



## EXPLORATORY STUDY OF WOMEN MANAGERS'S CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN MINING INDUSTRY: CHALLENGES, SUPPORT, AND STRATEGIES BEHIND IT

Sultan Naufal Rabbani<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Indonesia

### Article Info

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### ABSTRACT

The increase of women manager each year coexist with the low percentage compared to their male counterparts caused by the challenges in their career development in the form of glass ceiling phenomenon, resulting in underrepresentative of women in strategic position in minings's oil and gas company, which is a male dominated industry. The aim of this research is to explore, understand and analyze the experiences of 6 women managers in oil and gas sub-sector regarding their career advancement by conducting an in-depth interview. Using thematic analysis, this research found that women managers in oil and gas encounter challenges from their personal life and external matters, receive support from their partners and external side, and implement strategy relating to oneself and their external environment. This research also found the views regarding the figure of professional female workers in the mining industry are seen as the basis for female worker to compete in this industry. This research fills the gap in literature which discusses glass ceiling in male dominated industry, specifically in the perspective of women managers and their experience in career development process. The findings could serve as reference for employer in order to create gender-friendly and gender-neutral policy and to open many other possibilities for women in order to have an equal opportunity to serve in strategic positions.

### INTRODUCTION

There is an increase in the number of women occupying managerial positions. Badan Pusat Statistik (2023) reported an increase in the number of women occupying managerial positions in Indonesia from 2018 to 2022 by 4.53%, from 28.57% to 33.10%. However, it is still relatively low, especially in the mining industry if compared to the number of male and female workers. There are 115 thousand female workers in the mining industry, while there are 1.28 million male workers in Indonesia (Kirnandita, 2021). The oil and gas sub-sector also show the same trend. Based on the 2022 annual report of one of the oil and gas sub-sector company in Indonesia, the number of female workers is 7,782 or around 18% of the total workers of 43,666. Meanwhile, only 313 female workers serve as leaders or 17% of the total leaders of 1,803 people, which means that the number of women leaders or managers is still very small compared to male leaders or managers.

There are indications that women are still underrepresented in strategic policy-making roles in companies (Sunaryo et al., 2021), which is caused by glass ceiling (Odoh & Branney, 2022). Glass ceiling is a phenomenon where there is a transparent barrier that prevents women from reaching managerial and top management positions, thus becoming one of the causes of the small percentage of women filling managerial positions (Chen et al., 2021).

The career development of women managers in the oil and gas sub-sector of mining industry is hindered by family, organizational and social challenges caused by the perception that male workers are seen as breadwinners for their families so they are considered more suitable and focused on that role. On the other hand, women workers is perceived to focus more on their families and are considered for the role of homemakers in their families (Ismail & Ibrahim, 2008; Verma, 2018), which causes a gender gap in the mining industry (Perks & Schulz, 2020). Kansake et al. (2021) stated that women constitute less than 10% of the global large-scale mining workforce, which subjected them to gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual demands during recruitment.

In the career development process, there are two types of support for the career development of women managers: internal support obtained from personal life in the form of support from a partner (Cimirotić et al., 2017) and external support obtained from the organization or company where women managers work (Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2017; Calinaud et al., 2020; Perks & Schulz, 2020; Taparia & Lenka, 2022). In the process of climbing the career ladder, strategies are divided into two, namely internal strategies carried out by women managers themselves (Cimirotić et al., 2017; Calinaud et al., 2020) and external strategies carried out by women managers in matters related to the workplace (Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2017; Giguère et al., 2023).

This research seeks to capture and explore the perceptions of women managers in the oil and gas sub-sector in their career development process by using research questions packaged in career development theory, the glass ceiling and its antecedents to understand the challenges they feel, explore the support they receive, and identify the strategies they implement. by women managers in their career development.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Career Advancement**

Career development must be done by both male and female workers and is an important aspect of individual and company development (Katić et al., 2017). A career is "the process of employee development along a path of experience and work in one or more companies," which is planned and regulated by the company (Baruch & Rosenstein, 1992; Baruch, 2006). The traditional view of career sees the concept as having a rigid and hierarchical structure, with a linear direction and being uni-dimensional (one dimension), namely career development (advancement) or promotion (Baruch, 2004). Furthermore, a protean career is a process in which workers regulate the path and flow of their careers (Hall & Mirvis, 1996; Baruch, 2004; Hall, 2004).

Career compatibility can be achieved by combining the roles of the individual and the company to provide a balanced view (Lee & Lee, 2018). Successful career development is represented by interactions between individuals, behavior, company norms, and work practices (Collin & Watts, 1996; Katić et al., 2017). Balanced interaction in the form of career arrangements between individuals and companies, which must meet the needs of both parties, is known as hybrid career development theory (McDonald & Hite, 2015; Lee & Lee, 2018)

### **Career development of women managers in the mining industry**

Female workers in the mining industry are vulnerable because there are fewer female workers than male workers (Valadares et al., 2022). The forms of challenges in the career development process are family, organizational and social challenges (Ismail & Ibrahim, 2008), which are caused by men playing more of a role as breadwinners, while women are considered to play the role of homemakers and looking after children, apart from having to deal with discrimination in the workplace, sexual harassment, and company policies that are not friendly to women/gender neutral policies (Powell, 1999; Powell & Graves, 2003; Verma, 2018). The work environment is also seen as an obstacle in the career development of women managers, namely negative prejudice from colleagues and superiors, harassment, lack of support from the company, discrimination, and non-transparent promotional practices in companies which cause a gender gap in the mining industry (Botha, 2016; Moalusi & Jones, 2019; Perks & Schulz, 2020; Kansake et al., 2021; Mkhathshwa & Genc, 2022).

Efforts are needed to foster gender equality through existing policies in companies to support the career development of female workers in companies (Perks & Schulz, 2020) by implementing diversity strategies or diversity programs, especially in the mining industry where the workers are predominantly male (Williams et al., 2014), which can be a paradox because it perpetuates gender inequality in the mining industry due to not being properly regulated. Real efforts are needed by companies in the form of inclusive practices and not in the form of programs without supervision and a good monitoring system (Williams et al., 2014; Botha, 2018)

### **Glass ceiling and challenges of career development for women managers**

The term "Glass ceiling" was first coined in 1984 by Gay Bryant, editor of Working Woman magazine at that time, when interviewing with a magazine from the United States, Adweek (Carli & Eagly, 2016), and was defined as a transparent ceiling barrier (glass) which prevents qualified women from climbing the career ladder in the corporate hierarchy (Taparia & Lenka, 2022). The glass ceiling occurs in women who reach executive positions in companies (Odoh & Branney, 2022, Valadares et al., 2022), but Cho et al. (2019) found that the glass ceiling is

starting to be felt by women managers in low managerial and middle managerial positions, with the antecedent being seen as a challenge for female workers when pursuing their career ladder consisting of individual factors in the form of women's main obligation to do domestic work, especially looking after children due to gendered role expectations which result in dual roles for women managers (Cross & Linehan, 2006; Gabaldon et al., 2015; Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2017; Sarwar & Imran, 2019), organizational factors in the form of gender stereotypes which produce bias towards women who have children (Heilman & Okimoto, 2008, Taparia & Lenka, 2022) and minimal promotional opportunities as well as discrimination and harassment, as well as negative treatment from colleagues and superiors (Botha, 2016; Botha, 2018), factors related to policy in the form of lack of implementation of regulations relating to gender equality (Taparia & Lenka, 2022), and social and cultural factors in the form of determining roles for each gender (Eagly, 2013) which cause the careers of women managers to be hampered (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Fitzsimmons et al., 2014; Ansari, 2016; Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2017; Verma, 2018; Taparia & Lenka, 2022).

### **Enabling factors and support for the career development of women managers**

Enabling factors and support for the career development of women managers can be divided into support from the internal side or obtained from the personal lives of women managers in the form of support provided by partners (Gallhofer et al., 2011), which is seen as important due to the lack of opportunities for female workers. To achieve a strategic position in the company so that this support becomes an impetus for the career development of women managers (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Valimaki et al., 2009; Cimirotić et al., 2017), as well as external support obtained from superiors in the form of confidence in the capacity of women managers, self-care of women managers, and initiative towards the promotion of women managers (Ohlott et al., 1994; Seibert et al., 2001; Cimirotić et al., 2017). Support from colleagues in the form of positive interactions in the workplace (Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2017) and support from the organization in the form of commitment to diversity and inclusion issues related to promotion and policy making, and family-friendly work practices (Calinaud et al., 2020; Taparia & Lenka, 2022).

### **Strategies to climb the career ladder**

Strategies in climbing the career ladder are divided into strategies from the internal side, namely strategies carried out by women managers in matters relating to themselves in the form of increasing their capabilities by being proactive in increasing work experience and increasing knowledge so that they can adapt to the company's needs if there are promotional opportunities (Lee & Lee, 2018; Calinaud et al., 2020), and strategies from the external side, namely strategies carried out in matters related to their role in the workplace in the form of networking or creating professional relationships in the workplace to make it easier to get promotions initiative (Lyness & Thompson, 2000; Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2017), and hierarchical mobility or changing positions, either moving up a position (ascending), moving positions at the same level (lateral), or dropping a position (descending) (Giguère et al. al., 2023)

This research seeks to capture and explore the perceptions of women managers in the oil and gas sub-sector in their career development process by using research questions packaged in career development theory, the glass ceiling and its antecedents to understand the challenges they feel, explore the support they receive, and identify the strategies they implement. by women managers in their career development

## **RESEARCH AND METHODOLOGY**

The author selected 6 participants using several criteria: female married workers, had children, and were committed to having children, worked in the mining industry in the oil and gas sub-sector, and occupied low-level and mid-level managerial positions, which can be \can be found in Table 1. The selection of informants was not to generalize the experiences of women managers in the oil and gas sub-sector but to provide illustrations regarding the conditions experienced. The author got research participants from one person's personal contacts and five people from professional social media site, LinkedIn.

**Table 1.** Participants Information

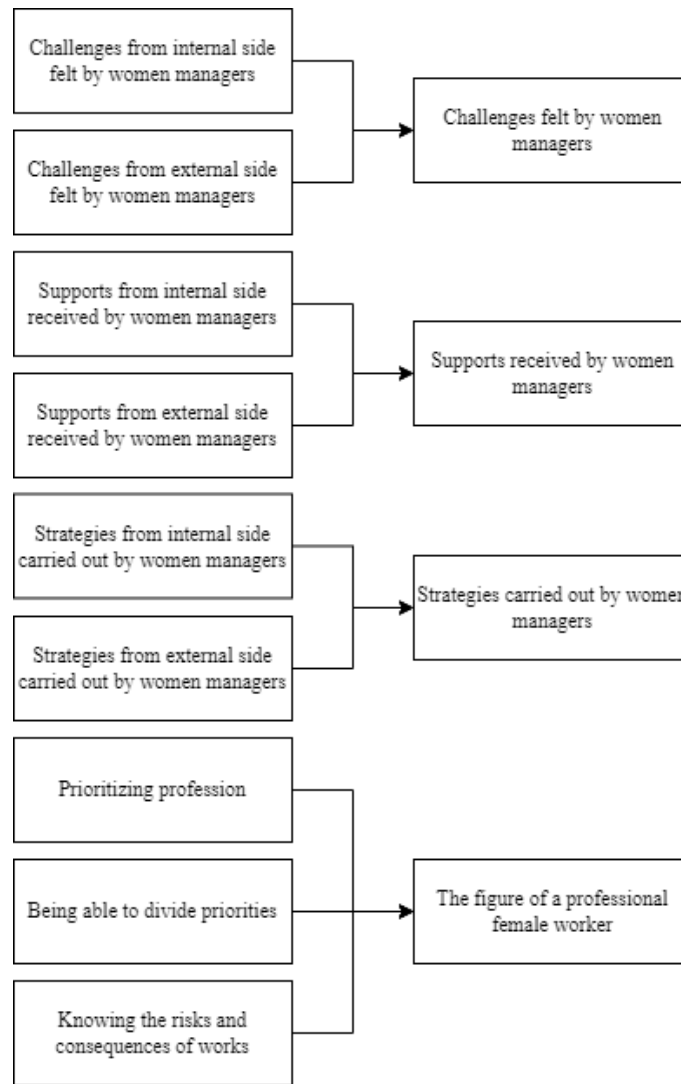
<b>Informan</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Tenure</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Domicile</b>	<b>Status</b>
Informan 1	<i>HR Business Partner Manager</i>	47 Years	23 Years	Bachelor's Degree	Jakarta	Married with kids
Informan 2	<i>Quality Assurance Manager</i>	41 Years	16 Years	Master's Degree	Cilegon	Married with kids

Informan 3	<i>HR Coordinator</i>	47 Years	20 Years	Bachelors's Degree	Jakarta	Married with kids
Informan 4	<i>Senior Manager Environmental &amp; Operational Permit</i>	34 Years	15 Years	Bachelors' Degree	East Luwu	Married
Informan 5	<i>Head of Asset Regional IV</i>	41 Years	12 Years	Master's Degree	Jakarta	Married with kids
Informan 6	<i>Converter Operation Manager</i>	31 Years	9 Years	Bachelor's Degree	East Luwu	Married with kids

**Source:** Author (2023)

The author first conducted opening interviews with all participants to confirm the participants' backgrounds and build chemistry to foster closeness. After that, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted using Zoom, which was recorded with the consent of six participants, whose names have been disguised to maintain the participants' privacy with the codes Informant 1 to Informant 6. The author began to stop collecting data because data saturation had reached. where no new data emerges when interviews are conducted, apart from a sufficient number of participants in qualitative research, namely a minimum of 5 to 6 participants (Morse, 2000; Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The research data was then analyzed using Braun & Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was used in order to determined pattern or themes that emerged in the research data. Thematic analysis was conducted in a series of phases which are data familiarization, creating codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, naming and identifying themes, and presenting the finding, which can be done after the research data were made into transcripts. After making transcripts and familiarizing oneself with the data, the author created a code and searched, reviewed, and named the emerging themes. To assist the search and review process as well as naming themes, the author adapted the theme analysis process from Gioia et al. (2012), namely "first order" in the form of terms used by participants, "second-order" comes from reducing terms into several themes based on the similarity of statements which are reduced back to "aggregate dimensions", followed by categorization of further themes into "lower-level" themes ( sub-themes) or specific themes, and "upper-level" themes or themes with a more general scope (Thomas, 2006). Nine lower-level themes and four upper-level themes were found based on the analysis process resulting from connected participant statements, which can perceive the experience in the career development process of women managers in the oil and gas sub-sector.

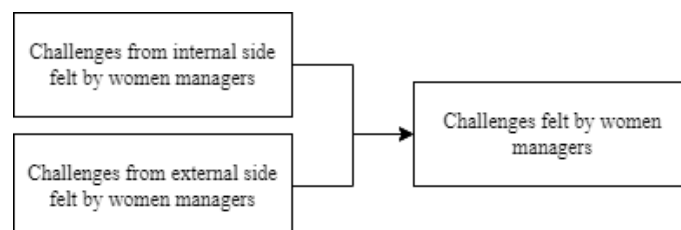


**Figure 1.** Lower-level and upper-level themes  
**Source:** Author (2023)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

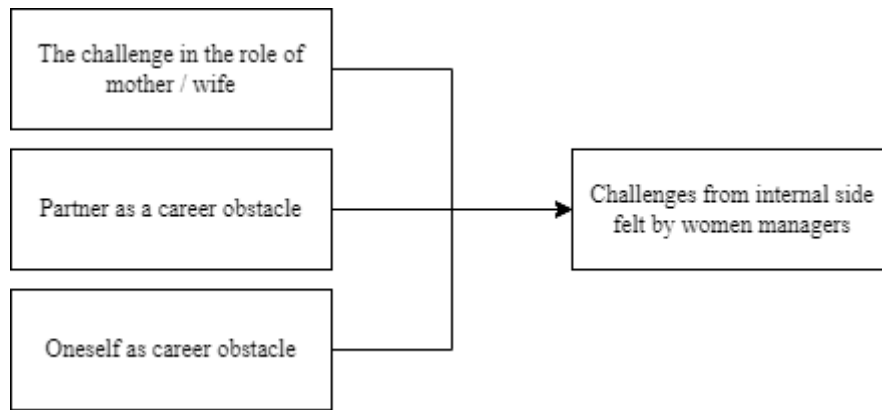
### Challenges felt by women managers

It was found that women managers felt two challenges, namely challenges from the internal side and challenges from the external side (Figure 2.).



**Figure 2.** Challenges Felt by Women managers  
**Source:** Author (2023)

Internal challenges are challenges from the participants themselves and are related to their role as parents and wives for their partners, which are divided into three, namely challenges in the form of the role of mother/wife, partner as a career obstacle, and oneself as an obstacle (Figure 3.).



**Figure 3.** Internal Challenges Felt by Women managers  
 Source: Author (2023)

The challenge in the role of mother/wife saw a situation where participants sacrificed their career development to fulfill their role as mothers, namely, to look after the child.

“There is one moment that I have to sacrifice. I was once offered a job which I really wanted; they asked me to lead from zero. On the other hand, I have to choose between my dream career or my children who were still a toddler at that time. After I thought about it, I choose my children” (Informan 3).

Partner as a career obstacle describes the situation of a partner with a high sense of jealousy, resulting in participants having limited room for movement in their career development.

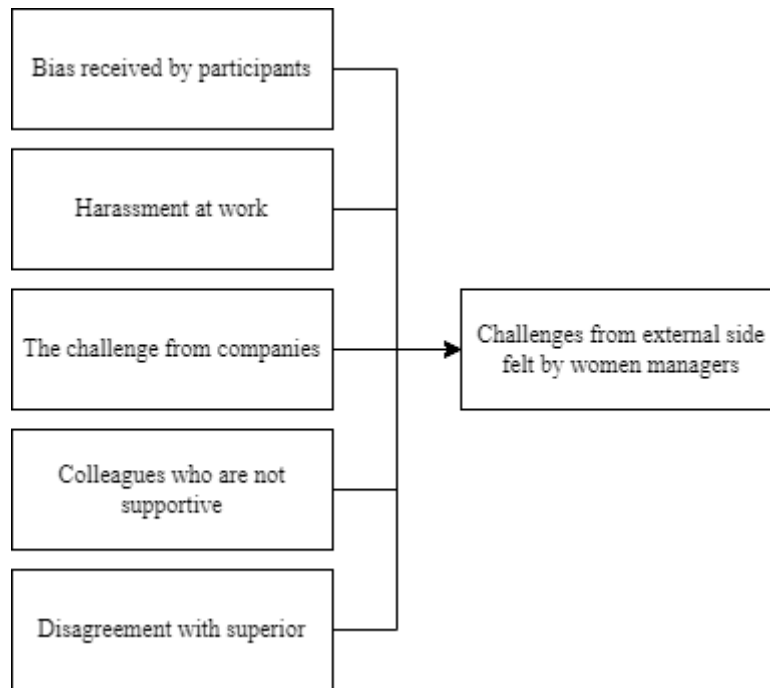
“The challenge is my own husband... Because I often get in touch with other men for work, so the feeling of jealousy is there” (Informan 4).

Oneself as an obstacle illustrates that being trapped in a comfort zone, limiting thoughts, and the inability to improve one’s capabilities are challenges in career development. Stagnancy in the comfort zone resulted in research participants not taking higher positions.

“I’m also already comfortable working in production planning, so I rejected the offer to be promoted as operation manager” (Informan 6)

Challenges from the internal side illustrate the antecedents of the glass ceiling in the form of individual factors (Taparia & Lenka, 2022), which see that women’s main obligation is to do domestic work and look after children, which is caused by expectations of gender-appropriate roles due to internalization of these roles, causing domestic obligations to become challenges in the workplace (Gabaldon et al., 2015; Fazal et al, 2019; Sarwar & Imran, 2019; Taparia & Lenka, 2022). The dual role of being a manager and being a housewife prevents women managers from pursuing the company’s highest positions by refusing offers to balance work and family (Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2017). Marital and partner status are also seen as challenges in the career development process. The findings in this research support Ansari’s (2016) statement that married female workers will view household duties and their role at home as an obligation, making it difficult for them to meet the criteria as ideal workers. Apart from that, partners are also seen as a challenge in the career development process. The high level of jealousy due to the dominant composition of male co-workers results in women managers having limited room for movement in the career development process (Botha, 2018). Women managers themselves are also seen as a challenge, namely being stagnant in their comfort zone and limiting thoughts, which causes the informant to be unable to improve her capabilities so that she cannot occupy a higher position. Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch (2017) and Odoh & Branney (2022) mention this as a self-installed glass ceiling.

External challenges are challenges felt by participants originating from their role as women managers in the workplace and are divided into five, namely bias received by participants, harassment at work, challenges from the company, unsupportive co-workers, and disagreement with superiors (Figure 4.).



**Figure 4.** External Challenges Felt by Women managers  
**Source:** Author (2023)

Bias received by participants are statements relating to working conditions in the oil and gas sub-sector, which is not a place for women, and performance in companies related to the role of a working mother that influences the career development process.

"It's definitely like that. If women had already taking care of their children, they will not focus on their work; will often ask for leave, not to mention if they get pregnant over and over again" (Informan 3)

Harassment at work is caused by the small number of female workers, resulting in their position being vulnerable to verbal harassment so that participants do not feel comfortable in the workplace.

"The risk to get disturbed is certain as minority at work. When I was young, I often get cat-called, up until given a love letter by employee working as operator. In the first 3 month at XXX, driver at that company is stating feeling, his keenness on me, so I get uncomfortable immediately " (Informan 2).

The challenge from companies is that they see a difficult career path for female workers due to promotional practices in the company and the lack of programs to support the career development of female workers.

"It was a critical moment; our career path is not so good. In XXX, our career path used to be hard and burdensome, especially for women because there was no HR program at that time" (Informan 4)

Colleagues who are not supportive describe the challenges participants feel in the form of minimal support provided by co-workers from a work perspective so that the participant's work is hampered.

"In my current position, the challenges would be my own friend with the same position but in different division. Because his working field is construction with their own target, he got defensive. He does not support me. Sometimes there is something I wanted related to work, he didn't provide. So that the permit is delayed" (Informan 4)

Disagreement with superiors saw the relationship between the participant and his superior, so the participant chose to move from his job. Apart from that, there is minimal support from superiors regarding fulfilling their obligations as mothers, namely pumping.

"When he (supervisor) was in charge, maybe the chemistry (between me and him) isn't there. Then I thought that I don't seem to fit to work there, then I decided to search for a new job" (Informan 3).

"So, there's this type of boss that 'Why you always pumping? Your task is not done yet! Where's the material?'" (Informan 5)

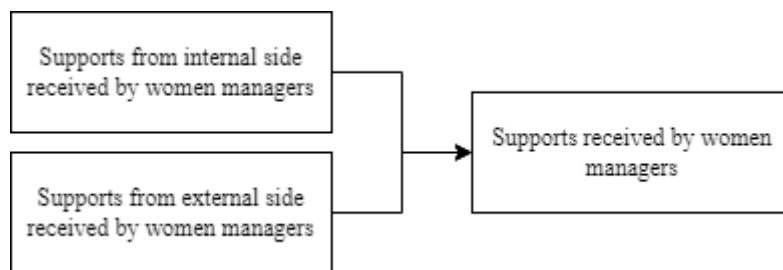
Challenges from the external side describe the challenges received by participants from their role as women managers in the workplace. The bias received by women managers is related to their role as mothers, which is caused by obligations to household affairs and work, resulting in differences in treatment experienced by women

and men (Fitzsimmons et al., 2014). In addition, the bias experienced is the view that pregnant women and have children will have poor performance, which currently known as "maternal wall" (Mella, 2022). Women managers in the mining industry also experience harassment from their colleagues. This supports Botha's (2018) findings which are due to the small number of women in the mining industry, making them vulnerable to harassment (Botha, 2016; Botha, 2018; Kansake et al., 2021; Valadares et al., 2022). Companies are also seen as a challenge in the career development process. Promotional practices that are not transparent support the findings of Botha (2018), and minimal promotional opportunities due to lack of policy hamper the career development process (Dambrin & Lambert, 2008). Superiors and co-workers are considered a challenge because the acceptance of female workers in the mining industry still needs to be improved, resulting in negative treatment from superiors and co-workers (Botha, 2018; Taparia & Lenka, 2022).

### Support received by women managers

Women managers in the oil and gas sub-sector receive support from the internal side and support from the external side (Figure 5.)

Support from the internal side was obtained from the participants' personal lives provided by their partners by permitting them to continue working after marriage and dividing domestic tasks (Figure 6.)

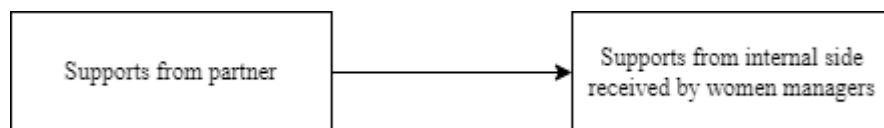


**Figure 5.** Support Received by Women Managers

Source: Author (2023)

"It just happened personally I made a commitment with my husband; If we ever get married, he will not ask me to stop working, I can still be able to work" (Informan 1).

"Always be there for each other. If I get to leave my family to work on site, my husband will be there (to handle domestic tasks), it's our commitment " (Informan 2).



**Figure 6.** Internal Support Received by Women managers

Source: Author (2023)

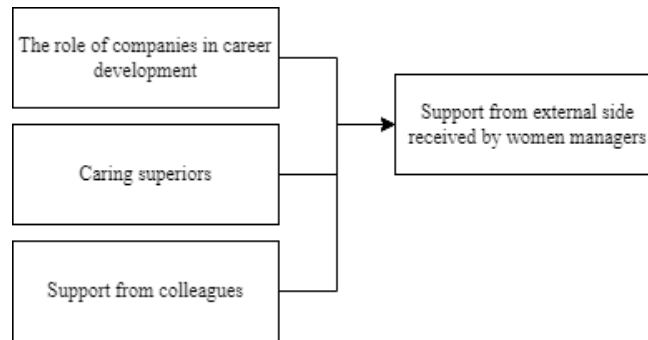
Their partners provided support in terms of participants' personal lives in the form of a commitment to granting permission to continue working after marriage, and the division of household tasks, especially looking after and taking care of children, made women managers more focused on work so they could develop their careers well (Gordon & Whelan-Berry, 2004; Valimaki et al., 2009; Cimirotić et al., 2017).

Participants received external support related to their role as women managers in the workplace, in the form of the company's role in career development, caring superiors, and support from colleagues. The company's role in career development shows support from the organization to help the career development of female workers in the oil and gas sub-sector in the form of making gender-friendly policies in male-dominant industries, especially the diversity rate program in the form of a percentage of the number of female workers in one company to boost workers' careers women in the oil and gas sub-sector (Figure 7.).

"Since XXX is a state-owned company, and state-owned company have KPI regarding women talent. The number should at least 20% from the total of all employee" (Informan 2).



"In XXX, there is one event that was held to prepare women employee to lead in order to achieve this 30% KPI" (Informan 5)



**Figure 7.** External Support Received by Women managers  
**Source:** Author (2023)

Caring superiors provide support to participants in terms of career development and personal affairs.

"They supported me. They support my carrier by giving me chances to try and work on new assignment and fresh work experience" (Informan 1).

"After I gave birth to my child, he (supervisor) even asked me: "How was your working rhytme (after giving birth)? How about your child? It's all good right?" (Informan 6)

Support from co-workers looks at how the participant's co-workers provide support by sharing their knowledge and experience with the participant regardless of gender boundaries.

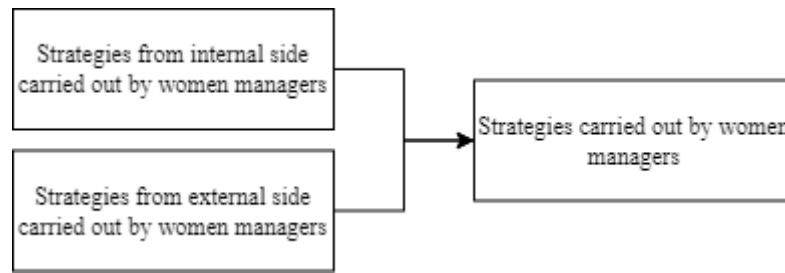
"My male co-workers always said to me: "You're the first woman that gets in here. You have to be able to exceed us" That's what they told me, to 'exceed', not on par, but to exceed" (Informan 4)

External support describes the support received by participants about their role as women managers in the workplace. Companies play an important role in the career development of women managers. Implementing gender and diversity issues in the oil and gas sub-sector takes the form of a diversity rate program in the form of a gender quota for female workers with a KPI (key performance indicator) of 20% to 30% of the total number of workers in the company. This is considered helpful considering that the number of female workers in the oil and gas sub-sector is still small compared to men so that it can help the career development of female workers (Calinaud et al., 2020). Gender quotas are considered capable of fostering equality between employees because they can share and explain the issues faced by each worker clearly and realistically (Perks & Schulz, 2020). The findings in this study are at odds with Williams et al. (2014), who state that diversity programs are seen as a form of discrimination and perpetuate male dominance. Participants in this research stated the opposite; diversity programs were seen as being able to help their careers as long as a monitoring process was carried out so that their success could be measured.

Caring superiors who provide support to participants in the form of more confidence to hold greater responsibilities and carry out work with a wider scope and challenges, which will help women managers in their career development process (Cimirotić et al., 2017) and implementation of family-friendly practices by superiors, to ensure female workers can work well without worrying about matters at home so that career continuity can be maintained (Mate et al., 2019; Calinaud et al., 2020; Taparia & Lenka, 2022). Support from colleagues also influences the career development of women managers. Positive interactions and recognition from colleagues are seen as support in the career development of women managers (Cimirotić et al., 2017; Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2017)

### **Strategies carried out by women managers**

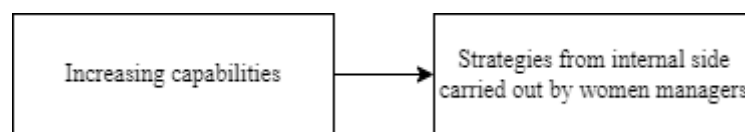
In pursuing a career ladder in a male-dominated industry, strategies that can be implemented to facilitate the career development process are needed. Women managers in the oil and gas sub-sector carry out strategies from the internal and external sides (Figure 8.).



**Figure 8.** Strategies Carried Out by Women managers

Source: Author (2023)

Participants carry out internal strategies in relation to themselves, namely by increasing their capabilities. Increasing personal capabilities is carried out so that informants can become and prepare themselves to become managers where they work (Figure 9.).



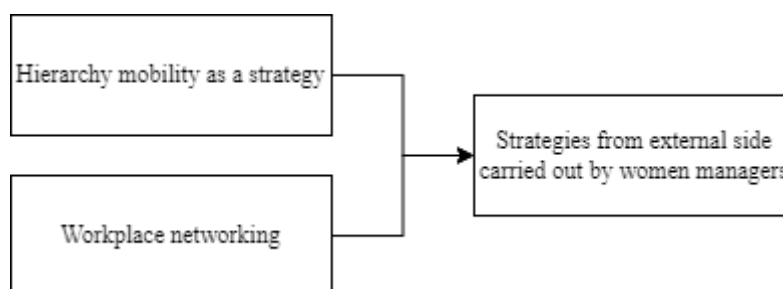
**Figure 9.** Internal Strategy Carried Out by Women managers

Source: Author (2023)

"I don't want to only work on the field. I want to know all the PT. XXX business process. Because I wanted to upgrade and enhance my knowledge. I don't aim for a high-level position, but the knowledge, so then careers will follow" (Informan 4).

Strategy from the internal side describes how participants increase their value so that they can occupy their positions to date by learning about things that are relevant to their work to increase their knowledge (McDonald & Hite, 2015; Cimirotić et al, 2017; Lee & Lee, 2018; Calinaud et al., 2020).

Participants carry out external strategies related to their role as women managers in the workplace, namely hierarchical mobility as a strategy and networking in the workplace. Hierarchical mobility is a strategy or effort to change positions, either taking a higher-level position or move to another position at the same level but in a different role (Figure 10).



**Figure 10.** External Strategies Carried Out by Women managers

Source: Author (2023)

"I would ask my supervisor to grant my aspirations to move to a different role but in a same leve. Even though I move to another position at the same level, I don't want to work with the same assignment and role for more than two years. If there is any chance, I would gladly take it" (Informan 4)

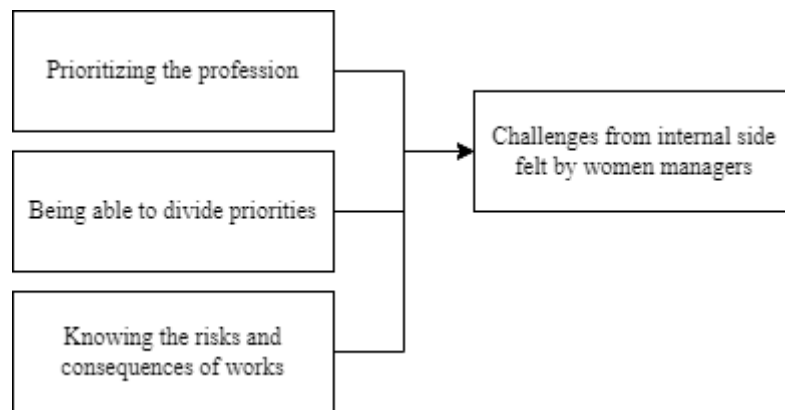
Networking in the workplace is an effort participants make to develop professional relationships with the right people.

"In order to get the job done, communication flow and relations is really important. I used to be an active member of the worker's union. That really helped me to build my professional relations" (Informan 2)

The strategy from the external side looks at the efforts made by participants in their career development process related to their role in the workplace as a women manager. Participants change positions by filling a higher position (upward hierarchical mobility) because there is an offer to fill a higher position and changing positions at the same level (lateral hierarchical mobility) due to boredom and the need for new challenges, coupled with the desire to improve one's abilities by learning from other work positions (McDonald & Hite, 2015; Cimirotić et al., 2017; Lee & Lee, 2018; Calinaud et al., 2020), as a strategy in the career development process (Giguère et al., 2023). Networking in the workplace is carried out to make it easier to get promotional initiatives (Lyness & Thompson, 2000; Remington & Kitterlin-Lynch, 2017) by knowing key people according to the needs and interests of women managers.

### The figure of a professional female worker

The figure of a professional female worker emerges based on the accumulated experience in pursuing a career ladder by women managers in the oil and gas sub-sector, which originates from the challenges they feel, the support they receive, and the strategies they implement, thus producing the figure of a professional female worker who is considered capable of being able to compete and work in the oil and gas sub-sector which is a male-dominant industry. The figure of a professional female worker prioritizes her profession, can divide priorities, and knows the risks and consequences of work (Figure 11).



**Figure 11.** The Figure of a Professional Female Worker  
 Source: Author (2023)

Prioritizing the profession is a woman who can act professionally and provide good work results, does not bring household problems to work, and does not see herself as different from her environment.

"If we meet with other employees, we need to present who we are: from what departments, what are our responsibilities, in order to prioritize our work" (Informan 1)

"I see if a person is professional by their quality of work and don't bring any domestic problem to the office" (Informan 3)

Being able to divide priorities is defined as the ability to choose and sort actions and actions with portions of logic and intuition because, according to informants, female workers have a strong intuitive side, so the ability is needed to be able to control that intuitive side.

"For me, a professional women worker is the one to know how and when to use their feelings and their logic. Professional women are the one who know that kind of priority" (Informan 5)

"Women workers have strong intuition. Please do take advantage of it, and also have to be strong in decision making. Our strong decision making needs to be agile. Agile in a way: we as a woman, have strong intuition but also need to have strong decision-making process. Don't get to carried away with our intuition" (Informan 6).

Knowing the risks and consequences of work sees how female workers must create mitigation and strategies that can help them in their work because, as women who work in the mining industry, of course, they will be faced with male-dominated co-workers, a rough work environment, and the obligation to work at the mining site.

"For me, a professional women worker are the one who knows their work environment and the consequences and risks of that work. For example, if the work environment is dominated by male workers, then exist a probability for us to be disturbed and harassed by them. We need kind of mitigations for it. If we went to site, we

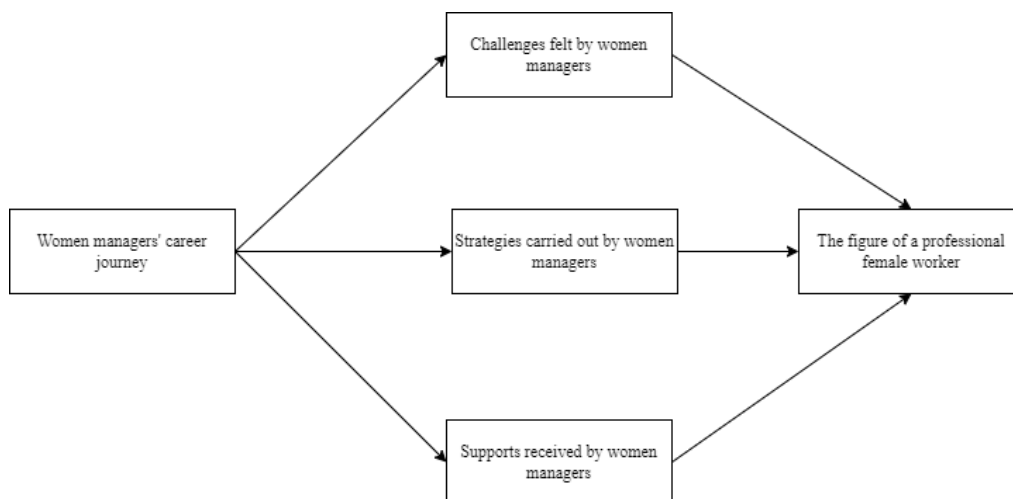
need to know what are the risks that follows. No complaining. If I ever get assigned to the site with the hot and humid environment, that's the consequences and the risks that we need to accept, and we are also committed to that working environment" (Informan 2).

The findings regarding the figure of professional female workers are new findings that have not been specifically discussed in previous research. From the participants' experiences, while working, views emerged regarding female workers who were considered capable of competing with male colleagues. Prioritizing the profession is an attitude where women can act professionally and provide good work results without seeing themselves as different from their work environment. Self-affirmation is considered an aspect of the figure of a professional female worker and is related to prioritizing their profession so that it gives rise to the idea that they are capable of working in a male-dominant industry by ensuring that they have the same requirements or capacities and can be an effort to move up. career ladder (Eitzen et al., 2010; Cimirotić et al., 2017). Being able to divide priorities is the ability to choose actions with portions of logic and feelings (intuition). The ability to control these two things is needed to act professionally (Cimirotić et al., 2017). Knowing the risks and consequences of work describes the conditions of female workers who work in the oil and gas sub-sector who are likely to face a work environment with health and safety risks, so female workers must also know and accept these risks and consequences (Botha, 2016; Botha, 2018).

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This research looks at the perceptions of women managers in the oil and gas sub-sector regarding the challenges they feel, the support they receive, and the strategies they implement in their career development process. In the process, professional female workers who were considered capable of competing with male colleagues in the oil and gas mining industry were found, based on accumulated experience working in the oil and gas sub-sector, which male workers dominate (Figure 12.).

Perceptions from the points above and findings about the figure of professional female workers can help companies evaluate existing policies regarding the working conditions of female workers in the oil and gas sub-sector. Making gender-friendly policies and setting flexible working hours allows companies to accommodate female workers who play dual roles as workers and as mothers/wives, creating an inclusive and conducive working environment in the oil and gas sub-sector. In terms of career development, companies can identify the challenges faced by their workers as material for formulating programs to boost their workers' career development. Collaboration between workers and companies is seen as a productive initiative for both parties, which, if seen in a long-term plan, can be used as a retention strategy for workers in the company.



**Figure 12.** Women Manager’s Career Development  
 Source: Author (2023)

This research has several limitations, which can later be corrected in the implementation of further research. First, the interview process is not face-to-face directly. Future research can conduct interviews directly to capture body gestures and build more natural chemistry with participants. Second, more participants with more diverse criteria are needed. Future research can consider more diverse participants to be able to capture the phenomenon more holistically and in-depth, as well as different sides. Finally, in-depth studies are needed in other mining

sub-sectors or male-dominant industries, aiming to deepen understanding and enrich research related to glass ceilings and career development with the particularities of each industry and other sub-sectors.

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