



# Women Workers Career Development Challenges and Strategies: An Explorative Study (Case Study of Women Workers in Mining Companies in Indonesia)

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**Abstract.** Equal representation of women in the workplace is considered as a condition that is favorable to women's interests and not only a demand for fairness or democracy. Increasing the participation and involvement of women in all fields of work has become one of the discourses that has been continuously debated in Indonesia so far. This research focuses on describing the tone of gender equality in terms of the employment performance of women in mining sector companies. This study uses an exploratory qualitative approach as a methodology that provides an analysis of philosophical assumptions about the phenomenon of gender equality in the mining sector. Discrimination experienced by women workers in mining companies includes additional assignments, verbal harassment, and opportunities to express opinions. Additionally, women often take professions that are not their responsibility, and their educational history affects how well-suited they are to their jobs. Discrimination against women workers has been able to be resolved using different strategies. Opportunities for opinions that women workers get have succeeded in solving both individual problems and work team problems. Colleagues are often quite cooperative providing a work environment where women workers are able to express opinions and solutions.

**Keywords:** Gender Equality · Women · Mining · Discrimination

## 1 Introduction

History has recorded the severity of women's efforts to equalize themselves to men in a certain way. Aristotle through a treatise entitled "Politics", stated that since 350 years BC, women, slaves, and children were not included in the citizenship of any nation. Gender equality began to get attention when the history of chauvinism emerged against the backdrop of the emergence of a number of women's activities, which began in Europe and America.

Gender equality is a controversial and complex paradigm. The implementation of justice and gender equality is indicated through the absence of discriminatory treatment between men and women, therefore men and women have opportunities for participation, accessibility and control of their development, as well as obtaining the full benefits of justice and equality based on their development [1].

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P. Hartanto (Ed.): ICEMAC 2022, AEBMR 252, pp. 21–33, 2023.

[https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-226-2\\_3](https://doi.org/10.2991/978-94-6463-226-2_3)

The stereotype that arises in Indonesian society about the role of women is that women who choose to be IRT (Housewife) are better than being career women, and the paradigm that career women do not prioritize family or their soul mate can erase a woman's intention to always achieve her desires.

UU no. 39 of 1999 concerning HAM (Human Rights) Article 49 Paragraph 1 has stated that women have the right to be elected, vote, be appointed in terms of position, work and profession based on statutory rules and conditions. Even so, negative perceptions about working women still exist.

Economic growth increases employment opportunities but still does not reduce inequality in the gender context. Quoting from the Indonesian Minister of Manpower and Transmigration, Fauziyah stated that one of the facts of discriminatory treatment of women in the context of work is related to their income [2].

Based on the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) report obtained through the Katadata page (2021), 50.70 million people aged 15 years and over who have jobs are women, namely in 2020. Based on the existence of a number of industrial sectors, mining is one of the many sectors related to patriarchy or masculinity. Not only in terms of quantity, women workers are still treated discriminatively based on the aspect of their wages. Based on BPS (Central Statistics Agency) data for 2017, the total number of female workers in Indonesia in the mining sector is only 115 thousand, whereas men have a total of 1.28 million. The data shows a drastic total difference between male and female workers in the mining aspect [3].

With regard to female workers at the coal mining company PT Kaltim Prima Coal (KPC), female operators are not only successful in negotiating with their male counterparts [4]. The women workers are also able to cope with the rigors of mining and the night shift pattern which is a very demanding daily routine. Based on the company's safety data, since 1992 until now there has been no record of Lost Time Injury (LTI) involving female operators at the KPC mine. In addition, women's work performance has also shown promising results, as evidenced by the emergence of female operators with the title of 'Best Operator' to represent companies at the Asian level.

The Minister for Women and Children's Empowerment stated that facts based on BPS data (August, 2021) indicate that the total number of workers is based on their employment, especially in the fields of quarrying and mining, women are still far behind compared to men. Now, the total number of female workers is only around 578 thousand women, and around 996 thousand men. It is not limited to being left behind in terms of numbers, discriminatory treatment appears in the line of revenue receipts in the aspect of quarrying and mining. Darmawati explained that the average income of women workers in the mining sector is only around 3 million and 3.7 million for men. According to him, the cause of women's vulnerability and inequality is not due to their own weaknesses, but the societal perception that has taken root and developed patriarchal understanding.

Research findings based on RMF reporting [5] the result (RMI in 2018) is that women workers in the mining industry are often treated discriminatory or negatively, which hinders their performance. In that report, it was stated that women holding mining executive positions were ostracized, singled out, or harassed at the start of their careers. Then, for women workers who work in the field, the vulnerability is because they are located in a work environment that lacks security. RMF noted that for essential job requirements such

as protective equipment, as well as changing room features, these toilets were generally not provided. This matter is getting worse with the work environment lacking lighting, as well as limited movement (underground) so that there is a risk of violence and sexual harassment.

Quoting from the Baktinews page [6], the problems that arise for women, such as inequality in the mining sector, are not limited to being solely responsible for solving them. The role of all parties is needed to create equality between men and women in that aspect. There needs to be synergy between employees and also from the industry side to open up greater opportunities in this sector because these problems will not be solved if they are borne on only one side. In addition, the government and related agencies also need to carry out stricter supervision on the technical side to ensure that everything goes according to the rules and ideal conditions that should be.

The purpose of this research is to know and analyze concretely about gender issues in the world of work in the mining sector, covering:

1. Conduct an analysis of the factors that support the progress of women in the world of work in the mining sector.
2. Identify the challenges faced by women in the world of work in the mining sector.
3. Analyze the strategies undertaken by women in their work in the mining sector to face challenges to achieve a successful career.

## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Gender Theory**

In the 1960s, the word gender was used in America to indicate or voice the existence of a woman as a human being, which later gave birth to awareness of gender issues.

In English, the word gender itself has the meaning of gender. This is not the same as the Indonesian language which defines gender as a person's gender. Meanwhile, gender itself is a concept that has a cultural context orientation in which the concept was created in an effort to provide differences in behavior, roles, characteristics and mentality between women and men where it develops from the perspective of society.

From these explanations the word gender can be interpreted as an effort to identify which focuses on the differences between women and men from various aspects. This view can be seen in terms of cultural, social and also human psychology. Even further, gender can also be identified in terms of art and human ethics. Meanwhile, the essence of a gender discourse is that there is no demeaning view and only focuses on equality between humans without discriminating between sexes. Furthermore, gender is also defined as a movement to achieve equality in the right to life between humans.

Gender is a conceptual arrangement that refers to a role system between humans. Anderson [7] gave his explanation of the concept of gender where he said that gender is a conceptual arrangement that focuses on a system of roles and relationships between the two, be it women or men, without looking at the biological side of the two. Robert Stoller was the first to introduce the use of the word gender. Robert Stoller uses it to provide a separation of human characteristics where it is based on defining humans that are oriented to social and cultural elements as well as to the physical characteristics of humans biologically.

Meanwhile, gender analysis is a method or tool which has a function in detecting inequality of rights or gender gaps which is carried out through the provision of gender information, facts and data. Information, facts and data in question are data that includes roles, behavior, control and benefits between women and men. Significantly, the difference in access for humans also results from the existence of social construction which refers to the roles of a woman and also a man.

Gender identity itself is a feeling that is built in a person about his role in social relations. The continuity of a process of social interaction that is so complex and gets reinforcement from the language used can be the meaning of a gender relationship. While on the other hand, feminism is an ideology that gives impetus to the creation of a social movement in fighting for the position of a woman where this has a political nature or can be said to be something that is not academic.

### **2.1.1 Modern Feminism Theory**

From its name, of course, one can see how this theory takes several parts from liberal theory. The theory of liberal feminism itself comes from liberal ideology which makes freedom the main core where these liberties only side with men and only benefit men.

### **2.1.2 Socialist Feminism**

The gender gap itself is the result of the existence of a system that consciously or unconsciously adheres to the capitalist system in which this creates the creation of caste or class even within the family. The theory originating from Marx Karl, namely the praxis of Marxism, became the initial milestone in the creation of this movement. This theory focuses on the awareness of groups that are considered oppressed, which with the existence of this movement then raises awareness for women that class as a woman is not a profitable class. Factors of capital accumulation and private property ownership are not used as a reference in this ideology. In this theory there is absolutely no view of the values of domestic work and the economy. Domestic work is considered as an unproductive marginal job [8]. Even so, in reality all public works for which an economic value can be obtained are very dependent on products which are then produced from household work. An example of this reality is a house that is fit for occupancy, food that is ready to be eaten and other things that have an impact on public works. The role or economic contribution created from women's domestic work has been massively taken into account by them, namely feminists themselves. In connection with this, Fourier [9] provides an explanation that the higher the freedom and position of a woman, the more advanced a human civilization itself will be. This makes them women who live and live in a family that tends to be restrictive and will become an obstacle for women to take part.

### **2.1.3 Radical Feminism**

The theory of radical feminism originated from the existence of sexual harassment practices such as rape and abortion which became the beginning of the movement of this theory. Related to radical feminism, Rahmayanty revealed that the theory of radical

feminism originated from the experience of women who encountered sexual violence. The existence of this then gave rise to a compulsion for women to stay at home and become a housewife. Meanwhile, in the world of work, women also get limitations in how to dress. The existence of a dominant element that sided with men then made them aware that women should also have the same rights. Women are those groups who get pressure and are not erased in social class.

## **2.2 Gender Equality**

Written in the Ministry of Home Affairs regulations in 2013, it stated that gender equality and justice are a condition that is fair and equal in cooperative relations between men and women. Mutual respect between women and men is a dynamic that gender equality seeks to become. Erviana revealed that the history of gender differences between men and women was formed through a procession that was so long and complex.

The existence of gender differences then also affects the role of humans in society, so that from these results, women do not get many more opportunities than men. Women are still subjected to violence in the form of rape, harassment, abortion, polygamy, forced marriage and most recently, where women experience structural impoverishment [10]. Based on these things, gender awareness is one of the big things that must be and immediately applied in society and in various activities of human life.

In simpler terms, there is a concept of dividing roles for men and women in carrying out their roles [11]. Equal rights and fulfillment of obligations are the basis of gender equality. Bappenas said that one of the ways to achieve gender equality is through increasing the role and quality of life of women themselves. It can be said that gender equality in Indonesia cannot be said to have been fully achieved. In the world of work there is a lot of injustice which then becomes the creation of gender equality in that world.

## **2.3 Women and Politics**

The fulfillment of women's human rights is also the responsibility of government institutions, both legislative, judicial and legislative. One of the factors of injustice in politics is the initial concept of gender equality. Programs to protect gender equality have been obtained through the United Nations with a declaration in Beijing in 1995. Hadiyono explained further that starting from these obstacles, the fulfillment of women's human rights should not only be done by way of socializing women's rights but also by having legal regulations. Which supports gender equality so that the fulfillment of women's human rights can be achieved perfectly. Women's human rights themselves are an awareness that women also have life as human beings with their roles and functions. The human rights of women or women are fundamental and essential rights, which women have because they are human and a woman.

## **2.4 Set of Women's Rights Regulations**

Conversion of women is one of the regulations that discuss women's human rights. Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 7 of 1984 concerning Ratification of the UN

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against is what is meant by the conversion of women. Women's rights have been recognized and these rights have been protected where it has been stated in Law no. 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights. Protection of women's rights in general can be seen in the 1945 Constitution. In this sentence, of course, citizen does not only mean men but also refers to women who live in Indonesia.

Gender interests are not only reserved for women but also for men. The realization of gender equality in the work environment will also make progress in the company. One of the factors for the low number of Indonesian women's involvement is the aspect of norms and culture, which is still applied to the majority of the population, namely the role of traditionality which prioritizes over the role of transition. The persistent emergence of gender discriminatory treatment in aspects of work is actually due to misperceptions in society regarding the conceptualization of subordination, marginalization, stereotypes, violence, and work assignments.

## **2.5 Society's Cultural Practices Against Gender**

The strong view of society that women are not much better than men is a big obstacle in creating gender equality. In terms of culture, women themselves are placed in the human figure whose affairs are only domestic and are not allowed to have jobs outside the home. Developing from criticism of Women in Development (WID), the Gender and Development Movement became a movement that encourages development for women in all aspects of their lives.

There are many factors that become obstacles in the realization of gender equality. Women and men in society certainly have different functions and contributions for each individual. The creation of a number of gender differences is caused by a variety of things, one of the examples is socialized, created, formed, strengthened, to be built through socio-culture, through the teachings of religiosity to statehood. In this regard, gender and its role are relatively lacking in achievement in all aspects of people's daily lives, lack of opportunities for property rights and a number of other assets, for political authority, education, health, and adequacy of life. Efaningrum explained that cultural problems with their obstacles to the education process and the achievements of women and men must be investigated as deeply as possible.

### **2.5.1 The Influence of Javanese Culture in Gender Equality**

Prastiwi and Rahmadanik explained that the influence or role of culture has an important role in perceptions of career women, for example in Javanese culture there is a saying that women only have 3M assignments. This has created the perception that women's assignments are limited to giving birth, grooming, taking care of their children, as well as cooking. In Javanese society, the term "konco wingking" (back friend) is known, namely a wife. Priority for the right to higher education will be given to boys if there are boys and girls in one family. Placing women's position below men and considering them not entitled to be involved in the public world is a form of confinement to women.

## 2.6 Factors Affecting Gender Equality

Confidence affects the gender gap between men and women in getting a job [12]. Kubaison [13] stated that a workplace prejudice has affected workers' salaries and career advancement. Nwakanma [14] found that the field of information technology is characterized by gender inequality because the field has not yet achieved gender equality. The field of mineral extraction and processing presents opportunities for women's economic empowerment. The global mining industry is required to meet the increasing demands for environment, safety, technology, and organizational development in order to be competitive, efficient, and modern [15]. Several ongoing projects aim to implement lean, effective and safe mine production.

## 2.7 Female Workforce

Back in 2003, government officials had ratified the Manpower Law, in which regulations related to women workers appeared. In the first article, the first number of Law no. 13 of 2003 concerning Employment, the meaning of employment is anything related to employment, namely before, the process, and after work. Defining work deadlines in Law no. 13 of 2003 provides refinement of its definition in Law no. 14 of 1969 concerning the Main Provisions of Employment which defines workforce as each individual with the ability to carry out work within work relations or outside of it in order to produce services or goods to fulfill the needs of the community. The total number or total of Indonesian female workers is increasing.

## 2.8 The Role of Career Women

In general, women have two roles that must be played at one time simultaneously. The role is the domestic role as a housewife and the public role as a workforce. The open opportunity to work makes women appear to play both roles at once. Both are references for women especially for career women. Therefore, it takes the best arrangement possible so that there is no neglect. Based on this, women with the determination of selecting one of its roles are said to be inappropriate when living the reality of life. There are a number of reasons for women to have careers, namely the economic aspect. Usually, household needs require the husband and wife to do work so that all their needs are fulfilled. Therefore, this situation is the reason why his wife has no choice but to participate in seeking additional income.

## 2.9 Position of Career Women

Based on the KBBI, career women are women who are engaged in professional activities in the corporate, institutional, and other aspects. Anshary explained that career women are women who are passionate about their profession and activists who are useful for increasing their achievements and results. Therefore, it can be concluded that working women are working women based on their ability to get results and achievements according to their wishes. There are two forms of the role of career women, namely career women with marital ties, and career women with no marital ties. Therefore, all

of them have ties to each other regarding the balanced implementation of obligations and rights between the two. The obligations and rights of husband and wife have been regulated by the state and religion. However, due to conditions and situations, sometimes the husband takes over the wife's duties, or the wife takes over the husband's duties, for example financial problems.

## 2.10 Performance

Etymologically, the original performance or performance is performance, which means achievement or results of work. Assessment related to performance has a difference to the evaluation. The assessment is about the extent to which an individual carries out his work assignment activities, on the other hand the evaluation is his work activity determines the extent of a work activity to the agency and the linearity of income for that job. There are a number of indicators which influence the assessment of work or performance aspects, namely (1) the environment is a vital aspect regarding its influence on individual performance. Next is the institution or organization, its characteristics also influence the evaluation of its performance.

## 2.11 Previous Research

- 1) The gender gap in top jobs – the role of overconfidence [16].

The results of the study found that the self-confidence factor was a statistically significant explanatory factor in the gender gap for women in jobs in top career positions.

- 2) Why do women ask for less? [17].

The results of the study found that women have different beliefs than men about asking for a reasonable wage for an ideal candidate when applying for the same job.

- 3) Workplace Gender Pay Gaps: Does Gender Matter Less the Longer Employees Stay? [18].

Men often receive higher rewards than women for the same achievements. However, it is unclear whether the gender gap in incentives narrows with seniority or whether the gender gap in incentives remains constant across employees' internal careers.

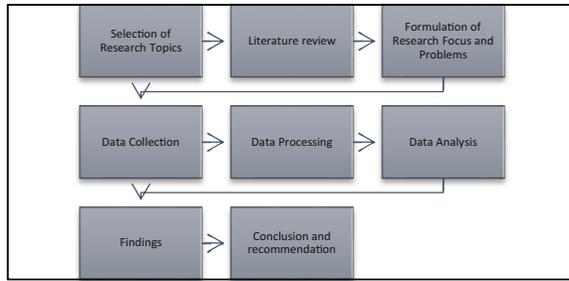
- 4) Motherhood 2.0: Slow Progress for Career Women and Motherhood within the 'Finnish Dream' [19].

Women face a conflict between the expectations of becoming an ideal full-time worker to pursue a career with continuing responsibilities as a housewife so that women accept forms of "limited individualism".

- 5) Cultural values and gender gap: a cross-national analysis.

Hamid Yeganeh & Diane May (2011)

Culture still has a significant impact on gender inequality when the influence of socioeconomic variables is taken into account. More specifically, the value dimension of conservatism is associated with higher levels of gender inequality, whereas the cultural dimension of autonomy can lead to gender equality.



**Fig. 1.** Research Design. Source: Creswell (2014).

## 3 Research Methods

### 3.1 Research Approach

This study uses a qualitative research method, namely as a methodology that provides philosophical assumptions to provide direction or guidance on how to collect and analyze data. The qualitative research used is descriptive qualitative, which is a research design that produces research products in the form of written or oral data from the observed phenomena or individuals.

This research method is used to research on natural object conditions (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is a key instrument of data collection techniques, data analysis is inductive/qualitative in nature, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization (Fig. 1).

### 3.2 Location and Time of Research

This research will take place in several mining companies, this company was chosen because it is based on the qualifications determined by the company's researchers according to predetermined criteria. The time needed for the research is 6 months starting from April 2022 to November 2022. This time is used for the process of research design, literature study, collection, processing, and presentation of research data.

### 3.3 Research Subject

This study chose research subjects using a purposive sampling approach, by dividing the informant categories into 3, namely main informants, key informants, and additional informants with a total of 8 informants.

### 3.4 Data Collection Technique

The technique used to collect data in this study is the interview technique. The interview technique that will be carried out by the author is the guided free interview technique, meaning that the questions that will be asked to informants are not fixed on the interview guideline. In this case, researchers can deepen or develop according to the situation and conditions in the field. In the context of this study, researchers will conduct interviews with key informants, key informants and additional informants as primary data sources.

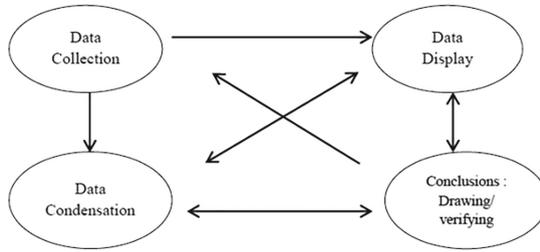


Fig. 2. Data Analysis Interactive Models. Source: Miles dan Hubermann (2014).

### 3.5 Data Analysis Technique

In the context of descriptive qualitative research like this study, the method used to analyze data is the model developed by Miles, Huberman and Saldana. According to Miles, et.al there are several main components that must be considered in the qualitative analysis process, including data condensation, data display and conclusion drawing which is done in an interactive form accompanied by a data collection process as shown in Fig. 2.

## 4 Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Overview of Discrimination of Women Workers in the Workplace

Respondents received additional task discrimination, namely getting workers who were not their job from male colleagues in the field. Rejection has been made. The result is that sometimes co-workers give in, but sometimes they still do the work, because if they don't do it, it hinders their work. Respondents also received discrimination Verbal harassment, male co-workers in the field often joked teasingly. In addition, sometimes male colleagues underestimate respondents by looking down on them, if female workers cannot do certain jobs. The sentence that is often said by male co-workers to respondents is "is it possible for a girl to take care of something like that" sometimes also includes the words "ah girl is too nervous". The majority of respondents' co-workers are smokers so all workspace windows are opened for smoking. This disturbs female workers and even workers who do not smoke. Discrimination regarding salary is also felt by respondents. The male co-workers tend to work in the field while the women are in the office. Salary is not much different, but Respondents feel that female workers have a greater burden of responsibility than colleagues in the field. Some of the things that make up the points above are the things that cause and lead to points of discrimination occurring against women workers in offices.

### 4.2 Obstacles to the Employment of Women Workers

Discrimination received by respondents sometimes became an obstacle in completing their assignments. Physical work in the field that was not possible for women to do was experienced. The male colleagues encourage and encourage female workers to do

what their male colleagues do, even though the female workers do not want it. The male coworkers charge the report work they should do to the female workers. If the report is not done by colleagues, then the respondent's work becomes hampered.

On the one hand, sometimes these gender differences give privileges to women workers. In a workplace that upholds an understanding of gender, it gives more privileges to female workers. When female workers get assignments in the field, male co-workers in the field provide convenience, so that actions create obstacles at work. Even some time before going to the field, the respondent's male colleagues had provided a thorough understanding of the technicalities in the field so that this made it easier for them to complete their work. Even this understanding extends to non-technical matters of work, such as how to behave when a field worker verbally abuses the respondent. This is quite helpful for respondents to better understand how to work in the field.

The average respondent is an office worker in a mining company, they feel more comfortable working in the office than in the field, because sometimes they get temptation from miners. This becomes a pressure when these female workers have to get a job in the field. In addition, the matter of physical work that sometimes respondents have to do becomes an additional obstacle in their work. Some work environments do stipulate gender equality to a bit of an extreme degree. Assume that women can do the same work as men, such as physical work.

#### **4.3 Responses and Solutions to Discrimination Against Women Workers**

Educational background influences the mentality of female workers in adapting to their jobs. Discrimination experienced by women workers, such as verbal harassment and giving extra assignments, has been able to be resolved using different strategies. Female workers try to complete their duties professionally with a personal approach, when there are work constraints due to communication with male clients. The personal approach in this case is more about understanding each other in the context of work professionalism. Respondents feel that work with a personal approach can make work easier. Respondents think more about how to improve communication patterns so that they are more comfortable communicating with male colleagues. Respondents prefer to change the working atmosphere to make it more enjoyable so that the perspective constraints of male co-workers can overcome bad communication.

Parents provide support by giving trust to female workers in solving problems and responsibilities. Opportunities for opinions that women workers get have succeeded in solving both individual problems and work team problems. Colleagues are often quite cooperative providing a work ecosystem where, female workers are able to express opinions and solutions. Women workers have succeeded in solving obstacles when they get an abundance of work that is not their job by refusing and giving arguments.

## **5 Conclusion**

Discrimination experienced by female workers in mining companies includes additional assignments, verbal harassment, and opportunities to express opinions. Several times getting a job that is not his duty. There has been a refusal to do the task. But sometimes

they still do the work, because if they don't do it, it hinders their work. Fresh graduates have received an appropriate salary, they should gain more experience, so the salary must match work experience. The male co-workers tend to work in the field while the women are in the office. Salary is not much different, but women workers feel the workload is bigger than their colleagues in the field.

Educational background influences the mentality of female workers in adapting to their jobs. Discrimination experienced by women workers, such as verbal harassment and giving extra assignments, has been able to be resolved using different strategies. Opportunities for opinions that women workers get have succeeded in solving both individual problems and work team problems. Colleagues are often quite cooperative providing a work ecosystem where women workers are able to express opinions and solutions.

**Authors' Contributions.** The results of this study are expected to add to knowledge and scholarship related to the topic of Challenges and Career Development Strategies for Women Workers in Indonesian Mining Companies in the academic field.

The research results for mining companies can be used as a future reference to ensure that the right to freedom of expression and freedom of communication is regulated in company provisions, in accordance with human rights law. In particular, provisions should clearly define the extent of permissible restrictions on the right to freedom of expression. This includes that such restrictions are imposed by company regulations on women workers.

Research results for mining companies can be used as a reference in establishing clear legal and policy frameworks to protect the right to information and gender equality through the development of a comprehensive legal framework. This is followed by full implementation of legal and policy measures that are fair and remove barriers to access for women workers, including challenging social and cultural norms that lead to discriminatory and intimidating attitudes towards women workers.

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