

CHAPTER II

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION ON CAREER ADVANCEMENT FOR WOMEN IN THE MINING INDUSTRY

This chapter describes a general overview of qualitative research presented from a gendercommunication perspective. The overview that will be discussed is regarding the communicationphenomenon that hinders the career advancement for women in the mining industry.

2.1 Career Advancement for Women in the Mining Industry

The masculine based working environment of the mining industry poses a challenge for women that desire career advancement, marked by various barriers that can be categorized into social, structural, and employment-related issues. Socially, women often face difficulties in gaining acceptance from their male coworkers, which can hinder their integration into the workplace and limit their professional development (Botha, 2017). The lack of adequate support systems, such as mentorship and networking opportunities, further restricts their growth and advancement. In male-dominated settings, many women experience isolation (Botha, 2017). This sense of exclusion creates additional emotional and psychological challenges, making it harder for women to succeed in their careers.

Employment-related barriers complete the picture of challenges that women face in the mining sector. Mining companies also struggle with implementing

diversity and inclusion strategies, which further limits opportunities for women's advancement (Botha, 2017). Without the right policies in place, it becomes difficult to retain female talent, leading to a lack of gender balance in the workforce. These barriers highlight the urgent need for mining companies to develop targeted strategies that address the specific challenges women face. By fostering more inclusive workplaces, providing necessary support systems, and implementing diversity initiatives, the mining sector can break down these barriers, creating an environment where women have equal opportunities to succeed and thrive in their careers.

2.1.1 Phenomenon of Masculine Culture in the Mining Industry

The masculine culture that exists within the mining industry exists within both personal and professional context. A workplace characterized by a culture of exclusion, where women may feel marginalized and unsafe due to the prevalence of traditional masculine norms and behaviors. This environment can manifest in various ways, from subtle microaggressions to overt discrimination, hindering women's professional growth and overall well-being.

On top of the social disconnect, there's a clear imbalance in opportunities. Training programs seem to vanish just as women reach for them, and promotions often favor male candidates. This lack of equal access

to development hinders women's professional growth and creates a sense of being stuck (Botha, 2017). The support systems that could help, like mentoring programs geared towards women, are simply absent. This isolation makes it even harder to navigate the challenges and poses a challenge for women to co-exists both professionally and personally with men.

Research shows a troubling pattern. While some women do break through the barriers and become supervisors, they struggle to move into higher management roles, as it seems some men are simply uncomfortable with female leadership, creating a roadblock that prevents women from reaching their full potential (Botha, 2017). This lack of advancement opportunities not only restricts women's careers but also deprives companies of the valuable perspective and diversity women bring to the table. This goes to show the limitations that women face in a male dominated working culture, where men are favored more than women.

2.1.2 Phenomenon of Bias in the Mining Industry

Women in the mining industry face hurdles due to deep-rooted gender bias. This bias often leads to discrimination in hiring and job assignments, with women being overlooked for challenging roles despite their qualifications (Iradukunda, Nahayo, & Saptandari, 2020). Even when

women are hired, they may lack the necessary support to advance their careers. This gender imbalance not only limits individual opportunities but also hinders the industry's overall development.

Gender discrimination is another pervasive issue. Some believe that women's presence in mining can lead to increased accidents (Abrahamsson & Johansson, 2020). This harmful stereotype perpetuates the idea that women are unfit for such roles and can create a culture of fear and exclusion.

These limitations translate into a glass ceiling for women in male-dominated fields like mining. It's an invisible barrier that, despite their qualifications and skills, keeps them from reaching top leadership positions (Botha, 2017). This lack of trust in their capabilities is a constant hurdle. Male colleagues might question their abilities, overlook their accomplishments, and even make degrading remarks, undermining their confidence and authority (Botha, 2017).

The pervasive underestimation of women's leadership abilities is a challenge in many workplaces, particularly in male-dominated industries like mining. Women in leadership positions often face skepticism and resistance from male colleagues who may be unwilling to accept instructions from female superiors (Botha, 2017). This resistance is often rooted in traditional gender roles and cultural biases that prioritize male authority.

Moreover, concerns have been raised about the appointment of women to leadership positions without adequate skills and experience. This

can lead to situations where women may struggle to assert themselves and may be overruled by male colleagues. To address these issues, it is crucial to challenge gender stereotypes, promote equal opportunities, and provide women with the necessary training and support to excel in leadership roles. By fostering a culture of respect, inclusivity, and meritocracy, organizations can empower women and unlock their full potential.

2.1.3 Phenomenon of Harassment in the Mining Industry

harassment is a serious issue that can create a hostile work environment for women. It can range from verbal abuse to physical assault, and can have a devastating trajectory of career hindering on victims' mental and emotional health, as well as their careers. In the mining industry, women are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment due to the male-dominated nature of the sector (Iradukunda, Nahayo, & Saptandari, 2020). Many women are discouraged from pursuing careers in mining because of the fear of harassment, and those who do enter the industry often face discrimination and abuse.

The consequences of harassment can be far-reaching. Victims may experience feelings of shame, guilt, and fear, which can lead to anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Iradukunda, Nahayo, & Saptandari, 2020).. They may also withdraw from work, avoid social

interactions, and have difficulty concentrating. In the workplace, sexual harassment can lead to lost productivity, decreased morale, and increased turnover (Iradukunda, Nahayo, & Saptandari, 2020).. It can also damage an organization's reputation and make it difficult to attract and retain top talent.

For instance, many women in mining are discouraged from pursuing challenging tasks due to fear of harassment or failure, which diminishes their opportunities for advancement and perpetuates the cycle of gender inequality. The emotional and psychological toll of such experiences are a threat on women's professional career, making it essential to address these issues comprehensively. Sexual harassment encompasses a wide range of behaviors, from verbal misconduct to physical abuse (Iradukunda, Nahayo, & Saptandari, 2020)..

In the mining sector, sexual harassment is a barrier to women's career development and safety. The hiring processes often reflect biases against women, leading to their rejection based on cultural misconceptions that mining jobs are suited only for men.

Sexual harassment can take many forms, from explicit comments to subtle, yet damaging, remarks. Women in mining often endure a hostile work environment, characterized by derogatory language and demeaning attitudes (Abrahamsson & Johansson, 2020). Such experiences can be deeply distressing and can undermine their confidence and sense of belonging.