

**Work-life balance and health of women:  
A Qualitative Study of a Mining Company in Ghana**



**Irene Owusu-Poku**

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Philosophy Degree in  
Health Promotion, University of Bergen, 2014.

Faculty of Psychology

Department of Health Promotion and Development

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my love, Joseph Owusu-Poku. "Adiepena", you made this possible.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would first give thanks to the Almighty God for how far He has brought me. My sincere and heartfelt thanks goes to my Principal Supervisor, Dr. Torill Bull (Associate Professor, University of Bergen Norway), for inciting, correcting and pushing me towards the road to successful completion of this thesis for which without, I would not have been able to complete the Masters program in Health Promotion. I am indebted to you Dr. Bull. My next gratitude goes to my Local Supervisor in Ghana, Dr. James Antwi especially when you gave me the guidelines to go through the Ghana Health Service Ethical Procedures. Thank you Dr. Antwi.

To the entire staff of the Department of Health Promotion and Development, I owe my gratitude of thanks for instilling in me, the principles of health promotion. To Professor Maurice Mittelmark, your lecture on Salutogenesis really helped me in this thesis. Thank you Professor Mittelmark.

My colleagues with whom I discussed the data analysis part of this work, I say a big thank you. I would not forget the support of my classmate, Mrs. Eunice Adusei, who gave me motivation and a helping hand especially in the moments of ill health. I am most grateful to you Eunice; you gave me the inspiration to move on.

I am thankful to the Company, (for the purposes of publication and Ethical reasons name of Company withheld), who allowed me into their premises for this study to be carried out. I am also thankful for the interviewees who shared with me their experiences of the challenges and means of coping in the course of balancing work and other aspects of life.

Thanks to my parents and siblings who always gave me the inspirations throughout my tough moments.

I would forever be grateful to my husband, Mr. Joseph Owusu-Poku, whom I left behind in Ghana some few months after we married. It has been tough, I know, yet you stood by me. Thank you very much "Adiepena" (*Pet name for my husband*).

## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GRRs.....Generalized Resistance Resources

HP..... Health Promotion

HRD..... Human Resource Department

LTPA.....Leisure Time Physical Activity

NSD ..... Norsksamfunnsvitenskapeligdatatjeneste; (Norwegian Social Science  
Data Services)

PMSU.....Professional and Managerial Staff Union of the Ghana Mineworkers  
Union of Ghana TUC

SDH.....Social Determinants of health

SOC..... Sense of Coherence

WHO.....World Health Organization

WLB..... Work-life balance

WLC.....Work-life conflict

## LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

### List of figures

Figure 1: The Salutogenic Model

Figure 2: Thematic network of Analysis

### List of Tables

Table 1a: Overview of participants

Table 1b: Distribution per department/job profile of the participants interviewed

Table 2: Stressors and accompanied resources

Table 3: Codes and Themes use in analysis

## **ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Both work and non-work activities are crucial to living and hence there is a need for balance and integration of career and other demands of life (Sturges & Guest, 2004). In many African countries after the Beijing conference in 1995, employers are aiming to increase the number of female employees and integrate them in their businesses. This has opened new opportunities for many professional women but also the challenge of juggling the demands of a career and life outside work, which has health dimensions necessary to explore. Mining is among the demanding and task driven jobs worldwide with gradual increasing in the number of women (Jones, 2006). The study was framed within the context of Antonovsky's Salutogenic theory, exploring the stressors which were encountered and the resources which contributed to achieving health and wellbeing of women in mining in the course of balancing work and other demands and aspects of life.

**Methods:** Semi-structured in-depth interviews were used as the main method of collecting data from 10 fulltime women employees in a Mining Company in Ghana. The data were analyzed using thematic network analysis by systematically coding and identifying patterns with the aid of a Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software called Open Code Software 4.02 which assisted in the organization of self-generated codes and retrieval of data.

**Results:** All the women irrespective of marital status complained of work taking most part of their productive life. Many stressors such as perpetual breaks in relationships, eating at night, inadequate time with family, inability to honour invitations, over demanding tasks at work, bad road network to and from work and inadequate sleep were encountered. Resources however, were perceived to be few, and included salaries for their hard labour at the end of the month, onsite health promotion programs, understanding partners and the hiring of nannies. Such resources contributed to the thriving, health and wellbeing of women in mining.

**Conclusion:** Companies and employers should consider certain stressors that abound in the workplace with the provision of resources that can mitigate much of the stress encountered by employed women. This would enhance the health of employees. Individual employed women can consider making good use of the available company facilities in order to reduce stress.

The life situation confronting the women did not deter most of the participants from combining both demands of work and other aspects of life. Analysis against the Salutogenic theory supported that women's Sense of Coherence (Korn, 2000) seems to propel them towards positive health and wellbeing.

**Key Words:** work-life balance, health, Salutogenesis, challenges, and resources.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

DEDICATION .....	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	i
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS .....	ii
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES.....	iii
List of figures .....	iii
Figure 1: The Salutogenic Model .....	iii
Figure 2: Thematic network of Analysis .....	iii
List of Tables.....	iii
Table 1a: Overview of participants .....	iii
Table 1b: Distribution per department/job profile of the participants interviewed .....	iii
Table 2: Stressors and accompanied resources.....	iii
Table 3: Codes and Themes use in analysis .....	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS.....	xi
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background of the study .....	1
1.3 Problem Statement .....	3
1.4 Objectives And Research Questions .....	4
1.4.1 Aim.....	4
<i>Specific Objectives:</i> .....	4
1.4.2 Research Questions .....	4
1.5 Definitions of concepts.....	5



CHAPTER TWO .....	6
2.0. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .....	6
CHAPTER THREE .....	10
3.0. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	10
3.1 Perception of balance of work and the other aspects of life.....	10
3.2 Health promotion and the workplace .....	11
3.3 Companies’ response to work-life balance .....	12
3.4 Health and work-life balance .....	12
3.5. Work-life Conflict .....	13
3.6 Challenges of Work-Life Balance.....	14
3.7 Resources to Cope with Work-life Conflict.....	15
CHAPTER FOUR.....	17
4.0 METHODOLOGY .....	17
4.1 Research Design.....	17
4.2 Study Area/Setting .....	17
4.3 Participants .....	18
4.4 Research Instruments .....	21
4.5 Sources of Data .....	21
4.5.1 Primary Data.....	21
4.5.2 Secondary Source of Data .....	22
4.6 Data Analysis .....	22
4.7 Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability .....	24
4.8 The Role of the Researcher .....	25
4.9 Ethical Issues.....	26

CHAPTER FIVE .....	27
5.0 FINDINGS .....	27
5.1 Introduction .....	27
5.2 Perception of work and other aspects of life .....	29
5.2.1 <i>More work than other aspects of life</i> .....	29
5.2.2 <i>Equal attention for both work and other aspects of life</i> .....	30
5.2.3 <i>The balance of work and other aspects of life depends on the Individual</i> .....	31
5.3 Perception of health.....	32
5.3.1 <i>Physical Health</i> .....	32
5.3.2 <i>Emotional and Social Health</i> .....	32
5.3.3 <i>Status in Life</i> .....	33
5.4 Challenges (stressors) of work and other aspects of life .....	33
5.4.1 Poor Emotional Health .....	33
5.4.1.1 <i>Loss of relationships</i> .....	34
5.4.1.2 <i>Limited time with partners and spouses.</i> .....	34
5.4.2 Poor Physical Health .....	34
5.4.2.1 <i>Inability to practice healthy living advices</i> .....	35
5.4.2.2 <i>Limited accommodation on site.</i> .....	35
5.4.2.3 <i>Bodily pains and poor sleep</i> .....	35
5.4.3 Poor Social Health .....	36
5.4.3.1 <i>Inability to honour invitations from friends and family.</i> .....	36
5.4.3.2 <i>Inability to attend family meetings and discussions</i> .....	36
5.4.3.3 <i>Limited time for children</i> .....	37
5.4.4 Poor Spiritual Health.....	37
5.5 Resources used in Promoting a balance of work and other aspects of life. ....	37

5.5.1. Supportive Environment.....	38
5.5.1.1 <i>Partner/Relatives</i> .....	38
5.5.1.2 <i>Nanny</i> .....	38
5.5.1.3 <i>Supportive work colleagues and supervisors</i> .....	39
5.5.1.4 <i>Accommodation on mine site</i> .....	39
5.5.2 Monthly Salary .....	40
5.5.3 Company's response to work life balance.....	40
5.5.3.1 <i>Hospitals and Wellbeing Program</i> .....	40
5.5.3.2 <i>Leave days</i> .....	41
CHAPTER SIX.....	43
6.0 DISCUSSION.....	43
6.1 Introduction .....	43
6.2 Discussion of Perception of work-life balance and health.....	43
6.2.1 Perception on WLB .....	43
6.2.2 Perception on health .....	45
6.3 Discussion of challenges (stressors).....	46
6.3.1 Introduction .....	46
6.3.2 Poor Emotional health .....	47
6.3.3 Poor Physical health .....	47
6.3.4 Poor Social Health .....	48
6.3.5 Poor Spiritual Health .....	48
6.4 Discussion of Resources .....	49
6.4.1 Introduction .....	49
6.4.2 Supportive environment .....	49
6.4.3 Monthly Salary .....	51

6.4.4 Company's response to work -life balance .....	51
6.5 Discussion in relation to Salutogenesis .....	52
6.5.1 Life situation.....	52
6.5.2 Life course exposures (challenges/stressors).....	53
6.5.3 Resources (GRRs) .....	53
6.5.4 Life experiences.....	54
6.5.5 Sense of Coherence (SOC).....	55
6.5.5.1 <i>Comprehensibility</i> .....	55
6.5.5.2 <i>Manageability</i> .....	56
6.5.5.3 <i>Meaningfulness</i> :.....	56
6.5.6 Movement towards health .....	57
6.6 Discussion in relation to Health Promotion .....	58
7.0 CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS .....	59
7.1 Introduction .....	59
7.2 Limitations of study .....	59
7.3 Concluding Remarks and Implications .....	59
APPENDICES .....	71
I. APPROVAL FROM NSD:.....	71
II. EXPLANATION OF STUDY FOR PARTICIPANTS .....	73
III. WRITTEN CONSENT .....	74
IV. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE.....	75
V. CODES AND THEMES USED IN ANALYSIS .....	77
VI. SUMMARY OF STRESSORS AND RESOURCES.....	79

## **ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS**

**CHAPTER ONE:** This chapter introduces the research. It gives the background and significance of the study and gives the reader some idea of the phenomenon under study. It states the scope of the study by outlining the aims and objectives of the study and as well as the research questions used in the study.

**CHAPTERS TWO& THREE:** These two chapters provide the theoretical framework guiding the study and gives insight into the literature used in the study. The reason for the use of Salutogenic model as the theoretical framework in chapter two is discussed and the researcher gives justification for the use of the model. Chapter three gives an account and assessment of other empirical and theoretical research works which have considered the phenomenon of work-life balance concept and health.

**CHAPTER FOUR:** This chapter explains the approach that was used in the study and justifies the choice of method used. The research design, study area/settings, the research instruments employed and the way the data was collected and analyzed are clearly stated. Issues of validity, reliability and generalizability, role of the researcher, ethical considerations and limitations of the study are also stated under this section.

**CHAPTER FIVE:** This chapter presents the findings of the study. It seeks to bring out the answers to what the research objectives sought. The findings section states the responses from the participants during the interviews. The section presents responses pertaining to perception of health and perception of the concept of work-life balance, challenges encountered in the course of balancing work and other aspects of life and finally the resources that are used to mitigate to some extent the challenges met by respondents.

**CHAPTER SIX:** This chapter presents the discussion section. Discussion on the findings of this study is presented in relation to other empirical and theoretical works on the

concept of work-life balance. In addition, the findings are related and situated in the theoretical framework, Salutogenic model, used in this study.

**CHAPTER SEVEN:** This chapter is the concluding part of this study. It encapsulates the key findings of this study. It gives the implications for employees, and employers in the mining industry, and finally gives suggestions for future studies.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background of the study**

In recent times, work-life balance has been an object of study for many researchers worldwide. The changing social structures have raised the need to research into work-life balance (Sturges & Guest, 2004). Work and non-work activities are crucial to living and hence the need for a balance and integration of career and other demands of life (Sturges & Guest, 2004). In many African countries after the Beijing conference in 1995, employers both private and governmental, are aiming to increase the number of female employees and integrate them in their businesses, even jobs that were traditionally labeled as manly such as mining. The Beijing conference 1995 was a world conference organized by the United Nations Wing for gender equality and the empowerment of women (UN Women, 2010). This has opened new opportunities for many professional women but also the challenge of juggling the demands of a career and life outside work. Mining is among the demanding and task driven jobs worldwide with increase in number of women (Jones, 2006).

Many researchers in different words yet denoting a similar understanding have defined the concept of work-life conflict and balance. For example, Todd (2004) puts work-life conflict as: "when the cumulative demands of work and non-work life roles are incompatible in some respect so that participation in one role is made more difficult by participation in other role...."(Todd, 2004, p. 9). According to Simmons Oxford Dictionaries (2012), work-life balance means balancing both work and other aspects of life in a harmony in order to promote physical, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing. Work life balance refers to a manner in which an individual could combine his or her work along with other aspects of life like socialization, childcare, housekeeping, and even exercising.

For the purpose of this study, health is conceptualized through the World Health Organization's definition as: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"(World Health Organization, 1948, p. 1). This means health as more than the absence of disease equals positive health in this sense, there is a presence

of something, not just an absence. In this study, the researcher's point of view is from the health promotion perspective and not a gender perspective.

## **1.2 Relevance of the Study**

There has been an increasing interest from academia and practitioners alike in the area of work-life balance, but there are a limited number of studies on the work-life balance and health of women in the mining industry. For example, Zatzick and Iverson (2006) explore work practices and also Kinnunen, Geurts, and Mauno (2004) studied work-to-family conflict among employees. The study of work-life balance among employees has far been advanced in European countries such as Norway, Finland, and United Kingdom. For example the works of Crompton and Lyonette (2006) and Guest (2002) have centered on Europe where social support help stabilize work-family conflict. In South Africa, 0

(2003) conducted a study on career and life balance of women and concluded that the ability to balance one's work and non-work activities has implications for health and success necessary to be explored. However, none of the studies was conducted in a mining setting. The work of Sackey and Sanda (2009) in Ghana also shows clear indications that work has a correlation with the health of women. Also the work of De Villiers and Kotze (2003) in an African setting within a petroleum industry revealed that employees have poor sleep even though the health implications were not the objective of the study. Notwithstanding these studies, there is a gap in the literature when it comes to exploring which factors promote health and wellbeing among women in mining. It is also necessary to know how work-life balance is conceptualized among women, the ripple effects on their health and the coping mechanism of these women in the Ghanaian mining industry. Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton (2000) suggest that the exploration of the work-life balance of people of different socio-economic status is necessary.

The purpose of this study is to explore what stressors are encountered during the balance of work and life in general and to know what resources contribute to the thriving of women in the mining industry. This study would lead to knowledge that can facilitate improvement in quality of life and stimulate thoughts and ideas about health and equity in relation to challenges of combining



remunerated work with other parts of life. In addition, the findings of this study can be used by the Company to reorient organizational structure such as flexible work arrangement. In the context of this study, I define 'work' as working standard hours within 8 hours in workplace. While other household responsibilities make up the most significant aspect of non-work life it is agreed that employees also have multiple non-work activities irrespective of their family and household responsibilities, such as personal relationships, community care and recreational activities (Derevensky, Gupta, & Winters, 2003; Pocock, Skinner, & Pisaniello, 2010). The normal/average working week in the Company under study is forty hours within five (5) days and eight (8) hours a day for all employees. The Company of study defines working days as "any number of days excluding day six and seven and statutory public holidays"(The Company, 2008, p. 8).

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

The demands of work in the mining industry put much stress on the employees especially on their physical and mental wellbeing. The Australian Mining Magazine reports that the Centre for Work and Life Director Barbara Pocock said: 'the mining industry has the worst work-life interference' (Validakis, 2012). According to the World Health Organization(WHO, 2005), mental health and its associated problems due to pressure at work are likely to be the second most common cause of disability and death by 2020 (WHO & International Labour Organization, 2000). WHO's framework on work and mental health however recommends that a total employee wellness program be instituted in Organizations/Companies to support employees in managing life stresses (WHO & International Labour Organization, 2000). M. Wilson, D. Dejoy, R. Vandenberg, H. Richardson, and A. McGrath (2004) also assert that there is a strong relationship between long hours spent at work and ill health.

In the Ghanaian context where women have societal roles such as responsibility for childcare, taking care of husbands, housekeeping, responsibility towards society and the extended family, the professional woman then has an assured double responsibility both at work and outside work. According Whitehead and Kotze (2003) to high stress is realized among employed women as they bear the thoughts of both home and work. In view of this, women in mining are most likely

to face a more challenging dilemma of life. This stress takes a toll on these women's' mental and physical health (Wilson, Dejoy, Vandenberg, Richardson, & McGrath, 2004). Ernst Kossek and Ozeki (1998) in a meta-analysis find support that there is a strong relationship between job-life satisfaction and work-family conflict. There is however the impression that the relationship is stronger for women than men.

## **1.4 Objectives And Research Questions**

The aims and objectives of this study are as below

### ***1.4.1 Aim***

The overall aim of this study is to explore the work-life balance and health experiences of Ghanaian women in the mining industry.

### ***Specific Objectives:***

1. To explore the stressors of participants
2. To explore what contributes to the health and wellbeing of women on the mine.

### ***1.4.2 Research Questions***

The research questions of this study are:

1. How do the women perceive work and other aspects of life?
2. What challenges do women in the Ghanaian mining industry face regarding their work-life balance and health?
3. What resources do the women use to promote their work-life balance and health?

## **1.5 Definitions of concepts**

**Perception** "is man's primary form of cognitive contact with the world around him" (Efron, 1969, p. 137) and also the experience of the world around us which involves the recognition of environmental stimuli and actions in response to these stimuli (Cherry, 2014). This study will explore participants' perceptions of health and the concept of work-life balance.

**Stressor/challenges:** "a demand made by the internal or external environment of an organism that upsets homeostasis, restoration of which depends on a non-automatic and not readily available energy expending action"(Antonovsky, 1979, p. 72). The stressors of the women participants of this study mean the same as the challenges they face either at work or outside the work premises.

**Resources:** Generalized Resistant Resource hereby captured in this paper as Resources is defined by Antonovsky (Morrison & Clift, 2007) as a "physical, artificial, material, cognitive, emotional, value-attitudinal, interpersonal-relational or macro socio cultural characteristics of an individual, primary group, sub culture or society that is effective in avoiding or combating a wide variety of stressors"(p. 105).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The study is framed within the context Antonovsky's Salutogenic theory exploring what makes women in mining strive to achieve their health and wellbeing.

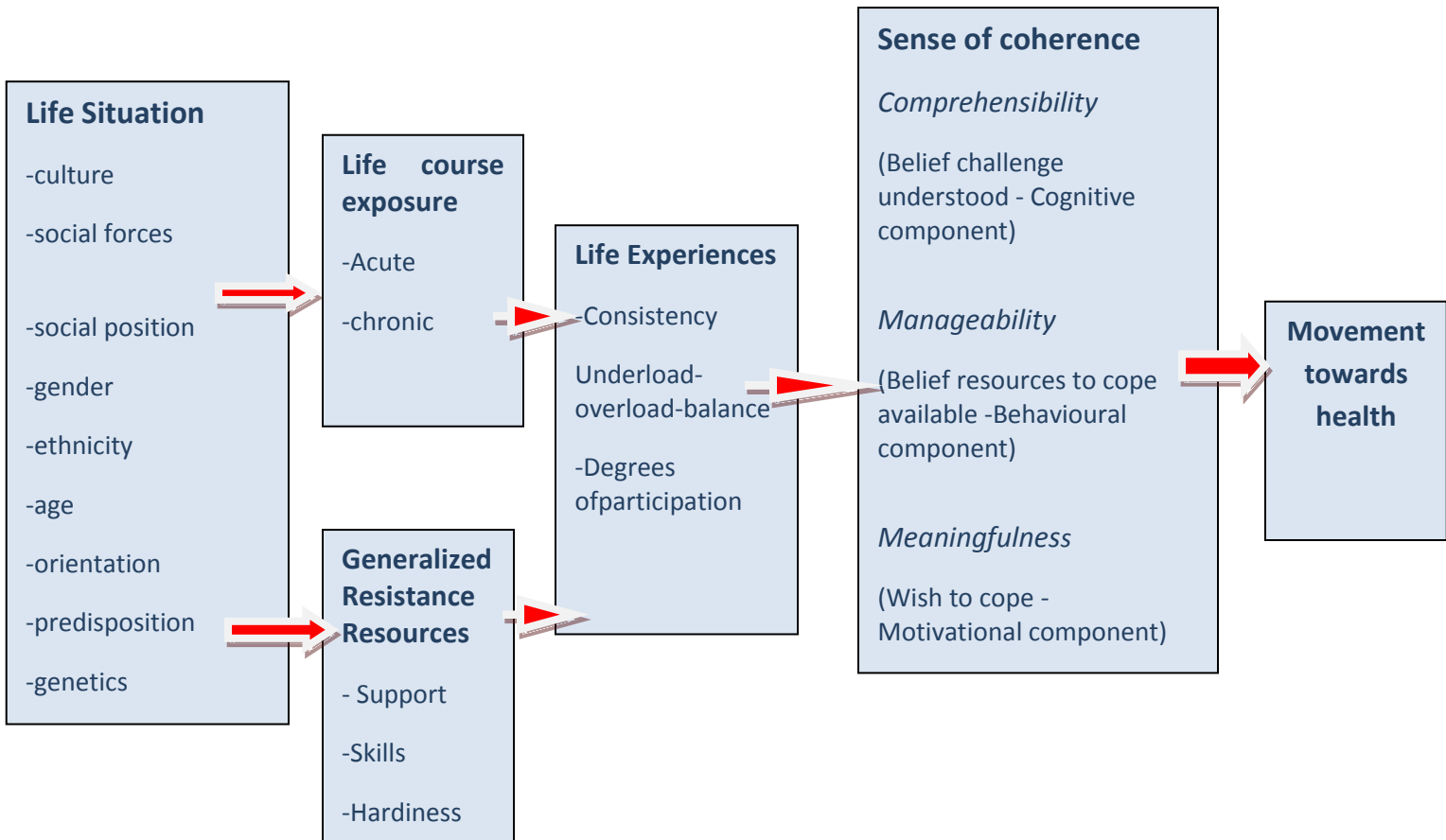
The Salutogenic theory explores the origins of health rather than the more traditional concept of the causes and origins of disease. The theory of Salutogenesis was introduced by Aaron Antonovsky in 1979, as the study of health development among the survivors of the Holocaust (Becker, Glascoff, & Felts, 2010) to explain why some people become ill when experiencing stress, while others remain healthy and even thrive regardless of major stressful conditions (Eriksson & Lindström, 2007). The two main concepts underlying Salutogenesis enhance the ability to understand one's situation to move towards positive health and the ability to use available resources to make the health movement possible (Eriksson & Lindström, 2005). These concepts are the Sense of Coherence (SOC) and the General Resistance Resources (GRRs). SOC is the orientation of how an individual perceives the world of life and responses to stress. GRRs are the available resources in the world out there that people use or re-use for the intended purpose (Eriksson & Lindström, 2005). Salutogenesis which refers to the origins of psychological strength in general however, attempts to broaden of the concept of SOC (Strümpfer, D. J. W. (1995) cited in Eriksson & Lindström, 2005, p. 460).

The resources (GRRs) available to an individual include but are not limited to social support, money, knowledge, coping mechanism, and cultural capital which could fall under biological, material or psychosocial factors (Lindstrom & Eriksson, 2006). The ability to use these resources (GRRs) to their full potential depends on one's perception of the world (SOC), which comprises of three components namely: comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness. Comprehensibility is the expectation that when faced with a challenging situation in the future, one will be capable of understanding the dilemmas in orderly and explicit manner. Manageability refers to the extent to which individuals think resources are available to them to cope. Meaningfulness on the other hand refers to the optimism people devote in what makes life

worthy of living and problems to be perceived as challenges instead of as burdens (Eriksson & Lindström, 2005).

Some scholars have shown that these components of SOC are interrelated. For example, Bandura (1977) shows the importance of one believing in his or her own capabilities in order to shape environmental events, control the challenges of life as well as welcoming the daily confrontations of life. Also, Gilbar (1998) found in his study that workers who have a strong SOC experience less burnout than those with a weak SOC. In order to deal with stressors it is important to have a strong SOC (S. Sagy & Antonovsky, 1996; Shifra Sagy & Antonovsky, 2000). In spite of all this evidence showing the relationship of SOC and GRRs and health, Flensburg-Madsen, Ventegodt, and Merrick (2005) questioned the validity of SOC as it does not correlate with physical health and rather skewed towards a mental conceptualization of health. The relationship between the concepts in the Salutogenic model is as shown in Figure 1 below.

One will find him or herself in a certain life course but critical is the choice that one has control over. Stressors in life could be either chronic, as in balancing work and other parts of life, or acute, for example suffering from lymphoma. The balance of stressors and GRRs (resources) creates certain life experiences that are varying as to degree of predictability, load balance and opportunity for participation in decision-making regarding important life aspects. These life experiences over time shapes one's perception of comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness in life, thereby shaping our SOC. For example, one experiences a balance when the GRRs are adequate, available, and suitable to what the life course exposure/stressor requires. A strong SOC facilitates the active use of available resources, thereby making movement towards health more likely (Mittelmark, 2010).



Source: (Mittelmark, 2010) based on Antonovsky A. (1996) The Salutogenic model as a theory to guide health promotion.

**Figure 1: Salutogenic Model**

Women in employment have responsibilities of caring for both work (paid) and non-work activities. Women in the mining industry have much stress and a challenge to deal with this combination. These stressors faced by women in mining are the basis of my research questions: how do the women perceive work-life balance? What challenges do women in the Ghanaian mining industry face regarding their work-life balance and health? What resources do the women use to promote their own health and wellbeing?

The way people ascribe meaning to a stressor determines the actions that are taken to avert it. According to Lindstrom and Eriksson (2006) People have to understand their lives and have to be understood by others, perceive that they are able to manage the situation and deepest and most important perceive it as meaningful enough to find motivation to continue" (p. 4) This is what Antonovsky (1996) describes as wish to, be motivated to, cope (meaningfulness); believe that the challenge is understood (Flensburg-Madsen et al., 2005); believe that resources to cope are available (Flensburg-Madsen et al., 2005).

The GRRs that promote the SOC of women in the mining industry is what I seek to find. The desire of this study is to know the stresses at work and outside work and to lay hands on the GRRs (resources) which the women in the mining industry use to promote their work-life balance and health and finally come out with recommendations, which can contribute to a healthy working life of women in mining.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The literature review gives an overview of the general knowledge and perception of work-life balance, challenges of work-life balance, coping mechanisms for work-life imbalance, resources that contributes to health and wellbeing of women.

#### **3.1 Perception of balance of work and the other aspects of life**

Work is seen to take the productive hours of employees. This is also in the case of lone mothers studied by Bull (2007) where she found that 75% of lone mothers reported that they get help and support from their coworkers. This suggests a form of resource that the women could reach out for though engulfed by work. The world of work is characterized by demanding tasks, meeting deadlines and the ability to support organizational goals (Bakker & Schaufeli, 2008). This brings competition among employees and sometimes stress builds up. It is for this reason that employees also expect some kind of support from the workplace to be able to mitigate largely if not all the challenges at work.

The world outside work is often activities from home and society at large. Other aspects of life outside work activities is often a world of one's self as noted by MacDonald (2003) characterized by one's homecare, leisure times, visiting family and friends, cooking, attending parties and sleeping to mention a few.

Work helps to acquire basic life needs because income could be earned from it. People have various reasons of working. People work in other to get money for their personal life satisfaction. Other people also work in order to meet family obligations and other people work because they have passion for what they do (Burton, 2012). The needs and requirements of family can be taken care of once there is employment that provides (Braun, Vincent, & Ball, 2008).

The balance of work and other demands of life have different meanings for different people (Whitehead & Kotze, 2003). This means that people perceive what a balance is differently.



People have different roles and tasks in life and hence their perceptions vary from each other (Whitehead & Kotze, 2003).

### **3.2 Health promotion and the workplace**

In order to appreciate the subject matter, health promotion, its definition is imperative. According to Green and Raeburn (1988, p. 157) health promotion is “any combination of health education and related organizational, economic, and environmental supports for behavior conducive to health”. According to Donev, Pavlekovic, Zaletel-Kragelj, Stability Pact for South Eastern, and Forum for Public Health in South Eastern (2007) health promotion is defined in different ways by different researchers, scholars, and professionals before and after the Ottawa Charter, in which World Health Organization (WHO, 1986) defines health promotion as the process of enabling people to increase control over and to improve their health. For people to increase control over their own health, it is necessary to target where you can find the people, where they live and work. Health promotion has a concept of healthy settings, focusing on arenas where people spend extended time during their lives. The workplace is one such setting. Workplace health promotion seeks to actively push the agenda of healthy workplace to both employers and employees by altering working and living situations and conditions (Chu et al., 2000).

Work is increasingly changing life patterns both in the positive and reverse side. The work of work has economic value to both the employee and the employer (Karadzinska-Bislimovska, Risteska-Kuc, Stoleski, & Mijakoski, 2007). The economic implications of work and the changing trends in working life also affect the development and health of people (Chu et al., 2000). The health of women as employees can either be affected positively or negatively at work. The personal health (such as eating sleeping and exercising) and the organization of work at the work place can affect workers' output and likewise affect the employer by the productivity returns to the Company (Shain & Kramer, 2004). This suggests that to bring about healthy workplace the employer and the employee has a stake in the maintenance of a healthy workplace. for this reason some Companies have put in some measure that would enhance and make healthy choices easy choices for employees.

### **3.3 Companies' response to work-life balance**

Companies these days have the health of their workforce at heart. Since a healthy workforce means a high productivity. There are several means by which Companies are providing support to enhance the work life balance of employees. One of such strategies by Companies could be workplace health promotion programs (Muto & Yamauchi, 2001) which seek to coach and monitor employee health by means of life style intervention activities (Reio & Ghosh, 2009). The institution of annual and other forms of leave days are also important and have been considered by human resource practitioners in Companies (Jang, Park, & Zippay, 2011) which help to ease pressure and stress from employees. Women have maternity leaves and this is very good not only to the health of the mothers but to their babies as well (Bird, 2006). Companies and employers that have concern for the work life balance and health of employees have lower turnover and high productivity (Burton, 2012; Jang et al., 2011).

### **3.4 Health and work-life balance**

It is realized that balancing issues of life for employees is becoming an important issue not for employees only but also for the cooperate world irrespective of employees parental status (Grant-Vallone & Donaldson, 2001); and research is continuously expanding to include new groups of employees and to a larger extent non-work life activities that goes beyond the family (Burke, 2010). The changing nature of work force is also turning around some social values. For instance, changes in the work force that is gender, age, race and the like are accompanied by changes in values, generating attention and an emphasis on the balance between work life and other aspects of life (Offermann & Gowing, 1990).

Work-life balance issues result when competing attention and demands for both work and other aspects of life emerges especially in this contemporary era (Michel & Clark, 2011).

Many researchers have examined work-life balance as a subjective phenomenon. The study conducted by De Villiers and Kotze (2003) shows that many individuals have different perceptions and understanding of what work-life balance is. Many individuals would want equal attention for all things be it work or non-work activities. There are times where one has a conflicting attention and duties for both personal and professional lives. By means of trying to

satisfy the one aspect, the other is affected. From the perspective of Jacobs, Mostert, and Pienaar (2008) work-life interaction is aiming at creating synchronization in the working life of people in such a way that their personal life and professional life does not affect the other. Sometimes the work life balance is tough to achieve when both spouses work extensively out of home. Couples often think their responsibilities at home are to be shared (Matjasko & Feldman, 2006) but in the case of Ghana, the woman has a full responsibility of the home and especially child care and cooking (Sackey & Sanda, 2009). This brings pressure on women in general. The mining woman has much on her job desk coupled with home duties making life for such women very stressful. The perception in Ghana is that the woman in to take care of the home. This is somehow becoming outdated as women also are busily getting educated to higher heights. Wives spend considerably more energy and time than their spouses on family work, however women do less and men do to some extent more now than 20years ago (Bianchi, Milkie, Sayer, & Robinson, 2000).

### **3.5. Work-life Conflict**

Work is undoubtedly part of life. However, life as used in this study refers to other demands and activities outside the domain of paid work. Work-life conflict (WLC) is when work issues and tasks affects personal or family life or the vice versa (Reynolds, 2005).

Role theories have given insights into how both men and women attempt to manage and balance multiple roles in their daily lives. The theory of compensation relies firstly on satisfaction in the demands of one role over the other and secondly on scarcity hypothesis “which says that time is distributed in a zero-sum fashion. Meaning spending more time with family, for instance, should require spending less time working” (Reynolds, 2005, p. 1315).

Work-life conflict is caused by the inability to meet the requirements of another role (often responsibilities outside the confines of the workplace) due to the demands of other roles (paid work). The effects of work-life conflicts on health and wellbeing of employees ranges from psychological strain to physical stress. A study by Grant-Vallone and Donaldson (2001) revealed that work-family conflict predicted employee well-being. The engagement with work sometimes

takes much time and women are the most affected. Men and women show interest in a work-life balance commitment but women experience high levels of work-life conflict since they are still supposed and required to take up household duties (Burke, 2010). Though women are now often educated and now are increasing in number in the employment circles, evidence suggest that they still take up basic household responsibilities and caring for the family as well (Smith, 2008) such that the phenomenon of work-family conflict is expressed more by women. There are however different levels of work-life conflict arising from demands by spouses, demands from children and social responsibility and relationships. Women often end the work day with the household and other responsibilities waiting. Women often have to fulfil the demands and roles as potential mothers, spouses, sisters and family members and also as income earners for the home (Bohle, Quinlan, Kennedy, & Williamson, 2004). Women's roles as wives sometimes compound the work-life conflict as partners may be demanding care, love, compassion, sexual attention and intellectual support(Whitehead & Kotze, 2003). There are also societal and community demands that need to be satisfied by people wherever they live (Whitehead & Kotze, 2003) but women as employees often have the conflict of satisfying their job demands and home demands in addition to community demands. This makes mounts stress for the women which is challenging to their wellbeing.

### **3.6 Challenges of Work-Life Balance**

There are several challenges that are encountered by both men and women in the course of balancing their work and other aspects of life, such as the withdrawal from family interactions, less time to address child's experiences and decrease in quality of life (Watts, 2009). Also there are times when family and non-work issues could spill over to affect the performance of an employee and thereby increasing the likelihood of leaving the company (De Villiers & Kotze, 2003). Marafi (2013) also argues that the organizational structures can be a source of challenge to work-life; especially when workers have to stay long hours to prove their commitment to organizational growth and career development (Bohle et al., 2004). The health and wellbeing of women is paramount not only to themselves but to the social structure (family and entire society). Mounting stress both from work and outside work can contribute to low resilience and

mental wellbeing of women in employment (Schueller-Weidekamm & Kautzky-Willer, 2012). Another challenge is where couples find themselves working together in the mining industry where time is really needed at work. This can cause imbalance in work and family lives. According to Zedeck and Mosier (1990) there are times where couples have to work so much that this creates some sort of barrier where couples hardly find time to meet. This can bring about conflicts and tension at home and consequently a break up. According to Marks, Huston, Johnson, and MacDermid (2001), if more time and attention is given to job, then the more likely one is unable to spend good time with the family and the vice versa. When this happens, the mental health of the employee is left in shamble threatened. Also the stress of having been isolated from other social engagement is a major disadvantage for mining employees and women often are found wanting and suffer from neurotic problems (Sharma & Rees, 2007). For this reason a means of coping and strategies for balancing the demands of work and other aspects of life is necessary (MacEachen, Polzer, & Clarke, 2008).

### **3.7 Resources to Cope with Work-life Conflict**

Many scholars have conducted studies on sources of strength in coping with stressful situations. For example, De Villiers and Kotze (2003) found out that the resources which workers in the petroleum industry resort to include skills and support from families in the event of child care and attending to other aspects of life on behalf of relatives. Other workers resort to managing tasks well and prioritizing tasks in other to avoid overload both at work and outside work (Todd, 2004). The results of the study of work-life balance for women physicians by Schueller-Weidekamm and Kautzky-Willer (2012) indicated that the distribution of different inputs and resources such as physical, emotional, and social structures combine to maintain an individual's work-life balance. The supports from loved ones and family members have also been seen as means of coping for most working women (Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). Sometimes the joy mothers have when they are able to share some quality time with their children is overwhelming, as job demands take them away from their children so often (Bohle et al., 2004). This form of quality time sharing boosts mothers sense of belonging and stimulate happiness about the fact

that they are able to meet the needs of their children. The study by (Bull, Duah-Owusu, & Andvik, 2010) from Northern Ghana shows clearly how women are happy when they are able to fulfill the basic needs of their children by putting food on the table for them. This may be a means of for the struggles they (Northern women of Ghana) had to go through to get food on the table.

Scholars agree that individuals can cope with long hours of work as well as the unpredictable demands of life in general especially when one has a precise work obligation assigned. Some professional women choose to balance work and non-work by prioritizing. Bell, Meyerson, Nkomo, and Scully (2003) realized that some women choose to balance work and other aspects of their lives by simultaneously dealing with the two equally. Some people have various ways of coping with the stressors that come their way. According to De Villiers and Kotze (2003), some general successful ways in which employees use to cope with stress is by using the gym and also setting boundaries and prioritizing tasks. Examples were given of respondents' answer to the question of how stress was managed: "The gym really helps to let off all that stress", "Sometimes I have to say: 'enough is enough'" (De Villiers & Kotze, 2003, p. 19).

Others cope for the fact that working brings some sort of fulfillment in life. One is able to afford some basic needs of life once in a paid job. For instance, Braun and colleagues (2008) in an exploratory study explored ways in which working class women negotiated negotiate mothering and paid work and realized that mothers rather loose when stay at home without bouncing back to work, as this even affects their children's future. Some women go in for nannies or depend on close relatives in other to take care of their homes and children when they are at work (Bird, 2006). Also personality traits counts in coping , as Michel and Clark put it that "firstly, personality traits impact individuals' perceptions relating to work and life; and second, personality traits impact the behaviors individuals engage in when attempting to manage or cope with their work and personal lives" (Michel & Clark, 2011, p. 84).

This could be interesting to explore – to which degree does the work environment and general demands allow the women to set sensible boundaries for work, to balance demands – which is spoken about as overload/underload balance in Antonovsky's literature.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **4.0 METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 Research Design**

A phenomenological qualitative study is chosen which is suitable because the research takes place in the natural setting of respondents in this case the mining company where "the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" (Patton, 2001, p. 39). Also qualitative research explores the meaning people ascribe to a phenomenon (Creswell, 2009) and hence the views of women employees concerning their work-life balance and health could be well explored through a qualitative research design. The chosen research design, qualitative approach, would help the researcher know the experiences of these women. With reference to the research questions posed, the perceptions of stressors and resources available to women in the mining industry could best be explored using a qualitative study,

#### **4.2 Study Area/Setting**

Participants were recruited from two different sites of the Company. The study was conducted in the operational site of an international mining company in Ghana. This is in line with Creswell (2009) who is of the view that a study should be carried out in a setting where the complexity of what the researcher wish to study operates. For the purposes of anonymity of the Company under study not much information of the study area would be disclosed. This is to abide by agreement signed between the researcher and the Company. However, the Company is among the best mining Companies in Ghana and a multinational Company that deals in Gold Production and Processing. Mining is a continuous operation and therefore the Company operates twenty four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week and fifty two (52) weeks per year, on a schedule of shifts basis.

The Company has recreational facilities such as a gym, schools, swimming pool and a club house where employees go sit and relax but this is practical only for those staying on the mine site. Employees who might be on leave or off duty, living off the site, have to close from work before using the gym. Though these facilities are available, they do not exhaust the resources

needed to create a work-life balance that promotes health. The wellbeing program on the mine provides support to employees on healthy living and health coaching. Employees, women inclusive are taught to prioritize schedules to be able to maintain a healthy work-life relationship. All employees in the research site have some source of strengths and resources such as the employee wellbeing unit, which provides comprehensive health and wellbeing services such as, but not limited to health risk assessment (HRA), employee assistance in emotional, mental, social, financial, and occupational counseling and support. The services help all employees (Lewis, Gambles, & Rapoport, 2007) deal with stressors and challenges that could hamper their move towards positive health.

### **4.3 Participants**

In order to have entry to the mine site, permission was sought from the Human Resource Manager of the Company to conduct the study. The researcher gave the Human Resource Department (Reio & Ghosh, 2009) the selection criteria of participants. The HRD did the selection. I do not envisage for any bias in selection because the subject under study is not sensitive. Prospective research participants were contacted by the HRD through either phone calls or emails, to identify women willing to participate in the study. **Inclusion criteria:** Ten (10) women with an average mine work experience of 5 years would be engaged in the study. The purpose is to have women (participants) with an experiential phenomenon so that the researcher can describe accurately the phenomenon (work-life balance and health) under study. This is what Collingridge and Gantt (2008) explain as criterion sampling - a type of purposive sampling. For the purpose of this study, women were considered from the age of 18-60 years within an age range of 18-26, 27-34, 35-42, 43-50 and 51-60. Each range was intended to have at most two women for fair age participation in the study but age spread ended up being different, as that can be seen from the table1a below. According to (Bull, 2009) in her study on the subjective wellbeing of single women in Scandinavia and in Southern Europe, "The regional differences suggest that single motherhood per se need not be a risk factor for poorer wellbeing..." (Bull, 2009, p. 80). Hence, for this study, the marital status of the women was not considered to be a barrier for participants. However, participants who were married should have at least one child. **Exclusion criteria:** Only full time women employees had a chance of participating in the study



**Table 1a: Overview of Participants' Background**

<b>Pseudonyms</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Civil Status</b>	<b>Living Status</b>	<b>Children</b>
TT1	32	Married	Living with children spouse and nanny	2
TT2	32	Single	Living with child and nanny	1
TT3	31	Married	Living with spouse	0
TT4	27	Married	Living with child, nanny and spouse	1
TT5	32	Married	Living with a relative	0
TT6	35	Single	Living with children and nanny	3
TT7	30	Single	Living alone	0
TT8	55	Married	Living with spouse and relative	4
TT9	42	Married	Living with spouse and a relative	0
TT10	29	Married	Living with spouse	0

Source: Field work (2013)

***Description of type of work the participants are involved***

There are no specific jobs allocated for women in mining. Women compete equally for jobs with the men. However, the men were seen predominantly in all sectors of the mine. Mining job is a 24hour business that involves both operational (field) aspects and strategic (office) aspects. The number of employees in the field aspect of the mining business is more than those employed to see to the strategic aspect. However, some of the employees do combine both field and the office aspects of the job. The various departments and units in the industry depend on each other with the purpose of safe production of gold. The minimum of hours at work for each employee is 8hours per day, but many of the employees work averagely 10hours per day. Field work ranges from but is not limited to going to meet workers in the pit area, meeting surrounding community members, going for inspections and operation of machines. Office work involves but is not limited to meetings, sitting behind the Computer software to direct trucks, sitting long hours studying documents, communicating, and responding to urgent and important emails from stakeholders.

Table 1b below shows the distribution per department/job profile of the participants interviewed.

**Table 1b: Distribution per department/job profile of the participants interviewed**

<b>Job</b>	<b>Number of participants interviewed</b>	<b>Type of work</b>	
		<b>Field</b>	<b>Office</b>
Drillers	2	100% field	
Human Resource Practitioners	3	50%	50%
Safety Practitioners	1	50%	50%
Metallurgists	2	70%	30%
Engineer	1	100% field	
Dispatcher	1		100% office
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10</b>		

Source: Field work (2013)

#### **4.4 Research Instruments**

The study used interviews and observations to collect data. However, for the purpose of this study a semi-structured in-depth interview was used as the main method for data collection. The interviews helped to gain a more in-depth understanding of the feelings and coping mechanisms of the women. An interview guide was used to solicit a broader context of the study however interviewee was guided in the direction of the research objectives. Permission was sought from research participants to audiotape all interviews that would be conducted. In addition, participants were assured that the use of audio tape was to avoid misquoting or misinterpreting any one. With reference to a relevant literature review, an interview guide was developed to give structure and direction to the interview process. A pilot interview was done to know the suitability of the questions for adjustment (Stroh, 2000). Probing questions were asked to clarify the intent of the response. Probing questions further helped the researcher to understand the respondents better from their perspective (Agee, 2009). The researcher used observation to see how women on the mine work, time of reporting and closing from work.

#### **4.5 Sources of Data**

The source where data is collected is necessary for one to determine the validity and reliability. In order to ensure validity and reliability, the researcher must use "different data sources or information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes" (Creswell, 2009, p. 191). This research employed both primary and secondary sources of data.

##### **4.5.1 Primary Data**

The researcher collected data through the audiotaping of interviews with participants of the study. Primary data were collected through interviews with respondents. The interviews conducted were face-to-face which gave room for further question of participants, or probing. Creswell (2009) makes it clear that it is necessary to interview face-to-face when the "participants cannot be directly observed, participants can provide historical information, allows researchers control over the line of questioning" (p. 179).

#### **4.5.2 Secondary Source of Data**

The internet through the databases provided by the University of Bergen, books, journals, and articles were the sources of secondary data. The Company's collective bargaining agreement for the employees was given to the researcher by the Human Resource Department, which was very useful in this study.

#### **4.6 Data Analysis**

Data analysis is the process of making sense of the set of data (Creswell, 2009). It is also the systematic process of interpreting the data (Gobo, Seale, Silverman, & Gubrium, 2004; Rapley, 2011). There are however different ways and approaches in conducting qualitative data analysis. No one approach supersedes the other. Braun and Clarke (2006) help novice researchers to systematically go through a six steps process of analysis; and that was what the researcher used. This process is similar to what Attride-Stirling (2001) also explains in the thematic network analysis of qualitative data. The six steps are Familiarization with data, Generation of Initial Codes, Searching for themes, Reviewing Themes, Defining and renaming of themes and finally, Producing the Report.

After each interview, the data was transcribed. Silverman (2010) recommends early transcription of data in order to facilitate and make easier the analysis. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis by systematically coding and identifying themes or patterns. Thematic analysis was used because its flexible to use (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) and as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) , it gives in room for the researcher to find rich meaning of one's data.

The researcher read through the data severally to be familiar with the data. This was first achieved through the transcription of all audio tape recordings. In addition, the researcher and research assistant made sure that the tape recordings transcribed were verbatim as in the interviews. This process was done forth and backwards to ensure accuracy in order to make sense of the whole data.

The researcher imported the transcripts onto a Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software called Open Code Software 4.02 which assisted in the organization of self-generated

codes and retrieval of data anytime during study. Then researcher went through all the 10 interviews individually. A coding framework was developed and was used to guide the coding process based on the research questions and the significant issues that emerged from the texts. In each interview, the researcher and assistant independently generated short simple phrases (codes) and labeled the significant texts with the codes to denote the meaning of the texts selected. The next step was to compare codes and arrive at common grounds. A code can be defined as "...a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data"(Saldaña, 2013, p. 3). These self-generated codes form the basis of themes described in the next stage. The researcher ended up with 23 different codes.

With the help of research assistant and a colleague, common patterns of the relevant generated codes were extracted and grouped into potential themes. This was done to increase the validity of results. Different codes were combined to form one theme. With the Open code software, there are two columns labeled Synthesis 1 and Synthesis 2 where the themes extracted from the codes were placed and were categorized as sub-themes under Synthesis 1 and the main themes under Synthesis 2 respectively. A theme as defined by Saldaña (2013) is “an *outcome* of coding, categorization or analytical reflection”(p. 14).

The researcher checked if the generated themes were in relation to the codes and the entire data set. This part was time consuming, as the researcher had to go through the whole process by revisiting the codes and see if there were repetitions. There were some repetitions of codes so these were collated together, and the themes refined for enhanced precision.

A thematic network of analysis as seen in Figure 2 under the findings chapter was drawn to get a better understanding and overview of the information at hand. The research questions were used as global/core themes. The researcher then checked for coherence from the generated code to the networks drawn.

In the findings chapter the overall story of the analysis is told in a scholarly manner with vivid examples of quotations from the transcripts. Later, in the discussion, a relationship is established between research questions and literature used in this study.

#### **4.7 Validity, Reliability, and Generalizability**

Validity in qualitative research is viewed with different lenses by different researchers. Collingridge and Gantt (2008) for instance explain validity as providing justifiable results for a study. In the context of qualitative studies by Green and Thorogood (2009) also define validity as "... attention to the quality of analysis and techniques to aid the credibility of interpretation"(Green & Thorogood, 2009, p. 287). Validity is enhanced by transparency, clarity of the study, accuracy of describing the phenomenon under study and use of appropriate research methods. For the purpose of transparency, the data analysis procedure is laid out as seen above in the analysis section with explanation of how themes were generated. The researcher also assumed a humble position as a student learner and a researcher in order to get the real context of the phenomenon under study. The researcher also allowed a free-flow of discussion with the research participants while using an interview guide. Follow-up questions were asked to clarify the responses of research participants in order to probe on interesting points.

Reliability in qualitative studies refers to "issues such as accuracy of reporting, consistency of coding, and thoroughness of analysis" (Green & Thorogood, 2009). Reliability also is about using research methods that are accepted by the research community as a genuine way of collecting and analyzing data, which brings out rich and meaningful description of any social phenomenon (Collingridge & Gantt, 2008). Practical ways that was used to enhance reliability of this study are: use of tape recorder when conducting the in-depth interviews and some of the exact quotes from the participants were presented in the analysis stage of this study. The quotes are intended to assist readers to identify the foundation on which interpretation and discussions were built on as well as giving rich meaningful description of the phenomenon of work-life balance and health of women in the mining industry. This should support readers in making judgments about the reliability of the study.

Generalizability has been an issue of great importance in quantitative study where the results of a study ideally should be transferable to the overall population. Generalizability in qualitative research on the other hand is in a different context. It seeks to locate the researchers work in the theoretical framework of the study, other studies and literature (Rapley, 2011). Readers of this

research work would be able to know how women cope with having a work-life balance that promotes their positive health by adding to literature. The readers should be provided with enough material to make judgments about to which degree the findings from the study can be relevant for other situations and contexts.

#### **4.8 The Role of the Researcher**

In qualitative research, where knowledge is created through the researcher's interaction with the data, the pre-understanding that the researcher takes into the process becomes of interest. The researcher needs to be aware of the ways in which own ideas can overshadow material that arises from the data. My previous training gives me some idea of what makes an ideal work-life balance necessary to move towards health. In the interview process I strived to keep these ideas to myself and be open-minded. The open-mindedness might help me better understand the challenges that are faced by women, what resources are readily available to them to cope and achieve a work-life balance, and health. In addition, I have training in the field of Public Health with an experience of working in the mining industry as an employee wellbeing program officer. I used to coach employees on health life styles, conducting health risk assessment and educating them on other health concerns/issues as demanded by the Program manager. With this background, it was crucial I did not assume the role of a wellbeing program officer during the data collection but rather was a student on a mission to learn. It was also crucial that research participants saw me as a student and not a program officer in order to prevent any unwanted data from interviews. Some unwanted data could be changing direction to healthy living, which is not the focus of this study. I was therefore specific and focused on the purpose of my study and my role as student ready to learn and know more about the work-life balance and health of women on the women in the mining industry.

With respect to potential power imbalance caused by my role as a University student, participants were assured that I was there to learn from them for the purpose of my study.

A further aspect of my role as a researcher is that I am a young Ghanaian woman which might have contributed to ease in the interview situation, facilitating for good communication.

#### **4.9 Ethical Issues**

Ethical standards are applied to this master thesis. Ethical issues were considered in the research design, informed consent for participants, and presentation of the proposal, giving and receiving critical feedback. Permission and approval to conduct this was obtained from The Norwegian Research Ethics Committee (Norsk Samfunnsvitenskapelig Datatjeneste: NSD), Ghana Health Service Ethical Committee and the Mining Company where this research was undertaken. Richards and Schwartz (2002) discuss four potential risks that are most likely to be encountered in qualitative research which are anxiety, misrepresentation, exploitation, and identification of participants by themselves in publications. The participation of the researcher in the data collection process might raise some kind of anxiety in the participants. Participants tend to wonder if their views would be articulated as they are given and not be misquoted, and there might also be anxiety for finding themselves in publications of research work (Richards & Schwartz, 2002). This study therefore minimized to the greater extent these potential risks through the use of a written informed consent as well as allowing room for participants to reconsider their interest in the study. In order to avoid misrepresentation and misinterpretation, the researcher maintained a close contact with her supervisor especially during the data analysis and interpretation stage. An interview guide was used to collect data from participants. Interviews were sometimes time consuming and with reference to mining schedules, individual participants were given the opportunity to choose their own convenient time for the interview. The recorded interviews were stored and kept safe from any other person with the exception of the researcher, research assistant, and the thesis supervisor. The stored recorded interviews were kept safe and given a secured password. Destruction of recordings will be done in December 2014. The data were anonymized by giving interviewees pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality of participants.

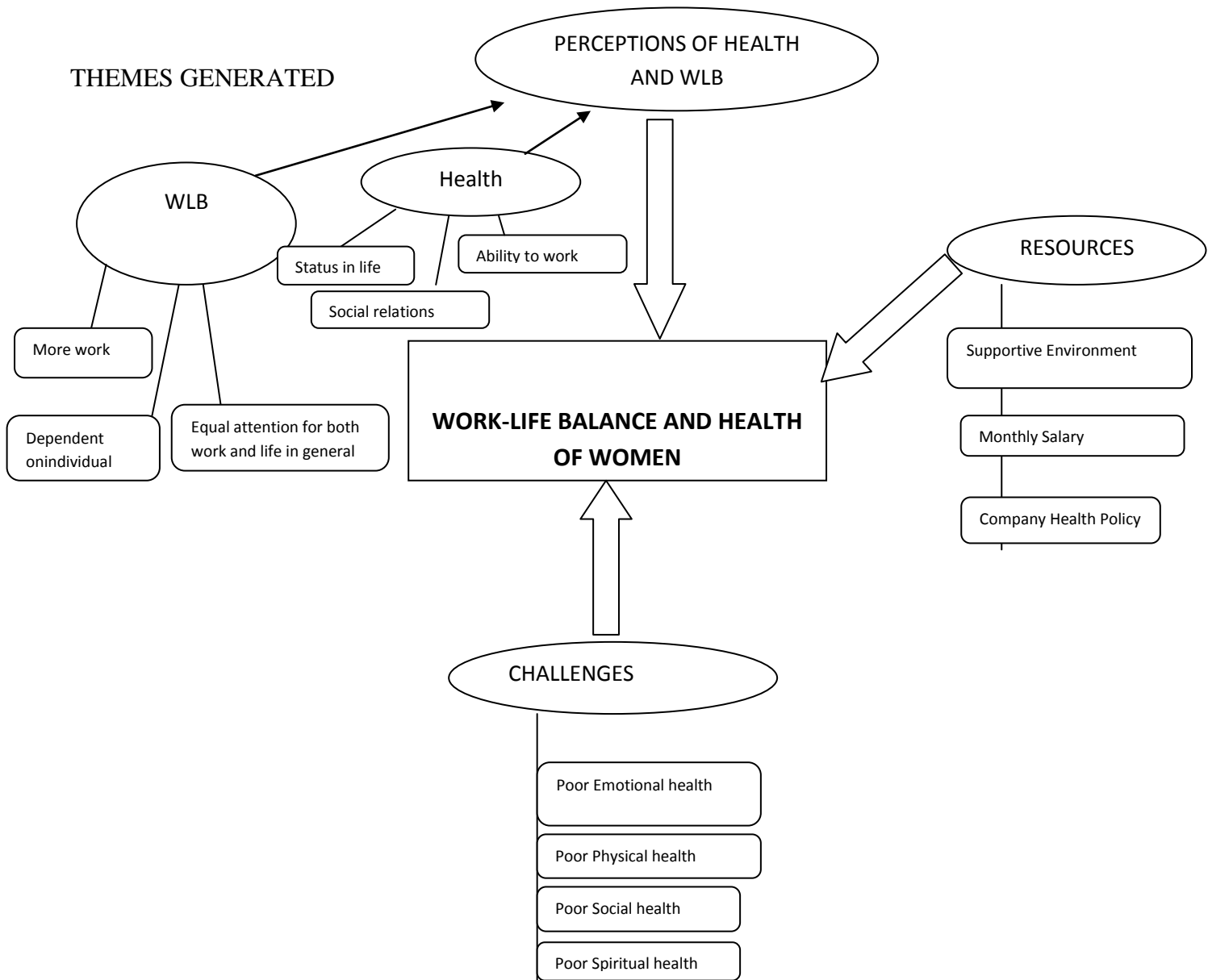


## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **5.0 FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The results here are the combined information from the interviews during the data collection periods at the two mining sites. I present results in relation to my research questions and the network structure presented below as a deduction from the analysis. The entire section of the findings gives an overview of the perceptions respondents have about the balance of work and other aspects of life, their perceptions of health, challenges (stressors), and the resources that they use in the course of balancing work and other aspects of life. The findings of the study are as follows:



Source: Data Analysis (2013)

**Figure 2: Thematic Network of Analysis**

## 5.2 Perception of work and other aspects of life

The respondents of this study have different understandings of what work and other aspects of life mean to them, and how they should be balanced, but there are also similarities in the answers provided. However, most of the answers of respondents show that work takes more of their time than other aspects of life. Some respondents think there should be equal attention for both work and other aspects of life, and the remaining respondents feel balancing the demands of work and other aspects of life depends on the individual.

### 5.2.1 More work than other aspects of life

Some of the women responded that work is a major part of life. The women believe that work has an important role in human endeavor. They know that once they work long hours they get paid for that.

*"...I believe for humans to live a meaningful life, work must play a critical role. Life without work is meaningless. I get fulfillment in my work more than anything else. Work is more important, I love to work always. I spend 12hours a day at work and I am ok"*  
(TT1)

*"Once you work, you can afford other things in life. You can pay off certain demands of life. Work is head of life. For me, if work takes 70% and other aspects of life is 30% of my life, I'm ok and better off than staying at home without work. The more I stay long hours at work, maximum of 12 hours a day, my salary increases"* (TT4).

There is more seriousness attached to work because one is accountable for tasks that are given. They earn their income and career progression from their work outputs.

*"Work and other aspects of life are same but only that we earn income from work but no income from the other. This makes work more for the fact that the task and responsibilities given us at work, someone is watching but no one watches what you do outside work. You are unaccountable to people with what you choose to do outside work."*

*This makes work takes upper hand. I think a 60% of work makes a work life balance".(TT3)*

### **5.2.2 Equal attention for both work and other aspects of life**

Others also think that it is prudent to have equal attention for both work and other aspects of life. That one must not necessarily outweigh the other.

*"HMMMMM... sometimes I try my best to make time for other life issues as well but, those are my off days and it's so tiring to get a 50%:50% balance for both work and other aspects of life, nonetheless I believe a 50/50 for work and other aspects of life in general is necessary" (TT2).*

Though the nature of work does not easily promote a work-life balance, respondents attempt to create time during their off days for other aspects of life that needed attention. On the contrary for the single ladies whom I thought would have loved to spend more time at work, majority of them preferred to have life easy and go on with other aspects of life to have a meaningful life

*"Work and other aspects of life are integrated. If you do not work, you don't get money. I think in general a work-life balance must be 50% each; except that mining life does not promote this kind of balance. Well, I try to bridge the gap during my off days." (TT6)*

*"Life is sweet, we have to enjoy it, it mustn't be work, work, work! Most often, working as a mining woman deprives you of most of the sweet connections in life. I work minimum of 10 hours per day every week, I have only Sundays off duty, and sometimes Saturdays are off duty. Even though work takes a chunk of my productive hours; I think that work and life in general should have equal attention". (TT8)*

### ***5.2.3 The balance of work and other aspects of life depends on the Individual***

The balance of work and other aspects of life means different things for the women. Some of the women find accomplishing set targets and tasks important to a feeling of balance, even if it might mean some long hours. This reflects that handling work load is an important part of successful work life balance:

*"At certain times, because I want to meet deadlines I stay long hours at work without necessarily being worried about other demands of life".(TT8)*

*"It's about been able to accomplish a task and still have time to spend with family and friends. Say if I come to work and I'm able to accomplish my tasks then at the end of the day I am happy when I meet my friend s and family; but if I'm unable to accomplish tasks at work I still think about job and that disturbs me even though I may be with family and friends" (TT9)*

Others feel that once the engagement with work does not affect their kids or partners they are ok. This reflects a family harmony element of work life balance. Nevertheless, once they find out that there will be a problem then they change their working pattern to suit their families' needs this shows how flexibility is important in the work schedule.

*"Now maybe because I am single, I work, work, work. But I believe work-life balance should depend on the individual. For me, I have no husband and no child so all I can do to occupy myself is work. I am sure to do some adjustments when I marry and have kids" (TT7)*

Others engage in some kind of tactics such as prioritizing their tasks and screening calls that could interfere with their working schedule, which is time consuming.

*"I make sure I list the important things first and also screen incoming calls and emails to minimize destruction so that I can complete all my task so that when I am out of the workplace I am stress free"(TT5)*

### **5.3 Perception of health**

The women have their own ideas and assumptions about what health means to them. Health as perceived by these women employees is about physical ability, emotional and social strength, and status in life.

#### ***5.3.1 Physical Health***

Some of the respondents' perception of health is physically based. Once physically strong then there is health. The strength to go to work is enough for them to say they are healthy.

*"Once I'm able to wake up without any pain in my body and go back to this demanding job, then I know I'm healthy". (TT3)*

*"When I do not have sound sleep....ooo my day is bad! Then I know I am not healthy. But when I'm able to sleep well, I feel good the next day at work, irrespective of job demands". (TT6)*

#### ***5.3.2 Emotional and Social Health***

Some of the respondents use their emotional and social capabilities to judge their state of health. They feel that once they have care, love and support from family and friends then they have health, as expressed by the three participants quoted below:

*"When I am able to say good bye to my kids before I leave for work...it's a joy and health in itself because when I am unable to see them for a day it means I cannot be sound at work".(TT1)*

*"At least making a phone call to find out about family and friends keeps me going. This for me I think makes me healthy...cos I am able to shed off some stress when I call them, on the contrary some friends and family also make demands once you call them and this jeopardizes my health its sets me thinking on what to do whether to avoid calling them to avoid unnecessary pressures and unbudgeted demands." (TT10)*

*"When you still have someone to comfort and love you irrespective of limited shared time, I think it will make you healthy." (TT7)*

### **5.3.3 Status in Life**

Some of the respondents judge their health based on their status in life, thus how they feel about certain things about their life. They feel once they can afford what they want in life then that puts them on a healthy track.

*"When I am able to afford all that I want and need, I can say I'm healthy". (TT6)*

*"Having comfort in life without any unnecessary stress shows ones state of health, after all, we can't have a complete healthy status but once the basic needs of life are met, one can be said to be healthy".(TT7)*

## **5.4 Challenges (stressors) of work and other aspects of life**

The challenges (Stressors) experienced by women from both mine sites are similar except for one challenge (Süß & Sayah). Challenges emerged from work issues, home issues, and time management in general. For these mine women employees, mining life has made them encounter many challenges that were sometimes hard to deal with. They explain these challenges in relation to their health and job flexibilities. Issues are grouped around poor emotional, physical, social and spiritual health, according to which health elements they were seen to threaten.

### **5.4.1 Poor Emotional Health**

This revolves around loss of relationship and limited time with partners and spouses. The underlying factor is time. Much time is spent at work and that affects the women's affection needs.

#### ***5.4.1.1 Loss of relationships***

The mining job has affected some aspect of their life such that they are unable to keep friends for lasting and healthy relationship. It was easy to attract men to them but keeping them was a difficult task for many of the women.

*"I have lost so many boyfriends; I mean boyfriends who are of marriage materials, because of my job. I am now emotionally unhealthy. Sometimes after a hard day's work I need someone to take care of certain needs I have but.....????You know it's so easy to attract a guy once you work in the mines but keeping the relationship going is the issue".*  
(TT7)

*"I now have only my work colleagues as my friends...and it's not so nice because they equally have busy schedules"(TT9)*

#### ***5.4.1.2 Limited time with partners and spouses.***

This is about the number of hours spent with partners and spouses. The women are not so happy because they spend less time with their partners.

*"I am lucky my husband is also in the mining industry, nevertheless he sometimes complain we do not share good time together.... we both often at work and come home tired."(TT4)*

*"My boyfriend is not a miner, and that makes it difficult for him to understand my schedule. We often quarrel about not been able to spend some good times together"(TT2)*

#### **5.4.2 Poor Physical Health**

The views and experiences of respondents show that the time to practice healthy living taught by the wellbeing team on site is difficult to put into practice. Some of the respondents complain of limited accommodation facilities on site to cater for all employees.



#### ***5.4.2.1 Inability to practice healthy living advices***

They feel that the efforts made by wellbeing officers, trying to coach employees on how to live healthy is difficult to practice due to the fact that they get home late after close of work. Healthy lifestyles therefore turn to be uneasy to practice.

*"I get home very late and still cannot sleep without eating. Hmmm meanwhile we are always told by the wellbeing team on site to avoid night eating for a health living. This work doesn't promote that"...it is all about work, work, work!"(TT8)*

#### ***5.4.2.2 Limited accommodation on site.***

Respondents indicate that there are accommodations on site for employees but there is insufficient capacity to cater to all. However some of the women try their best to rent or put up nice homes that can help them with sound sleep during their off days.

*"Those of us who have not been provided with accommodation on site are even on the worse side travelling long hours to get to work on a very bad road." (TT4)*

*"For some of us mining women it's a hell using this long and dusty road to and from work without any accommodation provided on site." (TT2)*

*" I have no access to site accommodation, but I have rented a comfortable place.....this job gives pressure and stress so I think a good place of rest is necessary" (TT9)*

#### ***5.4.2.3 Bodily pains and poor sleep***

Due to the nature of work which some of the women were engaged in, physical exhaustion and body pains were often experienced. A change in work activity was a joy to some of the women.

*"I sometimes have pain in my waist and back and I often cannot sleep well because I used to sit on the machine to work for long hours. Hmmm (a deep sigh)...Thank God I am now in the office temporarily because I gave birth not too long ago. It is not easy ooo. Because of money we are playing with our health!" (TT7)*

### **5.4.3 Poor Social Health**

All the respondents feel that work takes most of their valuable and productive time and leaves them unable to meet certain social responsibilities.

#### ***5.4.3.1 Inability to honour invitations from friends and family.***

Most often, as expressed by the women, invitations usually fall on weekends when they have allocated time to resting and attending to household chores.

*"As African woman for that matter a Ghanaian woman, you cannot absolutely dissociate yourself from funerals, parties and other social callings and invitations but here I find myself in a job that often isolates me from these social responsibilities. I have lost many and uncountable good friends because I repeatedly declined to their invitations" (TT9)*

*"All the invitations come over the weekends when I should be able to have time for myself. Most often I am unable to attend. I just send my present in a form of a small parcel" (TT7)*

#### ***5.4.3.2 Inability to attend family meetings and discussions***

In Ghana, most of the extended family plays a critical aspect of the family system and ties. The respondents indicated that their time with the family is very limited due to work. Most often, family members brand them as not having any care for their family obligations.

*"Now I am seen as an anti-social person and they often say that all I know is my job. My family even think that because I work in the mines I think I am somebody...hmmmm I tell you my dear, it's difficult to explain to them unless those of my friends and family who are equally in the mining environment".(TT8)*

#### **5.4.3.3 Limited time for children**

The women do not have much time for their children and this makes them worried. They get worried mostly because they leave home for work very early in the morning.

*"I am unable to make much time for my kids, I live with them, but I still miss them". (TT1)*

*"I leave the house as early as 5:30am so I can catch up with the bus to the workplace. This means my child will not see me before I leave. I sometimes see him trying hard to say good bye mum but with half closed eyes...." (TT3)*

#### **5.4.4 Poor Spiritual Health**

Respondents indicated that their work takes a lot of energy from them and they are unable to attend to church services especially during the weekdays' evenings.

*It is so tough to go to church after a hard day's job, meanwhile as a Christian I need to go worship my maker. Sometimes it seems I am only a churchgoer and not a worshipper all because I only go to church on Sundays." (TT5)*

*My major setback as a result of mining job is not been able to please my maker.... I feel I am neglecting a key part of life, which is spirituality. I am really battling within to go to church especially evening services...what a life! And life without Christ to me is not meaningful" (TT2)*

#### **5.5 Resources used in Promoting a balance of work and other aspects of life.**

Resources used in the promotion of work-life balance ranges from supportive environments either at home or at the workplace, being paid at the end of the month for their hard work, and good Company health policy.

### **5.5.1. Supportive Environment**

The research revealed that resources used by women employees in the mining settings under the Supportive environment category ranges from having an understanding partner or relative, having a good nanny, easy going work colleagues to having an accommodation on site.

#### ***5.5.1.1 Partner/Relatives***

Most of the women have their strengths and means of coping from the support of relatives and understanding partners. Women with supportive partners are happy because their partners give them a helping hand to manage their homes and house chores.

*"I am happy that I have a husband that understands me. ..But to be honest with you it's really a tough time. Most women have problems at home...sometimes because they do not have enough time for their children and husband, but my husband is very supportive with house work." (TT1)*

*"Well, am not married but I have a female relative living with me and she is helpful, and does most of the cleaning for me. I am able to rest well when am off duty because she helps me a lot" (TT2)*

#### ***5.5.1.2 Nanny***

Most of the women with children have good nannies that help them to take care of their children when they are at work. Possibly, because the nannies are well paid they also dispense their duties whole-heartedly.

*"Because I spend so much time at work, I deem it necessary to hire someone who will take care of my two kids. And I pay her so well so she takes good care of my kids just as I would have done. I even give her bonus at the end of the year just to motivate her to take good care of my kids. I am happy and I'm not stressed at work because of my kids. My nanny does a good job. I am free minded". (TT1)*

### **5.5.1.3 Supportive work colleagues and supervisors**

Supportive environment encompasses work colleagues for these women in the mining industry. Most of the women emphasized that their colleagues and supervisors are very supportive and in times of stress at work, they share jokes and laugh together.

*"Hmmm.....Sometimes when I am stressed at work or stressed from home, I get consolation from my work colleagues and because I have lost many friends from the family line, my colleagues are my friends. They make me laugh. Moreover, we share jokes. Without my colleagues I would have no friends because I don't get time for people outside my job routine....hmmm it's a pity! Nevertheless, I'm glad I have my colleagues." (TT7).*

*"I have a listening and supportive supervisor so I am able to cope with that". (TT3).*

### **5.5.1.4 Accommodation on mine site**

Accommodation on site was limited. Many of the women did not have the accommodation. However the significant few that had accommodation on site expressed that accommodation was a very good resource for them in promoting their health.

*"This is a good resource for us as women, because for me work is close to site, I get home early after work to cook for my husband and kids and also during lunch breaks I am able to have a quick look after my kids. This accommodation thing is a good thing but unfortunately majority of employees do not have access to it. But if I want to say a means to cope, then accommodation is a major coping mechanism to the stress of mine work"(TT3).*

*"Though the Company pays us housing allowances to those of us who do not have company accommodation, it is still not the best by commuting to work every day on this bad road". (TT2)*

### **5.5.2 Monthly Salary**

Money is a major resource for most of the respondents except for one woman. They share their view that most jobs in Ghana cannot be compared with mining jobs. The mining job pays well. The money keeps them going in the world of work. And they are very happy especially at the end of the month.

*"I work because the mines job pays more. I am able to take care of my home even when my husband is unable to take care of the home. I am able to support my own parents without bothering my husband. The mines job pays well and I can afford anything I want. I am therefore not ready to quit this job even in the next ten years.... even I can afford to go in for my own private doctor even though the Company provides employees health services". (TT1).*

*I am so happy when the month ends. I get joy and fulfillment. Because I have worked so hard for it. I am paid and I'm happy for the salary. Other people elsewhere work with same qualifications as I have but are far less paid. I guess I'm lucky to be in the mines and will endure because the pay at the end of the month keeps me going...even though I have low qualification. In same way I believe if I had a higher qualification I would have earned more on the mines like my other senior colleague women". (TT2)*

### **5.5.3 Company's response to work life balance**

The company has health and safety policy in place with the health of the employees at heart. Each employee and dependents have access to the company hospital regardless of the number of counts they visit the hospital. The company has also the wellbeing and wellness program in place that serves employee needs and the community at large. All the women had some source of strength from the Company's support.

#### ***5.5.3.1 Hospitals and Wellbeing Program***

There is hospital at the workplace to take care of employees and dependents. The women are happy that they have this facility, which they can walk in anytime they are ill either at work or off duty. The Company takes care of the cost of healthcare given to employees. The health

wellbeing program is also available to employees to complement the prevention and the management of cases on site.

*"We have good healthcare system. Me for instance, I am so glad that the Company is able to give healthcare. In addition, the wellbeing program educates us in order to prevent diseases. This is to make us healthy". (TT3)*

*"I don't often get time to go check my health so I'm happy we have a wellbeing team on site at least I can check my cholesterol once a year without a fee right on site!" (TT10 )*

### **5.5.3.2 Leave days**

A number of leave days is available to employees. The annual leave days also make all the women happy especially when it is approaching. Sick leave; Bereavement leave, Maternity leave, Annual leave and Casual leave are days that have been given out by the Company to promote a healthy work-life balance. For example one single lady who stressed much with sitting long hours explained:

*The number of days depends on the pay category of staff and most importantly to the employee; these days are sometimes tagged to one's bonuses and profit sharing as well as basic pay". (TT7).*

This could suggest that employees may not take unnecessary days off duty since it has an implication on their salaries and it may therefore stay be better to stay working.

Some however showed some level of happiness when they were due for annual leave:

*"Amidst the policies are annual leaves and word day offs which also help shed off much stress. I get so happy when I am getting close to my annual leave". (TT8).*

*"My major happy days are when am on my annual leave. I tend to forget all about work". (TT1).*

The company also provides recreational facilities and an onsite health and wellbeing program to enhance employee health. Some of the women showed that they were happy that the Company had a wellbeing program onsite that coached them.

*"I am happy when the wellbeing team comes around, at least I see that the Company cares about my health".(TT10)*

Some of the research respondents' answer to the question of how stress was managed read: *"I sometimes use the clubhouse to cool off stress", "Sometimes too I just use the Staff swimming pool when am tired" and "I seldom walk into the wellbeing office to check my Blood pressure....meanwhile it's a means for me to cool off"*.

The findings of this study suggest that there are multiple roles as (potential) partners, as friends, as mothers, as relatives, as devotees and as employees. This creates a serious strain on the women. It is not only about sharing the time equally between different aspects of life, but about fulfilling roles that are important to them. In a way they are in a situation where a good income is so important and hard to come by that they really sacrifice a lot of things that is equally important to them such as their social relations. The perceptions of some of the women on work-life balance from the responses indicate that the phenomenon of work life balance is part of human existence whereas others see the phenomenon as pertaining to time allocated for each role. This means that different people have different expectations of what constitutes a balance of work and other demands of life. Though the participants have many challenges issues ranging from poor spiritual health to poor physical health, poor emotional health and less time spent with family; they still made good use of the limited resources available to them such as good company health policy, having supportive environment, and been paid at the end of the month for their hard labour. The next chapter, which is the discussion part, explores the findings in relation to research objectives and literature.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **6.0 DISCUSSION**

#### ***6.1 Introduction***

The Discussion part is made up of two sections. First, the identified themes are discussed in relation to the empirical literature. The second part links the findings to the theoretical framework, Salutogenic model.

The purpose of this study is to explore the stressors, which are encountered during the balance of work and other aspects of life, and to know the resources, which contribute to the thriving of women in the mining industry. The discussion is done from the perspective of health promotion and not necessarily gender. The research questions that were asked were: how do the women perceive the balance of work and other aspects of life?, what challenges do women in the Ghanaian mining industry face in the course to balance their work and other aspects of life?, and finally what resources do the women use to promote their work-life balance and health?

My findings suggest that in the course to balance work and other aspects of life, respondents go through many challenges but are able to make use of limited resources available to them in order to move towards positive health.

#### **6.2 Discussion of Perception of work-life balance and health**

##### **6.2.1 Perception on WLB**

Literature on the perception of WLB makes us appreciate that WLB is subjective depending on the individual in question. According to De Villiers and Kotze (2003), the perceptions of participants of their study suggest that work-life balance is subjective. This is supported by my respondents' views. The findings of this study show that the women put up a form of action towards balancing work and other aspects of life depending on how they perceived an ideal balance between work and other aspects of life. There were three categories of women with different perceptions about the balance of work and other aspects of life. Perceptions and real life

situation can sometimes show what the individual strives to achieve as described by Judge, Bono, Erez, and Locke (2005) in their writings about life and job satisfaction, explain that inconsistency between the real job life circumstances and the perceived ideal life condition determines what satisfaction could be. Perceptions of the ideal will vary, and therefore people will be happy with different balance between work and other aspects of life.

Some of my participants were of the opinion that work should outweigh other aspects of life for meaningful living. This depicts that one can acquire all that is needed in life once there is paid work. People are able to afford the basic needs of life once on income. This is clear from the responses as one indicates that "*.....I am ok and better off than staying at home without work*". Braun et al. (2008) conducted an explorative study with 70 families with pre-school children and found out that women never wanted to stay at home because they thought going back to work would sustain their future for the better. None of my respondents expressed that other aspects of life should outweigh work.

Some of the women suggest that work and other aspects of life should attract equal attention for a good work life balance to exist. One should not outweigh the other. The findings suggest that the more people work, the less time they have for their loved ones and even for other leisure activities, for instance swimming and reading. Quality time with loved ones in a good atmosphere is a crucial matter for workers' overall physical and mental wellbeing (Knave & Ennals, 2001 ) and it is therefore imperative to give attention not only to work but also activities that enhance health and wellbeing (Crompton & Lyonette, 2006). Life in general requires a participation in most spheres of life. Whittington, Maellaro, and Galpin (2011) suggest that life in general must be blended to incorporate all other aspects of life. In fact balancing work and other demands of life makes life in totality and promotes not only organizational development but also personal health and wellbeing of employees. Though the findings show the women's perception of what a work-life balance *should* be their real work-life balance does not mirror their perceptions.

It can be said that in life some have higher strengths and are more intrinsically motivated for certain types of work than others are. As seen in Michel and Clark (2011) the personalities of people can either make work-life balance a hurdle or not. In this study the responses of

participants in the category under discussion suggests that each individual put in mechanisms and tactics to be able to achieve a work-life balance by screening calls and emails as well as prioritization of task. It can also be said that this is what they are motivated for as their perceptions of ideal work life balance is subjective. Parallel to this, Whittington et al. (2011) noted that the tactics employed by people to achieve a work-life balance largely depends on their orientation and perception of what success could mean to them. For example they "When an individual's self-worth is based on their total self-concept, stressful events in one life arena are not as devastating"(Whittington et al., 2011, p. 68).

It is clear that work life balance is subjective as different people experience different situations and hence respond differently. The findings of Whitehead and Kotze (2003) suggest that people have different expectations and hence have different perceptions about what constitutes a life balance.

### **6.2.2 Perception on health**

Health as defined by WHO is "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (World Health Organization, 1948, p. 1). From the respondents point of view health was categorized under physical ability to work, one's positive status in life and good social relations.

The perception of health being the physical ability to wake up without pains and go to work is not too different from what Diener and Chan (2011) explain as happy people have healthier status. Diener and Chan (2011) argue that healthy people are those who go to work happily without any setbacks such as body pains arising out of the work. This suggests that the definition and the meaning people ascribe to what health means to them is subjective.

Status in life has been classified by respondent as a means to know whether one is healthy or not. For some of the respondents having a comfortable life where the necessary things in life can be acquired without stress is paramount to their health and wellbeing. The status in life determines one's health from the respondents' point of view. This is because they could afford many things

they want in life and respect is gained among peers. For instance, George and Jones (1996) discussed this as value attainment where "value attainment captures the extent to which a job helps a worker to attain life values"(p. 319). Some of the respondents feel that once they could afford their needs it is enough for them to be healthy and make them attain certain values they have. The responses of participants depict how financial and economic status can influence health. In a paper by the World Health Organization on the conceptual framework for action on the social determinants of health (SDH), Solar and Irwin (2007) suggest that the health of an individual determines one's socioeconomic position in life. However, the findings from this study also support that socioeconomic position can influence health status.

Social health as perceived by women is really a concern. More often than not we turn to overlook the social aspects of health. However, the society and the relationships we build can make us either healthy or unhealthy. A simple thing as a good bye to children before work really was reported to be an important health influence for one of the women. The studies by Marks et al. (2001) show that if one spends so much time on work, then it brings about pressure and this affects the mental health of employee as quality time is likely to be lost with friends and loved ones. The responses suggest that relationship with family, friends and children help the women to ease off stress from work. Spending quality time with their family, friends and children is something very significant to the women as it enhances their health. Whitehead and Kotze (2003) show that women perceive social health as crucial because their relationship with their community members are affected when work takes most part of their time.

## **6.3 Discussion of challenges (stressors)**

### **6.3.1 Introduction**

From the respondent's experiences, there is more pressure at home due to high demand of time and energy at work and trying to balance the demands of both work and other aspects of life brings its own challenges. Findings suggest the stressors encountered in the course of balancing work and other aspects of life emanate from the workplace. This is mainly due to limited time

and physical exhaustion. Very few times does issues from other aspects of life spillover into the domains of work. The challenges discussed in this section are *Poor Social Health, Poor Physical and Poor Physiological Health and Poor Emotional Health as found below.*

### **6.3.2 Poor Emotional health**

The emotional health of some respondents suggests that there are repetitive breaks in relationship due to lack of quality time to spend with partners. This is not different from what Zedeck and Mosier (1990) realizes that there are times where couples have to work hard such that this creates some sort of barrier where couples hardly find time to meet and at the end bring about conflicts and tension at home and can consequently cause a break up. Tension at home often arises as a result of limited shared time among couples (Zedeck & Mosier, 1990) and even trust is easily destroyed among people living together (Marks et al., 2001) making life somehow difficult.

This perpetual break in relationships was more rampant for the single women who are easily attracted by men and yet maintaining the relationship had always been a problem due to lack of quality time as said by three of the respondents. As this study suggests isolation can easily set in the lives of women who find themselves in mining. As depicted by Sharma and Rees (2007) isolation from friends and love ones is often experienced by people living in mining towns and women suffer the most from mental and emotional stress. The fundamentals of psychology teach that the human need to belong is critical for healthy and stable relationships with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This need seems to be under threat among mining employees.

### **6.3.3 Poor Physical health**

The physical wellbeing of an individual is very important to healthy living. Respondents have some sort of pains emanating from sitting and working for long hours, to commuting on a bad road to and from work. This results in physical exhaustion and inability to sleep well with mounting stress. There is a large body of research linking stress to impaired physical health. One example is Oldfield and Mostert (2007) who studying 320 employees found both direct and indirect link to physical and physiological health with job demands and characteristics of the job in question having a major link with the ill health of the employees. As the study of Harkness,

Macfarlane, Nahit, Silman, and McBeth (2004) suggests, stress from work as a result of long hours sitting, long standing and even manual handling of heavy loads had serious consequences on the body of the worker. Stress from either work or other life issues has some bearing on an individual. Stress at work can even in extreme cases cause serious and fatal accidents at work, thereby employee losing his life or a part of the body. Bodily pains and tiredness was a challenge for respondents of this study.

#### **6.3.4 Poor Social Health**

As stated by WHO health is not just about the absence of disease in one's body but the social aspect of one's health is also critical Respondents indicate that more often than not, they are unable to honor invitations of friends and loved ones in their communities due to work. Consequently, the society turns to see such individuals as anti-social and sometimes brand them with names. Women in mining have no choice than to honour invitations by sending some form of present such as money to appease the invitee. It is on this note that Sharma and Rees (2007) see mining workers as isolated from even love and affection from family and friends. The social aspect of health, which undoubtedly promotes one's state of health, cannot be overemphasized. This is an aspect of work life conflict where the demands from one role make it impossible to fulfill demands from another role. A two-year study among cohorts of newly employed workers conducted by Harkness et al. (2004) revealed that workers who reported low social support which was the strongest independent predictor were more likely exposed to chronic pain from the workplace. Social health is key in the health promotion concept as social support and systems in place can promote the health of an individual (Solar & Irwin, 2007).

#### **6.3.5 Poor Spiritual Health**

Health is undoubtedly not the mere absence of disease. The responses of this study suggest that for health to be holistic, the spirituality of an individual is important. Spirituality has a link with health. However, the concept is such that it has no distinct definition. Findings of this study suggest that going to church and praying represents a means to cope with the stress and traumas

of life and work for women in the Company. However, the nature and demands of work makes them unable to participate fully in church activities. Larson et al. (1989) found that religious smokers were seven times less likely than nonreligious smokers to record an abnormal diastolic pressure. The authors concluded that religious commitment, by providing purpose in life, promoting greater peace and self-confidence, contributed significantly to preventing high blood pressure. This may mean that the religious aspect of life for the women in mining could help them mitigate some stressful situations that they encounter at either at work or at home as seen in Larson et al. (1989) “religious motivated persons may suffer less stress, anxiety and conflict.....”(p. 275).

## **6.4 Discussion of Resources**

### **6.4.1 Introduction**

Though the challenges found outnumbered the resources, the women in The Company were able to use available resources to help them thrive. My findings suggest that social support had a very critical role in helping create a friendly work-life environment. The findings of De Villiers and Kotze (2003) agree to this as participants were very appeased when supported to deal with any work-home imbalance. The resources discussed under this section are: *supportive environment, monthly salary and company strategies to enhancing health and wellbeing of employees.*

### **6.4.2 Supportive environment**

This emanated from both work and home environment. Respondents indicated that support from colleagues and supervisors were very critical to helping build a healthy work -life balance. When there is support either from home or at the workplace, it facilitates the movement towards positive health and wellbeing. From the findings of Kouvonen et al. (2012) supportive environment and social support to individuals elevated a high sense of leisure time physical activity that promotes health. For instance, the finding of this study suggests that helpful

partners, either husbands or nannies and supervisors helped a lot in supporting women in mining. It is well noted from findings that accommodation on site really helps to minimize the stress of travelling to and from work on bad roads daily.

Such support is a major resource for women. Supportive husbands and partners, and relatives alike, are a good means of support and resource for women in mining. The findings of Kouvonen and colleagues suggest that high support from close relatives and partners was associated with both maintaining and improving leisure time physical activity levels. In the current study there was only one single mother among the study participants who indicated that though she did not have a husband for support, she had a very good relative who was her major help at home especially when she was away for work. This minimized the stress levels of the women and helped them cope with the demands of both work and other aspects of life.

The findings of this study indicate that nanny was a good resource for most of the women with children. The use of a nanny has helped many professional women in coping with the demand at home (Moen & Yu, 2000) such that there is a reduction in stress for the women. The hiring of nannies by many of the respondents was a deliberate attempt to manage the stress that they encountered in the course of balancing work and other demands of life. Though the nannies according to the women provided the needed support to them, they still felt that they should be the controllers of their own homes and children.

Work colleagues and supervisors were resources to facilitate employee wellbeing at the workplace. Most of the women were able to confide in their supervisors and colleagues who were supportive at the workplace. Bakker and Schaufeli (2008) confirm that resources such as recognition from supervisors and colleagues are extrinsic sources of motivation for employees and equally enhance organizational belongingness. Findings of this study indicate that sharing jokes at the workplace with colleagues was a means of coping with stress and when the demands of the job get tough.

Provision of accommodation for employees had contributed positively to the health and wellbeing of employees by limiting their travel time to and from work. Though few (four) of the women interviewed have been provided with accommodation, it was a resource to them. Those without accommodation had to wake up rather earlier and join the bus to work. This from the



respondents' point of view limited their hours of sleep, which sometimes gave them headaches. One thing that came up from the respondents is that even though most of them had not been accommodated onsite, they did their best to rent comfortable homes that could help in facilitating sound sleep especially during their off days.

While external support was reported as important resources, still two of the respondents' maintained that though a supportive environment could be a resource to coping in mining life, their resources were mostly intrinsic as they regarded working in the domain of men as a good opportunity which moved them towards positive health irrespective of the job strain. The annual conference of The Australian Sociological Association 2009 showed that even though women sometimes find themselves in masculine jobs like mining, they are not bothered however are prepared to work just as the men do (Murray & Peetz, 2009).

#### **6.4.3 Monthly Salary**

As suggested by the respondents the salary kept them going irrespective of the strain on the job. This was somehow a motivation factor for employee women. Some of the study participants worked for the sake of love for their job. This what Deci and Ryan (2000) refer to in their self-determination theory, which assert that some people are intrinsically motivated, that is by the feeling of competence, autonomy and relatedness they achieve through the job, not through the external motivation of money. It looks approximate from my findings to say that women in mining are there for various reasons ranging from the love for the job to being able to financial gains. Once people are employed and well paid, they are happier than a less paid or unemployed. Financial and job status for that matter has a correlation with the health and SOC of people (Liukkonen et al., 2010). For participants of this study, the money paid to them at the end of the month as their salary was both a motivation and also compensation for their hard work.

#### **6.4.4 Company's response to work -life balance**

The Company has policies in place to promote worker's work-life balance. My findings from respondents indicate that Maternity leave, nursing mothers close early from work, Sick leave;

Bereavement leave, Annual leave and Casual leave are days that have been given out by the Company to promote a healthy work-life balance. However, the number of days depends on the pay category of staff and most importantly to the employee; these days are sometimes tagged to one's bonuses and profit sharing as well as basic pay. For this reason, employees are not so willing to take these days at ease unless at a critical stage. It is however, the Company's vision to have a healthy and productive workforce so these days have been enshrined in the Employees' Collective bargaining agreement but affects one's basic pay.

The presence of workplace health promotion programs (onsite wellbeing program) have been one of the major resources for employees to cope with job and other work related stress (Burton, 2012; Jang et al., 2011).

## **6.5 Discussion in relation to Salutogenesis**

This section discusses the researcher's findings in relation to the theoretical framework of this study. The study is framed within the context of Antonovsky's Salutogenic theory as depicted in Figure 1, exploring what makes women in mining strive to achieve positive health and wellbeing in spite of the challenges of life. In line with the purpose of this study, this section gives an example of practical application of the Salutogenic theory within a qualitative study.

### **6.5.1 Life situation**

The women find themselves in an environment where the woman's role is to manage the kitchen, cook for the family, care for the children and surrounded with invitations and demands from the society and extended family which are cultural engendered roles. Women are also required by the Ghanaian society to manage their homes well irrespective of employment status. This shows how culture can have influence on the issue of work and family balance (Thein, Austen, Currie, & Lewin, 2010). This is what Antonovsky refers to as social position in the life situation bracket (Lindstrom & Eriksson, 2006), see Figure 1. Furthermore, the women are placed in a working environment which takes much of their time. This interferes with other roles and responsibilities they are to perform in their homes, families and the society. At work, the women are required to

perform their tasks and meet deadlines; they have to be proactive, alert, and innovative at work always as part of their core competence. In addition to this, they have to show no sign of incompetence because they are women competing with the men in their capabilities in new arenas. This predisposes them to a lot of stress as there could be conflicting roles between work and other demands of life (Eriksson & Lindström, 2005). Thus, these life situations have exposed the women to many stressors as well as resources.

### **6.5.2 Life course exposures (challenges/stressors)**

The stressors encountered by these women are enormous ranging from bodily pains, less hours of sleep, inability to honor invitations, less time with families, perpetual breaks in relationships, tension at home, limited time for healthy living practices, poor spiritual health, over demanding tasks at work, and commuting on bad road network to and from work. In spite of these stressors encounters in the course of work and life in general, their perception of the world of work and life helps them to put to use the limited resources available to them. Antonovsky states that stressors are ubiquitous in life, what matters is how we are able to counter them through the use of available resources.

### **6.5.3 Resources (GRRs)**

The GRRs seeks to find the significant things whereas the SOC shows the ability and capabilities to put those things to use. The GRRs were from both the workplace and outside the workplace. The GRRs found were in the category of monthly salary, supportive environment (colleagues, supervisors, relatives, partners and nannies) and Company strategies, and inputs to enhance wellbeing and health of employees. The women used these resources to manage the stressors they encountered in life. The women also relied on their physical health as having the energy and physical strength to go to work. On the whole, this played an important role in shaping their life experiences.

#### 6.5.4 Life experiences

The experiences the women go through have the ability to shape their SOC. This helps the women move towards enhanced health. As shown in Figure 1 this depends on the degree of consistencies in life, whether there is an over or underload of demands and stressors encountered versus resources, and finally decision making in meaningful life roles, such as for instance the role as employee and as mother (Steger, Mesenholl-Strehler, & Endler, 2010).

**Degree of Consistency:** The activities the women perform both at work and outside work are done every day repeatedly. Except for some weekends and some off duty days when they have to fulfill other personal and societal obligations, these activities are also cyclical. This implies that there would be a high degree of repeated activities which could mount stress. This can also be linked to predictability which is helpful in handling challenges and which stimulates the comprehensibility element of SOC (Avotri & Walters, 1999).

**Under/Over load Balance:** The findings show that the stressors the women experience outweigh their resources in numerical strength; but some of the resources compensate the load of the stressors thereby helping establish a load balance. The resources though limited are very significant in helping them cope. The load balance is important in stimulating the manageability element of SOC (Avotri & Walters, 1999). The ability of these women to use available resources suggest that their SOC is strong to help them apply those resources to achieve a good load balance

**Participation:** There is a strong degree of participation in the above life situation. At work, the women are allowed to work as their men counterparts and are part of the decision making process in their various departments. This degree of participation helps the women to be strong enough to solve their own life stressors. At home and outside the confines of work environment, women are (potential) wives and care givers. Their roles at home involve taking decisions regarding family growth. This could enhance their motivational component to cope because the challenges, roles or stressors are worthy of engagement. According to Antonovsky (1996) this creates a strong SOC which makes the women to “reach out in any given situation, and apply the resources appropriate to that stressor” (Antonovsky, 1996, p. 15). Also, the multiple roles of women create a strain on the women because their participation in various roles is important to

them. This can be linked to Antonovsky both through the importance of decision-making in important life roles (participation). The findings of this study support the idea that women, as they find having a well-paid job important, activate the resources available to cope with the stressors related to the job. In this way, meaningfulness is an important motivational factor.

### **6.5.5 Sense of Coherence (SOC)**

The correlation between stressors and GRRs (resources) affects the way individuals ascribe meaning to the world of experience. The experiences in the life of the respondents shape their Sense of Coherence (SOC) and that prompts them to engage in a health promoting activities. For instance, most of the women turn to relax and sleep for long hours during their off days in order to make up for lost hours of sleep. In the Salutogenic model, one experiences a balance when the GRRs are adequate, available, and suitable to what the life course exposure/stressor requires. The women's ability to use the available and suitable resources to cope with the stress of both work and life in general move them towards the direction of positive health. When there is a positive correlation of the concepts, movement towards positive health can be attained (Mittelmark, 2010). These life experiences turn to shape one's Sense of Coherence (SOC). However, the issue to deliberate on is the adequacy of available resources, which is very important to look at but goes beyond the scope of this study.

#### ***6.5.5.1 Comprehensibility***

The findings show that the women really understand and know the stressors they go through in the mining sector. They are highly aware of them but for some benefits they acquire from the work like money, they understand their challenges as worthy of their investment. Thus, a conscious awareness of the stressors and resources available to them shapes their understanding of life as career-oriented women in a country like Ghana.

### ***6.5.5.2 Manageability***

Life for these women is a challenge especially combining the demanding work in mining and other aspects of life. The ability of the women to comprehend their life experiences drives them to use resources available to them to manage their stressors. These resources are available both at home and in their work place. For the women resources at home were used to mitigate the demands from home and the demands and stresses from the workplace are used to minimize stress at the workplace. For instance, women were involve in some kind of tactics such as screening calls and e-mails that help them minimize stress at work. This kind of tactics can be linked to their SOC since they have the perception that there is a way of managing one's stress irrespective of whatever is happening in their lives. At home for instance, the use of nannies and other close relation was a relief and a means to manage stress for most of the women single and married alike. From their responses they are able to rest well because their nannies and close relatives are very resourceful at home. Also, at work, most of the women put emphasis on the fact that their colleagues and supervisors are very supportive and in times of stress at work, they share jokes and laugh together.

### ***6.5.5.3 Meaningfulness:***

The findings indicate that there were different factors that created meaningfulness in the lives of the women. This is key to SOC and the driving force behind one's wish to cope in life. Though many stressors abound for the women, they have the perception that the world of work helps them to attain certain heights in life hence the wish to cope. For some of the women, they derived meaningfulness from the ability to maintain their homes and work at the same time, for others, it came from being able to fulfill social responsibilities (attending funerals, weddings etc.) and religious demands. One women feel that her religious obligations has the role to make them life a meaningful one. This is seen where one of the respondents linked relationship with God as an element which made life meaningful, which is an important element in a strong SOC. From the findings, not being able to fulfill any of these responsibilities was a great source of worry and concern to the women. This is a clear indication of role conflict. As a result, they were motivated

and strived to achieve positive health and wellbeing by utilizing resources around them to meet these needs.

### **6.5.6 Movement towards health**

The researcher does not have any measurement of health or of sense of coherence, but the findings of this study show women who cope with the demands of their jobs and other aspects of life, who also display the elements of a strong SOC, and who therefore, based on other empirical evidence such as Eriksson & Lindström (2007), are likely to move in the direction of health rather than disease. This comes from having a strong SOC. Though, they go through stressors, the women are able to make use of resources available to them in order to thrive and manage their stressors.

They had different perceptions on what WLB should be. For example, because social health is meaningful to some, even if they are unable to fulfill such demands, they always had a way to compensate for that, like sending parcels when they are unable to attend wedding/party invitations. The researcher believes this meaningfulness attached to the WLB has also played an important role in creating their wish to cope despite the stressors, consequently moving them towards positive well-being/health.

Previous empirical research strongly suggests that the ability for one to move towards well-being/health depends on how strong their SOC is. The findings suggest that the women in the mining company under study are motivated enough for the researcher to say that they are a personification of hardiness. The women go through many stressors yet they cope to have a meaningful life.

## 6.6 Discussion in relation to Health Promotion

The Ottawa Charter, the pillar for health promotion, makes it clear in its actions and principles that health can be achieved not only by the health sector but all sectors, organizations, society as well as the individual (WHO, 1986).

It is at the heart of health promotion to provide equal resources and opportunities to ensure health equity (WHO, 1986). For these women, there is no equity in the provision of accommodation on site by the Company which to them could have reduced their travel time to and from work and by so doing, minimize their stress levels.

There seems to be adequate supportive environment for the women. They have close relatives, nannies and supportive supervisors as well as colleagues who provide some sort of reliability and management in the balance of demands from both work and non-work. Supportive environment according to the Ottawa Charter is to "... encourage reciprocal maintenance - to take care of each other, *and* our communities..." (WHO, 1986, p. 2).

Women in mining seem to be battling with practicing healthy lifestyles. For example, their lateness to their homes after close of work exposes them to late eating habits which can be detrimental to their health especially when they have to sleep immediately in order to wake up very early for work. In this instance, healthy choices become difficult for these women. There is therefore the need to have enabling environment which could help them achieve their fullest health potential (WHO, 1986).



## **7.0 CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This section gives the limitation encountered in the course of this study, and summarizes the key findings of this present study. It gives the implications for employees and employers in the mining industry. It gives a stimulating thought about the concepts of work-life balance to the reader and finally gives suggestions for future studies.

### **7.2 Limitations of study**

The respondents were very busy with their tasks at work and this prolonged the researcher's contact hours with them. This might have created an inconvenience for them and responses might not be in-depth, as they would have in a relaxed atmosphere. For some of the respondents the researcher had to spend about a week to rescheduling of appointments for the interview. This sometimes made the process a hectic one but for the love for the research, the researcher pursued further.

The researcher would have loved to explore a larger sample size of more than 10 for the study but due to time constraints and limited available funds, this was not possible. Therefore, the findings of this study is not intended to be generalized to other women in different mining settings but to add to knowledge what women in mining go through in the course to balance their work and other demands of life to achieve positive health.

### **7.3 Concluding Remarks and Implications**

The findings of this study have the potential to add to knowledge and literature on stressors and resources used in the balance of work and other demands of life. First, the stressors of work and other demands of life cannot be overemphasized. The women in this study make good use of the resources especially social support, which also acts as buffer between life demands and challenges. Though few resources are available to them, they were adequate for them to be used.

It is most significant to say that the policy implications of this study is the finding regarding importance of organizational support in terms of adequate provision of accommodation facilities and the resourcing of the onsite wellbeing program. Likewise, the organization can consider to take up training for both men and women on demystifying some of the gendered roles placed on women. Loscocco (1997) explains that irrespective of the changes in the workplace, the family is the first place where gender norms are replicated, hence a site for potential change: “Changes in gender consciousness at home are the ‘final frontier’ in the quest for greater gender equality in work-family linkages”(Loscocco, 1997, p. 223).

Companies and employers should also consider certain stresses that abound in the sphere of work. However, adequate provision of resources can mitigate most of the stresses encountered by employed women. This would enhance the health of employees. The emphasis on the provision of adequate number of accommodation facilities on site as well as revamping the wellbeing program would give more support to employed women if not all employees.

Individual employed women can consider making good use of the available facilities such as the gym, swimming pool and the pitch to exercise and take some leisure times during their off days by prioritizing their tasks at work in order to reduce stress.

The study has given insight into not only the stressors and resources available to women in the mining domain, but also the nature of mining work with respect to time. The research has been able to show that though women employees go through many stresses at work especially they are able to lay hands on the resources and put them to use. The theory of Salutogenesis was conceptualized taking into consideration the consistency of stress the women go through every day of their life and the resources they use in handling those stressors. The life situation confronting the women did not deter most of the participants from combining both demands of work and other aspects of life. Their robust SOC was able to propel them towards positive health and wellbeing.

Further studies can consider exploring the variations in stressors and health implications of the stressors experienced by married and single women in demanding work domains such as mining. The levels of stress and coping mechanisms by women in different types of jobs (Marafi, 2013) in the mining industry could also explored.

## REFERENCES

- Agee, J. (2009). Developing qualitative research questions: a reflective process. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 22(4), 431-447. doi: 10.1080/09518390902736512
- Allen, T. D., Herst, D. E., Bruck, C. S., & Sutton, M. (2000). Consequences associated with work-to-family conflict: a review and agenda for future research. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 5(2), 278.
- Antonovsky, A. (1979). *Health, Stress and Coping: New perspectives on mental and physical well-being*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Antonovsky, A. (1996). The Salutogenesis as a theory to guide health promotion. *Health Promot Int*, 11(1), 11-18. doi: 10.1093/heapro/11.1.11
- Attride-Stirling, J. (2001). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative research*, 1(3), 385-405. doi: 10.1177/146879410100100307
- Avotri, J. Y., & Walters, V. (1999). "You just look at our work and see if you have any freedom on earth": Ghanaian women's accounts of their work and their health. *Social Science & Medicine*, 48(9), 1123-1133. doi: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0277-9536\(98\)00422-5](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0277-9536(98)00422-5)
- Bakker, A. B., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2008). Positive organizational behavior: Engaged employees in flourishing organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 29(2), 147-154.
- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191.
- Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological bulletin*, 117(3), 497.
- Becker, C. M., Glascoff, M. A., & Felts, W. M. (2010). Salutogenesis 30 Years Later: Where do we go from here. *International Electronic Journal of Health Education*, 13(1), 25-32.
- Bell, E. L. E., Meyerson, D., Nkomo, S., & Scully, M. (2003). Interpreting Silence and Voice in the Workplace A Conversation about Tempered Radicalism among Black and White Women Researchers. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 39(4), 381-414.

- Bianchi, S. M., Milkie, M. A., Sayer, L. C., & Robinson, J. P. (2000). Is anyone doing the housework? Trends in the gender division of household labor. *Social forces*, 79(1), 191-228.
- Bird, J. (2006). Work-life balance: Doing it right and avoiding the pitfalls. *Employment Relations Today*, 33(3), 21-30. doi: 10.1002/ert.20114
- Bohle, P., Quinlan, M., Kennedy, D., & Williamson, A. (2004). Working hours, work-life conflict and health in precarious and " permanent" employment. *Revista de Saúde Pública*, 38, 19-25.
- Braun, A., Vincent, C., & Ball, S. J. (2008). 'I'm so much more myself now, coming back to work'—working class mothers, paid work and childcare. *Journal of Education Policy*, 23(5), 533-548.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology*, 3(2), 77-101.
- Bull, T. (2007). *Work-Family Conflict and Care-Career Values: Subjective Well-Being of Employed Lone Mothers in Europe*. (Master of Philosophy Health Promotion), University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway.
- Bull, T. (2009). Work life and mental well-being: single and coupled employed mothers in Southern Europe and Scandinavia. *Global Health Promotion*, 16(3), 06-16.
- Bull, T., Duah-Owusu, M., & Autry Andvik, C. (2010). My happiest moment is when I have food in stock': poor women in northern Ghana talking about their happiness. *International Journal of Mental Health Promotion*, 12(2), 25-32.
- Burke, R. (2010). Do managerial men benefit from organizational values supporting work-personal life balance? *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 25(2), 91-99.
- Burton, S. (2012). *How We Attain and Sustain Work-life Balance?* Paper presented at the SPE Middle East Health, Safety, Security, and Environment Conference and Exhibition.
- Cherry, K. (2014). Perception and the Perceptual Process. from <http://psychology.about.com/od/snsationandperception/ss/perceptproc.htm>
- Chu, C., Breucker, G., Harris, N., Stitzel, A., Gan, X., Gu, X., & Dwyer, S. (2000). Health-promoting workplaces—international settings development. *Health Promot Int*, 15(2), 155-167. doi: 10.1093/heapro/15.2.155

- Collingridge, D. S., & Gantt, E. E. (2008). The quality of qualitative research. *American Journal of Medical Quality, 23*(5), 389-395.
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design. Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods*. (Third ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Crompton, R., & Lyonette, C. (2006). Work-Life 'Balance' in Europe. *Acta Sociologica, 49*(4), 379-393. doi: 10.1177/0001699306071680
- De Villiers, J., & Kotze, M. (2003). Work-life balance: a study in the petroleum industry. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management, 1*(3), 15-23.
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being. *American psychologist, 5*(1). doi: 10.1037/110003-066X.55.1.68
- Derevensky, J., Gupta, R., & Winters, K. (2003). *Journal of Gambling Studies, 19*, 405.
- Diener, E., & Chan, M. Y. (2011). Happy People Live Longer: Subjective Well-Being Contributes to Health and Longevity. *Applied Psychology: Health and Well-Being, 3*(1), 1-43.
- Donev, D., Pavlekovic, G., Zaletel-Kragelj, L., Stability Pact for South Eastern, E., & Forum for Public Health in South Eastern, E. (2007). *Health promotion and disease prevention : a handbook for teachers, researche[r]s, health professionals, and decision makers*. Lage: Hans Jacobs Pub. Co.
- Efron, R. (1969). *What is perception?* Paper presented at the Proceedings of the Boston Colloquium for the Philosophy of Science 1966/1968.
- Eriksson, M., & Lindström, B. (2005). Validity of Antonovsky's sense of coherence scale: a systematic review *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* (Vol. 59, pp. 460-466).
- Eriksson, M., & Lindström, B. (2007). Antonovsky's sense of coherence scale and its relation with quality of life: a systematic review. *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health, 61*(11), 938-944.
- Ernst Kossek, E., & Ozeki, C. (1998). Work-family conflict, policies, and the job-life satisfaction relationship: A review and directions for organizational behavior-human resources research. *Journal of applied psychology, 83*(2), 139.

- Flensburg-Madsen, T., Ventegodt, S., & Merrick, J. (2005). Why is Antonovsky's sense of coherence not correlated to physical health? Analysing Antonovsky's 29-item sense of coherence scale (SOC-29). *TheScientificWorldJOURNAL*, 5, 767-776.
- George, J. M., & Jones, G. R. (1996). The experience of work and turnover intentions: interactive effects of value attainment, job satisfaction, and positive mood. *Journal of applied psychology*, 81(3), 318.
- Gilbar, O. (1998). Relationship between burnout and sense of coherence in health social workers. *Social Work in Health Care*, 26(3), 39-49.
- Gobo, G., Seale, C., Silverman, D., & Gubrium, J. F. (2004). *Qualitative research practice*: Sage Publications Limited.
- Grant-Vallone, E. J., & Donaldson, S. I. (2001). Consequences of work-family conflict on employee well-being over time. *Work & Stress*, 15(3), 214-226.
- Green, J., & Thorogood. (2009). *Qualitative Methods for Health research* (2nd ed.). Great Britian: Sage Publications Inc.
- Green, W., & Raeburn, M. (1988). Health promotion. What is it? What will it become? *Health Promotion*, 3(2).
- Guest, D. E. (2002). Perspectives on the study of work-life balance. *Social Science Information*, 41(2), 255-279.
- Harkness, E. F., Macfarlane, G. J., Nahit, E., Silman, A. J., & McBeth, J. (2004). Mechanical injury and psychosocial factors in the work place predict the onset of widespread body pain: a two-year prospective study among cohorts of newly employed workers. *Arthritis & Rheumatism*, 50(5), 1655-1664.
- Hsieh, H.-F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative health research*, 15(9), 1277-1288.
- Jacobs, D., Mostert, K., & Pienaar, J. (2008). The experience of work-life interaction in the Northern Cape mining industry: an exploratory study. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences= Suid-Afrikaanse Tydskrif vir Ekonomiese en Bestuurswetenskappe*, 11(1), 17-36.
- Jang, S. J., Park, R., & Zippay, A. (2011). The interaction effects of scheduling control and work-life balance programs on job satisfaction and mental health. *International Journal of Social Welfare*, 20(2), 135-143. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2397.2010.00739.x

- Jones, R. (2006). Sociability, Solidarity, and Social Exclusion: Women's Activism in South Wales Coalfield. In J. J. G. L. Mercier (Ed.), *Gender In The Development Of A Global Industry* (pp. 96-118). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Judge, T. A., Bono, J. E., Erez, A., & Locke, E. A. (2005). Core self-evaluations and job and life satisfaction: the role of self-concordance and goal attainment. *Journal of applied psychology, 90*(2), 257.
- Karadzinska-Bislimovska, J., Risteska-Kuc, S., Stoleski, S., & Mijakoski, D. (2007). Health Promoting Workplaces. *Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, 292*.
- Kinnunen, U., Geurts, S., & Mauno, S. (2004). Work-to-family conflict and its relationship with satisfaction and well-being: a one-year longitudinal study on gender differences. *Work & Stress, 18*(1), 1-22.
- Knave, B., & Ennals, R. (2001 ). Working Life Across Cultures work life 2000 Quality in work and occupational health education in developing countries. *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics, 7*(4), 435-448.
- Korn, D. (2000). *Canadian Medical Association Journal, 163*, 61.
- Kouvonen, A., De Vogli, R., Stafford, M., Shipley, M. J., Marmot, M. G., Cox, T., . . . Kivimäki, M. (2012). Social support and the likelihood of maintaining and improving levels of physical activity: the Whitehall II Study. *The European Journal of Public Health, 22*(4), 514-518. doi: 10.1093/eurpub/ckr091
- Larson, D. B., Koenig, H. G., Kaplan, B. H., Greenberg, R. S., Logue, E., & Tyroler, H. A. (1989). The impact of religion on men's blood pressure. *Journal of religion and health, 28*(4), 265-278.
- Lewis, S., Gambles, R., & Rapoport, R. (2007). The constraints of a 'work-life balance' approach: an international perspective. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 18*(3), 360-373. doi: 10.1080/09585190601165577
- Lindstrom, B., & Eriksson, M. (2006). Contextualizing salutogenesis and Antonovsky in public health development. *Health Promot Int, 21*(3), 238-244. doi: 10.1093/heapro/dal016
- Liukkonen, V., Virtanen, P., Vahtera, J., Suominen, S., Sillanmäki, L., & Koskenvuo, M. (2010). Employment trajectories and changes in sense of coherence. *The European Journal of Public Health, 20*(3), 293-298.

- Loscocco, K. A. (1997). Work–family linkages among self-employed women and men. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 50(2), 204-226.
- MacDonald, G. (2003). *Ordering your private world*: Thomas Nelson Inc.
- MacEachen, E., Polzer, J., & Clarke, J. (2008). “You are free to set your own hours”: Governing worker productivity and health through flexibility and resilience. *Social Science & Medicine*, 66(5), 1019-1033. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2007.11.013>
- Marafi, H. (2013). Perception of Work Life Balance-An Investigation of Education Sector of East and West. *Asian Journal of Business Management*, 5(1), 174-180.
- Marks, S. R., Huston, T. L., Johnson, E. M., & MacDermid, S. M. (2001). Role balance among white married couples. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(4), 1083-1098.
- Matjasko, J. L., & Feldman, A. F. (2006). Bringing work home: the emotional experiences of mothers and fathers. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 20(1), 47.
- Michel, J., & Clark, M. (2011). Personality and Work-Life Integration. In S. Kaiser, M. J. Ringlsetter, D. R. Eikhof & M. Pina e Cunha (Eds.), *Creating Balance?* (pp. 81-99): Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- Mittelmark, M. (2010). *From risks to resources: Building models for salutogenesis*. Paper presented at the "Building models for salutogenesis".29th IUHPE World Conference on health Promotion., Geneva.
- Moen, P., & Yu, Y. (2000). Effective work/life strategies: Working couples, work conditions, gender, and life quality. *Soc. Probs.*, 47, 291.
- Morrison, I., & Clift, S. M. ( 2007). Antonovsky Revisited Implications for Mental Health Promotion Practice. *The International Journal of Mental Health Promotion*, 9(2), 36-46.
- Murray, G., & Peetz, D. R. (2009). *Women Miners: 'we're in like a virus and we don't mind the work either'*. Paper presented at the The annual conference of The Australian Sociological Association 2009: The Future of Sociology.
- Muto, T., & Yamauchi, K. (2001). Evaluation of a Multicomponent Workplace Health Promotion Program Conducted in Japan for Improving Employees' Cardiovascular Disease Risk Factors. *Preventive Medicine*, 33(6), 571-577. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1006/pmed.2001.0923>
- Offermann, L. R., & Gowing, M. K. (1990). Organizations of the future: Changes and challenges. *American psychologist*, 45(2), 95.



- Oldfield, G., & Mostert, K. (2007). Job characteristics, ill health and negative work-home interference in the mining industry. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 33(2), 68-75.
- Oxford Dictionaries. (2012). Definition of work-life balance. from <http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/concept?q=concept>
- Patton, M. Q. (2001). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*: Sage Publications, Incorporated.
- Pocock, B., Skinner, N., & Pisaniello, S. L. (2010). *How much should we work?: working hours, holidays and working life: the participation challenge*: Centre for Work+ Life, University of South Australia.
- Rapley, T. (2011). Some pragmatics of data analysis. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 273-290). Great Britain: London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Reio, T. G., & Ghosh, R. (2009). Antecedents and outcomes of workplace incivility: Implications for human resource development research and practice. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 20(3), 237-264. doi: 10.1002/hrdq.20020
- Reynolds, J. (2005). In the Face of Conflict: Work-Life Conflict and Desired Work Hour Adjustments. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67(5), 1313-1331. doi: 10.1111/j.1741-3737.2005.00219.x
- Richards, H. M., & Schwartz, L. J. (2002). Ethics of qualitative research: are there special issues for health services research? *Family Practice*, 19(2), 135-139.
- Sackey, J., & Sanda, M.-A. (2009). Influence of occupational stress on the mental health of Ghanaian professional women. *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*, 39(5), 876-887.
- Sagy, S., & Antonovsky, H. (1996). Structural sources of the sense of coherence - Two life stories of holocaust survivors in Israel. *Israel Journal of Medical Sciences*, 32(3-4), 200-205.
- Sagy, S., & Antonovsky, H. (2000). The development of the sense of coherence: a retrospective study of early life experiences in the family. *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 51(2), 155.
- Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: California 91320: Sage Publications Inc.

- Schueller-Weidekamm, C., & Kautzky-Willer, A. (2012). Challenges of Work–Life Balance for Women Physicians/Mothers Working in Leadership Positions. *Gender Medicine*.
- Shain, M., & Kramer, D. (2004). Health promotion in the workplace: framing the concept; reviewing the evidence. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 61(7), 643-648.
- Sharma, S., & Rees, S. (2007). Consideration of the determinants of women's mental health in remote Australian mining towns. *Australian Journal of Rural Health*, 15(1), 1-7.
- Silverman, D. (2010). *Doing qualitative research* (3rd ed.). Great Britain: Sage Publications Limited.
- Smith, J. M. (2008). Crafting Kinship at Home and Work: Women Miners in Wyoming. *WorkingUSA*, 11(4), 439-458.
- Solar, O., & Irwin, A. (2007). A conceptual framework for action on the social determinants of health.
- Steger, M., Mesenholl-Strehler, E., & Endler, P. C. (2010). Teaching Foundations of Salutogenesis in a Master's Program for Complementary Health Sciences. Evaluation research via Grounded Theory. *European Journal of Integrative Medicine*, 2(4), 224. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.eujim.2010.09.108>
- Stroh, M. (2000). Qualitative interviewing. *Research training for social scientists*, 196-214.
- Sturges, J., & Guest, D. (2004). Working to live or living to work? Work/life balance early in the career. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 14(4), 5-20. doi: 10.1111/j.1748-8583.2004.tb00130.x
- Süß, S., & Sayah, S. Balance between work and life: A qualitative study of German contract workers. *European Management Journal*(0). doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2012.12.003>
- Collective Bargaining Agreement Conditions of Service and Rates of pay schedule of the PMSU (2008).
- Thein, H. H., Austen, S., Currie, J., & Lewin, E. (2010). The impact of cultural context on the perception of work/family balance by professional women in Singapore and Hong Kong. *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 10(3), 303-320.
- Todd, S. (2004). *Improving Work-life Balance: What are Other Countries Doing?* : Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Labour Program.

- UN Women. (2010). Beijing and its Follow-up. 2013, from <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/>
- Validakis, V. (2012). Mining jobs blamed for poor work-life balance. from <http://www.miningaustralia.com.au/news>
- Valk, R., & Srinivasan, V. (2011). Work–family balance of Indian women software professionals: A qualitative study. *IIMB Management Review*, 23(1), 39-50. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.iimb.2010.10.010>
- Watts, J. H. (2009). ‘Allowed into a Man's World’ Meanings of Work–Life Balance: Perspectives of Women Civil Engineers as ‘Minority’ Workers in Construction. *Gender, Work & Organization*, 16(1), 37-57. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-0432.2007.00352.x
- Whitehead, T., & Kotze, M. (2003). Career and life-balance of professional women: a South African study. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 1(3), 77-84.
- Whittington, J. L., Maellaro, R., & Galpin, T. (2011). Redefining Success: The Foundation for Creating Work-Life Balance *Creating Balance?: International Perspectives on the Work-Life Integration of Professionals* (pp. 65). New York: Springer.
- WHO. (1986). WHO Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion. *WHO/HPR/HEP*, 95(1).
- WHO. (2005). *The Bangkok Charter for Health Promotion in a Globalized World*. Paper presented at the 6th Global Conference on Health Promotion, Bangkok, Thailand.
- WHO, & International Labour Organization. (2000). Mental health and work: impact, issues and good practices. Retrieved 2/03/2013, from <http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/gladnetcollect>
- Wilson, M., Dejoy, D., Vandenberg, R., Richardson, H., & McGrath, A. (2004). Work characteristics and employee health and well-being: Test of a model of healthy work organization. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(4), 565-588.
- Wilson, M. G., Dejoy, D. M., Vandenberg, R. J., Richardson, H. A., & McGrath, A. L. (2004). Work characteristics and employee health and well-being: Test of a model of healthy work organization. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 77(4), 565-588. doi: 10.1348/0963179042596522
- World Health Organization. (1948). Constitution of the World Health Organization. from <http://www.who.int/governance/eb/constitution/en/>

Zatzick, C. D., & Iverson, R. D. (2006). High-involvement management and workforce reduction: competitive advantage or disadvantage? *Academy of management journal*, 49(5), 999-1015.

Zedeck, S., & Mosier, K. L. (1990). Work in the family and employing organization. *American psychologist*, 45(2), 240.

## APPENDICES

### I. APPROVAL FROM NSD:

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS  
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



Harald Hårfagres gate  
N-5007 Bergen  
Norway  
Tel: +47-55 58 21 1;  
Fax: +47-55 58 96 5  
nsd@nsd.uib.no  
www.nsd.uib.no  
Org.nr. 985 321 884

Torill Bull  
HEMIL-senteret  
Universitetet i Bergen  
Christiesgt. 13  
5015 BERGEN

Vår dato: 25.04.2013

Vår ref.:34077 / 3 / LMR

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

#### TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 02.04.2013. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

34077	<i>Work-life balance and health of women in the Mining Industry in Ghana: A Qualitative Study</i>
Behandlingsansvarlig	Universitetet i Bergen, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Daglig ansvarlig	Torill Bull
Student	Irene Owusu-Poku

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.12.2014, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

  
Vigdis Namtvedt Kvalheim

  
Linn-Merethe Rød

Linn-Merethe Rød tlf: 55 58 89 11

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Kopi: Irene Owusu-Poku, P. O. Box 867 Fantoft Student Boliger, 5075 BERGEN

## Personvernombudet for forskning



### Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

---

Prosjektnr: 34077

According to the notification form there will be obtained written consent based on written information about the project and the processing of personal data. The Data Protection Official finds the letter of information satisfactory according to the Personal Data Act, hereby assumed that contact information regarding responsible institution and advisor are attached.

The information will be registered on a private computer. The Data Protection Official for Research presupposes that the use of a private computer is in accordance with the routines for data security for Universitetet i Bergen.

When the project is completed, by 31.12.2014, the data material will be made anonymous by deleting directly and indirectly identifying variables. In order for the data to be fully anonymised, all directly identifying data, such as names/reference numbers must be deleted, and indirectly identifying data in the remaining material must be deleted or changed.

## **II. EXPLANATION OF STUDY FOR PARTICIPANTS**

This study is about the work-life balance and health of women in the mining industry in Ghana. This study is a partial fulfillment for the requirement of the award of Master of Philosophy in Health Promotion at University of Bergen, Norway. Mining life has been aligned as a manly business because of its rigorous nature. Women are currently seen to be in such ventures and neither relegated their responsibilities of other non-work activities such as home care. This study seeks to explore how women balance their work and other aspects of life in order to move towards good health and to know the resources women use to cope for the betterment of their health and wellbeing. If you agree to participate, you will be involved in an in-depth interview lasting approximately 1 hour.

Your experiences can give important information to the study. If you agree in this study, your own name will not be used in the report and it will not be possible to trace who said what. Whatever is said in the interviews will not be passed on to other people on the mine site. Recordings of the interviews will be destroyed after they have been transcribed (written down).

Ten(10) women from your Company will participate in this study. If you agree to participate in the interview, you are also free to redraw anytime or may refuse to answer any part of the questions I ask. I also want to you to know that there is no economic reward for participating in this study.

If your agree to participate Please read and sign the statement below.

Thank you for your cooperation

**IRENE OWUSU-POKU (Principal Researcher, University of Bergen. Health Promotion Department. Mobile: 004746212062. Email: [ime044@student.uib.no](mailto:ime044@student.uib.no))**

**Supervisor: Torill Bull (Associate Professor), University of Bergen. Email: [Torill.Bull@iuh.uib.no](mailto:Torill.Bull@iuh.uib.no)**

**Signature of Principal Researcher.....**

**Date:.....**

**III. WRITTEN CONSENT**

The purpose of the study has been explained to me and I understand what is about. Participation will involve an in-depth interview.

It has also been made clear to me that if I agree to participate in the study my own name will not be used and in the written report, it will not be possible to trace who said what. Whatever is said in interviews will not be passed on to another person on the mine site.

Recordings of the interviews would be destroyed after they have been written down.

I accept willingly to participate

**SIGNATURE:.....**

**DATE:.....**



## **IV. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE**

**IRENE OWUSU-POKU**

**Work-life balance and health of women in the Mining Industry in Ghana:**

**A Qualitative Study.**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

AGE

MARITAL STATUS

#### **1. Perception of work, life and health**

- a. What does work mean to you?
- b. What does life (non-work activities) mean to you?
- c. Is work different from other aspects of life? How do you understand balance in the context of work and life?
- d. How do you understand health?
- e. Does work have any relationship with your health and wellbeing?
- f. How your non-work activities do relates to your health and wellbeing?

#### **2. Challenges**

- a. How is work preventing you from achieving other aims of life
- b. How are the other non-work activities retarding your progress at work?
- c. Are there any challenges to achieving what you aim for?
- d. How does your work interfere with non-work activities?

- e. Can we talk about any other thing that could be a source of challenge in achieving a work-life balance?
- f. Can we talk about some things that do not make you happy in the course of balancing work and demands of everyday life?

### **3. Forms of support to cope**

- a. What actually makes you happy?
- b. Can we talk about what keep you strong in the course of work and the demands of everyday life?
- c. How do you know that you have a work-life balance that promotes your health and wellbeing?
- d. How do you deal with stressful situations at work and outside work?
- e. What is the first resource that comes to mind when u think of a support?
- f. How do you feel about your Company's role on work and health issues?
- g. What comes to mind if you want your employer to improve to ensure a healthy work-life balance?
- h. Do you have leisure times, if yes how often do you have the leisure times what do u do during those times?
- i. Are there any resources that you could reach out for to be able to achieve a work-life balance?
- j. How do you feel, is there any time you feel you are in an unfamiliar and demanding job and do not know what to do?
- k. Tell me about any feeling you have and any wish to cope in your current position?
- l. How do you know if you have pleasure or satisfaction in your daily life?

*Thank you for participating in this interview! Is there any other thing you want us to discuss? Or tell me? I am ever ready for you. You can however call me if you have anything you want to share concerning this project.*

## V. CODES AND THEMES USED IN ANALYSIS

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Basic Themes</b>	<b>Organizing Themes</b>	<b>Global Theme</b>
<p>More work than others</p> <p>WLB depends on individual</p> <p>Equal attention for work and other aspects</p>	<p>More of work</p> <p>Subjective WLB</p> <p>Equal attention for all</p>	<p>Perceptions of work-life balance</p>	
<p>Ability to work</p> <p>Good relations with others</p> <p>Can afford all need</p>	<p>Physical ability</p> <p>Strong social relation</p> <p>Status in life</p>	<p>Perceptions of health</p>	

<p>Bodily pains</p> <p>Less hours of sleep</p> <p>Demanding tasks at work</p> <p>Commuting on bad road network to and from work</p> <p>Limited time for healthy living practices</p> <p>Inability to honor invitations</p> <p>Less time with families,</p> <p>Perpetual breaks in relationships</p> <p>Less time with children, tension at home</p> <p>Less time for church activities and worship</p>	<p>Poor Physical and Physiological health</p> <p>Poor social health</p> <p>Poor emotional health</p> <p>Poor spiritual health</p>	<p>Challenges/Stressors</p>	<p><b>Work-life balance and health of women</b></p>
--	---	-----------------------------	---

Nanny			
Relatives	Supportive Environment		
Supportive colleagues & Supervisors			
Comparatively good pay	Monthly Salary	Resources	
Company inputs	Company Health and wellbeing Strategies		

**VI. SUMMARY OF STRESSORS AND RESOURCES**

1. Bodily Pains	1. Rest during off days
2. Minimum sleep time	2. Rest during off days
3. Less time with family	3. Monthly salary compensates
4. Inability to honor invitations	4. Send parcels
5. Limited time with children	5. Nanny and close Relatives
6. Unable to attend regular	6. Monthly salary compensates