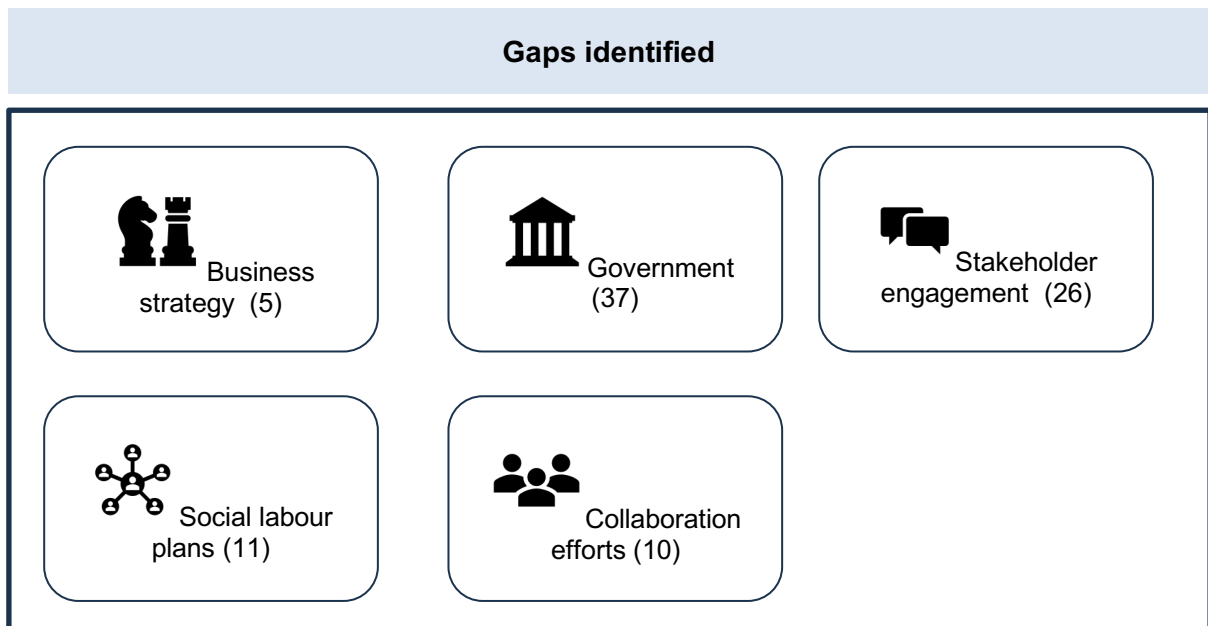
Figure 10: key gaps identified through research questions (two) 2

▪ **Gaps in business strategy**

Comments around business strategy emerge five times during the interviewing process with the mining companies' representatives. Participants indicate that all mining companies should – and most of them do − realise the impact of the mines' presence on the local region. The mining companies' operations arrive at (intrude on) a community that had the appropriate level of services for its population size, clean water, and a reasonable level of service delivery, although people were poor. The disruptions cause a shift in these areas as they cause population structures to change, especially as people move towards the area looking for jobs at the mines. Mining companies do not realise this, and their business strategies do not accommodate this. This is highlighted by Participant 7 as per below.

"You will probably find an ordinary town that is poor according to its standard. If you look at it before and after, it was poor before the mine. Then you bring the

mine, and you bring in other problems, social issues, other people coming in there. The town cannot cope in terms of sewerage, water infrastructure and all those things. This burden is now on the local government, but before you brought in all these people they were coping, although they were poor. They did not have all this burden of supplying [for others as well]."

It also does not seem as if the community's voice is as loud as it should be when mining companies build their strategies.

"The voice of communities is not as loud as it should be when we are making decisions, business decisions. Business decisions are made and then later on, we are like 'oh by the way, we have got communities, and, and and … ." Participant 3

- **Gaps in government**

Codes around government regulations emerge 27 times during the interviewing process. The comments by these mining company representatives are largely concerned with the question of how government regulates small mining companies and whether this is similar to how they manage major mining companies. There seem to be several gaps in communication in the manner how government communicates the Mining Charter, which causes confusion and misalignment between the mining communities and the mining companies. They are not clear about the correct or inappropriate expectations of mining companies (including the related rewards). Participant 4 highlights this as per below:

"Our politicians send out a different vision in terms of how to view the mine – or how to view mining operations. I mean if a minister would sit out there and say that a Mining Charter is there, and a Mining Charter is there to provide 30% to the communities, that is what the communities will want from the mines, you know. Not really understanding what the legislation is saying."

In addition to the need for clearer communication of the various rules and regulations of the Mining Charter and its application to the mines as well as the communities, government should ensure that the commitments that the mining companies make to the community through the SLPs and prior to receiving mining licenses are kept.

"Another big item that government has got an obligation to fulfil, is to make sure to keep the mining houses in check. So, it is their responsibility. These mining

houses operate for three or four years, rope in the cash and then afterwards 'oh, insolvency or you know, just vanish from the face of the earth' and then the communities and the country sit with the scourged land. That is where government needs to legislate and control and make sure to keep the mining houses honest."
Participant 5

- **Gaps in stakeholder engagement plans**

This theme emerges 26 times during the interviewing process, and it is focused on stakeholder analysis and understanding where and who the important stakeholders are. Thereafter, the mining houses have to develop a clear and detailed engagement strategy, which has to include how the key engagements will be structured. These plans must not only state the various goals for engagement, but also timelines and accountabilities/responsibilities. Mining companies need to fully engage communities and not only consider them as a tick box exercise.

"In our past, we have always been engaging to tick the box. So, we need to fully engage with them and understand their concerns and then, when we go and plan for that project, we [must] take their input into consideration." Participant 7

Unfortunately, after the mining companies have engaged with the communities for some time and they see there has been no conflict for a while, these engagements tend to "fizzle down" and companies enter into a place of comfort, forgetting and neglecting the communities. This is highlighted by Participant 5 below:

"The moment you start neglecting … and you think everything is perfect, everything is going well, and you get complacent, then it backfires in your face rapidly. So that is definitely one of the weaknesses or where it does not work."

Another aspect that emerges as part of the gaps in stakeholder engagement plans is that even when engagements occur, there is no transparency in those engagements, especially when tempers are high, and people are frustrated.

"So, no matter how high the tempers are, I always maintain that if you stick to your messaging, as much as your message is not what people want to hear, but if you stick to it, then they will realise that 'this is the truth', but you cannot chop and change. So, your consistency of messaging creates the issue around the trust

deficit." Participant 3

In addition to the above, the engagement plans seem to be structured in such a way that communication with 'the masses' rarely occurs. Usually, it is only with the community representatives that any form of engagement takes place, and the shared information at times does not trickle down to the affected community. This is sometimes the result of representatives' own agenda or ulterior motives.

Lastly, when protest actions then occur, some mining companies tend to automatically call in the police forces, based on the risk they feel for their own lives and the potential damage to property. However, instead of finding ways to negotiate with the protest leaders and addressing grievances, calling in the police forces often leads to violent clashes.

- ▪ **Social Labour plans**

Most importantly, the mining companies' representatives acknowledge that there is a noteworthy gap regarding their social labour plans as there is a lack of meaningful supplier development. This theme emerges eight times during the interviewing process. When supplier development is not done correctly, then the community's SMMEs cannot deliver on their assigned business opportunities.

> *"You procure services from the host communities, but how do you ensure that those services are going to be delivered? You develop programmes such as supplier and enterprise development and you make sure that everybody goes through the process and as soon as you on-board them, you know that they will not deliver."* Participant 1

There seems to be the conflicting view that even though communities indicate that they want business opportunities, most of them do not become registered businesses and this can be a challenge when ESD is concerned.

> *"… from business opportunities, you have limited business scope, but we have a number of communities that call themselves business people and I used to fight with communities in my previous job, where I would say, 'you know it takes literally 20 minutes to register that business because you can go online, fill in your information, 20 minutes later you have a business. Are you a businessperson?'*

Chances are 'no', you are not a businessperson. If you have a registered business, you then have to go through business development, enterprise development and so on. And you find that our communities or business communities do not have the patience to do that." Participant 2

▪ **Collaboration efforts**

Comments made by the mining companies' representatives around collaboration efforts tend to focus on collaboration with government. Mining companies view this as being extremely one-sided at the moment, with government believing they know what the community requires and the community having a different view, which results in misalignment, as explained by Participant 12 below.

"So there is no alignment between the communities who have got something that they want that is different to what the politicians want. The councillor or the local municipality – and the DMRE just wants you to comply with the law."

Government should provide a platform for mining companies to collaborate more meaningfully on SLPs, while still ensuring that this is counted as efforts towards social labour plans. This will motivate the mining companies enhancing their collaboration efforts, and make more of a positive difference in the community. Participant 18 highlights:

"But I also do think the last thing is that the way regulation is set up it does not necessarily promote that the mines should collaborate and therefore, it promotes silo working, which further erodes the possibility of creating more impact, and the less impact you have on the ground, the more aggrieved you will have the community members because they are aware that you are able to do your pit-to-pot and declare your dividends on an annual basis."

There also seems to be a misalignment around collaboration even within the different government entities and they tend to pull in different directions. Such disruptive changes can have serious repercussions not only on the mines, but also on the communities. An example is provided by Participant 7:

"And that has one thing of coal not being railed to Richards Bay and also iron ore to Saldanha, it can actually cause Thungela or Kumba to redo their production,

which then means we can reduce the workforce, which then means you are actually sending people back to the community, which are already under pressure in terms of unemployment and all those other things."

Some of the permits required to fulfil the SLP commitments can also heighten the challenges that tend to come up as a consequence of misalignment even within government.

"For me to build a hospital, I need to engage the government to provide a permit and all those other things. But those things get so difficult … to be able to get that. So yes, the government takes the front lead in everything that we are doing."
Participant 7

Instead of merely relying on government collaborating with communities, Participant 3 highlights the potential for mining companies to work collaboratively with faith leaders to resolve some of the community's issues, which mining companies generally do not consider. However, this view stems only from the mining company representatives.

5.5.2. Response from the community

Community members were asked the following questions as highlighted through table 7, which aimed to elicit an understanding of the community's perspective on currently experienced gaps:

Table 7: Interview questions for research sub-question (two) 2 (community's perspective)

Questions
What initiatives are the mining companies conducting within the communities to ensure sustainability?
What are your expectations on mining companies' and government's role in enhancing stakeholder relationships with the community? What should they do for the community?
What is your view on collaboration between mining companies and government?
How quickly do mining companies respond to your needs? And how often do you see government officials coming in to provide support?
What is your view on government and mining company collaboration efforts and challenges?
How often do mining companies engage the community?
Tell me about your experience and relationship with the mining companies.

A total of 22 codes emerge from the interviews with community representatives. A process similar to that of the mining company representatives was followed with codes that were

similar to each other being combined. This resulted in 17 codes remaining. The codes were then grouped and translated into themes. Some of the themes that emerged were similar to those from the mining company representatives. Below is a summary of the themes that emerged:

a) Government support: This theme relates to aspects, such as how the DMRE can provide support through ensuring that mining companies commit to rules and regulations and deliver on their commitments.

b) Stakeholder engagement: This theme includes aspects related to how mining companies engage the mining communities, who the representatives are, how open and honest they are in their conversations, and how they respond when communities gather at the gates of the mines.

c) Social labour plans: This theme is focused more on the impact that mining activities have on the community.

d) Collaboration efforts: This theme includes aspects of division within the communities and some of the gaps related to the collaboration with the communities and with other mining houses.

e) Corruption: Some key codes that emerge within the corruption space are related to corruption seen to take place between members of government, the mining companies, and the community representatives.

- **Gaps in how government supports communities and mining companies**

The community representatives stress aspects related to how the DMRE needs to be clearer about the mining companies' role and the requirements towards the host communities. They also highlight the need for a clearer definition of what or who is a host community. The DMRE is believed to be not strict enough on issues related to how mining companies should be providing support to the communities or ensuring that the mining companies deliver on the required commitments.

> *"I think before they issue mining rights they need to go and assess, and need to talk to the community and how it is affecting them. Can these people come and mine here? What about the needs of the township? Do these people want to build houses there and if these guys are going to mine here, how would it affect the area, affect the blasting, air pollution and all that? So, we really need our DMR to be strict, if you have a mining right, then you need to make sure that you issue it*

to the right people and assess the impact this will have on the community. And we also need to make sure that we give strict rules around the work that needs to be done." Participant 9

In addition, the community members believe that the regulations around community workforce representation within the mining communities are not very clear. Participant 11 indicates this through the below statement:

"I think if you read the DMR, it just says 'affected communities and the hosting communities' and I think from that aspect maybe, they need to define what they really mean. Because then anyone can walk through the mine and say 'I am an affected community' or 'I am a hosting community'. So I think in terms of legislation they need to redefine this."

▪ **Gaps in stakeholder engagements plans**

The community members highlight that the mining companies seem to focus on those who complain the most and then concentrate on attending to those complaints. This theme is nearly identical to the comment made by a mining company representatives, confirming that this seems to be taking place. Participant 8 states that this approach sets the wrong precedents, as everyone then believes that they just need to complain the loudest and they will be given what they need.

"I think what they were doing was very focused around who complained the loudest, which created the problem that as soon as something was not going their way, they would start complaining and they would get what they want – which also sets not a good precedent."

Although mining companies communicate through forums where there are nominated community representatives, the information usually does not trickle down to the rest of the community. This is highlighted by Participant 16:

"It is just the fact that it is impossible to communicate with everybody. In as much as mining companies give us updates at those sessions and tell us what they have been doing, the information doesn't cascade to all the communities properly."

At the same time, the comments made earlier also indicate that some of these representatives have their own ulterior motives and agendas, and they withhold some information on purpose. A community representative also believes that some mining companies hardly ever engage the communities, but only decide to engage them when there is a protest.

- **Gaps in social labour plans**

Another theme that mining communities seem to feel strongly about is that they believe that the mining companies fail to realise the strong impact the mine and its related activities have on the communities. For example, the trucks on the road damage the roads at a faster rate, the continuously high level of dust affects the environment and the air quality, and the mining companies "do nothing" about these.

> *"And there is a lot of traffic, trucking, when they are moving the commodity around and they are damaging the roads. There are a lot of potholes around Witbank and Middelburg. It is not a good thing to us as a community, because from the SLP or from the commitments they say they will make sure they will maintain the roads, even if it is in conjunction with the municipality, but somehow things are not moving the way they should."* Participant 13

While environmental damage is affecting communities negatively, they also believe that far more could be done by the mining companies also contributing more on a social or educational front. Some mines do not support primary schools or secondary schools. Additionally, after students complete their university education, there are only limited job opportunities at the mines, if any at all. The mines might offer training, but there is no guarantee of a job there afterwards.

- **Gaps in collaboration efforts**

As has already noted in the previous sections, the communities are very divided. There are far too many forums and at times, people who are not even elected to represent the communities form their own forum, pretending to be supporting or representing a community. In addition, these forums all have different needs and goals, resulting in infighting within the communities.

> *"I am also part of some community forums that have been created, although I find*

it very difficult because there are lots of communities surrounding those mines and lots of those community forums as well, and usually, we all have different needs. We are not aligned with what we need as part of development in our various areas, so it also gets complicated sometimes for mining companies to be able to address those issues because we ourselves as communities are not aligned and not in agreement with what we all need." Participant 16

In addition to the above, mining companies tend to be close to each other within one area or one community. In theory, this should lead to positive opportunities for collaboration. If these mining companies were to work together collaboratively towards achieving some of the community initiatives, the impact would be greater. Participant 10 highlights this through the below comment:

"So, it needs to be more collaboration between them, instead of … the mining company can only put so much money up for a school, whereas if the local municipality or government was involved, then you could build a bigger school with better facilities with more technology; whereas the mining companies can only do so much. But I think the municipalities here tend to be very lack-lustre in terms of how they behave; they are very lazy, they just rely on everything to be done by the mining companies."

▪ **Corruption related challenges**

The issue of corruption is again raised by community members and community representatives, and emerges five times over the course of interviews. Corruption in this case is specifically linked to community representatives, as highlighted by Participant 16:

"There are certain people who are elected to represent those communities. Again, you depend on them to be authentic, to not be corrupted, to ensure that what they get from companies gets to develop the communities the way it should, the community should benefit in the right manner. So, already there … you already find people who want to enrich themselves with whatever is allocated and that is the first problem."

Corruption within the government entities and within mining communities is also challenging the outcome for mining communities. Participant 11 speaks to the aspect of

leadership and the need to have selfless leaders who are not only focused on themselves, but also the community and its needs.

> *"We just need competent leaders, we need people who are selfless, who don't think about themselves alone and that rather by any chance we are rather representing a community, we are not here to exploit the resource alone; we want to make sure that they benefit. We need such motive, or people who have such heart."*

5.5.3. Summary of results

The themes emerging from the mining community members are very similar to those from the mining companies, with the exception of the gaps in a business strategy, which does not emerge as a key theme from discussions with the communities. Instead, a new theme emerges, which includes the issue of corruption within and between mining companies, government, and community representatives.

Overall, the key gaps identified by the mining companies and the community representatives tend to focus on the how mining companies do not correctly identify or include the communities' needs in their business strategy. As such, they tend to be forgotten. In addition, government is not seen to be holding the mining companies accountable to deliver on their various legal requirements.

Most mining companies lack stakeholder engagement plants or their engagement plans do not take cognisance of all stakeholders' needs. This situation is aggravated by the plethora of community forums that are often misaligned and not truly representative because of different interests and needs.

However, in delivering correctly on the social labour plans, mining companies could collaborate with other mines, especially those in close proximity to them. Such collaboration efforts are missing and government does not compensate or consider these initiatives under the social labour plans. Understanding the gaps together with what has worked work hand in hand, allowing one to gain a deeper understanding of the causes of conflict and the use of stakeholder management in resolving these issues. Research question 3 highlights these key learnings.

5.6. Research sub-question Three (3)

"What learnings can be utilised to develop an overarching stakeholder management framework that would be applicable within a South African context?"

This question was meant to draw from the participants' lived experiences and gain an understanding of what they have seen working in relation to how mining companies engage with the communities.

5.6.1. Response from mining company representatives

The following sub-questions as highlighted through table 8 were linked to RQ3.

Table 8: Interview questions linked to research question (three) 3 (Mining company's perspective)

Questions
What is your view of the role companies play in the community?
What is your view on collaboration between mining companies and government?
What is the mining company doing to ensure enhanced stakeholder relationships with the community? And are these working?
What is your view on government and mining company collaboration efforts and challenges?
How much money is budged for employee-community engagements and CSR
How often do you engage with the community and why?
What initiatives are the mining companies conducting within the communities?
What is your view of what mining companies should do for the community and how government can support and assist?
What programmes are available and being implemented to ensure good relationships are maintained with the community?
What challenges do you experience when dealing with the community and government entities aimed at supporting mining companies and communities?
Does your company use a top up or bottom approach to engage communities?
What are some of the key things that have worked with regard to community engagements? What has not worked? Where are the gaps?

When mining company representatives were asked these interview questions, 33 codes emerged. From the 33 codes, some codes were combined as they were very similar but had different labels. This reduced the number of codes to 20. The 20 codes were then grouped together as common themes.

Key themes emerge around strategy development and the mining company's responses when issues arise, stakeholder analysis, engagement forums and feedback structures. Below figure 11 provides details of the key learnings are provided from the mining company representatives' perspectives.

Key themes
Strategy development (3)
Stakeholder analysis and mapping (16)
Engagement Plans & frameworks (12)
Engagement forum constitutions (3)
Community feedback structure (3)
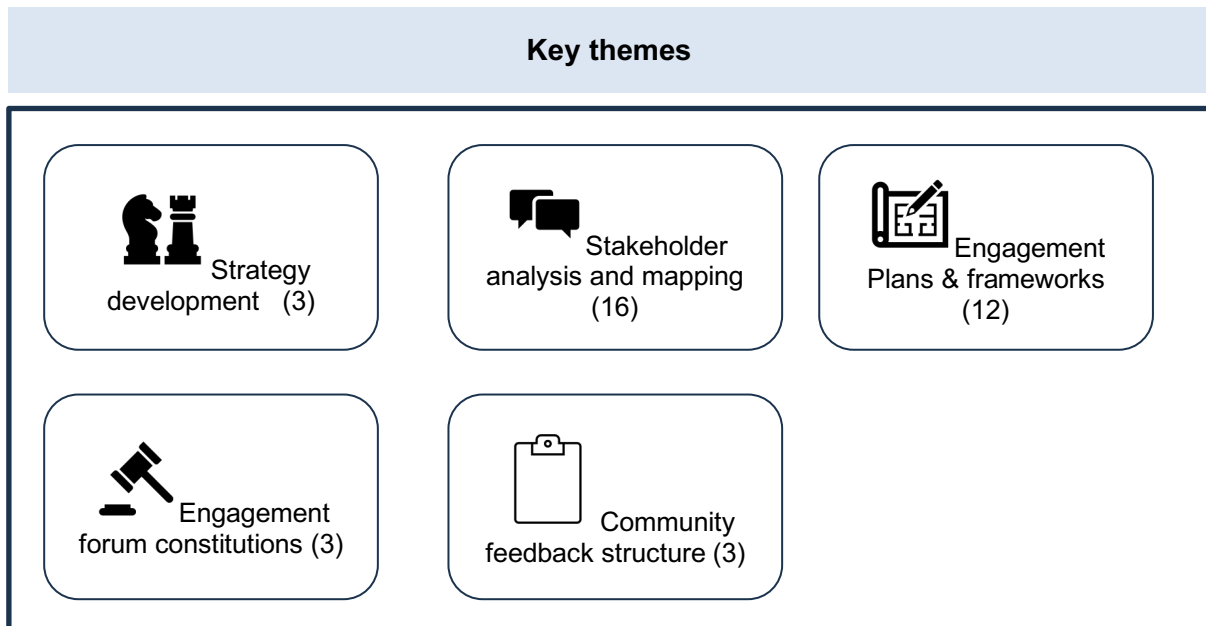
Figure 11: Key themes that emerged from research question three (3)

- **Strategy development and stakeholder analysis**

  When developing a company strategy, mining companies should embed the affected communities' requirements in their strategy. Part of embedding these requirements in the company strategy involves developing a clear stakeholder map with a detailed understanding of who the key community stakeholders are, whether they support the presence of mines in the community or not and what they feel is most critical for the community. Participant 3 highlights this through the following statement:

  > *"Do a proper comprehensive stakeholder mapping, understanding who are the ward councillors in the area, who are the traditional operators in the area, what are the community structures in the area that we need to engage with, who are the vulnerable groups. So, when we look at a stakeholder engagement framework, the key aspect of it is to do a stakeholder mapping."*

- **Engagement forums and community feedback:** When developing ways to engage these stakeholders, embedding the forum structures, and required engagements within some of the already existing forums will be essential as well as developing the frequency of engagements with the said forums and communities. If this forms part of the stakeholder engagement framework, it becomes easier to manage.

Of importance is for these engagement forums to have a clear constitution with clear rules and definitions. Participant 6 highlights the importance of engagement having to ensure robust discussions with the communities:

> *"The forum … firstly is governed, it has a constitution in terms of who must sit in and who must not sit in, and so forth – and it represents all wards in the surrounding communities, and ward councillors that sit in there."*

These engagements should allow for the mining company to understand what the community requires. Participant 1 highlights that when they started engaging communities, they also started to understand what the communities' problems or requirements were.

> *"Then you start engaging this stakeholder, you then start understanding what those issues are around the business that they are interested in or they want to be engaged on, and this then becomes the approach of you engaging with them."*
> Participant 1

Participant 4 states that once they knew what was critical for the community, they started to engage with them on a per-topic basis, item by item, in an attempt to resolve the issues.

> "*What has worked very well for us is the communities, and engaging them per topic and having that stakeholder engagement analysis that will help us to say how often we want to engage with them."* Participant 4

Another important consideration mentioned by the mining company representatives is that they should be proactive about engaging communities.
>   "

> *"But the most important thing is that we are proactive in engaging them, and also getting some intelligence from the ground, you know, in terms of having our own informers, you know, and knowing what are the real issues, because you can be in a meeting and dealing with the wrong issues. So, we try also through intelligence, to gather also what are the real issues."* Participant 12

In addition to engaging through forums, Participant 6 reports that the use of surveys has helped them in understanding the key needs of the communities. This is done as a proactive way of understanding whether communities are happy or unhappy about the current state of how companies are engaging with them and delivering on commitments.

Once the business has a good sense of what the communities need, then they will know what works and they can ensure that the initiatives related to what communities require are embedded within the overall company strategy as SLPs (participants 2, 5 and 7).

Of importance is also ensuring that the company's own employees are kept in the loop of these plans with regard to what is happening between the mine and the community. Participant 5 highlights that mine employees are also part of the community and some even stay in the local communities. When they know what is happening, they are then also able to respond to questions from the community. This also refers to the appropriate support for education and training, as well as employee selection.

> *"Part of it is that we should then ensure that the people who are working for us, the people who are around the mine are well equipped and ready – and let's start with schooling; you can't go to a community and say you are going to employ 70% of the population, or let me say 70% of your employees will come from your communities around, and then think that things will just fall from the sky without investing into the primary education and ensuring that kids who are coming up from Grade 12 are choosing the right process to go and do engineering."*
> Participant 5

Participant 2 adds that, over time, communities will develop a relationship with the liaison officer or mining company representatives, and when they have any specific problem, they will call these people and, communicate. It is important to keep these lines open for the appropriate communication, answer phone calls, respond to messages, and return phone calls.

Given that there are some already known issues around what host communities require and where they require support, some of the initiatives that have worked are partnering with banks to fund SMMEs. This is highlighted by Participant 8 as per below:

"And we are business partners with ABSA to make sure that there can be finance and we act as a guarantor, you know? So there are good things that we are now starting to do, after seeing that the only way to go is collaboration. We have to work together."

A further aspect relating to engagements on issues and why they arise is that when these issues arise, and when the community has questions, then bringing in a specialist in that particular area is important as that person can then explain the implications.

"So, you go and communicate. Remember, I am not the owner of the data centre, so I would organise my community, I will bring somebody from blasting, and they will explain. I will bring in an environmentalist to talk to them. Remember, we have dust monitoring, so talk to the dust issue."
Participant 2

5.6.2. Response from community representatives

To obtain the community perspective, the following interview questions as outlined in table 9 were asked related to research question 3

Table 9: Interview questions for research question (three) 3 (a community perspective)

Questions
What challenges do you experience when dealing with these mining companies?
What are some of things that been working in terms of how the mining companies engage communities?

Community representatives and community members recall that they find it really challenging to identify what has worked well between the mines and themselves. Seven codes were generated with the community members highlighting what in their view had worked well.

a) Initiatives around schools and education: Participant 8 recalls about the opportunities around swimming initiatives where learners were taught how to swim,

b) Participant 9 mentions the university bursaries as one of the initiatives that are well received.

5.6.3. Summary of results

Overall, mining communities do not seem to recall many positive initiatives between themselves and the mining companies that have gone well. Instead, they are more focused on what has not gone well and how the concerns they continuously raise should be addressed. They mention that initiatives around education seem to go well.

Mining company representatives, on the other hand, have a different perspective on what has been successful, which includes comments from two participants who feel that the company must ensure that there is a clear stakeholder map and a detailed engagement framework. Once engagements occur, what has worked well is meetings where the forums have a clear constitution and the right attendees. It also important not only to engage forums, as some participants report that it is important to engage the actual communities and working through surveys to get a sense of who and where the correct representatives and stakeholders are.

5.7. Conclusion

Chapter 5 provided an overview of the interview questions linked to the research questions. In responding to research question 1, which deals with whether the causes of conflict differ across different provinces within South Africa, the findings suggest that both from a community perspective, as well as a mining company perspective, the perceived causes of conflict remain largely the same. The emerging themes are related to lacking employment opportunities, not enough business opportunities being granted to local SMMEs, the range of environmental challenges, the lack of government support or meaningful collaboration, and communication challenges between the mining communities and the mining company, but also within the host communities themselves. Table 10 below highlights the key emerging themes with similar colours to highlights each theme per province. This indicates that the causes of conflict within South African Mining companies and host communities do not varying across provinces.

Table 10: Overview of findings related to RQ1

Research question 1: Do these sources of conflict differ across host mining communities					
Limpopo	**Mpumalanga**	**North-West**	**Gauteng**	**Kwazulu-Natal**	**Northern Cape**
▪ Employment opportunities ▪ Business Opportunities ▪ Lack of transparency ▪ Lack of engagements ▪ No structure in engagement forums ▪ Environmental challenges ▪ Lack of support for SMMEs	▪ Mis-information ▪ In-fighting within communities ▪ Engagement: Too many forums & lack of engagements ▪ Communication: Forums not well structured ▪ Misaligned representatives ▪ Employment opportunities ▪ Business Opportunities ▪ Government & SOE support ▪ No service delivery ▪ Lack of trust	▪ Employment opportunities ▪ Lack of support for SMMEs ▪ Communication: inconsistent ▪ Lack of training and education opportunities ▪ Environmental challenges ▪ Lack of engagements ▪ Lack of transparency ▪ Business opportunities	▪ Misunderstanding of what communities want ▪ Lack of trust ▪ Employment opportunities ▪ Lack of transparency ▪ Lack of support from Government and SOEs ▪ No delivery of promises ▪ Engagement forums not well structured ▪ Lack of education opportunities ▪ No service delivery ▪ Lack of SMME support	▪ Employment opportunities ▪ Misalignment and misunderstandings ▪ Engagement forums not well structured ▪ Lack of engagements ▪ Inconsistent communication ▪ Not enough business opportunities	▪ Misalignment ▪ Employment opportunities ▪ Education opportunities ▪ Lack of engagements ▪ Delivery of promises ▪ Engagement forums not well structured ▪ Lack of support for SMMEs ▪ Lack of Government & SOE support

Research question 2 focused on gaps identified through lived experiences, from both, the mining companies, and the host communities. Some of the key gaps identified include the exclusion of the host community requirements in the overall mining companies' strategies. Communities also believe that government is not holding mining companies accountable with regard to delivering on their commitments, and there seems to be a lack of stakeholder engagement plans in the mining companies, which ultimately means that some of the mining companies do not have a structured way of engaging the communities or even understanding who the correct stakeholders and their needs are. The below figure 12 highlights the key gaps identified by interview participants on the gaps.
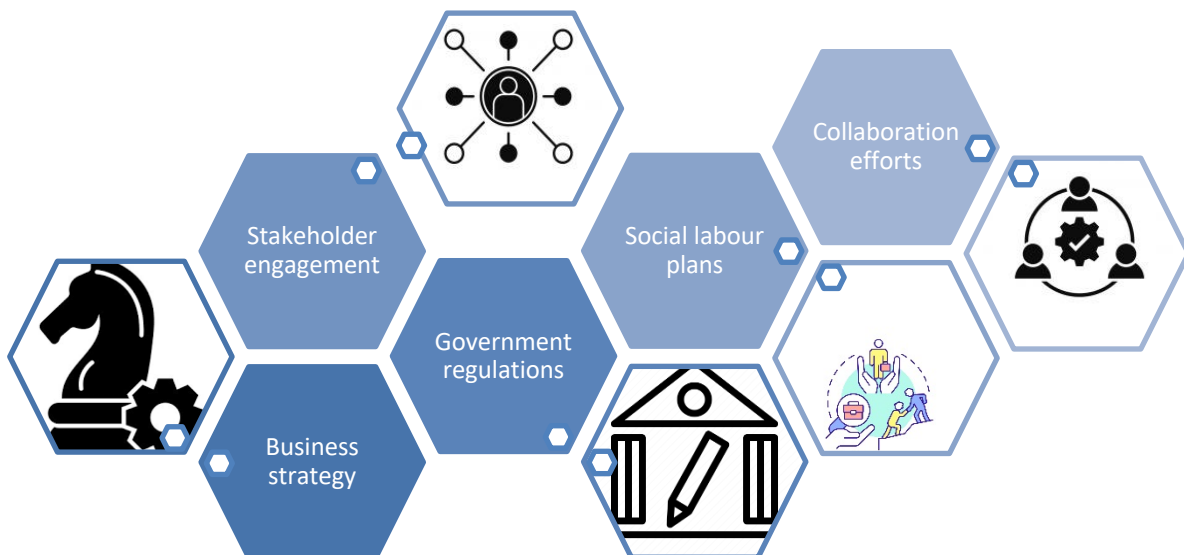
Figure 12: Overview of gaps identified Source: Author's own

Research Questions 3 explored the key learnings from the lived experiences the participants gathered over the years. Some of the key learnings include that the mining companies will have to ensure that there is a clear stakeholder engagement map and stakeholder engagement approach. This should ensure that the forums are correctly identified and utilised, that they have a clear and well-defined way of operating that strongly guards against corruption and alternative agendas by the representatives. Over and above these engagement structures, mining companies should regularly engage with

the actual communities (and not only their representatives) through various other forms, such as surveys. Chapter 6 will discuss the results and highlight how these results link with the literature. This is highlighted through figure 13, looking at how understanding the stakeholder and their needs, developing engagement plans and frameworks, and ensuring the right feedback is provided in the right way is critical to resolving or minimising conflict.
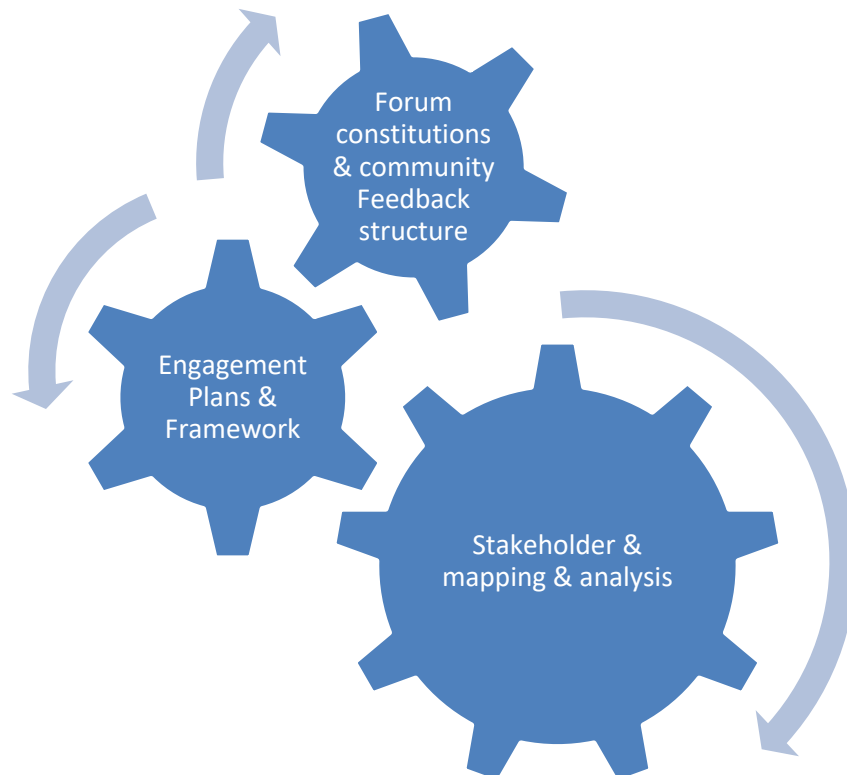
Figure 13:Overview of Key learnings Source: Author's own

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSIONS OF RESULTS

6.1. Introduction

Through Chapter 2, Bezzola (2022) highlights the challenges related to growing conflict within mining host communities. Furthermore, Bezzola highlights that because of these conflicts, the viability of the mines is threatened. Humby (2016) further highlighted the need for mines to be more attentive to the host communities, highlighting how stakeholder management could be used to address some of the key legacy issues which result in conflict. This study aims to understand how stakeholder management principles can be utilised as a conflict management tool within host communities. Twenty (20) interviews were conducted with participants who either work for a mining company within a stakeholder management environment largely dealing with communities, or who live within host mining communities, or represent host mining communities.

Chapter 5 highlighted the key findings from the qualitative analysis, which utilised semi-structured interviews. Chapter 6 provides a detailed discussion of the results, in line with literature, in order to improve the current body of knowledge. The discussion will be summarised per research question to provide ease of flow.

The key question for this research was:

> "How can the stakeholder management principles be utilised as a conflict management tool in host mining communities?"

The following sub-questions (RSQ) assisted in answering the main research question:
- RSQ1: Do these sources of conflict differ across host mining communities?
- RSQ2: What are the current (knowledge) gaps in various stakeholder management frameworks that are utilised by different mining companies in South Africa?
- RSQ3: What learnings can be utilised to develop an overarching stakeholder management framework that would be applicable within a South African context?

6.2. Research Sub-question one (1)

The first research question explored the sources of conflict and evaluated whether they differ across various host communities and provinces. Sub-question 1 had asked:

"Do these sources of conflict differ across host mining communities?"

Literature highlighted that mining globally and in South Africa has evolved immensely over the years. In the early years from the 1920s, mining was primarily focused on stockholders. This means that the owners of the companies were the most important and the only ones considered when decisions were made. Value was driven mainly for the stockholder. It emphasised that the primary and most important responsibility of the company's executive management team and the board of directors was to maximise shareholder wealth as long as it remains within the legal and ethical boundaries. This is highlighted through Friedman (1970)'s stockholder theory. Cole and Broadhurst (2020) highlight that over the years, the mining landscape has changed from not only a political perspective but also a social perspective, with host communities becoming increasingly outspoken about their rights and their demands. These community stakeholders have a considerable influence on mining activities. Given the increase in conflict within these host communities, Constanza (2016), Ngomane (2019), and Masuku (2021) suggested that future research should include a wider scope of participants to provide a broader understanding of the likely sources of conflict and whether these sources are similar across the South African landscape. This research study and research sub-question focused on a wider scope of participants across various mining companies and host mining communities (across various provinces) with the aim of understanding whether sources of conflict differ across various host communities from a South African landscape. The discussion in this chapter (as outlined through sections 6.2.1 to 6.2.6) provides an overview of the causes of conflict per identified theme as highlighted in Chapter 5 and established through thematic analysis. Each of the causes of conflict identified in Chapter 5 and presented in Figure 14 below will be discussed in detail.

Figure 14: Summary of sources of conflict; Source: Author's own

These themes include communication and engagement, alignment with communities, education and training, employment opportunities, environmental challenges, government and SOE support, and SMME support and development.

6.2.1. Communication and engagement

Communication and engagement cover aspects such as the ability of a mining company to clearly define and analyse its stakeholders and to develop clear communication and engagement plans. These form the basis of building strong relationships between the community and the mining company, as described by Saenz (2019). This is also supported by Constanza (2016), stating that mining companies need to engage with communities in order to be able to operate and co-exist with the mining communities.

The study also confirmed that because mining companies do not make time to get to know and understand who their stakeholders are, what their needs are, and how they can engage them to address these needs, the community is not sufficiently informed about the plans and actions of the mines. Consequently, and as the mining companies only respond or react when they are confronted by conflict with the communities, protest actions take place and disrupt the mine's operations. This is in line with literature from Bezzola et al.

(2022), who highlight that mining companies need to understand the communities where they operate to be able to avoid conflict and this is achieved through meaningful stakeholder relationships.

Another common threat from the interviews and in line with the communication and engagement theme was that mining companies are not believed to be transparent and honest, nor are they willing to have honest discussions with the communities. This contributes to losing trust between the mining company and the communities. Pless et al. (2022) highlight the need for integrative responsible leadership. This will ensure that communities remain well informed of what will affect their community, what the mine's plans are and their intended actions. Although communication is critical, it is equally important for communities to be aligned internally regarding what they require and who should represent them. This challenge is further outlined in section 6.2.2.

6.2.2. Alignment with communities

Because there is a plethora of forums that exist within the communities and the representatives vary and, at times, have their own agendas and plans, it results in misalignment between the different forums in the host communities and the mine's representatives. Costanza (2016) highlighted this challenge through her research study titled "*Mining conflict and the politics of obtaining a s social license: Insight from Guatemala"* that communication and organisation among community leaders was weak, and most community members knew little about their rights as host communities so everyone had their own view of what this meant. This also opens the door for manipulation of ideas. This misalignment created hindrances for communities to discuss, plan or address any controversial issues and challenges affecting them.

This also aligns with the aspect of communication and trust. It is not only that lack of trust exists between mining companies and communities, but it also exists within the various communities. Because of this trust deficit, it no longer functions to believe that one forum represents one community, as many forums exist because there is no trust in the various leaders or representatives. As so many forums exist, each with its own agenda, mining companies are required to engage more and different people who represent different needs. Should the needs of one group have been met, then another group raises their dissatisfaction. Kougiannou et al. (2020) highlight the challenges related to not having enough trust in community engagements. In addition to communication and alignment

within communities, an issue related to education and training opportunities emerged as a cause of conflict and is elaborated further through section 6.2.3.

6.2.3. Education and training opportunities

Education and training, employment opportunities, and SMME support and development are all related to the distribution of benefits between communities and the mining industries, as described by Saenz (2019). When communities see mines starting in their environment, their immediate expectation is that they will benefit from training and education opportunities; these could be in the form of:

a) Primary schools obtaining funding or being built
b) Secondary school conditions improving
c) Bursaries
d) Training opportunities.

Prono (2013) highlights that there is a need and expectation for mining companies to provide training and apprenticeship opportunities and programs for those without the required mining skills and experiences. The expectations are, however, that any such education and training would result in the community being given employment opportunities at the mines or businesses within the communities being given business opportunities. When this does not happen or when the correct processes are not followed in employment or supply chain processes, this causes conflict as the communities see their expectations not being met. They then regard the hiring of "outsiders", people who are not part of their communities, as an unfair practice. This is a common thread confirmed across participants from various provinces in South Africa through these interviews. Blesia et al. (2021) argue that it is not really about education and training as this is not sufficient to transform the communities' cognition within a generation. However, it is important to ensure that communities understand the training programmes provided within the context of an ever-changing world. The argument from Blesia et al. (2021), which seems to counter the view that providing education and training would resolve some of the challenges around conflict, highlights that it is not only about offering training but ensuring that the contents of the training offered helps the community understand the world we live in. Communities believe that these education and training opportunities should give way to employment opportunities; these are further highlighted in section 6.2.4.

6.2.4. Employment opportunities

Employment opportunities are interlinked with education and training, and the two cannot be divided. Literature from Saenz (2019) still remains key because employment opportunities are believed to be part of the expected benefits by the host communities when a mining company starts operating. This is further supported by Prno (2013), who indicates that following the training and apprenticeship opportunities, job opportunities should be made available. Should more people from "outside" the host community start receiving employment opportunities, this creates tension among the communities, leading to protest actions. Furthermore, Costanza (2016) highlighted that when residents are offered employment, they support the mining projects. However, in instances where the mining companies cannot offer enough employment to the community, the mine will struggle to operate without conflict. Apart from employment opportunities, other opportunities are related to Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise (SMME) support and development; these are also linked to and proceed education and training opportunities. These are discussed in detail in section 6.2.5.

6.2.5. SMME support and development

When the unemployment rate started increasing significantly in South Africa, and people could not find jobs, many started up their own businesses, even without much knowledge of the business environment. The expectation from host communities was not only that they would receive business opportunities from the mines but that they would also be sufficiently supported and developed to ensure that those businesses would become successful, especially if they had received business training from the mine. However, these businesses feel that they are either not receiving opportunities or not receiving sufficient support, causing tension and conflict. They do not realise that often, the size does not offer the scale needed by the mine. Fraser (2021) indicates that mining companies should improve company-community relations through building partnerships that improve the economic conditions of host mining communities. These businesses can tap into the financial resources as well as technical expertise within the mining companies to advance and grow their own businesses, something they would otherwise not be able to do on their own. Apart from the need to improve the economic landscape through business opportunities, other contributors to conflict include the challenges related to the environmental impact of mining activities; this is further highlighted in the next section.

6.2.6. Environmental challenges

As indicated through the interviews, one of the common grievances from communities is the impact that mining activities have on the environment. At times, communities cannot even drink the water from their taps as it is polluted, and the air quality is poor, leading to many in the community falling ill. Some participants mentioned that the challenges are not only related to water and air quality but also to the impact that the mining activities have on the houses they live in, with windows breaking and walls cracking from mine blasting activities, heavy trucks destroying their roads and causing noise and exhaust fumes pollution. Fraser (2021) highlighted that mining operations often raise questions related to the environment as most mining activities require a substantial amount of water, leading to competition for this resource with the community as well as other industrial users. Additionally, Ansu-Mensah et al. (2021) highlighted the need for mining companies to not only be aware of the environmental impact of mining activities but to also work to resolve these challenges related to these impacts, such as afforestation activities aimed at restoring the environment, pollution prevention measures to avoid chemical spillages, utilisation of environmentally friendly chemicals and reclaiming and rehabilitating previously mined areas. A key factor highlighted in resolving both mining company challenges and community challenges, including environmental, is that related to support from the government and other State Owned Entities (SOEs); this is discussed in the next section 6.2.7.

6.2.7. Government and SOE support

Lacking or poor government support and support from state-owned entities was highlighted as one of the causes of conflict. Both the host communities, and the mining companies cited concerns around the government and SOE support. The mining companies highlighted that it was difficult to collaborate with the government, while communities highlighted that the government was not holding mining companies accountable to deliver on the promises they make, both citing challenges related to corruption and misaligned expectations between the government and the communities, this is supported by Phiri et al.(2019) who highlights that government's financial reliance on mining companies results in them advocating for the companies which conflict with the interests and needs of the community. Another critical factor to the state's ability to hold mining companies accountable is the capacity within the government to monitor and enforce how mining companies are performing against their commitments. There is a specific dynamic between mining companies, the government, SOEs and communities,

which is not only about the lacking collaboration between one mining company and one SOE or government entity but which looks towards finding alternative collaboration rather through a combination of various mining companies working together with communities and the government. This is a key gap indicated through the interviews. There does not seem to be room for mining companies to collaborate with each other, while the government incentivises these collaborative efforts. Constanza (2016) highlights that collaboration between mining companies and the government, which allows for communities to participate in specific initiatives, can help to reduce conflict. The author states that when government and mining companies work together, there is improved transparency, accountability, and service to the community. At present, there are very limited opportunities for collaboration. Furthermore, Fraser (2021) indicates that mining companies' stakeholders, such as community leaders and key officials from the government, are at times reluctant to work with mining companies Although this collaboration is viewed as important, it can be challenging to implement due to various stakeholder needs and desires. Pless et al.(2022) link this to the lack of responsible and accountable leadership, which became a common thread when discussing government and SOE support during the interviews. Additionally, Phiri et al. (2019) highlight that at times, due to the power asymmetries between the government and the mining companies, the government ends up being reliant on the mining company for economic upliftment and political power. Resultantly, the government can, at times, fail to hold mining companies accountable to deliver on their promises, instead advocating for the mining company.

6.2.8. Summary of research sub-question one (1) discussion

A key observation throughout the interviews was that it takes some time for communities to reach a point where conflict turns violent, and it assumes that there is not just one source of conflict but a combination of a few, resulting in frustration. Because of the frustrations, the community members resort to aggression. Additionally, and supported by Boadi et al. (2018), the failure of mining companies to deliver on promises, communicate and engage effectively contributes to a trust deficit. Another contributor within communication, according to Boadi et al., is the inability of employees who deal with community stakeholders to assess how their behaviour when they engage communities affects these communities, especially when they refuse to understand opposing views or understand grievances. These were the common themes across all interviews from various provinces. In essence, these challenges are interlinked with other themes and can be described through the below Figure 15
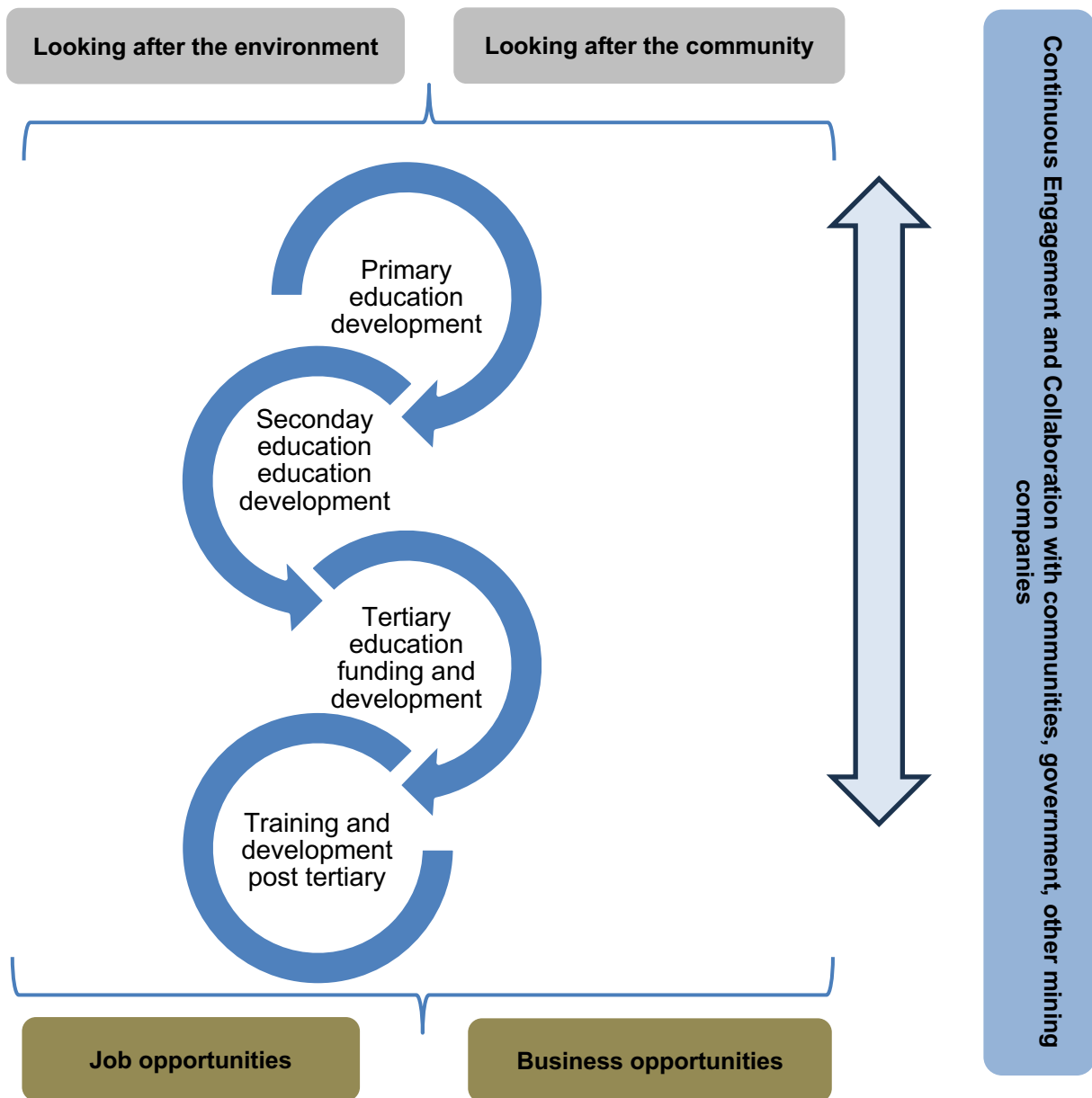
Figure 15: How the sources of conflict inter-connect; Source: Author's own

In line with the figure above, mining companies should recognise the impact and change opening up a mine has on the community. The mine management is expected to make a positive difference to the communities' lives and not "leave the community the way it was before the mine started" or even worse off. A good example of this is that of the Kleinzee community, where one can argue that the community was left worse off than when mining commenced. The community gained the impression that "the mining company came in, took the minerals, took the profits and left the community deserted". They believe that despite the previous levels of poverty in some families, generally, "life was good when the mining was there, and the community was booming, the community and town is now a

shadow of what it once was" (Van Dyk & Roux, 2021). The mining companies will have to look after the environment and the community, and part of this involves the support or provision of primary school and secondary school education, ensuring that there are significant training and job opportunities after school for the children in the community. This includes ensuring there is relevant infrastructure and good-quality teachers. There needs to be some available funding for those wanting to study further and for those who qualify for college training. However, it is only through the relevant education and training that there will be qualified people within the communities when job opportunities arise at the mines or the local businesses. Ensuring continuous communication and engagement with the communities and collaborating with other mining companies and the government will be essential to establish the specific needs of the communities and provide for the priority factors.

With the above in mind, this also means that the cause of conflict in the communities is not only the mining companies. Part of these causes include the government and the community itself. However, most responses from the community representatives highlight that they tend to focus more on mining companies because they believe mining companies can assist in some way and not necessarily because they believe it is only the mining company at fault.

The below figure 16 highlights how often the themes emerged and where they emerged; this relates to where (which province) the participant stayed or worked. This answers the research question of whether the causes of conflict differ across host communities.
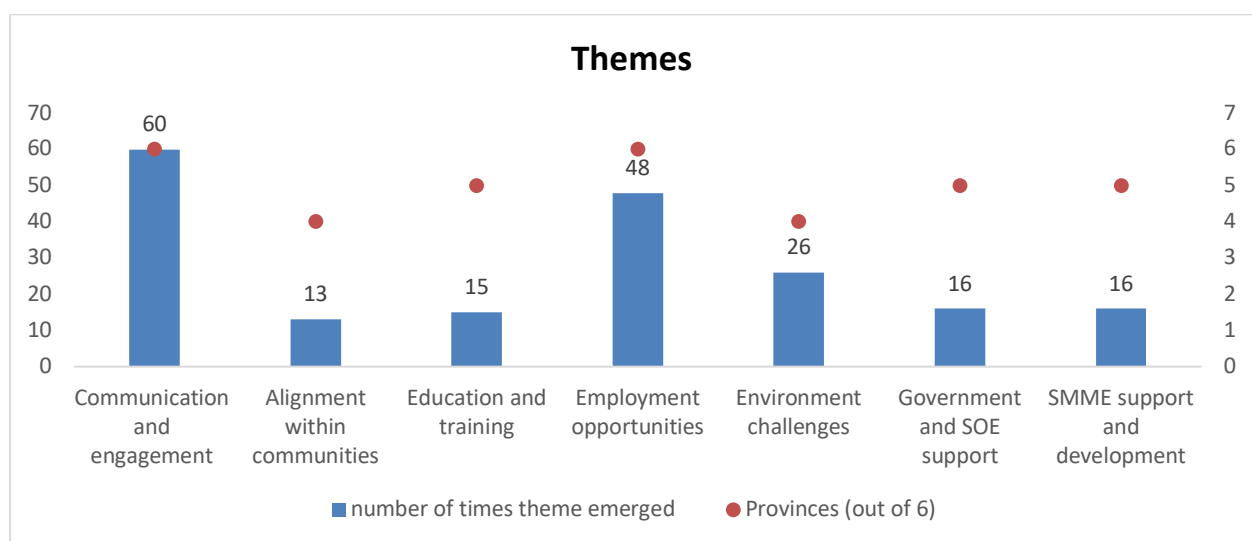

Figure 16: Emergence of key themes across various provinces

Sources of conflict do not differ across host communities. Host communities face the same challenges across South Africa related to communication, engagement, alignment within communities, employment opportunities, business opportunities, support for SMMEs, environmental support, and government and SOE support for mining companies and host communities. Although some mining companies can say that they are supporting SMMEs, they are not harming the environment, or they will restore the environment, or that they are looking at creating employment opportunities, without communicating these plans and what is happening properly and to the right people, this can result in a misinformed and frustrated community. Consequently, this can result in conflict and protest actions between the host community and the mining company. Saenz (2019) and Kilajian and Chareonsudjai (2021) highlight the criticality of building strong relationships between the mining company and the host communities. This is further supported by Boadi et al. (2019), indicating that stakeholder management strategies can support in establishing trust between mining companies and host communities, reducing conflict. They also state that in order to ensure a smoothly running mining operation with limited conflict, it is important that communities become involved and informed of what is happening on an ongoing basis. This approach should consider the current gaps in stakeholder management as addressed through research sub-question 2.

6.3. Research Sub-question two (2)

The second research question explored the current gaps that exist in how mining companies manage communities:

> "What are the current (knowledge) gaps in various stakeholder management frameworks that are utilised by different mining companies in South Africa?"

When participants were asked questions related to this research question, given the years of experience they have regarding this topic, they drew on their lived experiences to talk through what they see as gaps in how mining companies engage with the communities. Five themes emerged. These relate to stakeholder engagement, social labour plans, collaboration efforts, business strategy and government.

6.3.1. Stakeholder engagement

From the 12 interviews held with mining company representatives, only two representatives provided a detailed response to stakeholder engagement, elaborating aspects related to stakeholder analysis, development of engagement plans and overall details around how their engagements work. This included a detailed engagement

strategy. In line with Mahajan et al. (2023), sound stakeholder assessment frameworks are required to enable effective stakeholder management. When this is not in place, the stakeholders' needs are either not known, not addressed or prioritised, creating gaps.

The common gap highlighted was that mining companies engage *"just to tick a box but not fully engaged for the right purpose".* This was highlighted by Participant 17 and further supported by Boadi et al.(2019), who highlight that the perception of host communities is that mining companies engage and perform their corporate social responsibilities as a cover up or a form of green-washing strategy, the engagements are superficial and done to fulfil a requirement and not as a genuine way to address concerns or needs that the communities have.   In fact, some companies ignored the communities until a conflict occurred, and only then, when it escalated to protest actions and operational disruption, they called the police without first engaging the communities. The issue of respect was also raised where the community does not feel respected, acknowledged, or engaged in a meaningful way. According to Freeman (2010), this is not the correct way to manage communities as stakeholders. Furthermore, this approach does not result in understanding the stakeholders' needs or contributing to a positive relationship with the communities. Some mining companies engage the communities for a while, but when they see that "things are going well", they stop engaging.

An additional gap in some of the current stakeholder management frameworks, as developed by mining companies and highlighted through interviews, is that they are heavily focused on engaging only the community representatives and community forum leaders and not the communities. There are very limited engagements with the communities. This creates gaps in knowledge regarding the priority of the community's needs, where these representatives and leaders often focus on progressing their own motives and agendas instead of those of the community. Pless et al. (2022) indicated that stakeholder engagement frameworks should be proactive and collaborative and they should also be inclusive. This means that the engagements should not only be with community representatives but also with the community itself through different stages within any project.

The inability to identify all the stakeholders, develop engagement forums with them, and engage meaningfully with the community leads to misconceptions and lack of awareness or disregard of important issues; consequently, it results in a strained or failed relationship between the mining company and the host communities (Kilmann & Thomas, 1977)

6.3.2. Social labour plans

Regarding the mining companies' social labour plans, the local SMMEs do not feel adequately supported by the mines or set up to succeed as suppliers to the mines. Mining communities feel that the mining companies do not do enough to support the local businesses. This results in local SMMEs who either apply for contractor opportunities with the mines and do not get them as they are deemed inadequate to deliver, or they obtain the contract but cannot deliver on the contract and related commitments. This again links back to 6.2.5, the issue around SMME support, where Fraser (2021) highlighted the importance of mining companies working together with communities , providing key expert training that allows those businesses to succeed. Freeman (2010) stated that the ability to use social labour plans and or CSR (corporate social responsibility) as a stakeholder management tool is referred to as normative stakeholder management. The focus on this stakeholder approach is more rooted in the business' moral and ethical obligations towards the community. For successful implementation of social labour plans, collaboration efforts need to improve, and this is outlined as a gap and discussed in detail through 6.3.3.

6.3.3. Collaboration efforts

Not only have the mining communities experienced challenges, but the mining companies also reported that collaborating with the government was difficult as often, there was corruption at play. In addition to this, because the different mining companies have different interests and priorities, they find it challenging to collaborate with other mining companies. The inability for mining companies and the government to collaborate results in initiatives related to community improvement not getting implemented. A good example was one made by respondent seven (7), who highlighted that you can, as an example, agree to build a hospital, but when it is time to get the land permits approved, that becomes a stumbling block. Phiri et al. (2019) suggest that it is important to understand stakeholder salience to determine the potential for interaction and collaboration. However, understanding the stakeholder salience is also heavily dependent on understanding first who all the stakeholders are and, secondly, what their most prominent needs are.

Phiri (2019) further highlights that within the different stakeholder holder groups, there would also be division. An example is that of a community where, within the one stakeholder group, varying sub-groups, different interests and varying levels of power, legitimacy and urgency exist, further hindering collaboration efforts. Once initiatives are

set up aimed at supporting the community, it is important that these form part of the business strategy and how the business measures its success; this is outlined and discussed in the next section, 6.3.4.

6.3.4. Business Strategy

Some mining companies are successful in their stakeholder engagements by clearly defining and understanding the stakeholders, embedding their stakeholders' needs and wants within their social labour plans, and finding ways to work collaboratively with other mining companies and the government. Where such efforts were not successful, these approaches and actions had not been embedded in their business strategy. Communities also believed that the government was often not holding mining companies accountable for not delivering on their promises or even on their legally required actions, where their business strategies did not include the communities and their needs. Given that primary stakeholders have an impact on the business strategy, it is critical to embed community-related actions in the business strategy (Chowdhury, 2021). Altman (1998) and Waddock et al. (1995) stated that it was imperative to blend the overall strategic plans related to community involvement with the business, indicating that this would provide the company with a competitive advantage as the sustainability of the business would be enhanced. Once the initiatives are embedded into the business strategy, the community expects the mining companies to be held accountable, and this is a key gap identified by communities.

6.3.5. Government support

Gaps around the government theme related to the following:

a) Misunderstanding or misinterpretation by the mines and the communities of the Mining Charter and its different commitments. Thus, it was expected of the mining companies and believed to be the responsibility of the mines towards the community to clearly communicate the implications of the Mining Charter to the communities.

b) The government was not seen to be holding mining companies accountable for the delivery of the commitments they make when mines start up and throughout the life of mine. Communities believe that it was the government's role to not only legislate the rules to ensure that the mines deliver on their promises but also to ensure that there are severe consequences should the mines not deliver on these promises. However, this should be within the confines of the Mining Charter.

The aim of the legislation, as developed by the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (2017), is to ensure that the government holds mining companies accountable for delivering on their promises. However, the communities believe that this is not the case at present.

6.3.6. Summary of research sub-question two (2) discussion

Gaps identified in stakeholder management frameworks currently used by South African mining organisations included that most mines do not have an official framework to begin with. Thaba (2021) highlights the importance of considering all stakeholders when developing corporate social responsibility initiatives, additionally adding that it is important to integrate stakeholder needs within the value chain. Furthermore, O'Riordan and Fairbrass (2014) emphasize the importance of developing a stakeholder management framework, which comprises a detailed process of determining, and developing stakeholder relations, including ensuring that those relations are maintained. According to O'Riordan and Fairbrass (2014), this process includes identifying stakeholders, consulting the identified stakeholders and communicating with the stakeholders through dialogue and exchange. In an instance where a company does not have an official social framework in place or one built into their business strategy, they easily become reactive. Being reactive means that the mine is then only active when a conflict or protest action occurs and attempts to calm the situation down to enable mining operations to resume. This is highlighted through the interviews in Chapter 5 and supported by Maher (2019) and Mahajan et al. (2023) who indicate that without a sound stakeholder management plan, companies can potentially struggle to balance the various stakeholder interests, resulting in conflicts, behaviour and response that is reactive when issues arise. However, such reactive responses does not make the mine's operations sustainable. Furthermore, in line with Boadi et al. (2019), these mining companies purely engage to tick a box and react when issues arise. These gaps talk to items 1, 2,3 and 4 within figure 17.

Some of the mines that have a framework in place still have knowledge gaps related to their lack of understanding of the group dynamics and how they ought to engage the communities. This includes having to make decisions on how often to engage community representatives versus the community as a whole, what the engagement principles should be, and the engagement tactics and communication process. This is outlined in Figure 7 under items 2,3 and 4. Failure to understand engagement principles brings forth issues related to respect and being open to allow for open and honest communication between the mining company and the community. Freeman (2010) highlights that this is not the

correct approach to managing stakeholders. This includes aspects such as the potential for collaboration with other mining companies and government, as outlined by Phiri et al. (2019) and the development and embedding of social labour plans within the overall business strategy in line with Chowdhury (2021). These gaps are outlined in Figure 17 below.
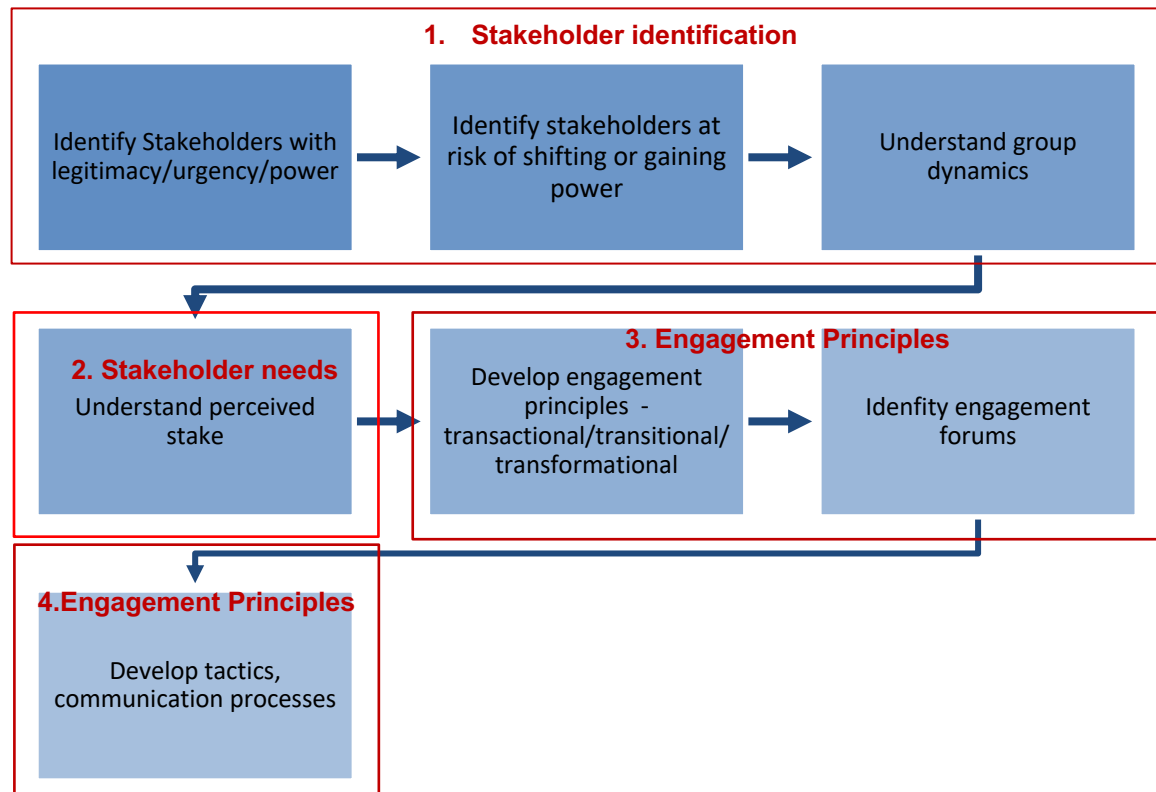
Figure 17: Stakeholder management process, Source: Aurthor;s own

Figure 17 highlights the interconnectedness of each of the principles and the identified gaps. When a company does not understand its stakeholders, it will not understand the group dynamics that exist within and between the various stakeholder groups in the community. Consequently, understanding the stakeholders' needs will be difficult and further gaps will exist in the engagement principles, which involves identifying how to engage with the communities and the related tactics and communication processes. Any gaps that are allowed to persist in these principles create negative impacts on the proceeding steps. It is thus important to understand what has worked or the learnings that other organisations have implemented to assess how to address or fill the current gaps.

6.4. Research sub-question three (3)

Although understanding the gaps within the current stakeholder management frameworks is helpful in developing or mapping a way to manage stakeholders, given the South African landscape, it is equally important to understand what has worked. This was the aim of research question 3:

> "What learnings can be utilised to develop an overarching stakeholder management framework that would be applicable within a South African context?"

Throughout the interview process, mining company representatives reported some management or strategic areas which they believed were successful. However, the community representatives still believed that, for the most part, in their experience they were not as positive as mining companies. Thus, the mining companies might have addressed some of the identified shortcomings or gaps, but very often, this was not successfully communicated to the communities. Sometimes, the mines also addressed gaps they believed existed in their approaches, but those were not the priorities of the communities. The following will focus on what seemed to have worked well.

6.4.1. Stakeholder identification and strategy development

It is important for the mines to conduct a comprehensive stakeholder mapping exercise, which includes an identification and understanding of who the key stakeholders are (their level of salience and perceived stake). It is also important to understand whether these stakeholders are in support of the presence of mines. Participants gave very detailed reports on the fact that given their organisation 'Thungela' represents a few mines in Mpumalanga in different locations of Mpumalanga, as a team responsible for the community relationship, they and the mine's members completed the stakeholder mapping for each mine together. They went into rigorous debates about who the stakeholders are and the level of salience of each of those stakeholders. This formed a critical part or input into their development of a credible engagement plan. This is in line with Mahajan et al. (2023)'s view on stakeholder analysis. Mahajan et al. (2023) give emphasis to the importance of stakeholder analysis as a critical step in stakeholder management. It talks to the examination of stakeholders in order to determine what best practice is for the organisation in how they should engage the stakeholders. In addition, it highlights that given the continuous disruptions in the operational environment, stakeholder analysis has become more and more critical. When stakeholders are

sufficiently analysed and understood, developing ways of engagement is easier, and this is discussed in 6.4.2.

6.4.2. Engagement forums and community feedback

Engagement forums and community feedback are the next steps to be taken once one knows and understands the stakeholders and their salience. This involves the development of a clear engagement path with the community that also ensures that the engagement path allows for regular feedback. A participant from Tshipi Entle specifically mentioned how their interactions with forum leaders are so rigorous that they have developed some credible relationships with the community. This aligns with the normative stakeholder approach as defined by Freeman (1984, 2010), where the aim is to ensure long-term sustainability of the organisation, which is rooted in an effective CSR programme.

Another experience was that from the Thungela mine and the community, where engagement was successful as they ensured that the engagement forums had clear constitutions with clear rules around what was to be discussed, how they would be discussed and the intent of the forums. They highlighted that it was important to engage the communities on a per-topic basis to avoid mixing issues up and creating confusion.

Lastly, and given that the needs of the different communities do not vary significantly, what has worked well for the communities were the mines' partnerships with banks to see how communities can be uplifted from an SMME perspective. This finding was not only the views raised by Maher (2019) of a transactional stakeholder approach but also that of a transformational stakeholder approach. Maher (2019) indicates that transactional stakeholder approach is seen through investment in the community as well as tactics that show "giving back" to the community through initiatives such as donations and building critical infrastructure in the local communities. In this approach, companies view host community engagements as business transactions. The transformational stakeholder approach integrates the community and the mining company, and beyond just the investments made, it aims to create a deeper impact within the community through joint projects. The next section provides a summary of the research sub-question three and its findings.

6.4.3 Summary of research sub-question three (3) discussion

In as much as some participants highlighted some items depicted in Figure 17 as gaps, it also showed that when gaps related to research sub-question (two) 2 were addressed, the relationship between the mining companies and host communities changed significantly. Some of the key items that were successful included the mine's ability to identify the important stakeholders, their salience and whether they were supportive of the mine's operation. This was supported by the works of Mahajan et al. (2023), providing emphasis to the importance of critically analysing stakeholders and was further supported by the research interviews from companies such as Thungela, who had done the exercise of detailing stakeholders and their salience.

Developing a transparent way of communicating with the stakeholders, clearing up misunderstandings, incorrect expectations, and the communities' priority needs contributed to better relationships between the mines and the communities. Both Freeman (2010) and Maher (2019) highlight that for those mining companies seeking long term relationships and creating a deeper impact within the community, this is important and forms part of the transformational stakeholder approach. In essence, the successful stakeholder approach was one that considered a combination of transactional, transitional, and transformational leadership, each depending on the relevant situation.

6.5. Conclusion

The conclusion provides an overview of the analysis from research sub-questions 1 to 3 and how they fit in with the main research question. The main research question considered how stakeholder management principles can be used to minimise conflict. It asked participants:

> "How can the stakeholder management principles be utilised as a conflict management tool in host mining communities?

This brings the key points from research sub questions one, two and three together and builds on the principles of Figure 17, which were related to stakeholder identification, stakeholder needs and engagement principles. Stakeholder identification relates to how mines can identify stakeholders and ensure that key salience is considered and understood. Stakeholder needs relate to ensuring that the needs of those identified stakeholders are identified and sufficiently understood regarding their prioritisation.

Engagement principles relate to the purpose and manner of engaging stakeholders and ensuring that these engagement tactics are built into the overall business strategy to ensure success. Table 11 below highlights the key linkage of this to literature as presented in Chapter 2

Table 11: How key findings link to literature

Process step	Process step	Related literature
1	Stakeholder identification	Bezzola et al. (2022); Costanza (2016); Fassin (2009); Mitchell et al. (1997); Phiri et al. (2019); Saenz (2019))
2	Stakeholder needs	Bezzola et al. (2022); Costanza (2016); Mahajan et al. (2023); Masuku (2021); Ngomane (2019); Saenz (2019)
3	Engagement principles	Bezzola et al. (2022); Chowdhury (2021); Freeman (1984, 2010; Kilajian & Chareonsudjai (2021); Kilmann & Thomas (1977); Mahajan et al. (2023); Maher (2019); Phiri et al. (2019); Pless et al. (2022)

In further elaborating the linkage between these key findings from research sub-questions 1 to 3 and how they link to the stakeholder management principles, and consequently, the main research question, table 12 was developed as per below.

Table 12: How the research sub-questions and related responses fit in with the engagement principles

Principles No	Principles	Research sub-question	Linked to figure 4
1	Acknowledging and actively monitoring the concerns of all legitimate stakeholders, taking their interests into account when decisions are made	1,2,3	Stakeholder identification Stakeholder needs
2	Listening and communicating openly with stakeholders regarding their concerns, contributions, and potential risks		Engagement principles
3	Adopting processes and behaviours that show sensitivity to the concerns of the stakeholders as well as their capabilities		Engagement principles
4	Recognising the interdependence as well as the rewards with the aim of achieving a fair distribution of benefits and burdens		Engagement principles
5	Working collaboratively to minimise risks and harm that could potentially arise		Engagement principles

6	Avoiding activities that could impact human rights negatively		Engagement principles
7	Acknowledging any potential conflicts between the role of companies as corporate stakeholders and their legal and moral responsibilities, which can be managed through open communication and incentive systems.		Stakeholder identification Stakeholder needs Engagement principles

In line with the principles stated above in Table 11, the three research sub-questions are interlinked with the stakeholder management principles 1 to 7, and each of these principles are closely linked to the findings presented in Figure 17 and these work hand in hand. In the South African mining sector, significant gaps are still prevalent in the application of engagement principles. This involves the mines having to communicate honestly and openly with stakeholders, understanding their concerns and ensuring that the mining companies, government, and communities engage in a manner that demonstrates that there is sensitivity towards the needs of all stakeholders. They should ensure a fair distribution of burdens and benefits, that behaviour does not negatively impact human rights and acknowledges that conflict can arise between the role of companies as stakeholders and their legal and moral responsibilities towards the communities.

Based on the findings discussed above and Table 10, chapter 7 further explores this relationship through the conclusion of this research.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1. Introduction

The purpose of this research study was to garner an understanding of which management or social frameworks and models have been utilised in the different mining companies, which frameworks have worked, and which ones have not been successful. The learnings from the study's findings were then utilised to develop a key framework that can be used within a South African mining context.

This research aimed at contributing to the academic body of knowledge as well as to business and to the host mining communities. Regarding the academic body of knowledge, this research aimed at adding to the body of knowledge from a stakeholder theory perspective, in line with Freeman (2010). Regarding the mining host communities, the research aimed to provide an understanding of some of the challenges the host communities face and how they vary across different host communities and provinces, if at all. The findings will contribute to the understanding not only of stakeholder theory but also stakeholder management through normative, descriptive, and instrumental stakeholder management frameworks. Bezzola et al. (2022) claim that better stakeholder management can reduce the level of conflicts and result in a positive outcome related to the reduction or avoidance of community protests.

With regard to the contribution to the business environment, the ability to appropriately manage primary stakeholders such as communities will ensure efficient operations, increasing profits and sustaining the business (Thaba, 2021; Tloubatla, 2020). This will allow the reduction of operational costs and reconciliation of the community's needs and demands (Bowen et al., 2010; Mercer-Mapstone et al., 2018).

Through qualitative analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the aim of exploring three research sub-questions. The first aim was, given that sources of conflict had been studied extensively in other parts of the globe, whether these sources of conflict differ across various mining host communities in South Africa. Second, the study aimed to identify the existing gaps in the current stakeholder management or engagement approaches and the utilised frameworks. The third aim was to identify the key learnings from the various communities and mining companies' approach towards stakeholder management.

The previous two chapters provided an overview of the results obtained through thematic analysis and the discussion of these results in detail, thereby providing a link between the results and literature, as presented in Chapter 2. Chapter 7 provides the conclusion to the research on *"stakeholder management as a conflict resolution mechanism within mining host communities"* and answers the key research question:

> "How can the stakeholder management principles be utilised as a conflict management tool in host mining communities?"

This chapter also provides an insight into the implications for communities, businesses, and government will be, as well as the research limitations and suggestions for future research.

7.2 Research Findings

The study has three key outcomes that will be discussed and summarised in the form of a framework. Sources of conflict and whether they differ within various host communities: Thaba (2021) conducted research through secondary data without the use of structured or semi-structured interviews. Within this research study, semi-structured interviews were used where participants from various host communities provided key insights on what they view as sources of conflict within host communities. Saenz (2019) and Costanza (2013) supported the highlighted communication and engagement as key sources of conflict, including the misalignment within communities which creates hindrances to discussing and resolving issues and challenges. Additionally, education and training opportunities were highlighted and supported by Prno (2013) and Blessia (2021), who highlighted that when mining companies start up, communities expect support related to education and training, which would allow them to meet the skills requirements and obtain jobs within the mining companies. Communities also expect that the mining activities embarked on do not harm the environment and that the government hold these mining companies accountable. Table 10 provides a good view of how these sources of conflict do not differ across various host mining communities. The next sections (7.2.1. to 7.2.3) outline the three outcomes that form the basis of the framework.

7.2.1. Stakeholder identification

The exploratory research study confirmed that the sources of conflict are largely the same across the different host mining communities. These include:

a) **Communication and engagement**

This is premised on the ability of mining companies to clearly define their stakeholders, analyse them, and develop clear engagement plans, which consequently form the basis of strong relationships between the mines and the community. This is supported by Saenz (2016), Costanza (2022) and Bezzola et al. (2022), who highlight the importance of mining companies effectively engaging with communities in order to build meaningful relationships, which consequently support in reducing conflict.

b) **Alignment within communities**

Communities themselves have an excessively high number of separate forums, which are at times divided in their goals, needs and purposes. It is not only that lack of trust exists between the mining companies and the host communities, but also within the host communities; this is supported by Kougiannous and Meara-Wallis (2020), who highlight the challenges related to the trust deficit within communities. When communication within community leaders is weak, and community members know very little about their rights, the misalignment creates hindrances and challenges related to communication and the ability to address critical issues.

c) **Education and training, employment opportunities, SMME support and development**

When mining companies start operating, communities expect schooling within the host communities to improve, bursary opportunities being developed, and training and development opportunities being set up and linked to business and employment opportunities at or through the mines. Prno (2013) and Blesia (2021) argued that this is an expectation that host communities have; as mining companies start up within the communities, education and training opportunities are provided, and these give way to employment opportunities and support and development for SMMEs.

d) **Environmental challenges**

Mining activities, expansions and operations create challenges related to the environment, such as water that is unsafe to drink, resulting in communities falling ill and requiring them to purchase bottled water. In some areas such as

Mpumalanga, the air quality around the mining area has reduced with high levels of pollution, resulting in some health challenges for people staying in the host communities. Ansu-Mensah et al. (2021) highlighted that it is important for mining companies to be aware of the environmental impacts of their mining activities and to work to resolve these impacts, restoring the environment and implementing pollution prevention measures. Damage to housing through blasting activities and trucks causing the destruction of roads, added to noise pollution, all have an environmental impact on these communities beyond the "promised" reparation of the environment after the closure of the mines.

e) **Government and SOE support**

Host communities highlight that mining companies do not seem to be held accountable when they do not deliver on promises and commitments they make to the communities, or the legislated commitments given in the Mining Charter. Mining companies stated that they were trying to deliver on those promises, but the various entities within the government were not supportive; often, they were plagued by corruption and disinterest, hindering their ability to deliver on the promises. The issue of responsible and accountable leadership was raised by Pless et al. (2022).

The frequency with which these themes were raised across all included communities and the mine representatives. This confirms that the actual sources of conflict are very similar across the host mining communities. However, some communities view some of these sources as more important or more critical than others. As an example, all six provinces' mining communities highlighted the lack of honest and transparent communication and engagement by the mines with the communities as a key source of conflict, while alignment or conflict within the communities was highlighted by only four of the six provinces included in the study.

It is thus critical for mining companies to identify the salient stakeholders, who they are, their level of legitimacy, urgency, and power. Identifying the potential risk by the stakeholders shifting or gaining salience and thus understanding the group dynamics of the communities is also very important. Communities have a high level of salience as they possess power, legitimacy, and urgency. However, it is important to clearly identify within the communities which stakeholders have what level of salience, how these stakeholders feel about mines operating in the community's environment, how they feel about the

mining company and how they can best be approached; this was supported by Mitchell et al. (1997) through elaboration of the various stakeholder salience that is determined through power, legitimacy, and urgency. And how to determine which stakeholders have power, which have legitimacy, which have urgency and which have all three, two or just one. Once an understanding of this is gained, it is easier to determine what the stakeholder needs are.

7.2.2. Stakeholders' needs

Understanding the needs of the community as a stakeholder follows the normative stakeholder management approach, where the mining company has to understand that it has a moral and ethical obligation towards the community. This is in line with the realisation that the organisation's value generating activities (i.e. mining, blasting, and trucking) impact the communities. Therefore, the mines have to consider the interests, rights, and needs of the communities and these interests should be prioritised. In the proposed framework, which results from the study's findings, this falls under understanding the perceived stake of the community. This is defined by Freeman et al. (2007) and Freeman (2010 who elaborate on the need to develop an understanding of stakeholders' perceived stake and needs.

7.2.3. Stakeholder engagement principles

Once the stakeholders are identified and the perceived stakes acknowledged, mining companies need to determine what approach they will follow for their engagement with the community. This engagement can be transactional, where the company gives back through charitable donations, and communication is typical one way from the mining company to the community, and the mining company controls this process. Another approach is transitional, where the mining company wants to build bridges with the communities, and it engages in stakeholder dialogues through formal committees and town hall meetings to identify needs and priorities. And lastly, transformational engagement, where the mining company aims to change the community in a positive manner. Based on the research study's findings and aligned with Chapter 5 and Chapter 6, as well as the works of Meher (2019a), a combination of all three engagement or management styles will be required to minimise conflict.

Stakeholder engagement principles involve first, considering the type of communication needed, communicating openly and honestly, and ensuring that risks, concerns, contributions, and potential risks are openly communicated with the communities, the

mining companies, and the government. Second, the mining companies will have to develop the necessary processes and behaviours that show sensitivity to the concerns of the stakeholder and their capabilities. Third, the mining companies will have to recognise that there are conflicts within the communities, but also interdependencies and a good balance between shared rewards and burdens is required. The fourth consideration is how to work collaboratively with the government, other mining companies and the communities to minimise risks related to these perceived and real burdens and the potential harm that could arise for the mines and the communities.

7.3. Proposed Framework

The proposed framework is based on the research findings and considers the gaps and key learnings from the conducted interviews. Figure 19 presents the proposed framework that can potentially fill the identified gaps and is based on the learnings that have been gained through the interviews.

The framework can be implemented in an approach as indicated in figure 18 below, moving from left to right, where the left side of the framework considers the initial steps that should be taken prior to any action. Every mining company should be clear about who their key stakeholders are within the surrounding communities, be clear about these stakeholders' salience, how these stakeholders should be engaged, what their perceived stake is and what the engagement tactics should be. This should be embedded in the mines' business and social strategy.

The right-hand side is focused on the output that should be seen as a result of implementing the actions presented on the left-hand side of the framework. This includes all the aspects and concerns that were highlighted in chapters 5 and 6 as the causes of conflict and how these are resolved when the "left side of the framework" is implemented. When mines sincerely consider the community's educational and skills development from primary to tertiary schooling and job training, this would prove to the communities that the mines care for the communities' wellbeing. This also implies that they commit to avoiding any negative impact on the water, air, noise, and natural environment, keeping the communities healthy. The challenge for the mines will be to remain consistent, transparent, and honest in what they promise and what they deliver. They will also have to address the incorrect expectations held by the communities that they will offer employment and business opportunities, and should they have such vacancies, these will

be filled from the communities where suitability will be enhanced through the appropriate training.

This framework was created by linking the research results presented in Chapter 5 and, the discussions in Chapter 6 and the key insights related to how community stakeholders should be managed in an effort to reduce or avoid conflicts between the communities and the mines.
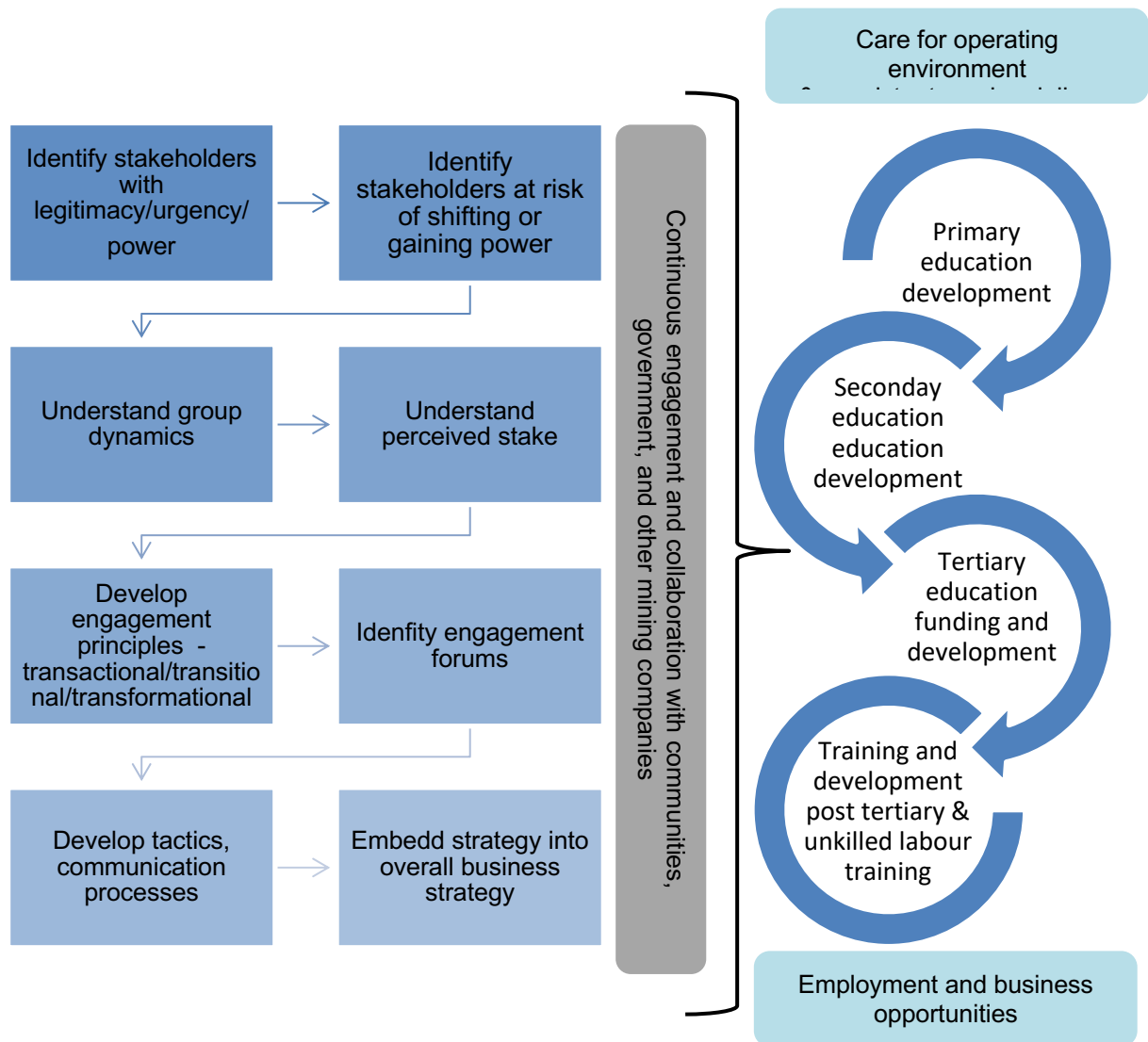

Figure 18: Proposed framework, Source: Author's own

7.4. Implications for communities, business, and government

7.4.1. Implications for communities

Although communities rely on mining companies to improve their community's living standards and job opportunities, it is critical to acknowledge that development takes time. However, some of the actions to be taken and the responsibilities remain within the government, and without collaboration, these can be hindered by the government. As such, expectations that host communities have of the mining companies need to consider this and remain realistic. The more mines are blocked from operating efficiently, the sooner they become unsustainable, and consequently, they shut down. And this has a severe impact on many communities, and it will increase the already high unemployment rate.

In addition to this, communities will have to consider a more consolidated approach to representation. When too many forums exist, mining companies end up spending all day in forums and in forum discussions; hence, no results will be achieved any time soon. When forums are consolidated, and the optimal, truly representative leaders are selected to represent communities, those who are not aiming to achieve their own ulterior motives and agendas or those who are open to corruption, it creates a more conducive environment for concerns to be addressed and the correctly prioritised action to be seen. Selected representatives need to be ethical and look out for the best interests of the community, and this is not necessarily a leader who is "the loudest" who can achieve the desired outcomes, but one who is ethical, fair, and firm.

7.4.2. Implications for businesses

For businesses, it is important to acknowledge that where a mine exists, there are significant impacts on the host communities and that stakeholder management is "not just a tick in the box to avoid conflict" but that it requires more effort and merely donating money to one or other cause is not viewed as enough to reduce or resolve conflict.

To reduce the risk of conflicts and protest actions arising, mines will need to put in extra effort to identify the salient stakeholders and learn to understand their stakeholders' needs and requirements. They also have to consider that there will be a financial impact on the mine if they commit to improving the communities' infrastructure, education, and training facilities, as well as adhering to health, safety, and environmental standards. Mining

companies need to ensure that in developing tactics and working with the community, they need to:

a) Acknowledge and actively monitor the concerns of all legitimate stakeholders, which includes community members and the government.

b) Listen and communicate openly.

c) Adopt processes and behaviours that show sensitivity to the concerns of all stakeholders, communities, and government.

d) Recognise that there are interdependencies that exist and the fair sharing of rewards and distribution of burdens.

e) Work collaboratively with communities, other mining companies and the government to minimise risks that could harm the communities.

f) Acknowledge the identified potential sources of conflicts between the mining companies, communities and government and work to address the sources of those conflicts.

The above is also presented in the proposed framework in Figure 19.

7.4.3. Implications for government

Government leaders have a critical role in the improvement of host communities. Without collaborative efforts from the government, host communities and mining companies will not achieve the desired outcomes, and consequently, conflict will remain. The proposed framework highlights these collaborative efforts as being imperative across all the actions that mining companies can attempt to do. These include improving the educational landscape within mining communities, where the government plays a key role as they control all educational infrastructure and registration. The government can also play a decisive role in creating employment opportunities in specific regions through SETA and similar organisations offering area and industry-specific training and placements. This not only helps the mining companies but also the government, as the economy improves when there are fewer unemployed people, especially among the youth.

7.5. Research Limitations

Given that the research study was exploratory in nature, limitations exist, as highlighted in Chapter 4. These are defined as potential researcher bias, the limited time horizon, the impact of culture and language, and limited access to participants from specific locations.

7.5.1. Researcher bias

Qualitative analysis presents a risk related to the assumptions that are introduced by the researcher and which can affect the outcome of the results. Given this risk, the researcher was constantly aware of the potential bias and ensured that transcripts were recorded in a verbatim manner. In addition, the researcher utilised research participants to verify the recorded data and thus manage bias.

7.5.2. Time horizon

The research was conducted in a short space of time, over four weeks in August and September 2023, and therefore resulted in only 20 interviews. However, this was five interviews over and above the required minimum of 15 interviews for semi-structured interviews in a qualitative study.

7.5.3. Culture and language differences

The researcher's primary language is Tshivenda, and the secondary language is English. As all interviews were conducted in English, there could potentially be details lost due to cultural and language differences.

7.5.4. Access to participants from specific locations

Given the limited time available for the study, access to participants from specific locations was a challenge; however, participants were drawn from the areas where most of the mining activities occur.

7.6. Suggestions for Future Research

Considering the findings of this research study, the methodology used and the limitations, the following recommendations for future research can be made:

a) The study considered only provinces with a high incidence of mining activity in South Africa. Further research can be conducted with a larger sample size across all nine provinces in South Africa, wherever there is a mining activity.

b) A quantitative study can be conducted considering the frequency of conflicts and their listed sources analysed by sub-sector of the mines as well as by provinces.

7.7. Conclusion

This study draws from the shared experiences of both mining company representatives and host communities who experience conflicts and challenges in their mining environment. Through the research study, it was confirmed that the causes of conflict between host communities and mining companies do not differ across the different mines or the included provinces in South Africa.

It was further confirmed that gaps exist in the current stakeholder approaches used by the different mining companies. These gaps or shortcomings are prevalent in whether and how mining companies identify their salient stakeholders, whether and how they engage their stakeholders, and whether they embed their risk reduction solutions in their overall business or social strategy. In addressing and hopefully resolving these gaps and working to minimise conflict, a framework was developed based on the findings from this study. This framework not only contributes towards the body of academic acknowledge from a stakeholder management perspective, but it is also useful in assisting mining companies to manage communities' requirements, needs and concerns better.

REFERENCES

Adams, M., Hoejmose, S., & Kastrinaki, Z. (2017). Corporate philanthropy and risk management: An investigation of reinsurance and charitable giving in insurance firms. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, *27*(1), 1–37. https://doi.org/10.1017/beq.2016.54

Alexander, P., Runciman, C., Ngwane, T., Moloto, B., Mokgele, K., & Van Staden, N. (2018). Frequency and turmoil: South Africa's community protests 2005-2017. *South African Crime Quarterly*, *63*, 27–42. https://doi.org/10.17159/2413-3108/2018/v0n63a3057

Altman, B. (1998). Corporate community relations in the 1900s. *Business and Society*, *37*(1), 221–227.

American Psychological Association. (2010). *Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct*. https://www.apa.org/ethics/code

Ansu-Mensah, P., Marfo, E. O., Awuah, L. S., & Amoako, K. O. (2021). Corporate social responsibility and stakeholder engagement in Ghana's mining sector: a case study of Newmont Ahafo mines. *International Journal of Corporate Social Responsibility*, *6*(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40991-020-00054-2

Arce, M. (2016). The political consequences of mobilisation against resource extraction. *An International Quarterly*, *21*(4), 469–483.

Asante Boadi, E., He, Z., Bosompem, J., Say, J., & Boadi, E. K. (2019). Let the Talk Count: Attributes of Stakeholder Engagement, Trust, Perceive Environmental Protection and CSR. *SAGE Open*, *9*(1). https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019825920

Banerjee, Subhabrata. B. (2018). Transnational power and translocal governance: The politics of corporate responsibility . *Human Relations*, *71*(6), 796–821. https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726717726586

Bebbington, A. (2011). *Social conflict, economic development and the extractive industry: Evidence from South America*. Taylor and Francis.

Bebbington, A., Humphreys-Bebbington, D., Bury, J., Lingan, J., Munoz, J. P., & Scurrah, M. (2008). Mining and social movements: Struggles over livelihood and rural territorial development in the Andes. *World Development* , *36*(12), 2888–2905. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2007.11.016

Bell, E., Bryman, A., & Harley, B. (2019). *Business research methods* (Fifth). Oxford University Press.

Bendall, P., Rossow, A., Viglione, L., Smith, D., Seoane, P., Chan, K., Milan, G., Li, R., Daruka, Y., Winzenreid, S., Magne, P., & Buist, D. (2023). *Mine 2023: 20th edition; The era of reinvention* .

Berman, N., Couttenier, M., Rohner, D., & Thoenig, M. (2017). This mine is mine! How minerals fuel conflicts in Africa. *American Economic Review*, *107*(6), 1564–1610. https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.20150774

Berman, S., Wicks, A., Kotha, S., & Jones, T. (1999). Does stakeholder orientation matter? The relationship between stakeholder management models and firm financial performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, *42*(5), 488–506. https://doi.org/10.5465/256972

Bezzola, S., Günther, I., Brugger, F., & Lefoll, E. (2022). CSR and local conflicts in African mining communities. *World Development*, *158*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2022.105968

Bird, G. (2016). The influence of the scale of mining activity and mine site remediation on the contamination legacy of historical metal mining activity. *Environmental Science and Pollution Research*, *23*(23), 23456–23466. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-016-7400-z

Blesia, J., Wild, S., Dixon, K., & Lord, B. (2021). Corporate community relations and development: engagement with indigenous peoples. *Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal*, *12*(4), 811–845. https://doi.org/10.1108/SAMPJ-10-2018-0278

Boadi, E., He, Z., Darko, D., & Abrokwah, E. (2018). Unlocking from Community Stakeholders, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects for effective Company–Community relationship. *Labor History*, *59*(6), 746–762. https://doi.org/10.1080/0023656X.2018.1470223

Bowen, F., Newenham-Kahindi, A., & Herremans, I. (2010). When suits meet roots: The antecedents and consequences of community engagement strategy. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *95*(2), 297–318. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-009-0360-1

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). *Thematic analysis: a practical guide*. SAGE.

Brodsky, Anne. E., Buckingham, Sara. L., Scheibler, Jill. E., & Mannarini, T. (2016). Introduction to qualitative approaches. In Leonard. A. Jason & David. S. Glenwick (Eds.), *Handbook of methodological approaches to community-based research: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods* (pp. 13–22). Oxford University Press.

Chowdhury, R. (2021). Self-Representation of Marginalized Groups: A New Way of Thinking through W. E. B. du Bois. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, *31*(4), 524–548. https://doi.org/10.1017/beq.2021.5

Christensen, D. (2019). Concession stands: How mining investments incite protest in Africa. *International Organization*, *73*(1), 65–101. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020818318000413

Clackson, M. (1995). A stakeholder framework for analysing and evaluating corporate social performance. *The Academy of Management Review*, *20*(1), 92–117. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1995.9503271994

Clarkson Centre for Business Ethics. (1999). *Principles of stakeholder management* (L. Preston, T. Donaldson, & Leonard. J. Brooks, Eds.). The Clarkson Centre for Business Ethics, Joseph L.Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto.

Cole, M., & Broadhurst, J. (2020). Mapping and classification of mining host communities: A case study of South Africa. *Extractive Industries and Society*, *7*(3), 954–964. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2020.06.007

Collins, D. (2009). The failure of a socially responsive gold mining MNC in El Salvador: Ramifications of NGO mistrust. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *88*(2), 245–268. https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-009-0288-5

Cooney, J. (2017). Reflections on the 20th anniversary of the term 'social licence'. *Journal of Energy and Natural Resources Law*, *35*(2), 197–200. https://doi.org/10.1080/02646811.2016.1269472

Costanza, J. (2016). Mining conflict and the politics of obtaining a social license: Insight from Guatemala. *World Development*, *79*, 97–113. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.10.021

Council for Geoscience. (2003). *Selected active mines; South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland* . Council for Geoscience . https://www.geoscience.org.za/cgs/systems/publications/downloadable-material/

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, D. J. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches* (Fifth). Sage Publications.

Davenport, J. (2013). *Digging Deep: a history of mining in South Africa, 1852 - 2022*. Jonathan Ball Publishers. https://books.google.co.za/books/about/Digging_Deep.html?id=dKsYngEACAAJ&redir_esc=y

Department of Mineral Resources. (2010a). *Guideline for the submission of a social and labour plan*. Department of Mineral Resources. chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.dmr.gov.za/Portals/0/social%20and%20labour%20plan_guideline.pdf

Department of Mineral Resources. (2010b). *Guideline for the submission of a social and labour plan*.

Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. (2017). *Mineral policy and promotion overview* . Department of Mineral Resources and Energy.

Dikgwatlhe, P., & Mulenga, F. (2023). Perceptions of local communities regarding the impacts of mining on employment and economic activities in South Africa. *Resources Policy*, *80*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2022.103138

DMRE. (2022). *D1-2022 Operating mines, quarries and mineral processing plants in South Africa*.

Donaldson, T., & Preston, L. (1995). The stakeholder theory of the corporation: Concepts, evidence, and implications . *The Academy of Management Review*, *20*(1), 65–91. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.1995.9503271992

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R., & Jackson, Paul. R. (2012). *Management Research* (Fourth). Sage .

Emalahleni FM news. (2020, September 2). Protest action in progress at Beryl coal by Phola community. *Emalahleni FM News*. https://witbanknews.co.za/203422/phola-protesters-not-happy-with-local-mines-employment-strategy/

Fassin, Y. (2009). The stakeholder model refined. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *84*(1), 113–135. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-008-9677-4

Fraser, J. (2021). Mining companies and communities: collaborative approaches to reduce social risk and advance sustainable development. *Resource Policy*, *74*, 1–10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2018.02.003

Freeman, E. (1984). *Strategic Management: A stakeholder approach*. Cambridge University Press. https://books.google.co.za/books/about/Strategic_Management.html?id=4PUJAQA AMAAJ&redir_esc=y

Freeman, E., Harrison, J., & Wicks, A. (2007). *Managing for stakeholders: Survival, reputation and succes*. Yale University Press.

Freeman, E., Harrison, J., Wicks, A., Parmer, B., & deColle, S. (2010). *Stakeholder theory: the state of the art*. Cambridge University Press. https://books.google.co.za/books?id=xF8WN1QlIMC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

Freeman, E., & McVea, J. (2001). *A stakeholder approach to strategic management* (01; 02).

Freeman, Edward. R. (2010). *Strategic Management: A stakeholder approach*. Cambridge University Press.

Friedman, M. (1970, September 13). A Friedman doctrine - The social responsibility of business is to increase its profits. *The New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/13/archives/a-friedman-doctrine-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to.html

Fujimoto, Y., Azmat, F., & Subramaniam, N. (2019). Creating community-inclusive organizations: Managerial accountability framework. *Business & Society* , *58*(4), 712–748. https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650316680060

Goldswain, Zi. (2022, November 15). Phola protesters not happy with local mine's employment strategy . *Witbank News*. https://witbanknews.co.za/203422/phola-protesters-not-happy-with-local-mines-employment-strategy/

Greenwood, M. (2007). Stakeholder engagement: Beyond the myth of corporate responsibility . *Journal of Business Ethics*, *74*(4), 315–327.

Harowitz, L. (2015). Culturally articulated neoliberalisation: Corporate social responsibility and the capture of indigenous legitimacy in New Caledonia. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *40*(1), 88–101. https://doi.org/10.1111/tran.12057

Harper, P. (2022, June 14). RBM cuts production over new wave of protests. *Mail & Guardian*. https://mg.co.za/news/2022-06-14-rbm-cuts-production-over-new-wave-of-protests/

Harrison, J., & Wicks, A. (2013). Stakeholder theory, value, and firm performance. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, *23*(1), 97–124.

Haslam, P., & Tanimoune, N. (2016). The determinants of social conflict in the latin American mining sector: New evidence with quantitative data. *World Development* , *78*, 401–419. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2015.10.020

Hendry, J. (2005). Stakeholder influence strategies: An empirical exploration . *Journal of Business Ethics*, *61*(1), 79–99. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-005-8502-6

Hlatshwayo, T. (2019). *Rethinking Corporate Social Responsibility in the mining industry: Focusing on recipients' perspectives* [Rhodes University]. https://commons.ru.ac.za/vital/access/manager/Repository/vital:37998?site_name= Rhodes%20University

Humby, T. (2016). Redressing Mining Legacies: The Case of the South African Mining Industry. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *135*(4), 653–664. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2380-8

Hussey, J., & Hussey, R. (1997). *Business research: A practical guide for undergraduate and post graduate students*. Macmillan Business.

ICMM. (2015). *Good practice guide indigenous people and mining*.

Jones, T., & Wicks, A. (1999). Convergent stakeholder theory . *The Academy of Management Review*, *24*(2), 206–221.

Kapelus, P. (2002). Mining, corporate social responsibility and the community: The case of Rio Tinto, Richards Bay minerals and the Mbonambi. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *39*(3), 275–296. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016570929359

Keller, P., & Brown, C. (1968). An interpersonal ethic for communication. *Journal of Communication*, *18*(1), 73–81. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.1968.tb00057

Kemp, D., Owen, J. R., Gotzmann, N., & Bond, C. J. (2011). Just relations and company-

community conflict in mining . *Journal of Business of Ethics*, *101*(1), 93–109. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-010-0711-y

Kilajian, A., & Chareonsudjai, P. (2021). Conflict resolution and community engagement in post-audit EIA environmental management: Lessons learned from a mining community in Thailand. *Environmental Challenges*, *5*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envc.2021.100253

Kilmann, R., & Thomas, K. (1977). Developing a forced-choice measure of conflict-handling behavior: The "Mode" Instrument. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *37*(2), 309–325. https://doi.org/10.1177/001316447703700204

King, B., & Soule, S. (2007). Social movements as extra-institutional entrepreneurs: The effect of protests on stock price returns. *Administrative Science Quartely*, *52*(3), 413–442.

Kougiannou, N., & O'Meara-Wallis, M. (2020). 'Chimneys don't belch out carnations!' The (in)tolerance of corporate hypocrisy: A case study of trust and community engagement strategies. *Journal of Business Research*, *114*, 348–362. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.08.029

Lali, V. (2022, August). Mining-affected communities protest outside Parliament demanding greater development . *Daily Maverick*.

Leavy, P. (2017). *Research design: Quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods, arts-based and community-based participatory research approaches*. Guildford Publications .

Li, F. (2016). In defense of water: Modern mining, grassroots movements, and corporate strategies in Peru. *The Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Anthropology*, *21*(1), 109–129. https://doi.org/10.1111/jlca.12198

Llaque, L. (2021). *Strategies to gain a Social License to Operate in the mining industry* [Walden University]. https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations/10514/

Magwaza, N. (2016, May 8). South Africa: Community protests against Rio Tinto's

Richards Bay Mine over 'unequal treatment of host communities' disrupt operations. *Business and Human Rights Resource Centre*. https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/south-africa-community-protests-against-rio-tintos-richards-bay-mine-over-unequal-treatment-of-host-communities-disrupt-operations/

Mahajan, R., Lim, W., Sareen, M., Kumar, S., & Panwar, R. (2023). Stakeholder theory. *Journal of Business Research*, *166*, 1–16. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2023.114104

Maher, R. (2019). Squeezing Psychological freedom in corporate–community engagement. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *160*(4), 1047–1066. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3898-y

Mahlangu, I. (2022, February 8). Residents blame blasting for damaged houses. *Sowetan Live*. https://www.sowetanlive.co.za/news/south-africa/2022-02-08-residents-blame-mine-blasting-for-damaged-houses/

Makoni, J. (2018). *Corporate Community engagement framework for stakeholder relations in the extractive sector in the Western Cape, South Africa* [Central University of Technology]. https://digitalknowledge.cput.ac.za/handle/11189/7024

Makoni, J., & Onojaefe, D. (2020). Framework for Stakeholders' Relations in the Extractive Sector in Selected Mines in Cape Town. *ACTA UNIVERSITATIS DANUBIUS*, *16*(2), 214–226.Retrieved August 28,2023, from http://journals.univ-danubius.ro/index.php/oeconomica/index

Masuku, C. (2021). *Sustainability and stakeholder relationships in embedded mining communities in Zimbabwe* [University of Johannesburg]. http://hdl.handle.net/102000/0002

Matsimela, T. (2020). *An evaluation of co-management practices: A case of a South African platinum mine management and the local community* [Rhodes Business School].https://vital.seals.ac.za/vital/access/manager/Repository/vital:42134?site_name=GlobalView&f0=sm_type%3A%22Thesis%22

Mckay, D. (2019, April 18). South32 lowers SA coal production target owing to community protests. *MiningMx*. https://www.miningmx.com/news/energy/36708-south32-lowers-sa-coal-production-target-owing-to-community-protests/

Mercer-Mapstone, L., Rifkin, W., Louis, W., & Moffat, K. (2018). Company-community dialogue builds relationships, fairness, and trust leading to social acceptance of Australian mining developments. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *184*, 671–677. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2018.02.291

Minerals Council South Africa. (2023). *The Minerals Council facts and figures pocketbook*.

Mitchell, R., Agle, B., & Wood, D. (1997). Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: Defining the principle of who and what really counts. *Academy of Management Review*, *22*(4), 853–886. https://doi.org/10.2307/259247

Mnwana, S., & Bowman, A. (2022). Land, conflict and radical distributive claims in South Africa's rural mining frontier. *Extractive Industries and Society*, *11*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.exis.2021.100972

Murphree, D., Wright, S., & Ebaugh, H. (1996). Toxic waste siting and community resistance: How cooptation of local citizen opposition failed. *Sociological Perspectives*, *39*(4), 447–463. https://doi.org/10.2307/1389417

Myers, Michael. D. (2020). *Qualitative research in business and management* (Third). Sage Publications Inc.

Ndlovu, M. (2013). Living in the Marikana world: The state, capital and society. *International Journal of African Renaissance Studies - Multi-, Inter- and Transdisciplinarity*, *8*(1), 46–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/18186874.2013.834554

Neville, B., & Menguc, B. (2006). Stakeholder multiplicity: Toward an understanding of the interactions between stakeholders. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *66*(4), 377–391. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-006-0015-4

Newenham-Kahindi, A. (2011). A gold mining corporation and local communities in the

Lake Victoria zone: The case of Barrick Gold multinational in Tanzania. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *99*(2), 253–282. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-010-0653-4

Ngcukana, L. (2018, October 9). Mining project will destroy us, say Xolobeni villagers. *City Press*. https://www.news24.com/citypress/news/mining-project-will-destroy-us-say-xolobeni-villagers-20181001

Ngomane, F. N. (2019). *The rebellious and ungovernable Barberton community against Barberton Mines (Pty) Ltd* [Development Studies , University of South Africa]. https://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/25712

O'Faircheallaigh, C. (2015). Social equity and large mining projects: voluntary industry initiatives, public regulation and community development agreements. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *132*(1), 91–103. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2308-3

Omisore, B., & Abiodun, A. (2014). Organisational conflicts: Causes, effects and remedies. *International Journal of Academic Research in Economics and Management Sciences*, *3*(6). https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarems/v3-i6/1351

O'Riordan, L., & Fairbrass, J. (2014). Managing CSR stakeholder engagement: A new conceptual framework. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *125*(1), 121–145. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1913-x

Passetti, E., Bianchi, L., Battaglia, M., & Frey, M. (2019). When democratic principles are not enough: Tensions and temporalities of dialogic stakeholder engagement. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *155*(1), 173–190. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3500-z

Pereira, V., Tuffour, J., Patnaik, S., Temouri, Y., Malik, A., & Singh, S. (2021). The quest for CSR: Mapping responsible and irresponsible practices in an intra-organisational context in Ghana's gold mining industry. *Journal of Business Research* , *135*(1), 268–281.

Phiri, O., Mantzari, E., & Gleadle, P. (2019). Stakeholder interactions and corporate social responsibility (CSR) practices: Evidence from the Zambian copper mining sector. *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, *32*(1), 26–54.

https://doi.org/10.1108/AAAJ-04-2016-2540

Pless, N., Sengupta, A., Wheeler, M., & Maak, T. (2022). Responsible leadership and the reflective CEO: Resolving stakeholder conflict by imagining what could be done. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *180*(1), 313–337. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-021-04865-6

Prno, J. (2013). An analysis of factors leading to the establishment of a social license to operate in the mining industry. *Resources Policy*, *88*, 577–590. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2013.09.010

Ranangen, H. (2017). Stakeholder management theory meets CSR practice in Swedish mining. *Mineral Economics*, *30*(1), 15–19. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13563-016-0098-z

Reed, D. (2002). Resources extraction industries in developing countries. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *39*(3), 199–226.

Remme, J., & de Waal, A. (2020). High performance stakeholder management: what is needed? *Measuring Business Excellence*, *24*(3), 367–376. https://doi.org/10.1108/MBE-08-2019-0077

Reuters. (2017, October 8). Protests test tribal authority on South Africa's platinum belt. *Reuters*. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-safrica-platinum-insight/protests-test-tribal-authority-on-south-africas-platinum-belt-idUSKBN1CD06E

Riger, S., & Sigurvinsdottir, R. (2016). Thematic Analysis . In Leonard. A. Jason & David. S. Glenwick (Eds.), *Handbook of methodological approaches to community-based research: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods* (pp. 33–41). Oxford University Press Incorporated .

Rodrigues, M., Alves, M.-C., Silva, R., & Oliveira, C. (2022). Mapping the literature on social responsibility and stakeholders' pressures in the mining industry. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management* , *15*, 425–453. https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm15100425

Rowley, T. (1997). Moving beyond dyadic ties: A network theory of stakeholder influences. *Academy of Management Review*, *22*(4), 887–910. https://doi.org/10.2307/259248

Saenz, C. (2019). A social conflict diagnostic tool for application in the mining industry: A case study in Peru. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, *26*(3), 690–700. https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1714

Saunders, M., & Lewis, P. (2012). *Doing research in business and management* (Second). Pearson.

Saunders, M. N. K., Lewis, P., & Thornhill, A. (2019). *Research methods for business students* (Eighth). Pearson .

Sautter, E., & Leisen, B. (1999). Managing stakeholders: A tourism Planning Model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, *26*(2), 312–328. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0160-7383(98)00097-8

Sexton, R. (2020). Unpacking the local resource curse: How externalities and governance shape social conflict. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *64*(4), 640–673. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022002719873044

Spiegelberg, H. (1994). *The phenomenological movement: A historical introduction* (Third). Kluwer Academic publishers.

Stebbins, R. (2008). Exploratory data analysis. In *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods* (Given, Lisa.M, Vol. 1). Sage. https://www.google.co.za/books/edition/The_SAGE_Encyclopedia_of_Qualitative_Res/byh1AwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0

Szablowski, D. (2002). Mining, displacement and the World Bank: A case analysis of compania minera antamina's operations in Peru. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *39*(3), 247–273.

Thaba, Sebonkile. C. (2021, July). Mine operations in South Africa: Community and employee reactions. *Proceedings of the World Congress on Engineering* .

The Minerals Council. (2023). *Facts and figures pocketbook*.

The Presidency. (2002). *No.28 of 2002: Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act*.

Tloubatla, M. (2020). *The role of Richards Bay Minerals (RBM) on the sustainable local economic development of KwaMbonambi and Sokhulu communities* [Masters thesis, University of Kwazulu Natal]. https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/handle/10413/20521

Tshehla, M. D. (2018). *Stakeholder engagement: exploring sources of conflict following implementation of agreed outcomes* [Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria]. https://repository.up.ac.za/handle/2263/68813

Van Dyk, J., & Roux, D. (2021). *Diamonds Are Forever: (Re)Building the archive of a prototypical mining town* [University of Stellenbosch]. https://scholar.sun.ac.za

Waddock, S., & Boyle, M. E. (1995). The dynamics of change in corporate community relations. *California Management Review*, *37*(4), 125–140. https://doi.org/10.2307/41165814

Warnaars, X. (2012). Why be poor when we can be rich? Constructing responsible mining in El Pangui, Ecuador. *Resources Policy*, *37*(2), 223–232. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resourpol.2011.10.001

Wheeler, D., Fabig, H., & Boele, R. (2002). Paradoxes and dilemmas for stakeholder responsive firms in the extractive sector: Lessons from the case of Shell and the Ogoni. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *39*(3), 297–318. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1016542207069

Wiersma, W. (1995). *Research methods in education: an introduction* (sixth). Allyn and Bacon .

Wisker, G. (2008). *The Postgraduate research handbook* (Second). Palgrave Macmillan.

Zandvliet, L., & Anderson, M. (2009). *Getting it right: Making corporate - community relations work*. Sheffield: Greenleaf Publishing.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Interview Schedule

Interview questions: Community representative

<u>Participant Code:</u>

<u>Interview Date:</u>

<u>Research questions:</u>

1. Do key sources of conflict differ across host mining communities?
2. What are the current gaps within various stakeholder management frameworks?
3. What learnings can be utilised to develop an overarching stakeholder management framework in South Africa?

What the researcher should look out for?	Questions the researcher can ask	Link to research questions

Setting the scene	• Greet the participant
	• Provide brief overview and introduction of researcher and research topic
	• Thank the participating for taking part in the research
	• Provide an overview of the participant consent form and request signature
	• Ensure the following points are highlighted in the overview of participant consent form:
	    o Confidentiality will be maintained
	    o Participant can withdraw consent at moment with no consequence	

Questions to ask: Ask probing and follow-up questions	1. Can you briefly tell me about yourself and your experience staying in this community?	-
	2. What is your view on mining companies and their impact on the community?	1

	3. Can you tell me about protests within the community related to the surrounding mines?	1
	4. What, in your view, are the main reasons for protests?	1
	5. What initiatives are the mining companies conducting within the communities to ensure sustainability?	2
	6. What are your expectations on mining companies' and government's role in enhancing stakeholder relationships with the community? What should they do for the community?	2
	7. What is your view on collaboration between mining companies and government?	2
	8. How quickly do mining companies respond to your needs? And how often do you see government officials coming in to provide support?	2
	9. What is your view on government and mining company collaboration efforts and challenges?	2
	10. How often do mining companies engage the community?	2
	11. Tell me about your experience and relationship with the mining companies.	2
	12. What challenges do you experience when dealing with these mining companies?	3
	13. What are some of things that been working in terms of how the mining companies engage communities?	3
Closing	**Thank the participant for taking part in the interview**	

Interview questions: Mining Company employees

What the researcher should look out for?	Questions the researcher can ask	

Setting the scene	• Greet the participant
	• Provide brief overview and introduction of researcher and research topic
	• Thank the participating for taking part in the research
	• Provide an overview of the participant consent form and request signature
	• Ensure the following points are highlighted in the overview of participant consent form:
	    o Confidentiality will be maintained
	    o Participant can withdraw consent at moment with no consequence	

Questions to ask: Ask probing and follow-up questions	1. Can you briefly tell me about yourself and your experience staying in the mining industry and this company?	-
	2. Who are the key community stakeholders for your mine?	2
	3. Can you tell me about protests within the community related to the surrounding mines?	1
	4. How often have you had stoppages due to community protests? Can you tell me more about these stoppages and some of the causes?	1,2
	5. What are the main reasons for the protests?	1
	6. What is your view of the role companies play in the community?	2,3
	7. What is your view on collaboration between mining companies and government?	2,3
	8. What is the mining company doing to ensure enhanced stakeholder relationships with the	2,3

	community? And are these working?	
	9. What is your view on government and mining company collaboration efforts and challenges?	2,3
	10. How much money is budged for employee-community engagements and CSR?	2,3
	11. How often do you engage with the community and why?	2,3
	12. What initiatives are the mining companies conducting within the communities?	2,3
	13. What is your view of what mining companies should do for the community and how government can support and assist?	2,3
	14. Does the mining company currently have a relationship with the community?	2
	15. What programmes are available and being implemented to ensure good relationships are maintained with the community?	2,3
	16. What challenges do you experience when dealing with the community and government entities aimed at supporting mining companies and communities?	2,3
	17. Does your company use a top up or bottom approach to engage communities?	2,3
	18. Does your company have a community engagement framework?	2
	19. What are some of the key things that have worked with regard to community engagements? What has not worked? Where are the gaps?	3
Closing	**Thank the participant for taking part in the interview**	

APPENDIX 2: CONSISTENCY MATRIX

Title: Stakeholder management as a conflict resolution mechanism within mining host communities

Research questions	Literature review	Data collection tool (Company representative research questionnaire)	Data collection tool (Community research questionnaire)	Analysis
Main Research question How can the stakeholder management principles be utilised as a conflict management tool in host mining communities?	(Bezzola et al., 2022; Costanza, 2016; Edward. R. Freeman, 2010; Mitchell et al., 1997; Phiri et al., 2019; Saenz, 2019)	Research sub-questions	research sub-questions	Content analysis on open ended questions – semi structured interviews
Research sub- question 1: Do these sources of conflict differ across host mining communities?	(Bezzola et al., 2022; Cole & Broadhurst, 2020; Costanza, 2016; Kougiannou & O'Meara-Wallis, 2020; Masuku, 2021; Ngomane, 2019; Pless et al., 2022; Saenz, 2019; Thaba, 2021)	Interview questions 1,3,4,5,16	1, 2, 3, 4	Content analysis on open ended questions questions linked frequency of protests and causes of conflict
Research sub-question 2 "What are the current (knowledge) gaps in various	(Altman, 1998; Chowdhury, 2021; Edward. R. Freeman, 2010; Kilmann & Thomas, 1977; Mahajan	Interview questions 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18	5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11	Content analysis on open ended questions linked to

stakeholder management frameworks that are utilised by different mining companies in South Africa?	et al., 2023; Phiri et al., 2019)			gaps in stakeholder management
Research sub-question 3 What learnings can be utilised to develop an overarching stakeholder management framework that would be applicable within a South African context?	(E. Freeman, 1984; Edward. R. Freeman, 2010; Mahajan et al., 2023; Maher, 2019)	Interview questions 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19	12, 13	Content analysis on open ended questions linked to key learnings in stakeholder management

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF CODES GENERATED/THEMATIC MAP

RSQ1: Mining company representatives			
Research Question	Number of codes per group	Code groups	Themes
RSQ1	45	Engagement forums not well structured Engagement forums not well structured Mining companies inconsistent about what they say and do for the communities No service delivery for communities No trust between mining communities and mining companies	Communication and engagement between communities and mining companies
	10	Gap between community representatives and how they communicate with the community Mining communities are misaligned amongst each other	Communication challenges within the communities
	13	Mining companies not upskilling communities Not enough education opportunities	Education and training
	32	Not enough employment opportunities	Employment opportunities
	4	Environmental challenges related to mining impacting the health of the community	Environmental challenges
	8	Lack of support from government to mining companies	Government and SOE support
	12	Mining companies' lack of support for SMMEs Unfair procurement practices	SMME support and development

RSQ1: Host community			
Research Question	**Number of codes per group**	**Code groups**	**Themes**
RSQ1	3	Division within communities	Alignment within communities
	15	Challenges with Communication channels Consistency in delivery Lack of transparency Not delivering to commitments	Communication and engagement
	2	Education and job opportunities Training opportunities	Education and training
	16	Employment challenges Inconsistent hiring processes Unfair hiring practices	Employment opportunities
	22	Environmental concerns Houses challenges due to blasting activities Road conditions	Environmental challenges
	8	Government support for employment and business opportunities Mining charter requirements Rehabilitation requirements for mines	Government and SOE support
	4	Unfair supplier processes	SMME support and development

RSQ2: Mining company representatives			
Research Question	**Number of codes per group**	**Code groups**	**Themes**
RSQ2	5	How businesses build strategies Understanding impact of mining Understanding responsibilities	Business strategy
	37	Government red tape Government regulations Role of government in SLPs Role of ward chancellors and municipalities	Government Support
	26	Communication Delivery on promises Engagements set up How companies escalate challenges Neglecting communities Reactive companies when there is an issue Sensitivity to different cultures Structure of engagement Transparency	Stakeholder engagement
	11	How SLPs are embedded Investing in education early on Relocation of employed people within host communities Supplier development processes	Social labour plans
	10	Collaboration with government Collaboration with other mining companies Collaboration within government SOEs Collaboration with faith leaders	Collaboration efforts

RSQ2: Host community			
Research Question	**Number of codes per group**	**Code groups**	**Themes**
RSQ2	7	Alignment within communities Collaboration	Collaboration efforts
	5	Corruption Leadership	Corruption and leadership
	8	Alignment on DMRE requirements DMRE oversight on regulations Government regulations Support form municipalities	Government Support
	5	Gaps in education Impact of mining and trucking on the community	Social Labour Plans
	20	Communication channels Communication with communities Gaps in engagement forums How mining companies respond Inconsistency in communication and information shared Lack of transparency Response of mining companies	Stakeholder engagement

RSQ3: Mining Company representatives			
Research Question	Number of codes generated	Code groups	Themes
RSQ3	3	Developing SMMEs Educating communities Embedding SLPs within company strategy Partnerships with banks to uplift SMMEs Setting up trust funds	Strategy development
	16	Stakeholder identification Clear understanding of community issues Doing surveys in communities Collaboration with communities	Stakeholder analysis and mapping
	12	Developing clear constitution for engagement Finding multiple ways of communication	Engagement plans & Frameworks
	3	Engaging communities when developing SLPs Knowing when to continue engagements and when to stop Setting up and consolidating engagement forums Working with own employees who stay within the community	Engagement forums constitution
	3	Doing surveys in communities Keeping lines of communication opened	Community feedback structures

RSQ3: Host community			
Research Question	Number of codes per group	Code groups	Themes
RSQ3	7	Education initiatives	Education initiatives