

CHANGING LANDSCAPE, CHANGING WORKFORCE AND CHANGING WORKPLACE: A GLIMPSE INTO THE MINING INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA



J. Mashayamombe, PhD fellow
Department of Sociology
12 March 2018, IRASA Conference



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Denkleiers • Leading Minds • Dikgopolo tša Dihlalefi

INTRODUCTION



- SINCE 1994, WORKPLACE RELATIONS, EMPLOYEE PROFILE, WORK DESIGN AND PRODUCTION HAVE UNDERGONE CHANGE
- CHANGE THROUGH POLICY, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FACTORS
- WORKER PROFILE IS FAST CHANGING
- 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION ALREADY UNDERWAY GLOBALLY AND IS SOUTH AFRICA READY
- IN THIS PRESENTATION, I DRAW MY FINDINGS FROM A COMPARATIVE STUDY I AM BUSY WITH ON TWO MINES (UNDERGROUND & OPEN CAST COLLIERY IN MPUMALANGA AND IRON ORE OPEN PIT MINE IN NORTHERN CAPE) AND TRY LINK WITH OTHER PAST STUDIES
- I EXAMINE THREE POINTS: CHANGING WORKER PROFILE, WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY & RESTRUCTURING



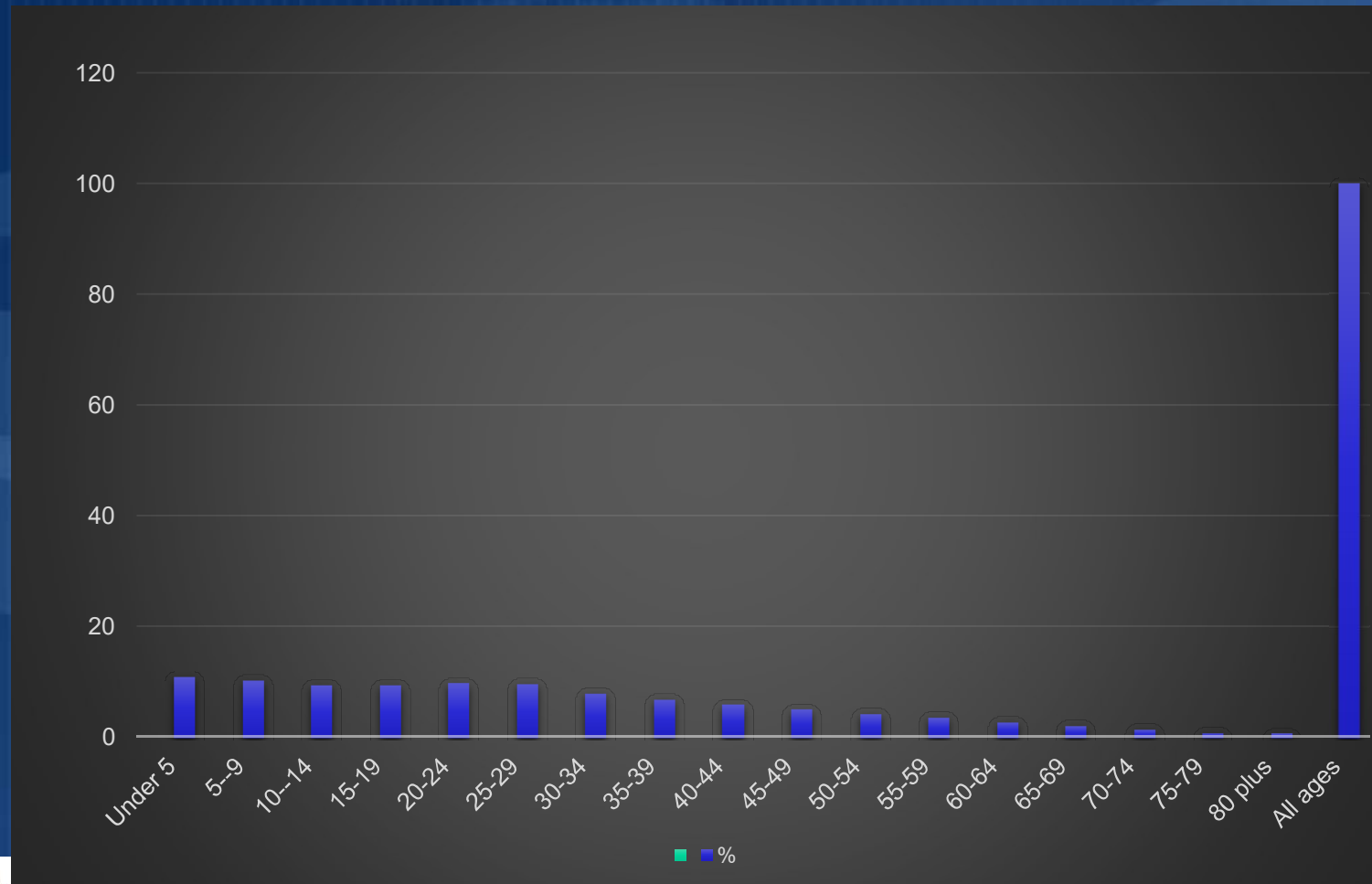
CHANGING WORKER PROFILE



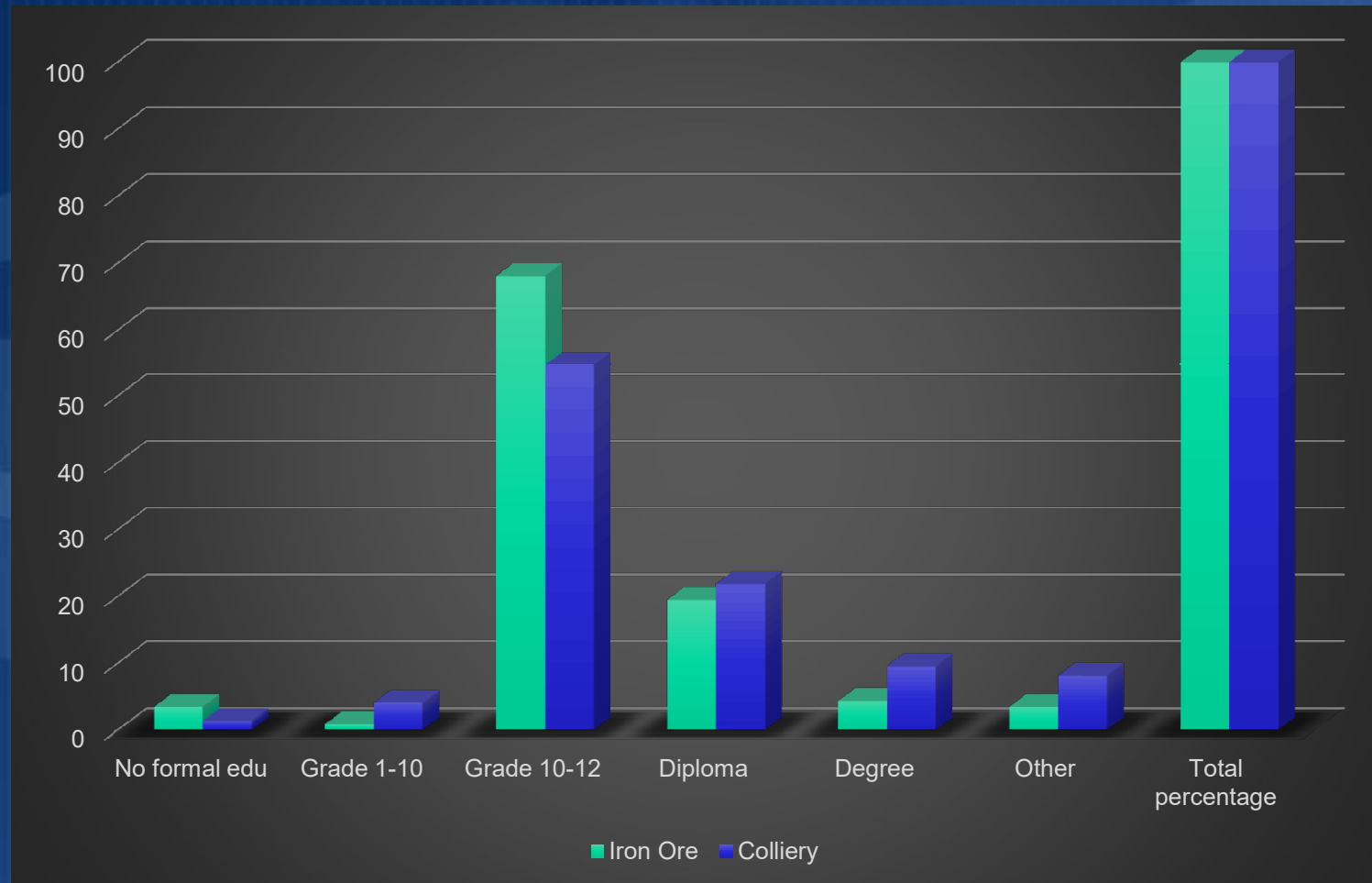
- YOUNG (33 yr.) AND WILL KEEP ON GOING DOWN
- EDUCATED (NATIONAL SENIOR CERTIFICATE AS ENTRY LEVEL REQUIREMENTS) AT NEW MINES
- YOUNG INTO FIRST LINE MANAGEMENT
- ABSENTEEISM AND ALCOHOL ABUSE



SOUTH AFRICA'S POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE



EDUCATIONAL LEVELS OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

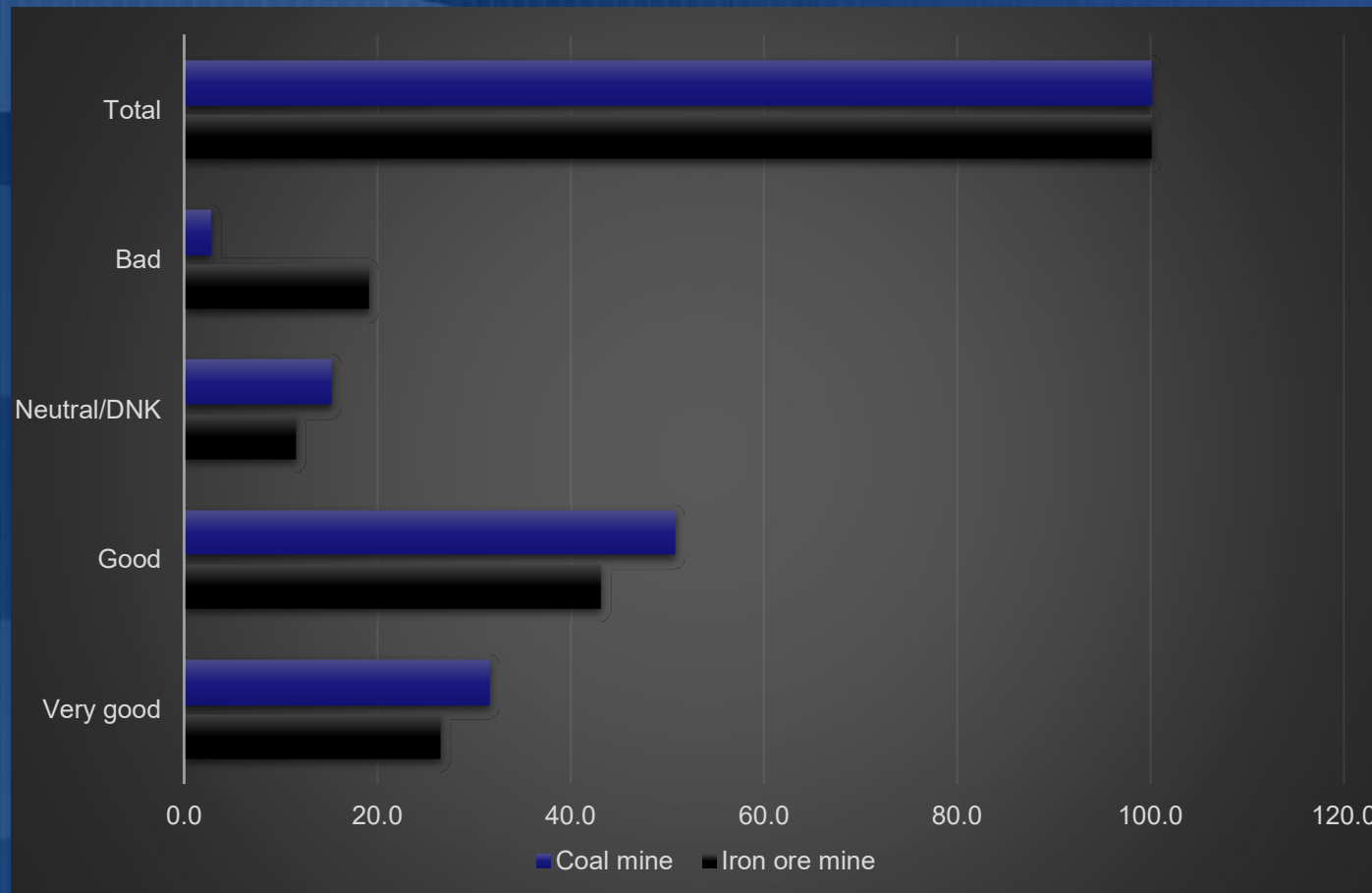


CHANGING WORKPLACE RELATIONS

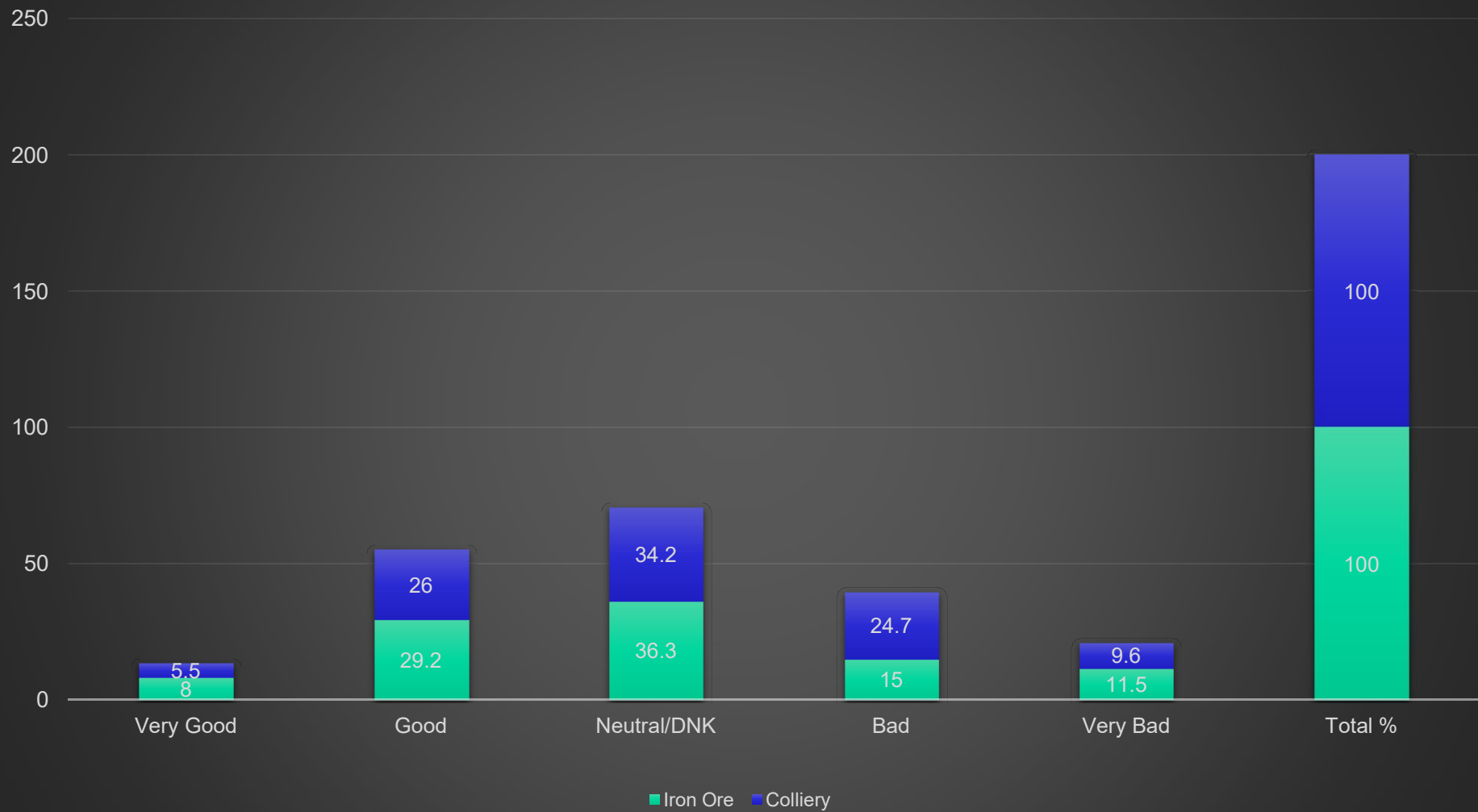
- EMPLOYER & EMPLOYEE RELATIONS
- EMPLOYER AND ORGANISED LABOUR RELATIONS
- ORGANISED LABOUR AND MEMBERS RELATIONS



EMPLOYER & EMPLOYEE RELATIONS



EMPLOYER AND LABOUR MOVEMENT RELATIONS



WORKPLACE RESTRUCTURING & TECHNOLOGY

RESTRUCTURING WITHOUT JOB LOSSES

- New operating models
- Upgrading in terms of job grading
- Salary increases and autonomy
- Increased production

TECHNOLOGY

- Artificial intelligence
- Mechanization, fatigue management, hazard control
- Training and development



CONCLUSION

- THE TWO MINING COMPANIES REVEAL COMPELLING CHANGES TAKING PLACE IN THE WORKPLACE
- THEIR WORKFORCE PROFILE IS LARGELY CHARACTERISED BY A YOUNG & EDUCATED WORKFORCE AND THIS IS SAID TO HAVE IMPROVED COMMUNICATION IN THE WORKFORCE
- UNFORTUNATELY IT HAS ALSO HAD DOWNSIDE IE ALCOHOL ABUSE AND PURGING OF FELLOW SUBORDINATES
- POSSESSION OF A SENIOR NATIONAL CERTIFICATE IS A REQUISITE TO GET AN ENTRY LEVEL JOB
- FINDINGS ALSO SHOW THAT WORKPLACE RELATIONS HAVE GRADUALLY IMPROVED AS SHOWN EARLIER WHICH CAN BE ATTRIBUTED TO CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP STYLE, POLICY AND LEGISLATION AND THE FACT THAT THEY ARE NEW MINES WITHOUT HISTORIES



CONCLUSION

- BOTH MINES UNDERTOOK RESTRUCTURING WHICH DID NOT RESULT IN JOB LOSSES AND THIS CALLS FOR WAYS THE PROCESS DONE ELSEWHERE
- THE MINES AMONG OTHERS HAVE EMBRACED TECHNOLOGY AND THIS IS WORKING WELL GIVEN THE YOUNG EDUCATED WORKFORCE ON BOARD
- WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE FACTORS I.E. YOUNG AND EDUCATED WORKFORCE; IMPROVED WORKPLACE RELATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY ON THE FUTURE OF WORK?
- FINDINGS SHOWS THAT THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE COHORT OF WORKING POPULATION IE 20-39 SUGGESTS A BRIGHT FUTURE AS YOUNG PEOPLE ARE TECH SAVVY AND HENCE NOT RESISTENT TO CHANGE
- ALSO COMMUNICATION HAS IMPROVED GIVEN INCREASED LITERACY LEVELS AND IF CAPITAL IS HONEST, SKILLS DEVELOPMENT CAN GO A LONG WAY IN ENSURING THAT THE YOUNG AND FUTURE WORKFORCE IS EQUIPPED FOR THE 4TH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION