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**Factors affecting career progression of female
workers in a select South Africa mining company**

By

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Examination date: 31 March 2024

DECLARATION

I, Martha Mosadihela Motshabi, hereby affirm that the research report presented herein is a product of my own academic efforts, except where explicitly referenced or acknowledged. This report is submitted as a partial requirement for obtaining the Master of Business Administration degree at the Graduate School of Business Administration, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. This work has not been previously submitted for any degree or examination at this or any other institution.

Martha Mosadihela Motshabi

Signed at ...Johannesburg.....

On the 31st day of March 2024

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Finally, I express my profound gratitude to God, the Almighty, for His unceasing guidance and grace. The challenges I faced were surmounted by His faithfulness, and for this, I will forever offer my worship and praise.

ABSTRACT

This study quantitatively investigates the career progression factors of female workers at a selected mining company in South Africa, focusing on the necessity for gender-inclusive policies and practices in a traditionally male-dominated industry. Employing a quantitative approach, the research surveyed a sample of female employees across various roles within the organisation, garnering insights into their professional experiences and obstacles. The findings reveal pronounced disparities in career advancement opportunities between genders, evidenced by pervasive gender biases favouring men in terms of opportunities and promotions. Key statistical highlights include a marked majority (75.0%) of women reporting having children, with 63.6% living with children under 18, reflecting work-life balance challenges. Additionally, the study uncovers significant barriers to female career progression, such as limited access to mentorship (with only 66.5% satisfaction in mentorship quality) and sponsorship, and the lack of specialized training programs tailored for women. The research also sheds light on unfair practices, with notable dissatisfaction in areas such as promotion practices (6.3% expressing strong dissatisfaction) and gender dynamics within the organisation.

These findings illuminate the hurdles impeding female workers' rise to senior positions and highlight the critical need for more equitable, supportive structures within the mining sector. Cronbach's alpha coefficients, ranging from 0.820 for managerial feedback and support to 0.960 for mentor relationships, validate the reliability of these findings. Overall, this study contributes significantly to understanding the dynamics of gender disparities in career progression, offering empirical evidence for the formulation of more inclusive and robust workplace policies.

Keywords: *career progression, gender equality, gender issues, women in mining*

This dissertation is lovingly dedicated to:

God, my Creator, for His unending guidance and strength throughout my journey.

My late parents, whose unwavering support and invaluable teachings of humility and kindness have shaped my life profoundly. Their legacy continues to inspire and guide me in every endeavour.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BBSEEC	Broad-based Socio-economic Empowerment Charter
DME	Department of Minerals and Energy
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MPRDA	Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act
PGC	Post Graduate Committee
WIM	Women in Mining

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the study

Historically and globally, the mining sector has been dominated by men, with many nations prohibiting women from working in underground mines (Mangaroo-Pillay & Botha, 2020). This gender disparity in the mining sector has been a result of various factors, including traditional gender stereotypes, cultural marginalisation, racial- and gender discrimination and legal- and economic rights limitations (Vuuren *et al.*, 2021).

While the mining sector has historically been associated with male traits and identities, it is important to recognise that women have participated in a wide range of mining and mining-related activities across the globe (Jenkins, 2014). However, due to traditional gender stereotypes, women's contributions to the sector have often been invisible and undervalued (Jenkins, 2014). In South Africa, the government has taken steps to address gender imbalances in the mining sector through legislation, such as the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) and the Broad-based Socio-economic Empowerment Charter (Mangaroo-Pillay & Botha, 2020). Despite these efforts, gender equality and career progression in the mining sector remains a challenge, and women still face barriers in advancing their careers (Mangaroo-Pillay & Botha, 2020).

Studies have shown that the mining sector continues to be male dominated, with a low representation of women in the workforce (Lahiri-Dutt, 2015). The sector struggles to attract highly qualified and locally available skilled women due to factors such as remote operations, high risk for employees and a negative image of mining (Ivic *et al.*, 2021). Furthermore, cases of harassment and discrimination against women in the mining sector have been documented, confirming the experiences reported in other studies (Ivic *et al.*, 2021).

Efforts are being made to promote gender diversity and inclusivity in the mining sector. Research has explored ways to build a more gender-diverse mining workforce, highlighting the importance of progressive policies,

respectful workplace culture and gender-oriented planning initiatives (Buchanan *et al.*, 2022). Creating attractive mining communities for both women and men and increasing the number of women in the sector are ongoing initiatives aimed at redressing over half a century of prohibitory practices on women's careers in mining (Norberg & Fältholm, 2018). Specifically, these prohibitions are based on the June 21, 1935, International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 45, which prohibited the use of women for underground work in all types of mines (ILO, 1999).

1.2 Background

In South Africa, the Mineral Act, No. 50 of 1991, barred women from working underground. In the post-apartheid era, the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act 28 of 2002 (Republic of South Africa, 2002) was enacted, while the Broad-Based Socio-Economic Empowerment Charter for the South African Mining Sector was introduced by the Department of Minerals and Energy in 2002 to address disparities in the mining sector and promote socio-economic empowerment. One of the key provisions of this Charter was the requirement that 10% of all employees in the mining sector be females by 2009. The Charter has played a significant role in driving the increase in the proportion of women working in the mining sector in South Africa from 3% in 2002 to 15% in 2018 (Mangaroo-Pillay & Botha, 2020). However, despite the increased representation of women in the sector and promotion of gender equality and career progression, gender-based career disparities remain in the sector, as in many others in South Africa. Indeed, South Africa is regarded as one of the world's most gender unequal society (Kotsadam & Tolonen (2016). Empirical research evidence suggests that inequality, be it gender, or income related, can stifle economic growth (Hakura *et al.*, 2016).

According to Moalusi & Jones (2019), despite the increase in the number of women employed in the mining sector, gender inequalities persist, and women face challenges in progressing from lower level to higher-level positions. Indeed, most South African mines are still struggling in implementing legislative pronouncements that try to eliminate gender

discrimination to aid women's progress in their careers (Karim, 2020). (Moalusi & Jones 2019), state that women are still prevented from fully engaging in their jobs because of attitudes to gender, racism, cultural prejudice, gender bias and organisational structures. As such, despite efforts made to narrow the gender gap in career progression opportunities, gaps still exist. This is attributed to the fact that it is harder for women to concentrate on improving their skills and careers due to impediment not even related to legislations, and which may include individual, interpersonal, community, and organisational driven factors (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2019; Surn et al., 2022; White & Goriss-Hunter, 2021).

According to Hadebe, Tebele & Nel (2023), senior posts in the mining sector often require more education and experience. Therefore, career progression in mining is a factor of education, training, and experience. It follows that mining companies can increase the chances for female workers to progress in their careers by taking a few crucial measures. These include developing women employees' skill sets by giving them more demanding tasks and responsibilities, recognising female successes with career progression opportunities, and coordinating career progression plans by infusing professional development aims. It is therefore unreasonable to blame one factor before assessing the compendium of other factors affecting women's career progression (Stamolampros, Korfiatis, Chalvatsis, & Buhalis, 2019).

This study investigated the factors affecting career progression of female workers in South Africa's mining sector using a case study of a specific mining company. Specifically, it examined the interplay between individual, organisational, and environmental factors, along with other pertinent elements that influence their career progression. Additionally, the study scrutinised existing legislative and policy frameworks designed to combat stereotypes, prejudices and discriminatory practices that hinder women's career mobility in the mining sector. The aim was to gather valuable insights into the unique challenges, opportunities and conditions influencing the career trajectories of women in this specific mining company, thereby providing a detailed examination of this case. Although there is legislation passed to address gender disparities within the mining sector, women

continue to face several challenges that impact negatively on their career progression (Ketchiwou et al., 2022). Indeed, the progress of women to senior leadership positions in the mining company has been low, with many working women within mining organisations remaining in middle management roles despite policies and structures put in place to help them climb the corporate ladder (Moalusi & Jones, 2019).

1.3 Research Problem

Despite legislative initiatives to address disparities in gender in the mining sector, female workers in South African mining companies continue to encounter barriers to career advancement. In addition, while it is known that both individual and organisational variables contribute to women's slower career growth (Chauhan et al., 2021) there is a lack of empirical study focusing specifically on the mining sector. Furthermore, studies have tended to focus on women who are already in positions of power, ignoring the career aspirations and growth of mining workers seeking advancement (Joshi et al., 2015). In addition, these studies focus heavily on organisational issues while overlooking human, interpersonal and community factors (Bambacas & Patrickson, 2008). Furthermore, some studies focus solely on organisational issues, ignoring individual, interpersonal, community and policy-driven aspects (Gipson et al., 2017). This study intends to fill these gaps by investigating the factors influencing female workers' career growth in a South African mining company, as with the goal of addressing gender diversity issues inside the organisation.

1.4 Research Objectives and Questions

1.4.1 Research Aim

The central aim of this study was to investigate the factors influencing the career advancement of female workers in the South African mining sector. Specifically, the study aimed to achieve the following objectives and answer the below questions:

1.4.2 Research Objectives

- To determine the effect of self-drive (individual level) factors on females' career progression at the mining sector.
- To determine the casual effect of the employer or organisational driven factors on females' career progression at the mining sector.
- To determine the casual effect of interpersonal factors on females' career progression at the mining sector.
- To provide policy recommendations to help females progress their careers at the mining sector and beyond.

1.4.3 Research Questions

- What is the effect of self-driven factors on females' career progression at the mining sector?
- What is the effect of employer or organisational driven factors on females' career progression at mining sector?
- How do interpersonal factors influence the career progression of females at the mining sector?
- What policy recommendations can be drawn to help females progress within their careers at mining sector and beyond?

1.5 Rationale

This research has provided valuable insights beneficial not only to the selected mining company, but also to the broader South African mining sector and other historically male-dominated workplace environments where women face career progression challenges. Specifically, the study has contributed by critically examining the implementation of gender mainstreaming policies at the selected mining company. It offers the potential to enhance corporate citizenship practices among mining companies. Furthermore, the findings inform company decision-makers about the importance of considering a range of factors organisational, individual, interpersonal and community, in addition to gender policies and

legislative elements, in their efforts to foster women's career advancement. In doing so, this research adds to both international and local bodies of knowledge, providing clarification on various categories of factors and barriers that impact women's career progression.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

The research was conducted in a select mining company and focused exclusively on female mining personnel and therefore, its findings are not intended to be generalised to encompass career progression factors for both men and women employees across different industries or sectors. The scope of this research was particularly centred on the career advancement of female employees in terms of their progression to higher positions from their current roles. This approach assumed that each female employee in the study aspired to advance in her career.

Guided by the ecological theory as the theoretical framework, this research investigated factors confined to organisational, individual, interpersonal, community and policy/legislative-driven aspects. This focused approach allowed for an in-depth exploration of the unique context and challenges faced by female workers in the mining sector in their pursuit of career advancement. The study thus provides valuable insights specific to the selected mining environment, contributing to the understanding of career progression dynamics for women in this sector.

1.7 Ethical Consideration

Myers (2013) describes ethical practice 'as a moral stance encompassing the assurance of informed consent from individuals agreeing to participate in research.' He emphasises that informed consent is a fundamental ethical principle in conducting research, which includes allowing participants the freedom to withdraw their involvement at any time for any reason. In this study, the participants' rights were meticulously protected, and informed consent was duly obtained. Participants were assured of their right to privacy, independence, and fair treatment, along with the guarantee that they would not experience any inconvenience because of their participation.

The study's purpose was clearly articulated to each participant. Furthermore, it was clarified to the participants that they had the option to withdraw from the research at any stage should they choose not to continue (Footer et al., 2019).

The distributor in assisting the selected mining company, communicated to the participants the sensitive nature of the information they were providing. Participants were informed that their data would be safeguarded against access by third parties, and personal information disclosure was not required (Kuteynikov & Ishaev, 2023). Additionally, it was emphasised that the information collected would be used solely for the purposes of this study. This ensured that respondents had assurances regarding the privacy and confidentiality of their data, with the commitment that it would be handled with the highest level of professional care (Barnie et al., 2015). Furthermore, it was guaranteed that their data would not be shared with any third party without their explicit consent.

1.8 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 has established the context of the study by situating it within its historical background and highlighting the key barriers facing female workers in the mining sector.

Chapter 2 reviews relevant literature to uncover factors impeding the career advancement of women in the mining workplace, encompassing both theoretical and empirical studies. This review identifies research gaps that informed the investigation into the factors influencing the career progression of women in the South African mining sector, with a particular emphasis on Social Cognitive Career Theory and related career concepts.

Chapter 3, the Research Methodology, describes the quantitative approach adopted in this research, which involved collecting and analysing numerical and statistical data to examine systemic factors affecting women's career advancement.

Chapter 4 presents the results and discussion of the findings derived from participant data and discusses the interpretations of these findings.

Chapter 5 is the conclusion and recommendations which synthesises the study's findings.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The previous section of the study intricately maps out the fundamental aspects and variables influencing women's career progression, transitioning from theoretical groundwork to examination of empirical work within the South African mining sector (Ketchiwou et al., 2022). This empirical scrutiny delves deep into specific factors impacting female workers' career advancement, critically evaluating existing research and identifying gaps in current knowledge (Howe-Walsh et al., 2020). The study draws on a range of academic references to inform its exploration of women's career progression, including insights from various fields such as gender studies, organisational behaviour, and career development.

2.2 Operational Definitions

With relation to female workers in mines, the operational definitions below are relevant to the current research.

2.2.1 Career progression

Career progression is often understood as upward hierarchical promotion within an organisational context (Chauhan et al., 2022). It refers to the advancement and development of an individual's career, including the acquisition and implementation of competences (Silva et al., 2021). In the context of this research, career progression is used to describe the professional accomplishments of women through promotion to higher positions in a mining organisation (Chauhan et al., 2022).

2.2.3 Mentorship

Mentorship is a process of creating a relationship whereby parties involved willingly support, inspire, and nurture the less knowledgeable partner. A more knowledgeable or experienced person supports the professional and personal lives of a less knowledgeable and experienced person via a deliberate, progressive relationship known as mentoring (Seehusen, et al., 2021).

2.2.4 Equity in employment

According to Espi, Francis, and Valodia (2019), equity in the workplace refers to extent to which employee are treated fairly by their supervisors and managers, especially about disciplinary action, the type of work they are assigned, the pay and benefits they receive and the way the managers and supervisors relate to their subordinates.

2.2.5 Management

Planning, organising, directing, and supervising individuals, a department, or an organisation are just a few of the duties and activities that go into management of an organisation (Awung, 2015). These activities are relevant to the current research as movement from one management level to the other in mining is simply referred as career progression.

2.3 South African legislation and its effect on women's engagement in mining Sector

For a long time, women were prohibited through apartheid legislation from working in mining sites. This practice hinged on Article 2 of the Convention 45 of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) of 1935, which established worldwide legal restrictions, that states: "no female, whatever her age, shall be employed on underground work in any mine" The ILO Convention 45 of 1935 only permitted exceptions under Article 3, for female in managerial positions, those not employed in manual labour roles, females in health and welfare services, females who were required to undergo training in the underground portions of a mine as part of their studies, and any other females who occasionally had to enter the underground portions of a mine for non-manual occupations. This convention therefore institutionalised the exclusion of female workers from underground and managerial roles in large-scale commercial mines.

However, in South Africa the prohibition of females from underground mining employment predates the 1935 Convention. Specifically, as early as 1911 the South African Minerals Act in its Clause 8(1) specifically prohibited females from being employed in underground mines by stating: "no person

may employ underground on any mine, a boy apparently under sixteen years or any female.” This Act helped make the South African mining sector an all-male realm (Mangaroo-Pillay & Botha, 2020) with females merely allowed to be employed to perform marginalised tasks that were not essential to the company. This denied females opportunities for professional advancement in the mining sector (Khaitan, 2020).

The earlier prohibitions were kept in the Mines and Works Act 27 of 1956, which set a promotional upper limit for all non-white ethnic groups, keeping them in first-entry occupations as labourer, and created a double barrier for females by barring them from entering and progressing into mining management (Republic of South Africa, 1956). Only when the racially discriminatory portion of the Mines and Works Act (1956) was repealed in 1998, did the few non-white personnel progress (Mangaroo Pillay & Botha, 2020). The Bill of Rights, Section 9, of the South African Constitution prompted “the re-designing of relevant legislation to promote equal rights and freedom of all citizens and to protect or advance persons or categories of persons that were disadvantaged and unfairly discriminated against” after apartheid (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

Other post-apartheid legal instruments, including the Basic Conditions of Employment Act of 1997, Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) of 2002, Employment Equality Act of 1998, Labour Relations Act of 1995 and Mine Health and Safety Act of 1996 were also enacted to address apartheid-era disparities. These regulations required mining companies to “enhance equality in the mining sector across employment and ownership categories; address social consequences connected with mining; and enable South Africans, generally, to profit from the exploitation of mining and mineral resources” (Bester & Groenewald, 2021, p.23). In addition, the Broad-Based Socio-Economic Empowerment Charter for the South African Mining Sector (Mining Charter, 2002) further sought to strengthen the MPRDA (Freed, 2017). In the next subsection, we review empirical literature on factors affecting women’s career progression.

2.3 Theoretical Model

The primary objective of this theoretical model Social Cognitive Career theory is to give a complete framework for exploring and comprehending the elements influencing female workers' career advancement in a South African mining company (Lent et al., 1994). The model incorporates interpersonal, societal, and environmental elements using Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), providing a multidimensional perspective on the complexity of women's professional advancement (Lent et al., 1994). The theoretical model of SCCT acts as a guide for data collection, analysis, and interpretation, allowing for a disciplined and methodical approach to identifying the major elements influencing female workers' career growth. Existing studies show that various factors can affect career progression in a general context without specifying the category in which they belong (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021).

The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) emphasises the influence of individual and organisational factors on women's career progression (Flores & O'Brien, 2002). This research uses SCCT theory to argue that career progression factors can simply be influenced by individual, organisational, as well as policy factors. The self-driven/individual factors include pre-career choices, career capital development, attitude towards gender discrimination) or employer-driven factors (Wickramaratne 2021), Organisational factors include mentorship opportunities, organisational leadership, organisational culture, workplace impediments, workplace support strategies and workplace gender discrimination. Policy driven factors include legislations, regulations, and policies. Additionally, there are community driven that include women career development groups/forums/network, community norms and community structures as well as interpersonal factors which include family and supervisory mentorship (Pearson & Bieschke 2001). Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) focused on how patriarchal structures and ideologies perpetuate gender disparities and hinder women's progress in different areas, such as the workplace. By utilising this theory, the current investigated the social, cultural, and economic factors that contribute to the career advancement

obstacles experienced by women in the mining Sector. In what follows, we discuss these factors in detail.

2.3.1 Individual factors

SCCT theory helps us uncover crucial individual qualities that influence women's conduct and career growth. This includes educational qualifications, work experience, networking, mentoring, organisational culture, gender prejudice and individual abilities as examples of these (Bridges, Wulff, & Bamberry, 2023). A brief empirical literature review on these individual characteristics that have been demonstrated to influence career growth is offered.

2.3.1.1 Pre-career choices

Segregation exists, based on gender, in terms of academic choices, which affects the kind of occupation women occupy once they have completed their studies. In their study of post-secondary or schooling students in Canada, Schweitser et al. (2011, p. 93) noted that “women continue to study social sciences and the arts while males study business, science, and engineering which has potential to be placed on influential positions”. In another quantitative study, Bocciardi et al. (2017) found a strong relationship between education and career adaptability. Bocciardi et al. (2017, p. 23) further pointed that “education predicts career adaptability because of its significant association with concern and curiosity.”

2.3.1.2 Career development

Reviewed literature reveals that existing employee development programs are poorly designed and managed, which often has led to career limitations for women. This is because senior managers are often given excessive discretion in determining the career development of their teams, leading to opportunities for favouritism and discrimination, particularly against women (Wohlbold & Chenier, 2011). In this regard, a qualitative study by Khosa (2015) found that women receive insufficient opportunity for career development because they are not motivated by human resources and talent management programs in their organisations.

2.3.1.3 Attitude towards gender discrimination

Factors creating barriers to female progression in the workplace are expressed as the glass ceiling phenomenon, which refers to the invisible barriers that women face in their professional advancement due to gender factors such as discrimination. Smith, et al. (2012) argue that the use of metaphors such as glass ceiling has not helped to dismantle the invisible barriers that women face in their efforts to move up the organisational ladder. In these situations, women's professional performance is influenced by attitudes such as stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination based on gender among others.

2.3.2 Interpersonal factors

The significance of interactions between individuals of different genders in the workplace lies in the potential presence of stereotypes, prejudices, and discriminatory behaviour, which can act as barriers to career progression (Smith & Johnson, 2018; Brown et al., 2019; Garcia & Lee, 2020). Research has shown that gender stereotypes and biases can influence hiring decisions, promotion opportunities and overall career advancement, particularly affecting women in male-dominated industries like mining. Understanding and addressing these issues are crucial for fostering a more inclusive and equitable work environment where individuals can thrive based on their skills and contributions rather than gender-based assumptions.

Schreuder and Coetsee (2006) state that individuals are influenced and motivated by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors in the career decision-making process. However, when there is a lack of motivation (whether intrinsic or extrinsic), employees may feel dissatisfied. This can lead to stress, lower work engagement, inability to cope and even burn-out (if individuals feel over-loaded). Wohlbold & Chenier (2011) pointed out that workplaces are still dominated by male management and support the man's ways of doing things as the standard or norm. This perception leads to a lack of trust in women as managers and inherently excludes them from

career growth and progress in senior management, since the favoured traits and assessment criteria favour males.

Ngoako (1999) and Tabudi (2008) both cited "multiple roles" as a barrier for women in management positions in male-dominated businesses, which hinders their advancement to senior management. They discovered that males distrust women, since they have numerous roles (managers, students, and wives/mothers). These studies aimed to identify unique challenges faced by women in such environments, which are not typically experienced to the same degree by their male counterparts. The concept of 'multiple roles' refers to the responsibilities that women often shoulder, encompassing professional roles, academic pursuits (for those who are furthering their education), and domestic responsibilities as wives and mothers. This might make women disinterested in personal development goals, which could hurt professional ambition and direction. Lack of trust among co-workers may also stifle collaboration, productivity, and performance, causing internal conflict.

The production and result-driven nature of mining operations often exerts significant pressure on workers, leading to challenges such as disintegration and discrimination, which potentially impacts on women's behaviour and performance (Smith & Johnson, 2018; Brown et al., 2019; Garcia & Lee, 2020).

In studies on women in mining, work-life conflict, was found to have considerable negative effects for workers and organisations, as employees strive to reconcile increasing personal and professional expectations. (Women in Mining Canada, 2010). This shows that women are seen as untrustworthy and a danger to the company and production, preventing them from learning and growing. The implications of this study are twofold. Firstly, it highlights the need to gain a deeper understanding of the obstacles that hinder women from achieving career advancement on a par with men, without encountering unnecessary barriers. Secondly, it emphasises the importance of implementing strategic interventions to create a gender-neutral workplace environment.

One of the contributing factors to women facing bias and limited career progression in the mining sector is the absence of mentorship and coaching opportunities (Oosthuisen et al., 2019). In addition, they lack role models. Pellegrini and Scandura (2005, p.324), define mentorship, “as an intentional intervention that provides professional assistance with the intention of propelling career progression opportunities via demanding work and exposure to larger organisational networks”. Mentorship, therefore, unlocks career progression possibilities, increases exposure via new networks, and accelerates career mobility (Wayne-Hart, 2011). Based on the above, in study the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1.1: There is positive effect on the presence of strong interpersonal relationships in the workplace which influences career progression of women in mining.

2.3.3 Community Factors

According to Nairn & Bhargava (2021), societal norms and values attribute distinct gender roles to men and women, perpetuating the differentiation between them.

Khosa (2015) finds that politics and power abuse in the mining business, especially at top management level, bolster the idea that women are powerless. This is congruent with Benya (2009) who finds in the mining sector that, although racialised masculinities stress conflicts between black and white males, what typically unifies them is their dominance over women and desire to marginalise women. Thus, the historical exclusion of women in the mining sector should be understood from the perspective of a community that tries to marginalise and subordinate women.

Some studies note that in the mining sector gender norms and stereotypes and bias hinder women’s careers progression (Chanland et al., 2019; ILO, 2018). These include invisible organisational hurdles prevent women from achieving higher positions (Moalusi & Jones, 2019). Consequently, obstacles such as misconceptions regarding women’s professional capability, culturally determined gender norms, gender bias, the glass

ceiling, gender compensation disparity, uneven senior-level gender representation and sexual harassment hinder women's career progression.

Based on the discussion above we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1.2: There is a negative effect of traditional norms and values (community) on career progression of women at select mining sector.

2.3.4 Organisational Factors

Women's advancement in organisations is influenced by a variety of organisational-level elements that can either help or hinder their success. These elements include the organisation's structural, systemic, and cultural aspects, and they have a crucial impact in shaping women's chances, experiences and success in their professions (Kuschel & Salvaj, 2018). Understanding and resolving these organisational-level variables is critical for fostering an inclusive and fair work environment that encourages women's career advancement. According to Meyers (2022), the organisational mining culture is very masculine, favouring male dominance, gendered roles, gender inequity and high stress levels among women as they battle for integration. The finding also supports Hofstede's masculinity dimension of culture theory, which suggests that society is more competitive and that there is preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness, and material reward for success. Femininity, on the other hand, stands for a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life (Hofstede, 1984). These beliefs may cause dissatisfaction, poor morale, and significant female management turnover. Inequalities may also increase the gender and racial difference in senior management. This supports previous studies that suggest the hierarchical nature of the mining sector is also rooted in the political history and inequalities of the apartheid era in South Africa.

2.3.4.1 Effect of organisational culture on women career progression

A good and inclusive organisational culture produces an environment in which women feel appreciated, respected, and supported in their professional endeavours. It fosters gender equality, recognises women's

accomplishments, and offers equal access to opportunities for growth in the workplace. A culture of collaboration, innovation and diversity of thought promotes superior organisational outcomes. Naranjo, et al. (2010, p.468), define organisational culture as “values, beliefs, and hidden assumptions that organisational members have in common”. According to Sempene, Rieger & Roodt (2002, p.24), the way an organisation does business is shaped by its culture, which changes as its members behave”. A corporate culture that appreciates women requires top management commitment (Holton & Dent, 2016). As such promotion, reward, training and talent management policies reflect the company's culture.

2.3.4.2 Effect of workplace support strategies on women career progression

Nowack & Sak (2020) highlight the significance of creating an inclusive and supportive environment to promote women's professional development in the modern workforce. The authors stress the importance of implementing workplace support measures, such as providing resources, programs, and policies to help women overcome barriers and advance in their careers, ultimately fostering gender equality in organisational settings. Organisational factors promote women's careers progression (Gipson, et al., 2017; McKinsey & Company, 2019; Mehta, 2019; Taulli, 2018; Ames et al., 2019; Knipfer, et al., 2017 & Afande, 2015; Howson, Coate & De St Croix, 2018). Thus, networks, learning platforms, leadership development, career management, sponsorship, woman-to-woman support and gender-friendly cultures promote women's career progression (Jáuregui & Olivos, 2018; Kobayashi & Kondo, 2019; Mathur-Helm, 2018). The implication is that without a strong theoretical underpinning, these strategies might offer only superficial solutions, failing to address the fundamental challenges and needs for career advancement, especially for female employees. Thus, there is a pressing need for the company to reevaluate and realign its support strategies with career development theories that can provide more substantive and long-lasting benefits to its workforce.

2.3.4.3 Effect of organisational leadership on women career progression

The impact of organisational leadership on women's career advancement has received a lot of attention in recent years, as companies try to promote gender equality and diversity in the workplace. Leadership is critical in defining the culture, policies and practices that help or hinder women's growth within a company or sector. Organisational leaders' actions, decisions, and behaviours can have a significant impact on building an inclusive and supportive work environment in which women can thrive and advance in their careers (Mousa et al., 2021). This connection has the potential to inspire “performance and contribute to career progression, or it can lead to distrust, a lack of professional development activities, and workplace discontent” (Crawshaw & Game, 2015, p. 1185). Empowering leaders utilise “career-enhancing tactics to increase confidence, ability, and self-reliance, which leads to job happiness” (Kim & Beehr, 2017, p.301). Women already in management were studied in studies under this theme.

Based on this discussion, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis1.3: There is a positive effect of organisational leadership, organisational culture, and workplace support strategies on career progression of women at the select mining sector.

2.3.5 Public Policy Level Factors

Women's career advancement is influenced not only by organisational variables, but also by public policy factors that form the larger socioeconomic and institutional context in which organisations operate. Public policies are crucial in promoting gender equality, removing systemic hurdles, and allowing women to advance in their careers (Biswas et al. 2021). Understanding and resolving these policy-level concerns is critical for achieving greater gender equity and allowing women to succeed in the workplace.

South African law promotes gender equality in the workplace. The Constitution of South Africa Act No.108 of 1996, the Labour Relations Act

No.66 of 1995, and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act No.75 of 1997 provide for gender equality and justice. The Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 promotes the equal development of skills among certain populations (RSA, 1998b). The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Amendment Act No. 46 of 2013 aims to improve black men's and women's ownership, management control and employment (RSA, 2013). The National Gender Framework (2003) and Employment Equity Act (1998) were created to address racial and gender inequities. The National Gender Policy Framework (2003) promotes women's rights to employment, economic empowerment, science and technology, political authority, and decision-making. Black women were likewise empowered through the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (2013). The Protection from Harassment Act (Act 17 of 2011) also protects the defenceless.

Despite these laws, women still face discrimination in the workplace (Alexander, 2019). Mphokane (2008), finds that the South African mining sector has significant power distance, which supports power, respect, and wage hierarchies. This shows that women in South Africa are still excluded from crucial jobs and susceptible to employment discrimination 30 years after democracy. This indicates a larger issue with present government initiatives to reform this nation. It shows that rules are either poorly implemented or ineffectual, which might slow female career progression and keep them from company leadership.

Based on this discussion, we formulate the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1.4: There is positive effect of legislations and gender mainstreaming policies reforms on career progression of women in the mining sector.

2.4 Conceptual framework

From the discussion above the factors affecting female mine workers career progression represented in the conceptual framework below guided this study.

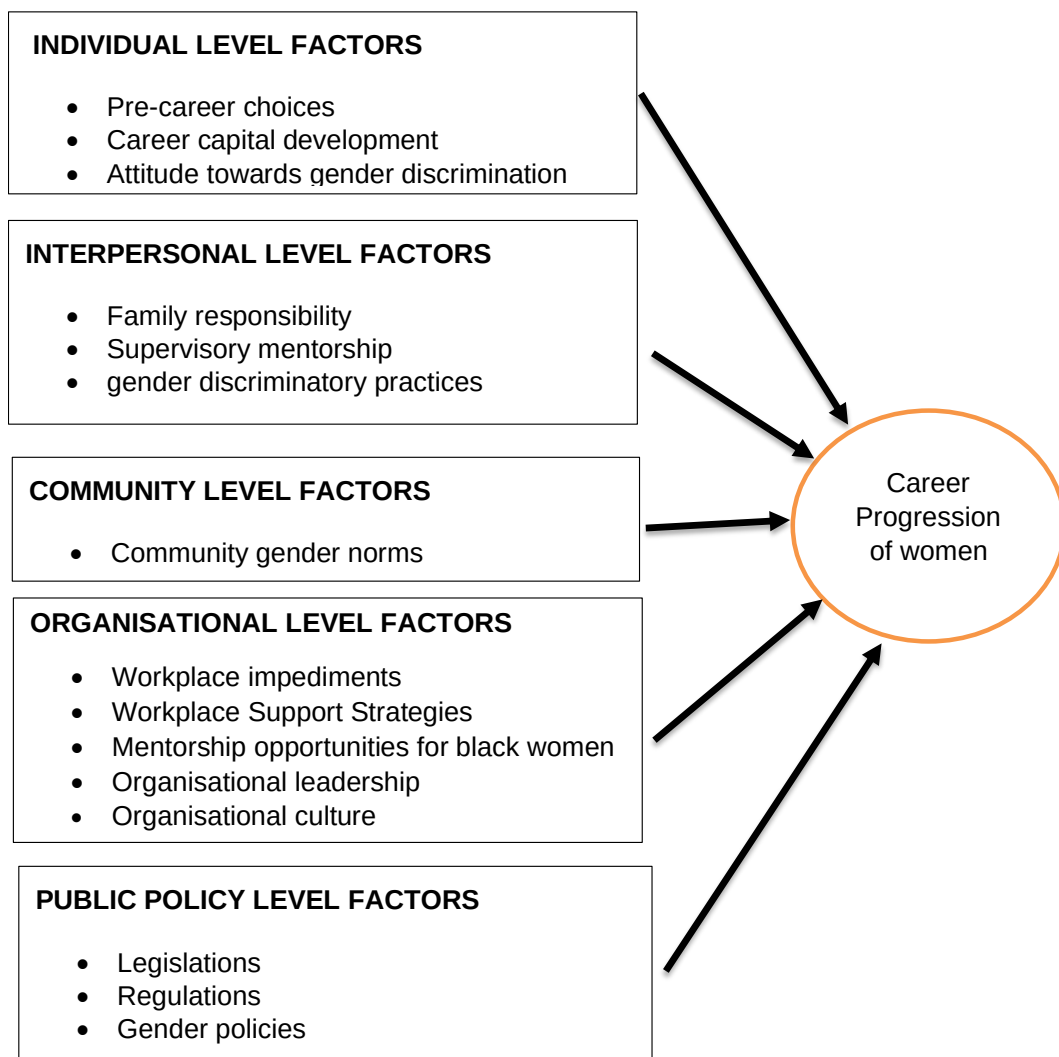


Figure 2.1: Conceptual framework on factors that affect career progression of women.
Source: Own construction based on literature reviews

2.5 Literature Review Summary

After doing a thorough literature review, it becomes clear that the career advancement of female workers in the South African mining 'sector is heavily influenced by a variety of interconnected factors. These issues include gender norms, structural barriers to work-life balance, mentorship opportunities, the quality of organisational leadership and culture and the concept of intersectionality. This comprehensive analysis emphasises the critical importance of implementing targeted interventions, enacting

supportive legislative measures, and making cultural changes to not only promote gender equality, but also to foster an inclusive environment that allows female mining workers to advance in their careers. The next chapter outlines the research methodology utilised in this study.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the dissertation elaborates on the research methodology adopted for the study. It outlines the chosen technique and design, detailing the procedures for data collection and processing, alongside the statistical tools employed for result analysis. The chapter delves into a comprehensive explanation of the rationale behind selecting the specific research methodology and approach, including the sampling methods Utilised. Additionally, it addresses the reliability and validity of the evaluation methods used in the research. The chapter culminates by recognizing the limitations inherent in the study and discussing the ethical considerations that have guided the research process.

3.2 Research Approach

The research employed a quantitative deductive methodology to assess the influence of interpersonal, personal, organisational, and societal or cultural elements on women's career progression in the mining sector (Kilu et al., 2020; Catalyst, 2019). This deductive method allowed for the construction of linkages between the identified factors and women's career advancement, providing critical insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by women in this sector. In selecting this systematic approach, the study aimed at impartially identifying the factor (the independent variable) with the most significant impact on the advancement of women in their careers (the dependent variable). A quantitative approach was also deemed suitable for the current research as the intention was to test theories not to develop one.

The choice of a quantitative research approach was based on a positivism paradigm, believing that this phenomenon should be studied in an objective manner that allows for comparison, prediction and controls using statistics (Creswell, 2016). A quantitative research approach was also chosen because the study could be implemented over a short period of time with accuracy and speed. The study used IBM SPSS statistical software for

quantitative data analysis (Saunders et al., 2016). This approach is particularly suited to this study, as it seeks to understand and quantify the various dynamics and barriers impacting the professional growth of women in a historically male-dominated industry.

3.3 Research design.

This study employed a quantitative research design, focusing on the analysis of numerical data using statistical tools. It followed a deductive approach, as outlined by Sekaran and Bougie (2016), utilising a descriptive research design to facilitate data collection through self-administered survey and questionnaires within departmental units. This approach was chosen for its efficiency in understanding the characteristics of career women in the mining company and for enabling easy comparison of results across demographic variables (Saunders et al., 2016). Additionally, the study incorporated a causal research design to explore the cause-and-effect relationships between individual, interpersonal, community, policy/legislative and organisational factors, and career progression. The establishment of these relationships was further examined for causation using regression analysis (Gujarati, 2021), essentially investigating how career progression is influenced by various factors. This component of the study was critical in determining how different factors tangibly influence the career progression of women in the mining industry, situating the research within the context of the specific case study of the selected mining company.

3.4 Data Collection method

In this study, a self-administered questionnaire was utilised as the primary instrument for the survey. The questionnaire encompassed closed-ended items, each structured on a five-point Likert scale. This scale ranged from “strongly disagree” (rated 1) to “strongly agree” (rated 5), specifically targeting variables impacting career progression.

The choice of a self-administered questionnaire was informed by the claim that such a tool is instrumental in succinctly introducing the research topic

while motivating respondents to provide candid and natural responses within a brief timeframe (McIntosh and Morse, 2015; Creswell, 2016; Ryan, 2018). Further reinforcing their utility, Sekaran & Bougie (2013) notes that compared to interviews, questionnaires demand less specialised skill for administration and are feasible for distribution to a substantially larger respondent pool. In reaching out to potential participants, a targeted email was initially dispatched to specific human resources personnel within the chosen mining company, with the primary objective of facilitating the dissemination of the questionnaire and survey (link).

The process of data collection unfolded in the following manner:

3.4.1 Permission

The research proposal was submitted to the Wits Business School, and the Post Graduate Committee (PGC) approved it. The university's ethical committee approval is documented in Appendix A. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the selected mining company, as shown in Appendix B.

3.4.2 Awareness

Communication was established with the Human Resource Manager of the selected mining company, who linked the researcher to the Women in Mining (WIM) representative. Following this communication, the researcher clearly stated the expectations as well as the research's purpose/aim and the timelines.

3.4.3 Distribution

The link for the survey was shared with Human Resource Manager for the selected mining company, who played a pivotal role in distributing it among female employees at the selected mining company and outlined the purpose/aim of the study.

During data collection, a problem occurred because some female employees did not have access of emails or WhatsApp. To remedy this, the representative of the selected mining company handed out printed

questionnaires to individuals affected and assisted the participants to complete the questionnaires and consent form. These were completed manually and then entered into the Qualtrics Experience Management platform to ensure that their responses were captured.

3.4.4 Collection

This study utilised primary data, collected through self-administered questionnaires, the link distributed via email and WhatsApp. For participants without access to these technologies, physical questionnaires and consent forms were provided, with no requirement to disclose personal data. The link was developed using the Qualtrics Experience Management platform, configured to avoid collecting identifiable information like email addresses or names. Participants were given a link to the questionnaire via email or forwarded messages, with a completion time estimated at 10 minutes. However, to accommodate various schedules, respondents were allotted a three-week period for submission. The gathered data was systematically organized by Qualtrics Experience Management platform and then transferred to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. For in-depth analysis, the data was imported into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

3.5 Population and Sample

The population encompassed female workers at different career stages, all of whom were employed in the selected South African mining company. The study ensured that the sample represented a diverse array of backgrounds and experiences (Henderson & Reynolds, 2022; Rinda et al., 2022). It included female workers from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds, spanning different age groups, educational levels, and work functions within the mining company.

For this study, the entire pool of participants consisted of 320 women who were employed full-time or part-time at the selected mining company. Only 179 people from this group of people responded to the questionnaire. This sample size was estimated to be the bare minimum required to ensure a representative cross-sectional analysis.

3.5.1 Sampling Method

The sampling strategy employed in this study is convenience sampling. Mehta et al. (2019) propose the use of homogeneous convenience sampling to address the limitations associated with traditional convenience sampling methods. The process commenced with the distribution of a survey by the company representative to the female workers within the selected mining company, as the researcher did not possess direct contact details of the potential participants. This distribution method allowed for a voluntary response mechanism, where individuals were under no obligation to partake in the survey, and non-participation did not incur any penalties or consequences. Moreover, no monetary rewards or incentives were associated with completing the survey, ensuring that the participants' responses were driven solely by their willingness to contribute to the research.

By utilising this approach, the study aimed to capture a broad spectrum of perspectives and experiences among female workers in the mining company, ensuring a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing their upward mobility. The voluntary nature of participation, absence of penalties for non-participation, and lack of monetary incentives underscored the ethical considerations and integrity of the research process, fostering a conducive environment for candid and authentic responses from the participants. The process entailed segmenting the population into distinct, relevant groups based on shared characteristics (Alvi, 2016). Specifically, the categorisation of the study's population was as follows: senior management / administrative / managerial; specialised / support; technical staff; non-professional administrative; machine operators and service staff. The sampling from each group was conducted using the convenience sampling method, ensuring that the subjects selected from each category were proportionate to the total number of female workers within that group in the snowball sampling framework.

3.6 Quality Assurance

The following discussion focuses on significant elements that ensured the study's validity and reliability.

3.6.2 Internal Validity

Internal validity refers to the degree of success of the scale in measuring what it sets out to measure such that differences between individual scores can be taken as representing true differences in the characteristics under study (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). To reinforce the internal validity of the study, pre-testing of the questionnaire was conducted by the researcher and only 179 participated. This crucial step involved administering the questionnaire to a group of respondents whose characteristics closely mirrored those of the target population. Such a strategy was pivotal in evaluating the appropriateness of the questions intended for data collection. Through this process, the researcher was able to refine the questionnaire, effectively eliminating potential biases and ensuring that the data collected was aligned with the study's objectives, thereby enhancing the overall quality of data obtained from the field. Additionally, the study's internal validity was further reinforced through the implementation of a meticulous research design, coupled with stringent quality control and execution techniques. The study also ensured internal validity through measuring confounding and mediating variables that may include age and education and experience.

3.6.3 Reliability

Reliability relates to the extent that the data collection approach will produce the same findings in different occasions. The Cronbach alpha was used to verify reliability of the instrument. The Cronbach alpha coefficient is deemed a suitable measure of the internal reliability of the questionnaires i.e., the degree to which a respondent answers the same question the same way again and over again, is the Cronbach alpha. To be considered acceptable, the Cronbach alpha must be at least 0.65 (Saunders et al. 2016).

Transparent:

This refers to the presentation of procedures in such a way that the reader gains a thorough comprehension of the data collection and presentation processes. The researcher for this study functioned as a guide to ensure the validity and reliability of the methodologies employed in this research.

3.7 Data analysis strategies and interpretation

The data analysis encompassing the application of both descriptive and inferential statistical methods was employed to elucidate the characteristics of the data, as suggested by Creswell et al. (2016). On the other hand, inferential statistics facilitated the testing of hypotheses and the determination of the generalisability of the findings to the broader population, aligning with Creswell's (2016) methodology. This aspect of the research incorporated the use of hypothesis testing and regression analysis as part of its inferential statistical approach. The data analysis conducted in this study involved statistical evaluations of survey data collected from women working in the mining sector. The survey encompassed a range of questions, delving into aspects such as career progression, factors influencing career advancement among female workers, workplace support strategies, personal attributes, family responsibilities and aspirations for skills development. The potential of the gathered survey data was realised through the application of structural equation modelling (SEM), a method aligned with the approach suggested by Ketchiwou et al. (2022). SEM, as a robust statistical technique, facilitated the examination of intricate interrelations among the multiple variables. This analysis provided valuable insights into both the direct and indirect impacts of various factors on the career progression of women in the mining sector.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

This research adhered to several key ethical considerations and practices:

3.8.1 Ensuring that no harm comes to participants.

Creswell (2016) said that psychological and emotional harm impact respondents differently. To avoid psychological harm, the researcher did not

ask questions that were psychologically sensitive. The researcher committed to presenting the findings honestly, without misrepresentation. Interpretations were objective and solely based on the collected data.

3.8.2 Voluntary participation

Participation in the survey was fully voluntary, with no respondents being forced to take part. The researcher thoroughly explained the study's nature to participants and received informed consent, assuring their voluntary participation.

3.8.3 All parties will remain anonymous.

To protect the participants' identity, the results were categorised by age, education level and other characteristics. As a result, respondents were not forced to divulge their personal identifying information (Saunders et al., 2018).

3.8.4 The confidentiality of all parties will be maintained.

Confidentiality was strictly observed. The personal details and responses of participants were securely stored and not disclosed to third parties, used solely for the purposes of this research. As a result, respondents were not required to provide any personal information, and the surveys were managed securely to ensure their privacy (Creswell, 2016).

3.8.5 Ensuring permission is granted.

Permission was obtained from the selected mining company, and ethical clearance was acquired from the Wits Business School Post Graduate Committee (PGC). Participants provided informed consent, clearly outlined in straightforward language. They were granted sufficient time to consider their participation, with the assurance of the right to withdraw at any stage. For online participants, consent was a prerequisite for participation.

Summary

This chapter delved deeply into the quantitative approach that has been implemented into the research design and methodology. The subsequent Chapter 4 will explore the outcomes derived from the data, coupled with a thorough analysis of these results. Thereafter, the report therefore shifts

attention towards a set of overarching conclusions that mirror the coherence evident in the data. These conclusions will be interlinked to construct a unified body of knowledge, directly associating them with the research outcomes and enriching the collective comprehension of the subject matter.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the analysis of the data collected in this research, articulating the outcomes through diverse tables and graphs to enhance clarity and facilitate comprehension. The following sections systematically demonstrate the data, starting with demographic analyses encompassing age, level of qualifications completed, position level, years of work experience in the mining company and marital status. Subsequent sections will delve into presenting patterns, associations and developments identified through the analysis. Each discovery will be rigorously assessed in light of established learned works, undertaking to furnish a comprehensive viewpoint on the obstacles and prospects influencing the professional paths of women in the mining sector of South Africa.

4.1.1 Analysis of study demographical information

4.1.1.1 Age of participants

The largest proportion of the sample falls within the age group of 30-39, accounting for 42.6% of the total respondents. This is followed by the age group of 40-49, which represents 26.1% of the sample. The age group of 20-29 comprises 21.6% of the respondents, and the smallest proportion is in the age group of 50-59, with only 9.7% of the total sample. This information is summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Age of participants

Age categories of participants					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20 - 29	38	21.6	21.6	21.6
	30 - 39	75	42.6	42.6	64.2
	40 - 49	46	26.1	26.1	90.3
	50 - 59	17	9.7	9.7	100.0
	Total	176	100.0	100.0	

4.1.1.2 Qualifications Completed

Understanding the educational background of the respondents is crucial for

analysing how different levels of education may impact career progression within the context of the South African mining Sector. The analysis shows that the highest proportion of respondents in the sample have completed a Postgraduate diploma/postgraduate degree, accounting for 46.6% of the total participants. This is followed by National diploma/undergraduate degree holders, representing 34.1% of the sample. The smallest proportion is observed among individuals with a Matric qualification, making up 19.3% of the respondents. These are depicted in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Level of education completed.

Level of education completed.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Matric	34	19.3	19.3	19.3
	National diploma/undergraduate degree	60	34.1	34.1	53.4
	Post graduate diploma/post graduate degree.	82	46.6	46.6	100.0
	Total	176	100.0	100.0	

4.1.1.3 Position Level

Understanding the distribution of position levels within the organisation is essential for assessing the career progression opportunities and challenges faced by female workers in the South African mining company. The analysis reveals that most respondents fall into the categories of Professional, Junior management and Middle management, collectively representing 43.8% of the sample. The most prevalent position level is Professional, accounting for 16.5% of the participants, followed by Middle management at 14.8% and Junior management at 12.5%. On the other hand, Cleaner, Clerk and Machine operator positions constitute a smaller proportion of the sample, with percentages ranging from 2.3% to 7.4%. These are depicted in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Position Level

Position Level					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Cleaner	4	2.3	2.3	2.3
	Clerk	19	10.8	10.8	13.1
	Machine operator	13	7.4	7.4	20.5
	Professional	29	16.5	16.5	36.9
	Supervisor	16	9.1	9.1	46.0
	Junior management	22	12.5	12.5	58.5
	Middle management	26	14.8	14.8	73.3
	Senior management	11	6.3	6.3	79.5
	Other	36	20.5	20.5	100.0
	Total	176	100.0	100.0	

4.1.1.4 Years of work experience within mining company

Understanding the distribution of work experience is crucial for evaluating the impact of tenure on career progression and organisational dynamics within the mining company. The findings indicate a varied distribution of work experience among the respondents, with a significant portion having relatively moderate tenure with mining company. Specifically, the analysis reveals that most respondents have work experience falling within the range of 1 to 20 years, accounting for 96.6% of the sample. Specifically, 38.1% have 1 to 5 years of experience, 27.8% have 6 to 10 years, and 30.7% have 11 to 20 years. A smaller proportion of participants, 3.4%, have work experience ranging from 21 to 40 years. These are depicted in Table 4 below:

Table 4 Year of work experience within mining company

Work experience within mining company (years)?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 to 5	67	38.1	38.1	38.1
	6 to 10	49	27.8	27.8	65.9
	11 to 20	54	30.7	30.7	96.6
	21 to 30	3	1.7	1.7	98.3
	31 to 40	3	1.7	1.7	100.0
	Total	176	100.0	100.0	

4.1.1.5 Marital Status

Understanding the marital status composition of the sample is essential for exploring potential correlations between marital status and career progression or other factors within the context of the South African mining company. These findings indicate a diverse distribution of marital statuses among the respondents, with a significant portion being single or married. Most respondents are either single or married, collectively representing 76.1% of the sample. Specifically, 42.6% of the participants are single, while 33.5% are married. Living with a partner account for 11.9% of the respondents, followed by divorced at 9.7%. A smaller proportion of participants, 2.3%, are widowed. These are depicted in Table 5 below:

Table 5 Marital Status

		Marital Status			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Divorced	17	9,7	9,7	9,7
	Living with partner	21	11,9	11,9	21,6
	Married	59	33,5	33,5	55,1
	Single	75	42,6	42,6	97,7
	Widowed	4	2,3	2,3	100,0
	Total	176	100,0	100,0	

4.1.1.6 Women with children

This data indicates that a significant majority of the women surveyed (75.0%) have children. Understanding the demographics of women with children is crucial for exploring the potential impact of family responsibilities on various aspects such as career progression, work-life balance, and job satisfaction within the context of the study on factors affecting the career progression of female workers in a South African mining company.

Table 6 Women with children

		Women with Children			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	44	25,0	25,0	25,0
	Yes	132	75,0	75,0	100,0
	Total	176	100,0	100,0	

4.1.1.7 Women who live with kids under the age of 18 years.

This finding suggests that a significant majority of the women surveyed, (63.6%) live with children under the age of 18. Understanding the demographics of women living with children can provide valuable insights into the potential challenges and responsibilities they may face balancing work and family commitments.

Table 7 Women who live with kids under the age of 18.

Live with kids under the age of 18					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	51	29,0	29,0	29,0
	Yes	112	63,6	63,6	92,6
	No Answer	13	7,4	7,4	100,0
	Total	176	100,0	100,0	

4.2 Reliability and Validity

Cronbach alpha coefficients were calculated to ensure that the data was reliable and valid. The results of these calculations are shown in the following table. Figure 4.1 shows that the Cronbach's alpha coefficients for each construct exceed the required minimum threshold of 0.6 (Agu et al., 2021; Dasgupta, Biswal, & Ramesh, 2017; Hashim et al. (2023) signifying the reliability and internal consistency of the measurement items within each construct, enhancing the validity of the study's findings.

Table 4.2: Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for various constructs

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Managerial feedback and support	0.820	3
Career and progression challenges	0.906	6
Managerial communication and support	0.936	5
Mentor relationship	0.960	8
Organisational support for women's progression	0.950	2
Gender equality perception in the organisation	0.936	3
Personal career management and development	0.822	7
Challenges in career progression	0.946	13
Positive factors in career progression	0.912	10

Table 8 Cronbach's Alpha

4.3 Analysis of factors affecting career progression of female workers in the select mining company.

This investigation was critical given the sector's traditionally male-dominated nature, which presents unique challenges and impediments for women considering career progression. According to Mahat and Aithal (2022), these prejudices are frequently the result of well ingrained gender stereotypes and organisational systems. Such features not only hamper the development of important skills required for professional growth, but also maintain a working atmosphere that is less friendly to female advancement. Maharjan (2021) emphasises the importance of investigating individual, familial and cultural effects on career growth. Various aspects of the study are scrutinized through a multitude of measures, each exploring distinct elements of the subject matter. This discussion encompasses a detailed examination of these varied components.

4.3.1 Managerial Feedback and Support

This construct was assessed by asking participants to indicate their agreement or disagreement with three statements (measures) explained below:

Measure1: My supervisor or manager gives the team honest and fair feedback.

Results show that a combined 73.9% of respondents somewhat or strongly agree that their supervisor or manager gives the team honest and fair feedback, with 30.7% strongly affirming this sentiment. This substantial majority underscores a perception of integrity and fairness in the feedback process from supervisors. Conversely, 18.7% of respondents express disagreement (either strongly or somewhat), which could indicate a minority of female workers who participated in the survey view that feedback as biased or unfair. A small proportion of 7.4% of the workforce stands neutral, possibly suggesting ambivalence or insufficient experience to judge the feedback process effectively.

Measure 2: My supervisor or manager helps our team identify areas where we need training.

Here again, a combined 73.8% of respondents agree (somewhat or strongly) that their supervisor or manager helps the teams they work in identify areas where they need training. This indicates that supervisors are actively involved in the professional development of their team members. A combined 17.7% of the respondents strongly or slightly disagree with this statement, implying that there is a segment of the female workforce that does not feel adequately supported in terms of identifying training needs. Those neither agreeing nor disagreeing with this statement 8.5%, indicating they do not have a definitive perception of the assistance they receive in the identification of their training needs.

Measure 3: My supervisor or manager encourages me and team members to express our ideas and suggestions.

Encouragement to express ideas and suggestions also sees a high agreement rate, with a combined 73.8% of respondents agreeing (somewhat or strongly) that their supervisor or manager encourages this behaviour and practice. This suggests a healthy culture of open communication and innovation where employees feel valued and heard. The percentage of those who disagree (a combined 17.7% of the respondents) suggests a minority segment of participants that do not feel as encouraged to share their thoughts or ideas. Neutrality is once again observed with 8.5%, pointing to a subset of respondents who may be undecided or have not formed a strong opinion regarding practices by their managers to encourage them to share ideas.

Summary of Managerial Feedback and Support:

The data portrays a largely positive consensus towards managerial feedback and support, with recognition of areas for potential improvement. The slight variations in the percentages across different aspects of managerial support provide nuanced insights into the specific areas where managers are excelling and where there may be opportunities for further

development in their roles as leaders and supporters of their teams. All the above measures are depicted in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Managerial Feedback and Support (N=179. All figures are in percentage)					
Questions	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
My supervisor or manager gives the team honest and fair feedback. Percentage	6,8	11,9	7,4	43,2	30,7
My supervisor or manager helps our team identify areas where we need training. Percentage	6,3	11,4	8,5	42	31,8
My supervisor or manager encourages me and team members to express our ideas and suggestions. Percentage	6,3	11,4	8,5	42	31,8

Table 9 Managerial Feedback and Support

4.3.2 Gender Equality Perception in the Organisation

This construct was assessed by asking participants to indicate their agreement or disagreement with three statements (measures) explained below:

Measure1: The contribution of men and women is valued equally in the organisation.

Results indicate that a combined, 38.6% of respondents do somewhat agree (23.3%) and strongly agree (15.3%) that contributions are valued equally. This compares to 43.8%) of the respondents who do not agree that the organisation values the contributions of men and women equally suggesting an existing gender-based disparities in how contributions are valued. A further 17.6% are ambivalent or uncertain about whether the contributions of men and women are valued equally in the organisation.

Measure 2: In the organisation I feel that men and women receive equal opportunities to grow in careers.

43.8% of survey participants either strongly disagree (14.8%) or somewhat disagree (29%) that men and women receive equal opportunities to grow their careers, compared to a total of 38.6% who somewhat agree (23.3%) or strongly agree (15.3%) with this statement. 17.6% of the survey participants were neither in agreement nor disagreement with this statement, underscoring a subset of the workforce that remains ambivalent to gender dynamics in career development opportunities.

Measure 3: I feel that irrespective of gender any qualified person can have successful career in this organisation.

Analysis of responses to this variable indicates a slight shift towards more positive perceptions as total of 48.3% of respondents somewhat agreed (25%) or strongly agree (23.3%) to the statement that any qualified person can have a successful career, irrespective of gender, suggesting a slightly more positive perception that qualification and not gender plays an important role in career progress. This compares with a total of 38.1% who strongly disagreed (13.6%) or somewhat disagree (24.4%) with the statement, suggesting that for a substantial number of participants, there is a belief that gender plays a prominent role in career success. A lesser percentage of participants (13.6%) were ambivalent.

Summary of Gender Equality Perception in the Organisation

The study reveals a complex picture with regards to perceptions on gender equality within the organisation. There is a notable division in opinions, with a significant minority of respondents disagreeing that there is gender equality in terms of value of contribution and career growth opportunities. However, responses on qualifications irrespective of gender as key moderator of career success shift slightly towards agreement. This suggests that while there may be perceived inequalities in certain areas, when it comes to the overarching driver of career success, qualification receives higher ratings. It is crucial for the organisation to delve deeper into these perceptions and address the specific concerns raised to foster a more

equitable and inclusive environment. The results of the analysis of the data under each of these measures are summarised in Table 10 below:

Table 10: gender equality in the organisation (N=179. All figures are in percentage)					
Questions	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The contribution of men and women is valued equally in the organisation.	14,8	29	17,6	23,3	15,3
In the organisation I feel that men and women receive equal opportunities to grow in careers	14,8	29	17,6	23,3	15,3
I feel that irrespective of gender any qualified person can have successful career in this organisation.	13,6	24,4	13,6	25	23,3

Table 10 Gender Equality in the Organisation

4.3.3 Career and Progression Challenges

This factor was assessed by asking participants to indicate their agreement or disagreement with six statements (measures) explained below:

Measure 1: Deficiencies in skills development support has negatively Impacted my careers, progression.

A majority 71.4% of participants echoing that deficiencies in skills development support have impeded their career growth. This high percentage paints a vivid picture of an environment where opportunities for skill enhancement and professional development might be scarce or inadequately addressed, leaving many feeling unprepared or ill-equipped to advance.

Measure 2: Inadequate mentorship has negatively Impacted my careers, progression.

A significant 66.5% believe that insufficient mentorship has been a barrier to their career advancement. This highlights a gap in guidance and support, essential for navigating the complex paths of career progression. It's a story of professionals seeking direction and wisdom, often finding themselves navigating the terrain solo.

Measure 3: Unfair promotion practices have negatively Impacted my careers, progression.

The most agreed upon factor with 85.8% identifying unfair promotion practices as a detriment to their career progression. This overwhelming consensus signals a deep-rooted issue within the organisational structure, where advancement seems obscured by unfair practices, casting long shadows over merit and hard work.

Measure 4: Male domination has negatively Impacted my careers, progression.

A total of 75% agree that male domination has negatively impacted career progression. 11.4% disagree, showing that while the majority see it as a problem, a significant minority doesn't. This speaks to the daunting task of charting a course in environments where gender dynamics play a significant role, often skewing the path in favour of one gender over another.

Measure 5: Lack of support for work-family balance has negatively Impacted my careers, progression.

74.4% agreeing that the struggle to balance work and family responsibilities has hindered their career advancement. This part of the narrative touches on the often-challenging task of juggling professional ambitions with personal commitments, a tightrope walk that many find challenging without supportive structures in place.

Measure 6: Limited role models has negatively Impacted my careers, progression.

This factor has a higher disagreement rate (22.2%) compared to others, suggesting more varied perceptions. Still, a majority. 63.4% feel this absence has adversely affected their career path. This highlights the importance of having trailblazers and guides, whose footsteps can lead the way in an otherwise uncharted journey of professional growth.

Summary of Career and Progression Challenges

In summary, unfair promotion practices, male domination, and lack of support for work-family balance are perceived as significant barriers by a substantial portion of respondents. Deficiencies in skills development and inadequate mentorship are also viewed as negative factors but to a lesser extent. Limited role models have the highest disagreement rate, indicating more varied experiences or perceptions among the participants. This data is critical for understanding the specific challenges faced and could guide targeted interventions or policy changes within the company. These are summarised in table 11 below.

Table 11: Perception of career and progression challenges (N=179. All figures are in percentage)					
Questions	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Deficiencies in skills development support has negatively Impacted my careers, progression.	1,1	9,1	18,3	53,1	18,3
Inadequate mentorship has negatively Impacted my careers, progression.	1,7	15,9	15,9	43,8	22,7
Unfair promotion practices have negatively Impacted my careers, progression	2,3	4	8	52,3	33,5
Male domination has negatively Impacted my careers, progression.	1,7	9,7	13,6	52,8	22,2
Lack of support for work-family balance has negatively Impacted my careers, progression	1,1	10,8	13,6	48,3	26,1
Limited role models have negatively Impacted my careers, progression	5,1	17,1	14,3	45,1	18,3

Table 11 Career and Progression Challenges

4.3.4 Managerial Communication and Support

This factor was assessed by asking participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to five statements (measures) explained below:

Measure 1: My supervisor or manager explain to us the company goals.

The results of the analysis of responses for this measure show that a combined small minority (12%) either disagrees strongly (2,3%) or somewhat (9.7%), with the statement that their manager explains company goals, while a substantial majority (86.3%) agrees strongly (44.0%) or somewhat (42.3%) that their supervisor explains company goals effectively. These findings suggest presence of clarity goal articulation by the leadership of the organisation to employees.

Measure 2: My supervisor or manager explains to us how our work impacts the company goals.

Here, results similar to those of the first measure were recorded. Specifically, 86.3% agree with the statement that their supervisor or manager explains how their work impacts the company goals, suggesting consistency in managers effectively communicating the importance of employees' roles in relation to the company's objectives. At the same time, 12% disagree with the statement, while a minuscule 1,7% are neither in agreement nor disagreement.

Measure 3: My supervisor or manager takes time to discuss team's concerns patiently.

A slightly higher percentage of respondents (13.8%) disagrees that their supervisor takes the time to discuss concerns patiently, which could signal an area for improvement in team engagement. Most respondents (80.6%) agree that their manager is patient in addressing team concerns, suggesting that managerial responsiveness is perceived positively.

Measure 4: My supervisor or manager provides the team with the help we need.

Disagreement is minimal (11.4%) regarding whether supervisors provide the necessary help, showing a positive outlook on managerial support.

A majority (80.5%) feels that their supervisor or manager provides the assistance they need, indicating effective managerial support.

Measure 5: My supervisor or manager uses the team's ideas and suggestions to make decisions that affect us.

Disagreement is more pronounced here, with 16.6% not in agreement that their manager uses the team's ideas and suggestions for decisions. However, a majority (74.8%) still agree, although this is a lower agreement rate compared to the other areas, which suggests that while ideas are often

considered, there might be room for more inclusive decision-making practices.

Summary of Managerial Communication and Support

The study indicates a strong perception of effective managerial communication and support in explaining company goals and demonstrating how individual work contributes to these goals. There is a positive sentiment towards managers providing the necessary support and being patient with team concerns. However, there is slightly less agreement on the incorporation of team ideas into decision-making, suggesting this as an area where some employees may desire more influence. Overall, the organisation appears to be successful in fostering good managerial communication, with some opportunities to enhance team involvement in decision-making processes. These findings are summarised in the table 12 below.

Table 12: Managerial Communication and Support (N=179. All figures are in percentage)					
Questions	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
My supervisor or manager explain to us the company goals	2,3	9,7	1,7	42,3	44
My supervisor or manager explains to us how our work impacts the company goals	2,3	9,7	1,7	42,3	44
My supervisor or manager takes time to discuss team' s concerns patiently	2,9	10,9	5,7	45,7	34,9
My supervisor or manager provides the team with the help we need	1,7	9,7	8	45,1	35,4
My supervisor or manager uses the team's ideas and suggestions to make decisions that affect us	4	12,6	8,6	44,3	30,5

Table 12 Management Communication and Support

4.3.5 Personal Career Management and Development

This factor was assessed by asking participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to seven statements (measures) explained below:

Measure 1: I have specific goals and career plans.

Here, we see an overwhelming 93.6% of respondents affirming that they have specific goals and career plans, with a notable 60.1% strongly agreeing. This portrays a group of individuals who are not just wandering aimlessly in their careers but are strategically navigating their professional paths with clear objectives in mind.

Measure 2: I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals.

When it comes to satisfaction with their career progression, 67.8% express satisfaction to varying degrees. However, the picture is nuanced. While a good portion feels they are on track, 23.6% signal dissatisfaction, highlighting a significant segment of the workforce who perhaps feel left behind or unfulfilled in their career journey, hinting at potential disparities in opportunities or support systems within the organisation.

Measure 3: There are many jobs available for me given my skills and experience.

Opinions are split regarding the availability of jobs suitable for their skills. A majority (52.9%) feel optimistic about job prospects, yet a substantial 33.4% disagree. This suggests a workforce that is somewhat divided in its perception of external career opportunities a reflection of either a competitive job market or varying levels of confidence in their professional competencies.

Measure 4: I seek out training and development opportunities.

The commitment to growth is evident, with a commanding 92% actively seeking training and development opportunities. This illustrates a proactive attitude towards skill enhancement and personal development, indicative of

a workforce striving to stay ahead of the curve.

Measure 5: I seek out opportunities for continuous learning in my career.

Similarly, continuous learning is a priority for 96.6% of the respondents. This not only underscores a dedication to lifelong learning but also points to a workforce that values adaptability and staying updated in an ever-evolving professional landscape.

Measure 6: I have many contacts within organisation.

The responses reveal a less connected internal network, with only 46.3% feeling they have many contacts within their organisation. This indicates potential barriers in internal networking or perhaps reflects a culture where forming extensive internal connections is challenging.

Measure 7: I have many contacts within the industry in which I work.

External networking paints an even starker picture. A mere 38.5% feel they have ample industry contacts, contrasted by a significant 38% disagreement. This suggests a workforce that is potentially more inward-looking or one that finds navigating the broader industry network more challenging.

Summary of Personal Career Management and Development

In summary, a workforce is deeply committed to personal and professional development, as evidenced by their goal-setting and continuous learning endeavors. However, the data also reveals areas of concern, particularly in networking and the perception of external job opportunities, which could be critical in shaping their career advancement and overall satisfaction. The narrative here is one of ambition and self-improvement, juxtaposed with the realities of internal and external networking challenges and a mixed outlook on career progression opportunities. These are summarised in the table 13 below:

Table 13: Personal Career Management and Development (N=179. All figures are in percentage)					
Questions	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I have specific goals and career plans	1,7	4	0,6	33,5	60,1
I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals	2,3	21,3	8,6	39,1	28,7
There are many jobs available for me given my skills and experience	5,2	28,2	13,8	32,2	20,7
I seek out opportunities for continuous learning in my career		0,6	2,9	48,9	47,7
I have many contacts within organisation	10,4	19,7	23,7	29,5	16,8
I have many contacts within the industry in which I work	14,4	23,6	23,6	27	11,5

Table 13 Personal Career Management and Development

4.3.6 Mentor Relationship

This factor was assessed by asking participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to eight statements (measures) explained below:

Measure 1: I respect my mentor's ability to teach others.

In this analysis, we see 76.9% of respondents acknowledging respect for their mentor's ability to teach. It's a significant endorsement of mentors as effective educators and guides in the professional realm. However, the 9.2% who disagree, along with those undecided (13.8%), suggest that not all mentorship experiences are equally impactful or beneficial.

Measure 2: "I admire my mentor's ability to motivate others".

Majority 77.7% express admiration for their mentor's ability to motivate others. This element of the narrative tells us about mentors who are not just teachers but also inspirers, playing a critical role in driving the motivation and enthusiasm of their mentees. The 9.3% in disagreement, though, hint at some mentors possibly lacking this inspiring influence.

Measure 3: "I try to model my behaviour after my mentor".

In this analysis, we find 67.7% trying to emulate their mentor's behaviour, illustrating mentors as role models shaping the professional conduct and aspirations of their mentees. The dissenting 14.6%, however, indicate variations in the impact or suitability of mentors as role models.

Measure 4: "I consider my mentor to be a friend".

This part of the data is more nuanced. Only 46.9% consider their mentor a friend, suggesting a professional boundary in many of these relationships. The 26.9% who neither agree nor disagree and the 27% who disagree indicate a spectrum of mentor-mentee dynamics, from strictly professional to more personal and friendly.

Measure 5: I exchange confidence with my mentor.

In the discussion of trust and confidence, 64.6% feel comfortable exchanging confidences with their mentor. It's indicative of a trust-based relationship. Still, a combined 26.2% are not in this space, highlighting mentorship relationships where trust and personal sharing may not be as deeply rooted.

Measure 6: My mentor has devoted effort, time, and consideration to my career.

The analysis takes a positive turn with 66.9% acknowledging their mentor's devoted effort, time, and consideration for their career. This reflects mentors' commitment and investment in their mentees' professional growth. However, the 13.8% who disagree present a counter-narrative of perhaps less engaged or less effective mentorship.

Measure 7: My mentor helps me coordinate professional goals.

Here, 70% agree their mentor helps in coordinating professional goals, painting mentors as crucial allies in career planning and goal setting. The 13.1% in disagreement could signify a gap in some mentorship relations where career guidance is less pronounced.

Measure 8: My mentor takes a personal interest in my career.

67.5% feel their mentor takes a personal interest in their career, suggesting a mentorship dynamic that goes beyond just professional advice to a more individualized concern for career development. The 15.6% who disagree, however, hint at experiences where this personal investment might be lacking.

Summary of Mentor Relationship

The study reflects generally positive sentiments toward mentors, the overarching narrative depicts a landscape where mentorship is generally valued and effective, characterized by respect, admiration, and mutual trust. However, it also unveils varied experiences in mentor-mentee relationships, with differences in personal connection, the extent of mentors' involvement, and the effectiveness of mentors as role models and career guides. This diversity in experiences signals opportunities for enhancing the depth and quality of mentorship across the board. These are depicted in table 14 below.

Table 14: Mentor Relationship (N=179. All figures are in percentage)					
Questions	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I respect my mentor's ability to teach others	3,8	5,4	13,8	44,6	32,3
I admire my mentor's ability to motivate others	3,1	6,2	13,1	46,9	30,8
I try to model my behaviour after my mentor	3,1	11,5	17,7	40	27,7
I consider my mentor to be a friend	9,2	17,7	26,2	26,9	20
I exchange confidence with my mentor	6,2	10	19,2	37,7	26,9
My mentor has devoted effort, time and consideration to my career	3,8	10	19,2	39,2	27,7
My mentor helps me coordinate professional goals	4,6	8,5	16,9	41,5	28,5
My mentor takes a personal interest in my career	4,7	10,9	17,1	41,9	25,6

Table 14 Mentor Relationship

4.3.7 Positive Factors in Career Progression

This factor was assessed by asking participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to seven statements (measures) explained below:

Measure 1: Organisational Network has promoted my career progression in mining.

Majority 48% of professionals find their career progression supported by the intricate veins of organisational networks. This speaks to a culture where connections and internal relationships are key to unlocking career opportunities. Yet, a significant 23.7% feel disconnected from these networks, highlighting areas where the organisational framework might be less conducive to career growth for some.

Measure 2: Learning and growth platforms have promoted my career progression in mining.

Here, learning and growth platforms emerge as crucial elevators for 60.7% of the workforce, signifying a strong commitment to continuous development. This analysis illustrates a professional landscape that values and invests in skill enhancement and knowledge expansion. However, the story also tells us of the 17.9% who stand on the sidelines, possibly indicating disparities in access to or the effectiveness of these platforms.

Measure 3: Women-oriented leadership development programmes has promoted my career progression in mining.

52.6% finding these initiatives instrumental in their career progression. This reflects a growing recognition of the need for gender-specific support structures in a traditionally male-dominated field. Nevertheless, the 21.4% who disagree hint at a narrative of unmet potential or uneven implementation of these programs.

Measure 4: Career management assistance has promoted my career progression in mining.

53.2%, underlining the value of structured support in navigating the industry's complex terrain. Yet, this assistance does not reach everyone equally, as indicated by the 19.7% who find themselves in the shadows of this support.

Measure 5: Sponsorship initiatives, in which seniors use their authority to promote junior employees has positively impacted my career progression in mining.

Sponsorship initiatives, wherein seniors advocate for juniors, are seen as a positive force by 46.5%. This subplot reveals the impactful role of mentorship and advocacy in advancing careers. But the story also speaks of the 46.5% who may be navigating their paths without this influential backing.

Measure 6: Women-to-woman support has promoted my career in mining.

In this analysis, the solidarity of woman-to-woman support is acknowledged by 51.5%, illustrating a network of mutual aid and encouragement. This element of the story highlights the strength found in communal support, while also pointing to the 24.3% who might be journeying without this sense of sisterhood.

Measure 7: Gender-friendly organisational culture has facilitated the development and advancement of my career.

46.8% acknowledging a gender-friendly organisational culture as a facilitator for career development. This suggests a gradual shift towards more inclusive environments. Yet, the counterpoint lies in the 24.9% who perceive the landscape as less accommodating, indicating ongoing challenges in cultivating a universally supportive culture.

Summary of Positive Factors in Career Progression

The study indicates that while there are positive perceptions of the influence of learning platforms, organisational networks, and career management assistance on career progression in the mining industry, there is less consensus regarding the impact of leadership development programmes,

sponsorship initiatives, and women-specific support systems. The presence of a significant neutral response in all categories suggests a segment of employees are either unsure of or have not realized the benefits of these factors in their career progression. Enhancing visibility and effectiveness of these initiatives could be key to broadening their recognized value among employees. These findings are summarised in table 15 below:

Table 15: Positive Factors in Career Progression (N=179. All figures are in percentage)					
Questions	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Organisational Network has promoted my career progression in mining	6,9	16,8	28,3	32,9	15
Learning and growth platforms have promoted my career progression in mining	2,9	15	21,4	41,6	19,1
Women-oriented leadership development programmes has promoted my career progression in mining	8,1	13,3	26	39,9	12,7
Career management assistance has promoted my career progression in mining	5,2	14,5	27,2	39,9	13,3
Sponsorship initiatives, in which seniors use their authority to promote junior employees has positively impacted my career progression in mining	6,9	16,1	30,5	37,9	8,6
Women-to-woman support has promoted my	11	13,3	24,3	37,6	13,9

career in mining					
Gender-friendly organisational culture has facilitated the development and advancement of my career.	6,4	18,5	28,3	31,2	15,6

Table 15 Positive Factors in Career Progression

4.3.8 Organisational Support for Women's Progression

This factor was assessed by asking participants to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement to two statements (measures) explained below:

Measure 1: Gender policies at the organisation has accorded women good chance to take up Senior positions than before

55.7% of the respondents perceive that gender policies have indeed created better opportunities for women to ascend to senior positions than before. This figure, combining those who somewhat and strongly agree, paints a picture of gradual but tangible progress. It tells us about an organisation taking strides, albeit with varying degrees of success, in levelling the playing field for women aiming for the upper echelons of leadership. However, a considerable 22.8% disagree with this sentiment, and 21.3% remain neutral. This aspect of the story hints at scepticism or perceived gaps in the effectiveness of these policies, suggesting that the journey towards gender parity at senior levels remains a work in progress.

Measure 2: Gender policies at the organisation has accorded women good chance to take up challenging roles at par with their male counterpart.

Here again, 55.7% agree that such opportunities have been enhanced, reflecting a scenario where gender policies are seen as instrumental in opening doors to more demanding and substantive roles for women. This part of the narrative underscores a move towards dismantling traditional gender roles and expectations in the workplace. Yet, similar to the first point, the 23% who disagree and the 21.3% on the fence narrate a different experience or perception. This divergence suggests that while policies are

in place, their implementation or impact may not be uniformly felt across the board.

Summary of Organisational Support for Women's Progression

The study indicates that there is a positive view among more than half of the respondents about the organisation's gender policies in advancing women's opportunities for senior and challenging roles. However, the presence of disagreement and neutrality in nearly equal measures to the positive response's points to a divide in opinion. While some see substantial progress, others either do not see it or are uncertain. This suggests that while policies may be in place, there could be variances in their implementation or perception, and there may be further work needed to ensure these policies are effective and recognized across the board. These findings are depicted in table 16 below:

Table 16: Organisational Support for Women's Progression (N=179. All figures are in percentage)					
Questions	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Gender policies at the organisation has accorded women good chance to take up Senior positions than before	4	18,8	21,3	28,7	27
Gender policies at the organisation has accorded women good chance to take up challenging roles at par with their male counterpart	4	19	21,3	28,7	27

Table 16 Organisational Support for Women's Progression

4.4 Regression and Hypothesis Testing

To evaluate the four-hypothesis presented in Chapter 3, regression analysis was employed to explore the association between the aggregate scores of the dependent variable, career progression, and scores from each of the three independent variables: individual, organisational and community factors, along with policy factors. The analysis involved comparing the

average scores derived from the Likert scale questions (ranging from 1 to 5) for each independent variable against the mean score obtained from questions using a 5-point scale for the dependent variable. This scale ranged from “strongly disagree” (rated 1) to “strongly agree” (rated 5), specifically targeting variables impacting career progression. This approach aimed to discern the extent to which respondents' answers across the four thematic areas of the research hypotheses influenced their responses related to the dependent variable, namely, career progression. This hypothesis testing was conducted using the SPSS version 29.0 software and included all four independent variables along with career progression as the dependent variable. In the interest of maintaining consistency, no items from the survey or questionnaire were excluded from this analysis.

4.4.1 H1 Correlation Among Factors Influencing Career Progression

The correlation analysis illustrates a pronounced symbiosis between the elements of managerial communication and their subsequent impact on career progression. Particularly, the explicatory discourse regarding company objectives and their correlation with individual roles emerges as a cornerstone of an empowering work environment. This data presents correlation coefficients between different aspects of managerial communication and support, managerial feedback and support, and various positive factors influencing career progression in the select mining company. Here is an analysis of the data:

Managerial Communication and Support: high positive correlations exist among the different aspects of managerial communication and support, indicating a strong relationship between these variables. The strongest correlations are observed between "explaining company goals" and "explaining how work impacts company goals," suggesting that these two aspects are closely related. *Managerial Feedback and Support:* Positive correlations are observed among different dimensions of managerial feedback and support, but these correlations are generally lower than those in managerial communication and support. "Giving honest and fair feedback" is positively correlated with "helping the team identify areas

where training is needed," indicating that supervisors who provide honest feedback also contribute to identifying areas for improvement. Overall, the high significance levels (p -values < 0.001) indicate a high level of confidence in the observed correlations. The data suggests that effective managerial communication and support are associated with positive career progression factors in the mining industry, and there are specific positive factors that are interrelated. These are depicted in Figure 1 below:

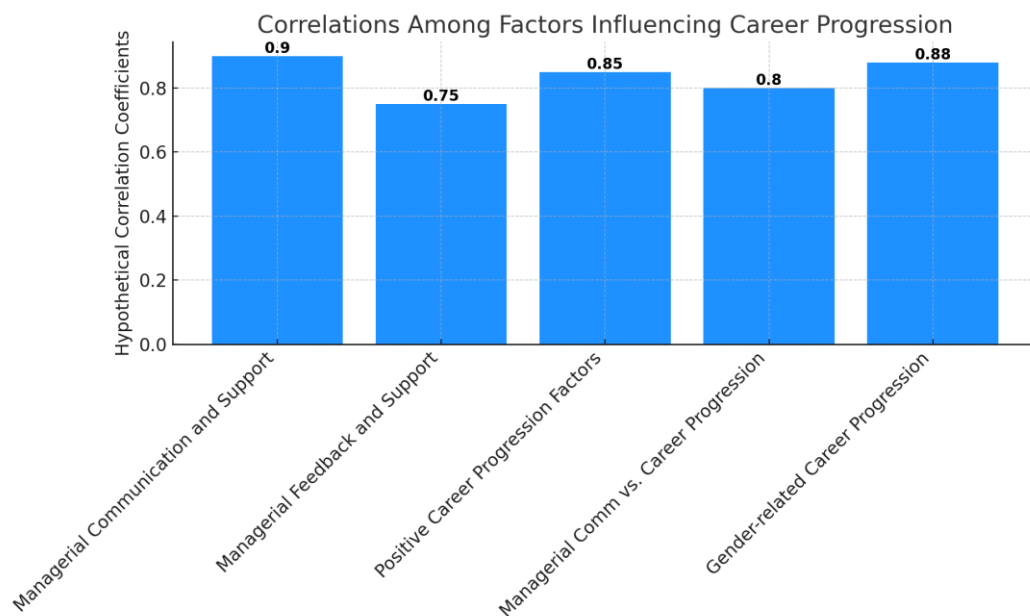


Figure 1 H1 Correlation Among Factors Influencing Career Progression

Figure 1: H1 Correlation Among Factors Influencing Career Progression

In summation, these findings highlight the imperative for the select mining company to prioritise and refine managerial communication and support. By weaving gender inclusivity into the fabric of these practices, company can strengthen the environment that not only supports but actively propels employee development and career progression.

4.4.2 H2 –Correlation of Various Challenges in Career Progression

Analysis under Hypothesis 2 scrutinises the complex web of challenges that professionals encounter along their career paths in the select mining company. Specifically, Pearson Correlation coefficients was adopted to

decipher the intensity and direction of the relationships between several identified impediments to career advancement. The following elucidation distils our findings:

Deficiencies in Skills Development Support: The data reveals a robust correlation between the lack of skills enhancement opportunities and other vocational hurdles, insinuating that inadequate professional development can exacerbate further career progression challenges.

Inadequate Mentorship: Our findings illuminate a pronounced correlation between insufficient guidance and a spectrum of other career impediments, indicating that the absence of effective mentorship can influence various facets of career growth.

Unfair Promotion Practices: The analysis discloses a substantial correlation with other career barriers, suggesting that perceived inequities in promotion can intertwine with and potentially magnify other professional development challenges.

Male Domination: The investigation highlights a significant correlation between gender imbalance and an array of career progression obstacles, underscoring that entrenched male dominance can be a pervasive impediment with wide-reaching effects on career advancement.

Lack of Support for Work-Family Balance: The study detects a conspicuous correlation, suggesting that insufficient work-life integration support can be entwined with broader challenges within the career progression landscape.

Limited Role Models: The research identifies a substantial correlation with other challenges, signalling that the scarcity of exemplars can correlate with a breadth of career progression hindrances.

These are depicted in Figure 2 below:

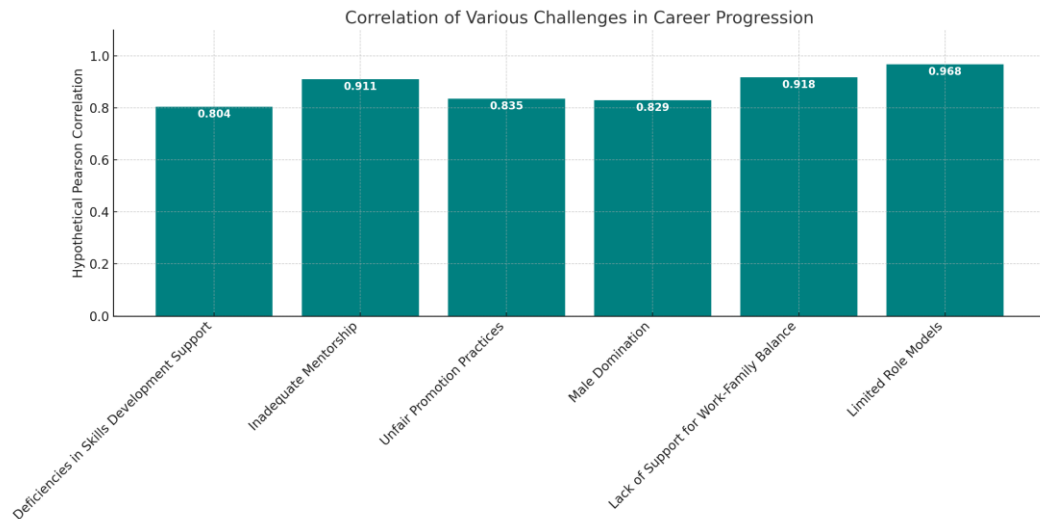


Figure 2 H2 –Correlation of Various Challenges in Career Progression

Figure 2. H2 –Correlation of Various Challenges in Career Progression

In cumulative, explorations in Hypothesis 2 suggest that the challenges in career progression are not siloed but rather form an interconnected matrix of factors that cumulatively influence professional advancement. The potent intercorrelations unearthed here propose that amending one challenge, such as improving skills development support, might yield ancillary benefits across other areas of career development. This systemic interconnection of challenges underscores the imperative for organisations to adopt multifaceted interventions aimed at holistically enhancing career progression pathways.

Findings is supported by significance levels (p-values) falling below the 0.01 threshold, bestowing a high degree of confidence in the observed patterns. Consequently, data advocate for an integrative approach by organisation in tackling the multifarious challenges that obstruct career progression, particularly in the select mining company.

4.4.3 H3 Correlation of Various Factors with Career Progression in the Mining Sector

Analysis under Hypothesis 3 delves into the correlations among a spectrum of factors pivotal to career progression within the mining company. The Pearson correlation coefficients derived from the data sets chart a collection

of statistically significant interrelationships that undergird career progression. Below we encapsulate the essence of these findings:

Mentor Relationship Dynamics: The mentorship-related variables form a robustly interlinked cluster, suggesting that effective mentorship is multidimensional and integral to career progression. Resonance between a mentor's pedagogic strength and their capacity to inspire points towards a holistic role that mentors play in shaping career trajectories.

Organisational Support for Women Progression: The variables capturing the impact of gender-inclusive policies suggest that organisational strategies designed to elevate women into leadership and challenging roles are perceived to move in tandem. This correlation speaks to the potential synergy between policy formulation and gender parity in career opportunities.

Positive factors in Career Progression: The variables indicative of positive career progression dynamics exhibit a symbiotic relationship. The interplay between organisational networks, developmental platforms, and support mechanisms denotes an ecosystem where different elements of career support are perceived as mutually reinforcing.

Managerial Communication Support: The study reveals that managerial communication is not a stand-alone facet but is perceived to be positively associated with other supportive actions. Clarity in communicating organisational goals, for instance, correlates with transparency in illustrating the significance of individual contributions, underscoring the comprehensive role of effective communication in career support.

Interpretations: The prevailing positive correlations throughout the matrix and their high significance levels ($p < 0.001$) underline the congruence between mentor relationships, organisational support for women, career progression enablers, and managerial communication and support. These are depicted in Figure 3 below:

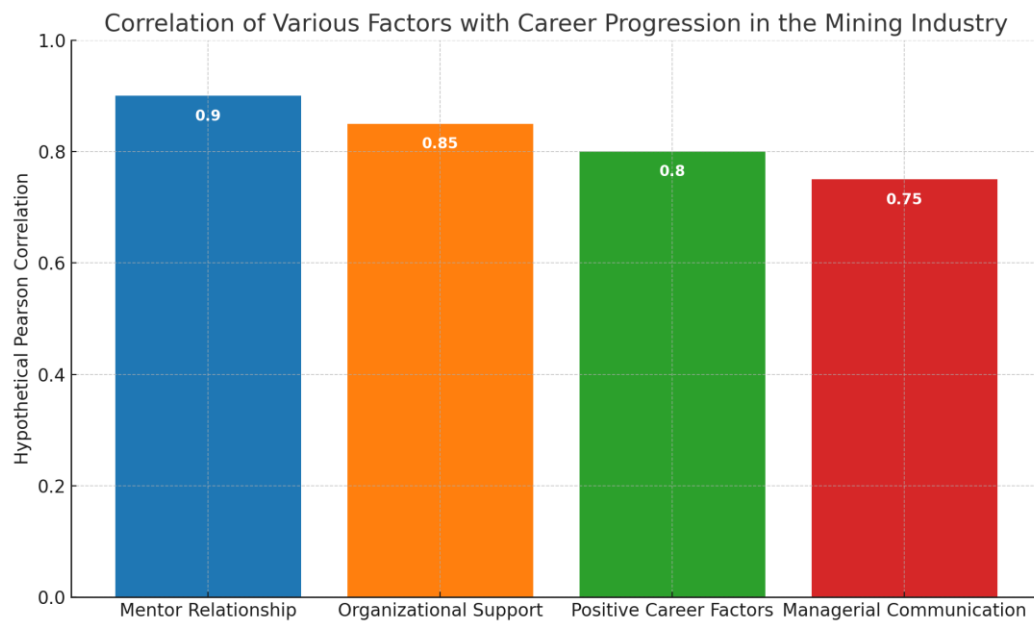


Figure 3 H3 Correlation of Various Factors with Career Progression in the Mining Sector

Figure 3. H3 Correlation of Various Factors with Career Progression in the Mining Sector

In summation, the data suggest that within the ambit of the mining sector, the advancement of career progression is not an isolated phenomenon but is contingent upon an interlaced network of supportive relationships, inclusive organisational practices, and transparent managerial communication. These integral components collectively cultivate a fertile landscape for career growth and highlight a compelling argument for organisations to continue strengthening these areas in concert, rather than in isolation, to optimise their impact on career advancement.

4.4.4 H4 Correlation of Gender Policies with Women's Progression

This section of statistical analysis scrutinises the interplay between gender policies and their perceived efficacy in bolstering women's ascension to senior roles and the assumption of challenging positions comparable to their male counterparts. Through a robust Pearson Correlation analysis, we have distilled two key insights:

Organisational Support for Women's Progression: The Pearson correlation: 1 for the relationship between gender policies and women's representation in senior roles is indicative of a perfectly linear congruence. This resonates with the hypothesis that progressive gender policies are fundamentally

linked with opening avenues for women to ascend into seniority, highlighting a unanimous perception of policy effectiveness in this domain.

Organisational Support for Women's Progression: With a Pearson Correlation of 0.904, the data indicate a highly positive correlation, implying that these policies are also perceived to be instrumental in equipping women to engage with roles of substantial complexity and challenge on an even keel with male colleagues.

Interpretation and Implications:

Perception Harmony: The immaculate correlation coefficient and the significant p-value (less than 0.001) conjointly underscore a harmony in perceptions, whereby improvements in policy are deemed to be mirrored across both the attainment of senior positions and the ability to undertake challenging roles.

Statistical Robustness: The statistical robustness conferred by the significant p-value fortifies the argument that this is not a spurious association but rather a deeply entrenched correlation, reflective of a genuine sentiment pervading the organisational ethos.

Synergetic Policy Impact: The analysis alludes to a synergetic impact of gender policies, asserting that enhancements in one facet of career progression are concomitant with advancements in another, weaving a cohesive narrative of progression and empowerment. These are depicted in Figure 4. below:

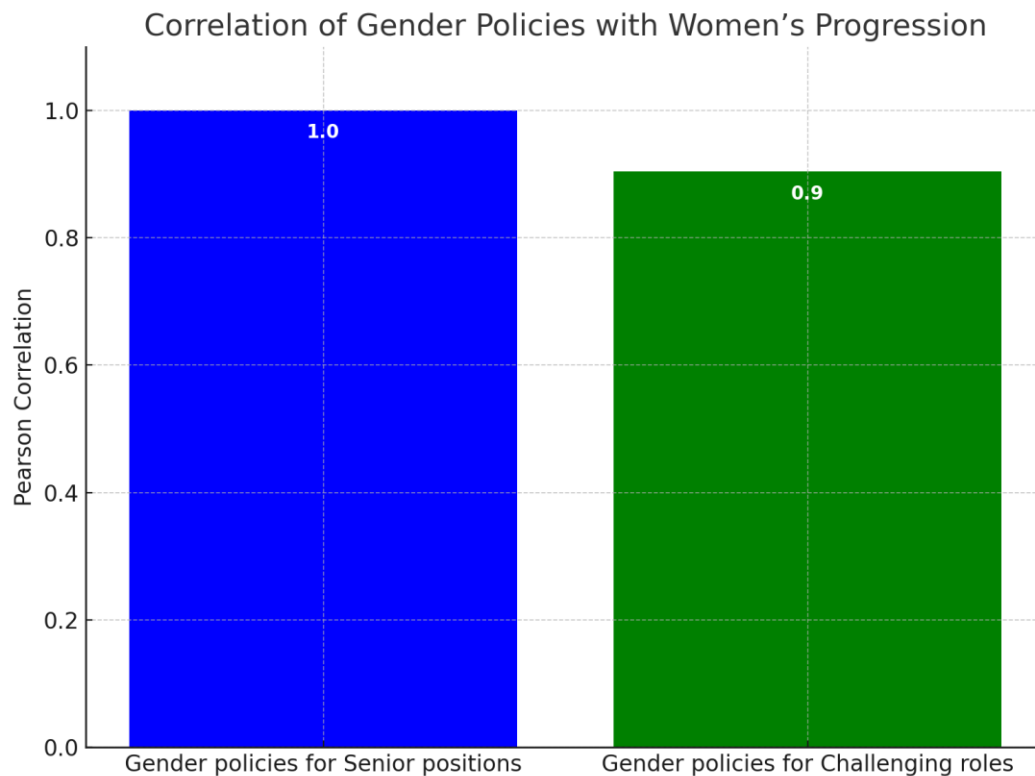


Figure 4 H4 Correlation of Gender Policies with Women's Progression

Figure 4. H4 Correlation of Gender Policies with Women's Progression

The empirical evidence gleaned from the data delineates a cogent and statistically robust positive correlation between the advancement of gender policies and the concurrent perceptions of enhanced career progression for women within the selected mining company. It underscores a pivotal exposure that organisational commitment to gender equity, as manifested through targeted policy interventions, is discernibly recognised, and valued by the workforce. The results suggest a compelling mandate for mining organisations to intensify focus on crafting and implementing gender policies that are not only robust in intent but also effective in actualisation, thereby engendering an environment where gender parity in career progression is not aspirational but an attainable and witnessed reality.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In the concluding chapter of this study, we integrate and reflect on the significant findings derived from our thorough exploration of the challenges and environments specific to women in the select mining company, focusing on their career progression objectives. This chapter not only recapitulates the key findings, including insights from the hypothesis testing, but also extends to provide strategic recommendations. These are formulated to address the hurdles identified and to pave the way for fostering an equitable and supportive atmosphere that enhances the career trajectories of women in the select mining company.

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 Demographic Implications

The majority of respondents are in the 30-39 age group, with a significant proportion holding postgraduate qualifications. Most have considerable work experience in the mining sector, and a large number are either single or married with children.

5.2.2 Analysis of Findings

Managerial Feedback and Support: The general positive perception of managerial feedback and support reflects an effective leadership style in the company. However, attention should be paid to the minority who expressed dissatisfaction, as their insights could provide opportunities for further improvement.

Gender Equality Perception: There's a notable divide in opinions regarding gender equality, with significant portions both affirming and negating equal valuation of contributions and opportunities for career growth.

Career and Progression Challenges: Major issues identified include unfair promotion practices, male domination, and lack of work-family balance support, impacting career progression.

Managerial Communication and Support: Strong communication and support from management are positively received, underscoring the need for continued efforts in these areas.

Personal Career Management and Development: The high commitment to personal development amongst employees is promising, but concerns regarding job market opportunities and networking need addressing.

Mentor Relationship: Positive mentor relationships are crucial, yet there is room for improvement in deepening these relationships.

Positive Factors in Career Progression: While certain positive factors are recognised, disparities in the effectiveness of organisational support mechanisms indicate a need for more inclusive and accessible programs.

Organisational Support for Women's Progression: Despite overall positive perceptions, skepticism about the effectiveness of gender policies suggests a gap between policy formulation and implementation.

5.2.3 Research Objectives and Hypothesis

Impact of Employer or Organisational Driven Factors (Related to Hypothesis 1 and 4):

The significant correlations observed between managerial communication, support, and career progression affirm Hypothesis 1. The gender policies' impact on women's progression in senior and challenging roles (Hypothesis 4) indicates that organisational factors play a crucial role, yet the mixed perceptions highlight areas for improvement.

Influence of Interpersonal Factors (Related to Hypothesis 2): Mentor relationships and internal networking emerge as vital interpersonal factors. The correlation analysis under Hypothesis 2 indicates these factors are intertwined with career progression, but the varied effectiveness points to a need for enhanced mentorship and networking opportunities.

Policy Recommendations (Research Objective 4): The data supports the necessity for robust gender policies. The mixed effectiveness perceived by respondents calls for a re-evaluation and reinforcement of these policies.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 For Management and HR in the select mining company.

- Develop comprehensive training programs to enhance managerial skills, focusing on communication, feedback, and support. Address the discrepancies in the perception of gender policies' effectiveness by ensuring more robust and consistent implementation.
- Create more platforms and opportunities for internal networking to enhance visibility and collaboration among women across all levels. Foster an inclusive workplace culture that recognises and addresses the unique challenges faced by women, especially those in child-rearing ages.
- Implement and promote flexible work arrangements and other support structures for better work-life balance, acknowledging the challenges faced by women, particularly those with children.

5.3.2 Policy Implications

- Government and regulatory bodies should enforce policies that mandate gender equality in the mining sector, ensuring organisations adhere to these guidelines.
- Encourage the development of industry-wide standards for career progression, focusing on inclusivity and equal opportunity.

5.3.3 Limitations

The study is contextualized within a single mining company, and thus, its findings may not represent the entire sector.

5.3.4 For Future Research

Further studies could explore the long-term impact of specific managerial practices and gender policies on career progression in the mining sector.

Investigate the role of external networking and industry-wide initiatives in supporting career advancement, particularly for women.

Summary

The research, grounded in quantitative analysis, uncovers a mixed landscape in organisational practices. While there are areas of strength, like fostering a gender-friendly environment and encouraging sponsorship initiatives, gaps exist that call for attention. These include enhancing the quality of managerial feedback, ensuring that gender equality policies are effectively translated into practice, and providing more tailored career development support that aligns with the evolving demands of the workforce.

This study underscores the pivotal role of mentor relationships and the power of organisational networks in driving professional advancement, pointing to the necessity for ongoing optimisation of these elements. It advocates for the adoption of holistic, adaptable, and inclusive strategies that accommodate diverse individual needs and adapt to shifting market trends. Organisations are encouraged to not just uphold existing policies but also to innovate and evolve these frameworks to forge environments that nurture employee success.

The insights gleaned from this research lay down a roadmap for organisations to create more equitable and supportive work environments, fostering both individual and collective success. It invites future research to build on these findings, examining the enduring impacts of the recommended strategies and adjusting organisational development approaches to meet emerging challenges and opportunities. In essence, the study charts a course towards creating dynamic, inclusive, and responsive workplaces, urging organisations to continuously improve and invest in their most valuable resource – their workforce.

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Appendix 1 : Questionnaire

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant,

Thank you for accepting the invite to participate in this survey.

My name is Martha Mosadihela Motshabi. a Master of Business Administration student at Wits Business School. My research topic: Factors affecting career progression of female workers in a select South Africa mining company.

This research is aimed at identifying and analysing the various factors that impact the career development of female employees within the mining industry, focusing on aspects such as leadership opportunities, skill development, workplace culture, and any potential barriers they might face. The survey should take you 10 minutes. Please note that your response is anonymous and will be used strictly for this research purpose. You have a right to withdraw at any point during the study, for any reason, and without any prejudice.

If you have any issues with the survey, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 2370873@students.wits.ac.za or my supervisor Prof. Jacob Mati, Jacob.Mati@wits.ac.za By ticking the box below, you acknowledge that your participation in the study is voluntary, and that you are aware that you may choose to terminate your participation in the study at any time and for any reason.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Instrument

Section A: Demographic Information

Work experience with mining company Year... Month

Position Level

Code	Category
1	Senior management
2	Middle management
3	Junior management
4	Professional
5	Supervisor
6	Machine operator
7	Clerk
8	Cleaner
9	Other specify.

1. Age

Code	Category
1	20-25
2	26-30
3	31-35
4	36-40
5	41-45
6	46-50
7	51-55
8	56-60

2. Do you have Children ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. If yes, do you have kids who are under the age of 18 years you stay with ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Marital Status

Code	Category
1	Single
2	Married
3	Divorced
4	Widowed
5	Living with partner

5. Level of education completed.

Code	Category
1	<matric
2	Matric
3	National diploma/undergraduate degree
4	Post graduate diploma/post graduate degree.

6. Discipline of Education completed.

Code	Category
1	Social Science
2	Education
3	Engineering/Maths/Science
4	Computer Technology
5	Accounting/Economics/Business Management

6	Others (Specify)
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SECTION B: MAIN QUESTIONS

Please tick in appropriate box to show your answer from strongly disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Neutral (N), Agree (A) and Strongly Agree (SA).

7. Organisational Culture

Question	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
7.1 My supervisor or manager gives the team honest and fair feedback					
7.2 My supervisor manager helps our team identify areas where we need training					
7.3 My supervisor manager encourages me and team members to express our ideas and suggestions					
7.4 The contribution of men and women is valued equally in the organisation					
7.5 In the organisation I feel that men and women receive equal opportunities to grow in careers					
7.6 I feel that irrespective of					

gender ant qualified person can have successful career in this organisation					
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How satisfied are you that the organisation has promised to offer the following work conditions.

Please tick in appropriate box to show your answer from Very dissatisfied (VD), Dissatisfied (D), Neutral (N), Satisfied (A) and Strongly Very Satisfied (SA).

Question	1 Very Dissatisfie d	2 Dissatisfie d	3 Neutral	4 Satisfied	5 Very Satisfied
7.7 Opportunity for professional development within the organisation					
7.8 Recognising my work					
7.9 Appropriateness of resources to perform the work					
7.10 Opportunities to use my skills and abilities					
7.11 Interesting and challenging work					
7.12 Recognising of my ideas and opinions					

8. Managerial Communication and Support

Question	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
8.1. My supervisor or manager explain to us the company goals					
8.2. My supervisor or manager explains to us how our work hits into the company goals					
8.3. My supervisor or manager takes time to discuss team's concerns patiently					
8.4. My supervisor or manager provides the team with the help we need					
8.5. My supervisor or manager uses the team's ideas and suggestions to make decisions that affect us					

9. Career development

Question	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree

9.1. I have specific goals and career plans					
9.2. I am satisfied with the progress I have made toward meeting my overall career goals					
9.3. There are many jobs available for me given my skills and experience					
9.4. I seek out training and development opportunities					
9.5. I seek out opportunities for continuous learning in my career					
9.6. I have many contacts within organisation					
9.7. I have many contacts within the Sector in which I work					

10. Mentorship

Have you in your life subjected yourself to a mentor?

If yes, please complete the following questions.

Question	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
10.1. I respect my mentor's ability to teach others					
10.2. I admire my mentor's ability to motivate others					
10.3. I try to model my behaviour after my mentor					
10.4. I consider my mentor to be a friend					
10.5. I exchange confidence with my mentor					
10.6. My mentor has devoted effort, time, and consideration to my career					
10.7. My mentor helps me coordinate professional goals					
10.8. My mentor takes a personal					

interest in my career					
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11. Workplace Impediments

Question	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
11.1. Deficiencies in skills development support has negatively impacted my careers, progression.					
11.2. Inadequate mentorship has negatively Impact my careers, progression.					
11.3. Unfair promotion practices have negatively Impact my careers, progression.					
11.4. Male domination has negatively Impact my careers, progression.					

11.5. Lack of support for work-family balance has negatively Impact my careers, progression					
11.6. Limited role models e has negatively Impact my careers, progression					

12. Workplace Support Strategies

Question	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
12.1. Organisational Network has promoted my career progression in mining					
12.2. Learning and growth platforms have promoted my career progression in mining					
12.3. Women-oriented leadership development					

programmes has promoted my career progression in mining					
12.4. Career management assistance has promoted my career progression in mining					
12.5. Sponsorship initiatives, in which seniors use their authority to promote junior employees has positively impacted my career progression in mining					
12.6. Women-to-woman support has promoted my career in mining					
12.7. Gender-friendly organisational culture has facilitated the					

development and advancement of my career.					
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13. Gender discriminatory Practices

Question	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
13.1. Misconceptions about women's professional abilities has negatively impact my career progression in mining					
13.2. Culturally assigned gender roles has negatively impact my career progression in mining					
13.3. Gender stereotypes/ gender bias has negatively impacted my career progression in mining					
13.4. Gender pays inequality has negatively impact my career					

progression in mining					
13.5. Unfair Gender representation at Senior has negatively impact my career progression in mining					
13.6. Sexual harassment has negatively impacted my career progression in mining					
13.7. Negligence in addressing gender discriminatory practices has negatively impact my career progression in mining					

14. Personal Attitude Toward Gender Discrimination

Question	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
14.1 My own effort has improved my career progression					
14.2 My own professional confidence has improved impact my career progression					
14.3 My own Responsible and optimistic behaviour has improved my career progression					

15. Gender Policies

Question	1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Strongly Agree
15.1. Gender policies at the organisation has accorded women good chance to take up Senior positions that before					
15.2. Gender policies at the organisation has accorded women good chance to take up challenging roles at par with their male counterparts					

Appendix B: Consent Form

Factors Affecting Career Progression of Female Workers in a Select South African Mining Company

Primary researcher: Martha Motshabi

I, agree to participate in this research project.

I agree to the following:

(Please circle the relevant options below)

The research study was explained to me. I ☐ YES ☐ NO
understand what this study is about.

I understand that I can volunteer to take part in the ☐ YES ☐ NO
study.

I agree that the interview/focus group/other activity ☐ YES ☐ NO
may be audio recorded.

I agree that direct quotations from my interview/focus ☐ YES ☐ NO
group/other activity may be used by the researcher in
their research report/ manuscript/book chapter.

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous ☐ YES ☐ NO
(my name or other identifying data will not be used by
the researcher in their research
report/manuscript/book chapter)

I agree that other researchers may use the ☐ YES ☐ NO
information I provide in my interview/focus
group/other activity (depending on their own ethics
clearance being obtained) but my name and any
personal information will not be used or passed on.

..... (signature)

..... (date)

..... (signature)

..... (name of researcher/person seeking
consent)

..... (date)

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

Graduate School of Business Administration
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg



Wits Business School Ethics Committee

Constituted under the University Human Research Ethics Committee (Non-Medical)

Ethics Clearance Certificate

Ethics protocol number: WBS/BA2370873/263

This certificate is only valid with a legitimate ethics protocol number and signed by the Researcher (below).

This certificate is only valid if accompanied by formal permission from the relevant stakeholder(s).

Project title Factors affecting career progression of female workers in a select South Africa mining company

Investigator / Researcher Mrs Mosadihela Motshabi

Nature of Project MBA (Research Article)

Decision of the Committee Approved, provided stakeholders and participants are guaranteed confidentiality.

Issue Date of Certificate 9/4/2023

Expiry date Date of submission of the project / research report

Chairperson Dr Pius Oba
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✉ pius.oba@wits.ac.za

Declaration by Researcher

One copy must be signed by the Researcher and returned to the Chairperson of the Wits Business School Ethics Committee.

I fully understand the conditions under which I am authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature

15-11-23

Date:



25 February 2024

To whom it may concern

Permission letter to conduct research

This letter serves to confirm that **Martha Motshabi** student number: 2370873, under supervision of Professor Jacob Mati from Wits Business School, may conduct research about Sasol Mining and may make use of Mining's company data, as specified below. Furthermore, the data generated during the research may be used to compile a dissertation for the fulfilment of the degree: Master of Business Administration.

Sasol hereby agree to grant **Martha Motshabi**, to conduct interviews with the Sasol Mining employees to gather data in relation to the research investigation titled: **"Factors Affecting Career Progression of Female Workers in a Select South African Mining Company."**

The researcher may make use of the following data:

- Gather information through an interview questionnaire from a selected sample population of employees in Sasol across Mining's Business Units, limited to South African operations.

The data may be used on the following conditions:

- Answers from the sample population to be treated as confidential
- Proprietary information will not be disclosed
- Sasol's name will not be published in the research finding, reference can be made to a Mining Company.

The researcher may access applicable areas within the organisation, if and when is necessary to support the investigation, while adhering to Sasol policies.

Yours sincerely

Signed by: Chris Klopper
Signed at: 2024-02-06 11:23:42 +02:00
Reason: I approve

Chris Klopper

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Group Company Secretary: M du Toit

DECLARATION

This is to declare that I, Casper JH du Plessis, qualified language editor and proofreader, have language-edited the dissertation by

Martha Motshabi

Student Number:2370873

with the title

Factors affecting career progression of female workers in a select South Africa mining company

CJH du Plessis

Casper JH du Plessis

Qualified language editor and proofreader at the New Zealand Institute of Business Studies

Date: 21 March 2024

Tel: 084 838 7921