

ANALYSIS OF TEAMWORK BY SECTORS IN A MINING COMPANY

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Abstract

The primary goal of this paper is to analyze teamwork across sectors within a mining company. Given the complexity and specificity of the industry, teamwork plays a crucial role in achieving operational efficiency and long-term sustainability. This research will focus on evaluating the current state of teamwork in different sectors of the mining company and identifying best practices for improving team dynamics and efficiency. Special attention will be given to analyzing factors that influence the success of teamwork, such as organization and internal communication. The study will use a questionnaire as the methodological framework for data collection and employee opinion analysis, in order to provide recommendations for enhancing teamwork and contributing to the company's success.

Keywords: *teamwork, sector in the mining industry, efficiency, organization, communication, questionnaire*

1. INTRODUCTION

The modern business environment is highly dynamic and complex, demanding that companies adapt rapidly and effectively. In this context, organizations are moving away from traditional models and developing new approaches based on information and communication technologies, teamwork, innovation, and knowledge (Vujičić et al., 2022). Globalization has profoundly impacted global markets, the expansion of knowledge, and the growth of multinational corporations, leading to financial market integration and heightened competition. New technologies, including virtual teams and electronic communication, have become crucial for strategic decision-making. Globalization has also enabled organizations to exploit new market opportunities, enhancing their competitiveness and necessitating more efficient organizational structures and processes (Radović-Marković, 2008).

Teams, defined as small groups with specialized skills working together to achieve common goals, are a fundamental component of modern organizational structures. The shift from individual work to teamwork has become the prevailing organizational model, essential for adapting to market changes and overcoming challenges with the support of leaders and technology (Lafter, 2021). Effective teams are vital for organizations functioning in a global environment, allowing for swift responses to market fluctuations and emerging challenges. Leaders play a critical role in coordinating and motivating team

members, while advanced technological solutions facilitate better collaboration and problem-solving.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The modern business environment is dynamic and complex, requiring adaptation to new models that include information and communication technologies, teamwork, and innovation (Vujičić et al., 2022). Globalization impacts financial market integration and increases competition, while new technologies such as virtual teams become crucial for strategic decisions (Radović-Marković, 2008). Teamwork has become the dominant model, helping organizations rapidly adapt to changes and solve challenges with the support of leaders and technology (Lafter, 2021).

An organization is defined as a deliberate grouping of people to achieve goals efficiently. Key success factors include clear goals, adequate resources, and the ability to adapt (Radović-Marković, 2008). Teamwork, as a small group with specific skills, enables quicker adaptation and more effective problem-solving (Lafter, 2021).

Cultural differences can affect communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution within teams, so managers need to understand these differences for better management (Radojević et al., 2013). Dysfunctional leadership patterns can decrease team effectiveness and increase conflicts (Pavošević, 2021). Conflicts are a natural part of teamwork and can have both positive and negative consequences. Managers should use decision-making methods to manage conflicts (Maksimović, 2005; Dmitrović, 2021).

Communication within the team is crucial for cohesion and efficiency, including open and two-way communication (Štivin, 2020; Mitrović, 2022). Motivation is essential for team performance, and open communication helps address problems and improve motivation (Tomić, 2002; Babić, 2019). Teamwork offers benefits such as profit and efficiency, but also challenges like stress and communication issues (Lafter, 2021).

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1. Organization

An organization is defined as a deliberate grouping of people aimed at accomplishing specific tasks with minimal effort. The term “organization” refers to both the process and result of organizing; it can denote a company or institution as well as a scientific discipline.

The primary task of every organization is to achieve its set goals, which are crucial for its functioning. These goals represent the organization's future and desired state. Without clearly defined goals, the organization lacks purpose. The main resource for achieving these goals is people or human potential. This includes all employees who need to be coordinated, directed, motivated, and guided toward achieving these goals. Human potential, through knowledge and skills, directly affects the organization and its management (Skledar, 2019).

Recent decades have brought challenges driven by technological progress, globalization, and various economic and non-economic factors. These challenges have necessitated significant changes in organizational and management structures, placing new demands on managers. The dynamic business environment requires rapid adjustments, improved

staffing, new work methods, and adaptable structures, all managed by a new generation of managers prepared to address emerging issues. Modern management relies on continuous practical knowledge acquisition, leveraging opportunities and avoiding risks within both the organizational context and external environment, applying a situational approach tailored to specific work scenarios. Success depends on people - on the managerial approach and behavior that generate appropriate feedback in employee behavior (Đergović et al., 2019).

According to Radović-Marković (2008), competitive advantage is defined as the unique position a company develops relative to its competitors. Many scholars assert that achieving a superior market position results in competitive advantage (Bamberger & Levi, R, 2009). This superiority depends on the consumer and can be analyzed from their perspective.

Successful companies that develop competitive advantages share these key characteristics:

- Diverse employee knowledge to handle various tasks and responsibilities.
- Employee rotation to foster ongoing professional development and advancement.
- Encouragement of teamwork, cooperation, and connections with business partners and clients.
- Increased employee involvement in the company's development activities.

3.2. Teamwork

A team is defined as a small group of people engaged in a work or business process, united by common goals, shared interests, a common mission, and tasks for which they are collectively responsible (Miljković & Rijavec, 2007). Teams can be categorized based on various criteria. According to the task criterion, they are distinguished as work teams and problem-solving teams (Petrović, 2021). Work teams, or operational teams, primarily focus on tasks performed by the organization, such as production or service delivery. Problem-solving teams address specific issues, improving quality, efficiency, or the work environment. For these teams to be effective, they require a clearly defined task and their size is usually limited (typically comprising 5 to 12 members) (Miljković & Rijavec, 2007).

The fundamental concepts behind creating teams and teamwork involve expanding the knowledge and experience of team members to find solutions to problems. Teamwork is necessary when the method for solving a problem is unknown, when there are multiple possible solutions, and when the task requires diverse opinions and expertise. Through the exchange of information and discussion, the best outcome can be achieved. The advantage of teamwork is that a group of people can accomplish tasks more efficiently than an individual, especially when the task requires a range of skills, judgment, and experience. One of the core reasons for teamwork is synergy. Synergy is defined as the phenomenon where two or more system factors, working together, produce a greater effect than what would be achieved by individual actions (Tudor & Srića, 2006).

Teamwork facilitates faster dissemination of information, leading to increased flexibility, productivity, and service quality. Additionally, teamwork enhances horizontal

communication compared to vertical communication. It is a more effective way of utilizing individual knowledge, which improves personal development and job satisfaction (Lafter, 2021). Effective teams achieve better results than individual efforts, are more flexible, take on more risks, generate more ideas, and make decisions faster and more easily.

Focus on teamwork:

- Reduces costs,
- Shortens deadlines,
- Provides satisfaction with achievements, etc.

Due to these factors, the company becomes more competitive, which is one of the most strategically important factors for success in the market (Maksimović, 2005).

3.3. Teams in organizations

One of the new forms of organizational design in the 21st century is the team organization. At the core of this new organizational structure are teams. The team organization differs significantly from other known organizational structures and is seen as a dynamic form and a completely new approach to organizational design. This new form of organizing can be incorporated into an existing organizational structure (Turkalj et al., 2012).

Introducing teams into organizations brings numerous benefits. Teams facilitate more efficient business expansion by speeding up the flow of information, which directly enhances productivity. Additionally, teamwork promotes the individual development of each member, as they continually work to improve their skills. The key to team success lies in unity members must work together cohesively to achieve common goals (Lafter, 2021).

The introduction of teamwork reduces hierarchical relationships in organizations and helps to define the roles and knowledge of individuals. The unity in teamwork ensures that all members collaborate effectively, leading to better outcomes compared to individual efforts (Lafter, 2021). According to Skledar (2019), the following types of teams can be identified in organizations:

- *Functional Operations Teams*: Members typically have specialized jobs but are part of the same core function. These teams often work longer hours and have relatively stable membership.
- *Cross-Functional Teams*: These teams are used to improve coordination between different organizational units. They usually include representatives from each involved unit and may also include external representatives such as suppliers, clients, and partners.
- *Self-Managed Teams*: A significant portion of managerial responsibilities is transferred to the team members. Most self-managed teams are responsible for specific projects or services.

In practice, different types of teams can be identified, and their divisions vary. According to (Žugaj et al. 1999), these divisions include:

- *Work Teams*: Responsible for tasks and objectives related to the company's business policy. They represent a significant form of teamwork organization, usually consisting of 10-15 members who perform closely related and interdependent tasks. Members of self-managed teams take on considerable responsibilities, including planning, scheduling work, assigning tasks, and monitoring progress.
- *Management Teams*: Known as management teams, these are characterized by a greater diversity of knowledge, abilities, and skills among team members compared to individual roles.
- *Virtual Teams*: Members communicate using electronic media rather than face-to-face interactions.

3.4. Team members

Every team comprises different members, and a successful team results from the combination of skills, roles, and knowledge of its members. Effective teams have members who can fill all roles and are selected based on their skills and expertise (Robins & Judge, 2009).

According to Lafter (2021), team members can assume various roles, each with distinct characteristics and potential weaknesses:

- *Leader*: Guides the team, assigns roles, and recognizes individual qualities. Possesses good communication, self-confidence, and the ability to leverage the team's potential.
- *Doer*: Practical and reliable, focused on completing tasks. Disciplined and organized but conservative and resistant to change. Ensures necessary tasks are completed, even those missed by others.
- *Creative*: Generates new, imaginative ideas but may overlook practical details and protocols. Prefers working independently over team tasks.
- *Researcher*: Collects and develops ideas from various sources. Sociable, enthusiastic, and skilled in negotiations. Works well with the Creative due to complementary approaches.
- *Team Worker*: Focuses on team relationships and creating a positive environment. Possesses strong social skills, resolves conflicts diplomatically, and may be a potential leader, though may struggle with decision-making.
- *Monitor*: Ensures that ideas are evaluated effectively and agreements are reached. Remains objective and intelligent, observing others without engaging in debates.
- *Coordinator*: Identifies members' abilities and directs them toward common goals. Calm, practical, disciplined, and optimistic, with the ability to handle various situations effectively.

3.5. Team building

Good leadership is essential for the successful implementation of assigned tasks and effective team management. If the dimensions of leadership are poorly set, the company cannot succeed. Good leadership should encourage discussion and innovation among team

members, support group cohesion, creates awareness of challenges, and identify solutions (Pavošević, 2021). The most important activities in the team formation process are (Vasić, 2004):

- Job analysis and determination of roles in the team,
- Determining the structure of the team,
- Creating a climate of trust, cooperation, and support,
- Determining the work strategy,
- Training and improvement of team plans,
- Adequate compensation of team members.

A team leader is someone who possesses the skills and abilities to properly select team members, trust them, encourage and reward them for successfully completed tasks, or punish them if they fail to meet expectations. To ensure the proper functioning of the team, the leader should direct their efforts in such a way as to inspire team members to make creative and innovative suggestions.

Given that teams performing certain tasks continuously on a daily basis may slowly lose sight of their purpose, one of the most important tasks of the team leader is to ensure that each individual's contribution aligns with the company's goals, rather than just focusing on individual tasks. A team leader must balance the degree of control and independence of each team member to ensure optimal team performance. Therefore, it is crucial for leaders to be energetic, to “radiate” positive energy, and to be persistent, active, and focused on the tasks they are performing. The main task of the team leader is to set precise and realistic goals for the team they lead (Jović & Jović, 2009).

Skledar (2019) identifies the skills needed to lead cross-functional project teams, which include:

- *Technical expertise:* The leader must be able to discuss technical issues with members from different functional areas.
- *Cognitive skills:* A leader must be capable of solving complex problems that require creativity and systems-level thinking, and must understand how different functions contribute to the success of the project.
- *Interpersonal skills:* A leader must understand the needs and values of team members, be able to influence them, resolve conflicts, and build cohesiveness.
- *Project management skills:* A leader must know how to plan and organize project activities, select and engage qualified team members, and manage financial affairs effectively.
- *Political skills:* A leader must have the ability and knowledge to build coalitions, obtain resources, and secure support and approval from top management and other relevant stakeholders.

3.6. Communication in the team

Communication is not merely passing information to another party. To meet the criteria of effectiveness, communication must be two-way, with constant feedback from both parties.

There are four basic functions within a group or organization: control, motivation, emotional expression, and information (Mitrović, 2022).

Control refers to adherence to the organization's policies and hierarchy, which involves informing superiors and management first.

Motivation is achieved through communication by explaining to employees what needs to be done, how to perform tasks, and how to improve work performance.

Emotional expression allows individuals to express their emotions and needs.

Information is conveyed to individuals and groups, providing them with the necessary details to make decisions.

Communication is the foundation of all relationships. Since it involves mutual exchange of information, it is fundamental to team functioning, which relies on the mutual dependence and cooperation of team members. The most immediate forms of communication include active listening, spoken, and non-verbal communication. The team manager or leader plays a crucial role in establishing communication within the team. They facilitate relationships and set standards for the team (Štivin, 2020).

Active listening enables establishing communication by demonstrating understanding and gaining the interlocutor's trust. This includes giving full attention, showing empathy, providing feedback, and avoiding interruptions. Active listening encourages cooperation and increases the likelihood of successful communication (Glavaš, 2021).

Verbal communication is achieved by exchanging ideas and information through words, either orally or in writing. It is often used in combination with written communication, such as additional explanations through telephone conversations (Mitrović, 2022).

Nonverbal communication includes body language and nonverbal signals, such as paralinguistic signals (intonation, emphasis), kinetic signals (movements, gestures), and proxemic signals (distance, control of personal appearance). These signals play a key role in communication and can influence the perception of the message (Glavaš, 2021).

When speaking, it is important to convey the message clearly and concisely, avoiding technical jargon and unnecessary digressions. To keep listeners' attention, it is necessary to address everyone present and ensure their involvement (Štivin, 2020).

3.7. Motivating team members

Motivation is crucial in the business world, and a team leader must understand motivation theories and recognize demotivation among team members. Motivation refers to the internal drive that influences an individual's behavior and activities (Babić, 2019). Team members' motivations can vary: from the desire to contribute to problem-solving, to seeking personal prestige or influence. Social motives and personal dispositions, such as interests and values, also play a significant role (Tomić, 2002).

Even minor signs of demotivation in one member can negatively impact the entire team, so leaders must regularly monitor motivation levels and use contemporary theories to address demotivation issues (Babić, 2019). Open communication through regular meetings allows

members to express their problems and reasons for demotivation, which helps build trust and improve overall team motivation.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research will focus on analyzing teamwork within the ESG and Marketing – Procurement departments at mining company. A survey has been used as the primary tool for data collection, providing detailed insights into the attitudes and experiences of employees crucial for team functioning.

The aim of the research is to analyze the dynamics and characteristics of teamwork, identify factors contributing to team efficiency and sustainability, and explore the challenges teams face. Special emphasis will be placed on the impact of organizational culture, communication among team members, and the role of leadership in achieving high performance and collaboration.

Through survey analysis, the research expects to identify existing practices and areas for improvement, contributing to a better understanding of the importance of teamwork in the mining industry in Serbia. Employee feedback, based on their practical experience, will be crucial for forming relevant conclusions.

4.1. Mining industry and the company under study

Mining is one of the oldest industries, involving the extraction and processing of ores for industrial and daily use. In our region, mining dates back to Roman times and flourished during medieval Serbia. Many mines from this period are still operational today. Commonly extracted materials include bauxite, tin, zinc, diamonds, natural gas, magnesium, manganese, copper, nickel, lead, platinum, oil, salt, silver, titanium, uranium, coal, gold, and iron, as well as clay, sand, granite, and limestone (IKT, 2021).

Historically, mining has always been under special supervision due to its importance for economic, political, military, cultural, and spiritual development. It has brought both prosperity and hardship. Many countries have achieved high standards of living and technological advancement through mineral resources, though these have also led to colonization, wars, and migration (Radosavljević, 2016). Radosavljević (2016) highlights key features of modern Serbian mining:

- Rapid development from manual, low-productivity methods to levels equivalent to highly developed economies.
- Mining has been a major driver of economic and industrial development.
- By the end of the last century, mining faced a decline and collapse.
- Despite its current state, Serbian mining still has a significant mineral resource potential.

Multinational companies unify production and supply across multiple countries and are vital to the global economy. They embody globalization, characterized by the exchange of knowledge, goods, capital, and services beyond national borders (Buvač, 2015).

The case study company manages four copper mines and a smelter, producing copper and precious metals. As the sole producer of these metals in Serbia, it significantly impacts the local economy through collaboration with over 1,500 local suppliers and creating over 8,000 indirect jobs. The company invests in local infrastructure and economic development, adhering to international human rights standards, and supports community development through donations, medical equipment, educational projects, and youth training.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research was conducted in August 2024 using an online survey distributed to employees of mining company. The survey was sent to 48 email addresses of employees from the ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) and Marketing-Procurement sectors. Some employees did not respond, mainly due to being on vacation or because they were in higher positions, making personal contact difficult. The survey was available in both Serbian and English to ensure participation from all employees, considering the company's multinational structure.

Based on the online survey, which included 41 respondents, socio-demographic data were collected, including gender, age, education, employment status, work experience at the company, position within the sector, and the sector in which they currently work.

Additionally, data were collected on the work environment, frequency of meetings and workshops for improving teamwork, level of autonomy in work, support and resources from senior management, need for changes, employee satisfaction with teamwork, efficiency of teamwork, mutual support among team members, quality of communication with supervisors, openness to innovation, team diversity, flexibility of working hours, and sense of belonging to the team.

Below is a detailed analysis of the results obtained from the online survey of employees at mining company.

5.1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample

The survey included 41 respondents, of which 22 were women and 19 were men (Figure 1). Gender distribution among respondents was relatively balanced. The largest portion of respondents, 41.5%, fell within the age group of 25 to 34 years, while 29.3% belonged to the 35 to 45 age group. Less represented age groups were 18-24, 45-54, and 55-64 years, each accounting for 9.8% of the respondents (Figure 2).



Figure 1. Gender of respondents

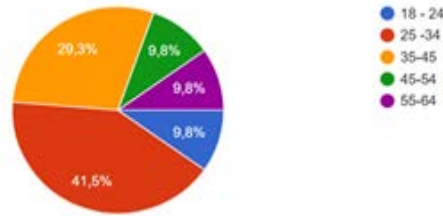


Figure 2. Age of respondents

In terms of education, 48.8% of respondents held a university degree, while 34.1% had a master's degree. The share of those with a high school diploma was 17.1%, while no respondents had only elementary education or a doctoral degree (Figure 3).

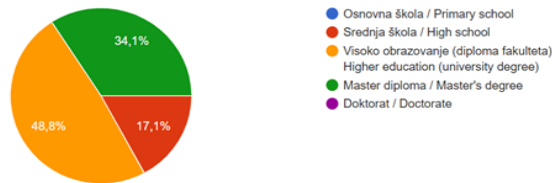


Figure 3. Education of respondents

Most respondents, 65.9%, were permanently employed, while 22% were temporarily employed, and 12.2% were interns. The largest group of respondents, 31.7%, had between 1 and 3 years of work experience in the company, while 24.4% had been with the company for over 10 years. Employees with 4 to 6 years of experience made up 22%, while those with less than a year (12.2%) and those with 7 to 10 years of experience (9.8%) were less represented (Figures 4 and 5). According to Figure 6, the majority of respondents, 23 of them, work in the Marketing – Procurement department, while a significant number of 18 respondents belong to the ESG department.

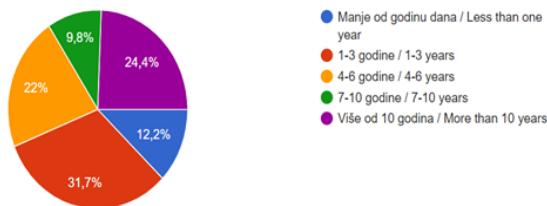


Figure 4. Employment status

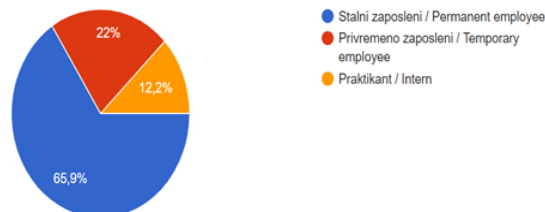


Figure 5. Work experience in the company

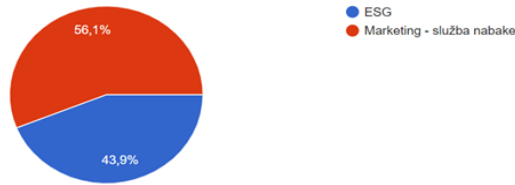


Figure 6. Department in the company

5.2. Analysis of respondents' answers

Work Environment: Figure 7 shows that the majority of respondents (41.5%) rate their work environment in their sector with a score of 4, while the fewest (7.3%) give it a score of 2.

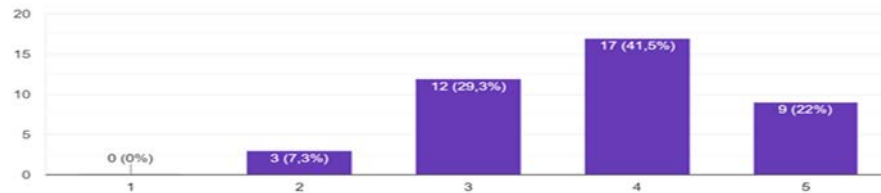


Figure 7. Work environment

Frequency of Teamwork Meetings: Figure 8 shows that most respondents (31.7%) rate the frequency of meetings aimed at improving teamwork with a score of 3, while the fewest respondents (9.8%) give a score of 1.

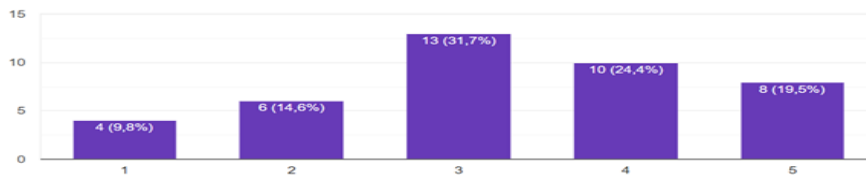


Figure 8. Frequency of teamwork meetings

Support from Upper Management: Figure 9 shows that most respondents (33.3%) rate the support and resources from senior management with a score of 4, while the least (2.6%) give a score of 1.

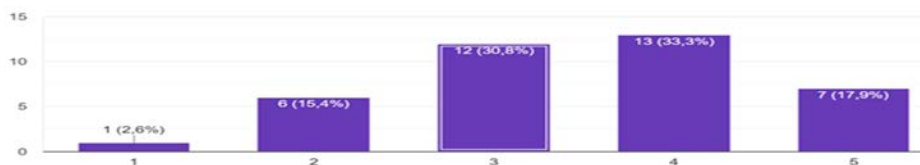


Figure 9. Support from upper management

Teamwork Efficiency: Figure 10 shows that most respondents (39.5%) rate teamwork efficiency as good (score 4), while no respondent gives a very low score (1).

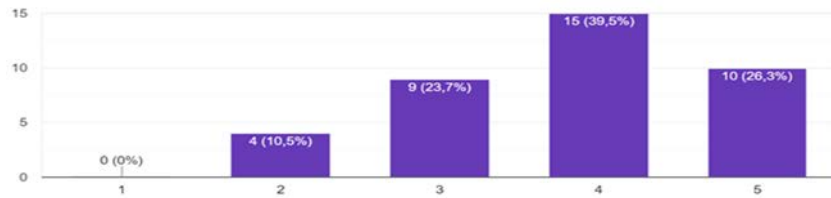


Figure 10. Teamwork efficiency

Mutual Support Among Team Members: Figure 11 shows that most respondents (39%) rate the level of mutual support as good (score 4), while no respondent considers it very low (score 1).

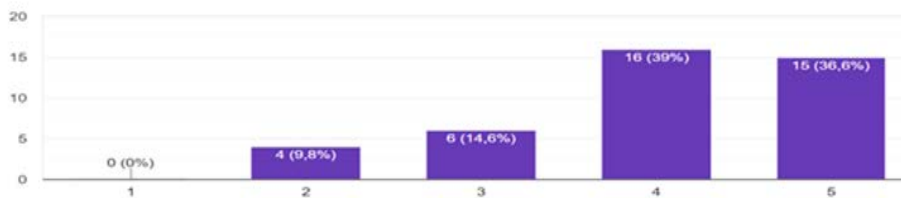


Figure 11. Mutual support among team members

Autonomy in Work: Figure 12 shows that the largest percentage of respondents (36.8%) rate their autonomy level as high (score 4), while the fewest respondents (2.6%) rate it very low (score 1).

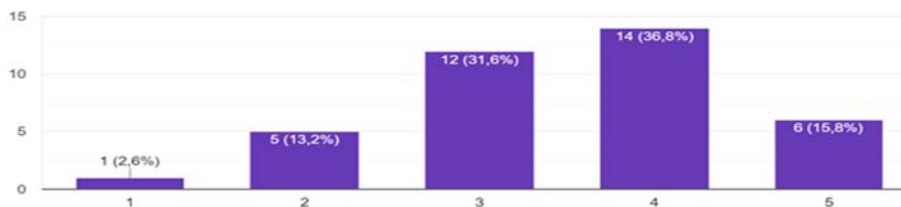


Figure 12. Autonomy in work

6. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Within the framework of the research, employees increasingly recognize the importance of teamwork for the survival and success of the company. Team members acknowledge the significance of mutual support and sharing information. The company occasionally organizes team-building events, but more frequent organization is recommended to improve cohesion and efficiency.

The analysis shows that the quality of collaboration and mutual support play a key role in achieving organizational goals. Results indicate that respondents are highly educated, which positively affects the dynamics of teamwork and the adoption of innovations. Although the work environment is rated positively, there is a need for additional meetings and resources from upper management.

The effectiveness of teamwork is high, but it can be improved through greater mutual support. The quality of communication with superiors and a high level of autonomy contribute to employee satisfaction. Diversity within the team is positive, but flexibility in working hours requires improvement.

7. CONCLUDING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teamwork is becoming imperative for the competitiveness of organizations in today's market. By providing a sense of security, teamwork facilitates task resolution. Effective teamwork requires proper organization, a good atmosphere, and a strong leader.

The research confirms the importance of teamwork and mutual support for achieving goals. Investing in team skills, enhancing communication, and fostering openness to innovation can significantly improve the work atmosphere. It is recommended to organize meetings more frequently, increase support from upper management, and hold events that will enhance communication and cohesion. Additionally, exploring new ways to encourage innovation can bring new ideas that will help the company remain competitive.

ANALIZA TIMSKOG RADA PO SEKTORIMA U RUDARSKOJ KOMPANIJI

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Izvod

Primarni cilj ovog rada je analiza timskog rada po sektorima u rudarskoj kompaniji. S obzirom na složenost i specifičnost industrije, timski rad igra ključnu ulogu u postizanju operativne efikasnosti i dugoročne održivosti. Ovo istraživanje će se fokusirati na procenu trenutnog stanja timskog rada u različitim sektorima rudarske kompanije i identifikovanje najboljih praksi za poboljšanje dinamike i efikasnosti tima. Posebna pažnja biće posvećena analizi faktora koji utiču na uspeh timskog rada, kao što su organizacija i interna komunikacija. Studija će koristiti upitnik kao metodološki okvir za prikupljanje podataka i analizu mišljenja zaposlenih, kako bi se dale preporuke za unapređenje timskog rada i doprinos uspehu kompanije.

Ključne reči: *timski rad, sektori u rudarstvu, efikasnost, organizacija, komunikacija, upitnik*

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