

The Affective Motivation of Women Miners in Ghana

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Abstract : Affective motivation (motivation that is emotionally laden usually related to affect, passion, emotions, moods) in the workplace stimulates individuals to reinforce, persist and commit to their task, which leads to the individual and organizational performance. This leads individuals to reach goals especially in situations where task are highly challenging and hostile. In such situations, individuals are more disposed to be more creative, innovative and see new opportunities from the loopholes in their workplace. However, when individuals feel displaced and less important, an adverse reaction may suffice which may be detrimental to the organization and its performance. One sector where affective motivation is eminently present and relevant, is the mining industry. Due to its intense work environment; mostly dominated by men and masculinity cultures; and deliberate exclusion of women in this environment which, makes the women working in these environments to feel marginalized. In Ghana, the mining industry is mostly seen as a very physical environment especially underground and mostly considered as 'no place for a woman'. Despite the fact that these women feel less 'needed' or 'appreciated' in such environments, they still have to juggle between intense work shifts; face violence and other health risks with their families, which put a strain on their affective motivational reaction. Beyond these challenges, however, several mining companies in Ghana today are working towards providing a fair and equal working situation for both men and women miners, by recognizing them as key stakeholders, as well as including them in the stages of mining projects from the planning and designing phase to the evaluation and implementation stage. Drawing from the psychology and gender literature, this study takes a narrative approach to identify and understand the shifting gender dynamics within the mine works in Ghana, occasioning a change in background disposition of miners, which leads to more women taking up mine jobs in the country. In doing so, a qualitative study was conducted using semi-structured interviews from Ghana. Several women working within the mining industries in Ghana shared their experiences and how they felt and still feel in their workplace. In addition, archival documents were gathered to support the findings. The results suggest a change in enrolment regimes in a mining and technology university in Ghana, making room for a more gender equal enrolments in the university. A renowned university that train and feed mine work professional into the industry. The results further acknowledge gender equal and diversity recruitment policies and initiatives among the mining companies of Ghana. This study contributes to the psychology and gender literature by highlighting the hindrances women face in the mining industry as well as highlighting several of their affective reactions towards gender inequality. The study also provides several suggestions for decision makers in the mining industry of what can be done in the future to reduce the gender inequality gap within the industry.

Keywords : affective motivation, gender shape shifting, mining industry, women miners

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