



Clearing the Pathway for Women in Wind: Improving gender-based outcomes in the Offshore Wind Industry

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Abstract

The Renewable Energy Sector recognizes that women are under-represented across the sector, in particular in technical roles. Yet organizational initiatives aimed at increasing women's participation and progression have not been as successful as intended. This poster details an ongoing three-phase program of empirical research applying mixed methods (semi-structured interviews, multiple case study analysis, survey). The research aims to understand (1) the lived experiences of women in the sector, (2) the underlying structures, processes and norms that generate these issues and (3) the development of practical evidence-based solutions that enhance experiences of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within the sector. Findings from phase 1 suggest an incongruence of organizational motivation for recruitment drives and (misplaced) quota-based initiatives and the experience of women upon joining. This is indicative of a problem with 'gender-washing' in that the sector is failing to live up to its promises to young women entrants. Furthermore, there is a disconnect between what organizations think is happening and actual experiences that is indicative of structural inequalities (Acker, 1990) as well as a potential legacy issue of 'masculine-dominated' energy sector (Murphy et al., 2021). Overall, findings indicate hidden costs of adverse gender-based experiences for both the individuals, allies and the organizations (and therefore the sector).

Keywords: Renewable energy, Engineer, Gender-washing, Practices, Structural inequalities, Legacy