**INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT**

**DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Union Position: Union member

Age: 40

Gender: Female

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| **INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT** | |
| **SPEAKER** | **DIALOGUE** |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Hi Melanie, how are you? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | I’m good thanks and you? |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Good thanks, um before we get started, I wanted to ask do you have any questions on your side and are you are aware that the interview will be recorded and transcribed for academic purposes. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So, no questions on my side. I do agree for the interview to be recorded. However, I do hope that the findings would be anonymous. Other than that from my side, that's pretty much from me in my introduction, so I'd like to hear a little bit more about you and about the research itself, |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Yes and of course, just to assure you everything will be kept anonymous. My name is Chloe. I'm a recent graduate of a company and I joined I think in February although it feels like forever with the time that's past. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Sorry which branch is it Chloe? |
| **INTERVIEWER** | The South African one. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Ah okay, cool. So you in Johannesburg as well? |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Yeah. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Okay, cool. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Um, so yeah, a little bit more about me. I'm doing my master’s in industrial psychology. So I'm investigating this, ER topic of trade unions. One that's been a bit difficult to get participants on but I'm hoping I can finish my interviews within this month because I know my target sample was the shop stewards, but then again, I thought I'm not sure how knowledgeable they would be on the subject.  So that’s why I'm reaching out to NUMSA for assistance. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So the NUMSA Research Institute is a sort of an arm located within the trade union space. So we are a research institute, per se. So that is our core business function, and we are located in the trade union space.  So we don't only serve as the trade union but all sectors that we organise in. So as the name suggests, it's an Economic Research and Policy Institute. So the work that we do is a high level. We also do the parliamentary work of the Union, all the policy work, and stuff like that.  So that is actually good. That you had chosen us as a participant in the study because we have more or less an overall insight into the into the subject matter per se. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Alright, great. I will ask at the end of the interview, but I think now that we've gotten over introductions, I see here they want to collect just a little bit of demographic information from you. So can you please just confirm your age and gender for me? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So I'm female and I don't know how does the demographics get into the into this but it's 40. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | You know, it's just to see the age range that my participants are in. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So, your participants age range will depend upon the nature of your interviews. So the level of knowledge production that you would want to get would HIGHLY impact the type of people you interview like you've mentioned earlier, you weren't really certain about the knowledge production in terms of the shop stewards exposure.  So, their knowledge sharing would be more of a practical experience whereas the different participants will offer different information in terms of the subject matter experts that you talk to, which is- which is generally what we do. So I guess you know, different age groups sometimes do play a role because in terms of experience and the knowledge that goes into it, but yeah, let’s leave it as that. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Alright. Great, then let me just jump right into the questions. So I want to know, from your perspective, what is the level of importance given to green transitioning and sustainable practices in the automotive sector? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Well, I think there's a huge importance for it. I mean, if you look at why the industry is changing in the first place is because of the … you know, global, the global influence in terms of the of the auto sector itself. So the auto sector in Sub Saharan Africa, obviously, our terms and conditions get dictated from the end of Europe because it's a multinational, it's a multinational company. So I don't know what your role is, if you can tell me that, I'll be able to put into perspective how we link the two sides are you on? Which end of the production are you on the shop floor? Or are you in the management space or? |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Um so mine is very, very far away from that, I'm in HR but I'm in talent acquisition. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Okay, so from that, um the reason why I ask Chloe is because I can give you something that would be able to assist you along those lines.  So in terms of multinationals, it impacts workers in a sense that the conditions that they impose on OEMs often find expression, in other countries in South Africa, Sub Saharan Africa and the likes. So because of the impacts and the stringent requirements and for us reduce our CO2 emissions etc. Hence, we the auto industry, obviously has to meet those global standards and sustainability goals.  So hence the route that yes, we have to do this. And obviously, climate change is a major problem. As you can see, I mean, we've never seen temperatures as low as we've seen them in Joburg. You know, there's a typical example. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Right, thank you for that. Um, so I want to also just touch on the specific green initiatives and practices that are currently being used. So can you please tell me um, what specific green strategies or practices are currently being implemented by the union to promote environmental sustainability now that you mentioned climate change? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So I don't know if you heard about the concept, there’s a very well-known concept called the Just Transition. So that is a concept. If the Union must really take credit for it, it's a concept that emanates from the labour movement.  But it's more about not just the concept for the sake of having the concept which is widely used now. But in essence, the choice of words is a just transition. So it's the transition from ice through combustion agents to electric vehicles, but it's our journey and how we actually get there when we say just so it's about the equality and the equity.  It's about the modalities of how we actually get to that point, meaning that jobs must not be displaced, and all of those socio-economic dynamics that goes with the justness and integrity of actually making that energy transition. I hope that answers your question, or do you want me to elaborate a bit more on certain aspects? |
| **INTERVIEWER** | I just would like to ask. So apart from the just transition, are there any specific like practices that is currently being done? Or would you say it all just falls under the just transition? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Well your question is quite broad. But if you look at the economy as a whole South Africa as a whole, right? We have different sectors within the economy. And when we talk energy, right, energy impacts us on every single level of our daily activities, whether it be in the automotive sector, whether it be in the manufacturing sector, whether it be in any sector of the economy. So this is a central question. It's a pillar for each manufacturing process, in whatever space in employment in itself in essence. Energy is pivotal for any organisation to be able to be productive, and to be able to conduct in the activities that they need to undertake.  So all work is energy intensive work, right. So every work is based on the premises that we need energy. So when we need energy, we need energy to be sustainable. Not like the challenges that we've been having with Eskom but obviously, is that we don't want power stations to be closed down because that displaces workers jobs. So when we say ‘Just’, we mean we need to do it. We need to make the change at a at a pace and at a cost that the country can actually afford considering our high employment figures that we currently experiencing. Our high levels of poverty inequality.  So those are the aspects that we look at when we mentioned the concept of Just Transition is that not being able to displace work and making energy affordable not just for workers but the entire South African citizen as a whole. And for businesses to be able to do business with ease and not have electricity prices spike up as you're seeing right now in the you know, the electricity debates that's currently transpiring. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Um, you spoke about displacing jobs for workers. So, I picked up that this might be a challenge or barrier. So can I ask apart from job losses, what are the other main challenges or barriers faced by the unions in the automotive industry in implementing green transition strategies? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | If you look at green transition strategies, firstly, what would be challenges right?  You asked what the challenges are. So if you look at moving different forms of energy, so there’s coal there is renewable energy and what are those renewable energy sources, right? So you want to use renewable energy sources, how do you get those renewable energy sources? So you need to look at is there infrastructure for this renewable energy sources, for example.  Challenge for workers is that if a worker for example, wants to move into the renewable energy sector, let's say for example, solar panels, right. How does that worker actually get skilled. So you go back to the institutions that actually trains workers, right.  What you find is that workers are being trained but workers are not being credited. And that's a huge challenge. Because as someone like you being in the HR field, it's absolutely useless to have a certificate of attendance and not a certificate of accreditation. So that's very important. From a trade union perspective is that for workers, is our workers must be trained but at the same time, workers must be accredited so that they can use that as a qualification in other in other career paths that they might want to take. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Okay and apart from the accreditation, would you say there are other factors that hinder the adoption of sustainable practices? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Well, yes, from a policy level, you'd have, you want to implement a policy but you don't have the infrastructure to do that. You'd want to say that you have for example, the energy policy, but do we have the infrastructure to be able to say we want to localise and localisation is a very important aspect for us as trade union. When we say localisation, we want you know, all of the components and the parts to be manufactured locally. Um and for us to be able to do that we need the infrastructure to do that. So infrastructure is a challenge skills is a challenge as well. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Okay, thank you. Moving on to collaboration and partnerships can you tell me, are there any collaborative efforts between trade unions to automotive companies and other stakeholders to drive green transitioning in the industry? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Absolutely so there isn't a stakeholder that I can tell who's not on board with the trade union so we engage with every single stakeholder and from the research institutes perspective, is that we engage with academics with universities and from government from different departments within government and parliamentary level. Both locally and on an international platform as well.  So all of the discussions that goes into the various strategies into the various policy documents has the input of labour, as a stakeholder as a key stakeholder within those discussions. So, thus, these various what you may call it collaborations they take place on a daily basis. So if something is needed to be done, we would sit down there probably have a discussion or workshop or we would have a research project. So various activities take place, and with various stakeholders, so stakeholders are very much included in all of the discussions. Labour is very much included in all of the discussions and the research institute is in key in all of the discussions as well from a policy strategic policy level as well. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Okay, you mentioned discussions and workshops that are taking place, are there other key activities that take place in terms of collaboration? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Yeah sure so each stakeholder would have their own sort of activity, for example, within the automotive space, we have different so I'm not sure if you're familiar with the auto motor master plan, are you? |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Not particularly, no. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Okay so from a policy perspective, there is the automotive master plan, and there's various structures from a government perspective that's already put in place. So NUMSA and various constituencies sit in those committees. So we sit in those committees. That's an example of where we actually provide our input in terms of the various aspects of the Master Plan. So various aspects.  So let's say if we look at Company B for example, and as a company as a multinational and Company B wants to implement a certain strategy, and we also have a very good relationship with our international stakeholders from Company B, and other OEMs that we interact with. So when you say committees, we have various committees that are set up, that speaks to auto-industry issues. And we work as well with different stakeholders even up to the education institutions, the merSETA’s as well. And then you sit on those on those committees as they provide input. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Thank you. Um, so I just wanted to touch on that for a second. I just want to ask, how effective would you say are these collaborations and how effective have they been in achieving sustainability goals so far? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | I would say the effectiveness depends on the stakeholder that is responsible for undertaking a specific task. Okay. I'll give you a typical example of what I mentioned earlier. This isn't that you have the Master Plan. So government is responsible for the implementation of the Master Plan and from a localisation perspective contained within the Master Plan. And the goals of the targets is to create 60% Local localisation by 2035. Right.  So if we have to look at where we are now, in terms of reaching that objective, we have not met the required targets, if we had to average it out to 2035. So if some sustainability goals are achievable while others are not achievable. And that would be primarily based on various factors, some within our control as a trade union and some aspects out of the trade union space.  Some related to the economy and obviously broader than the economies that you know, largely the international landscape shapes how we operate as a country because we are a developing country, as you know. So, obviously, the way we do certain things is impacted by the international influence on that as well. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Thank you. I want to move on to training and skills development, even though I know we did touch on it a bit earlier, but um, how would you say is the union supporting its members in adapting to the changing industry requirements? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So I think that the union has been very instrumental in this and rightly so because there are various changes taking place. If we look at it from an automotive perspective for the purpose of your context, is that we want we don't want workers to be displaced as a result of new technology, right? I'm certain that you've been on a production line. Am I correct? |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Yes. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Yes. So on the production line, you've seen that you've have your various automated machines the, very large KUKA machines right. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | The robots. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So even though I'm from a research space, I'm a very technical person as well, if I could just- you’ve been there so you've seen it right. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Yes. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So, those various machines, if you look at on the production line, there were various machinery that was not there previously, right. So from the production line from the Body Shop, to the Paint Shop to the assembly line. Those various tasks that was automated along those processes. And as a result, what we've seen is that more and more and more workers get pushed to the assembly line.  So it's actually displacing workers. Workers are not skilled to be able to go and perform other tasks. So what the union is trying to do is trying to skill workers to move from different skill levels. Right. And that would be to capacitate them in artisanal training and those what we're working with various stakeholders including merSETAs in order to be able to train workers so that they can be able to use the skills to be able to keep up with the changing transitions that's taking place. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | You spoke about artisanal training. Could you describe a little bit more of what that entails? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So the artisanal training, it’s training workers are new traits, right Artisans. So that would be let's say, for example, in the automotive industry, having trained workers in mechatronics. That's a specific core one I can give you the best example of so mechatronics training workers. Those workers that didn't have that skill before would now be able to work towards getting that skill and being a being accredited as an Artisan. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Okay, moving on to government policies and regulations. How do government policies and regulations influence the adoption of green practices within the automotive industry? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | It's a given, policy is a policy it's, in a sense non-negotiable. You have to implement it. But that's why further on you asked me what committees do we sit on. So what we try to do as a trade union is be part of the decision-making process before it actually becomes a final decision.  So before a policy actually becomes a policy, you get involved in the early stages of the design of the policy. So in terms of the development of the policy and the implementation of the policy, those are two aspects. So I hope that covers your question or is there some level of uncertainty on your side still? |
| **INTERVIEWER** | No, you’ve given me everything I needed. So from that, just based off your answer, I can assume that the trade union plays a very big part in advocating for these policies. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | I represent so for example, a policy on training and development. You know, what we advocate for is that we understand that various dynamics are taking place on a global platform, and OEMs are meant to implement this. Again, back to the energy question. Again, back to the just transition concept. Again, back to the sustainability job sustainability concept for the worker, to the committees that we sit in, at the end of the day, the end goal is to say that we want jobs to be sustained and not lost.  We want workers to be skilled and we want to be part of the decision-making process so that when a decision is made, it doesn't come down the line and cause a challenge for us. Because we say we told you so. So that's why unions are more and more involved.  I won't say more and more, now we’re actually part of a stakeholder, what we call a tripartite alliance. Between government between labour and between the private sector. So we have this relationship whereby nothing that they discuss does not include the union everything is with the union so you get everyone's opinion in there, before decisions are implemented. So you can foresee any challenges, explain it, raise it, and have that dialogue. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Thank you. Um, we're almost coming to the end of our interview. Just two more questions. I know we touched on the KUKA robots, a bit earlier. But I want to know, are there any other specific technologies that trade unions see as critical for a sustainable future in the automotive sector? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | Well, I think that technology is crucial. For where industry is moving right. But I also think that the trade unions perspective is that workers must not be left behind. While the technology is new, so the technology needs to compliment the worker not replace the worker. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Okay, that's very insightful. Okay and, yeah, we've come to the end of our interview, I just want to know, from your perspective, what can be done to enhance transitioning and sustainability within the automotive industry? |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So when you say sustainability, what specific aspects of sustainability um Chloe are you referring to because sustainability is a very broad term. So what specific aspects within the sustainability concept would you would you want me to expand on? |
| **INTERVIEWER** | I think for the purpose of my research, just based on the automotive industry moving away from conventional fossil fuel systems. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | So, sustainability, let's put it this way, then you will tell me if I managed to address it. So sustainability from a trade union perspective within the automotive industry, is for job sustainability for workers. Right. That could be our core sustainability goal. However, we realise that we don't operate in an isolated environment. There's various geopolitical variables that impact the way the economy functions as a whole so we’re very much mindful of that.  So we want to be able to reach our sustainability goals in terms of a green transition, but what people call green jobs should be quality jobs, should be jobs that are paying work, equal work. Pay for work of equal value, meaning that it should be quality jobs that people could do, skilled enough to do that, skilled enough to call you know, reach a sustainability goal but a job creation sustainability goal as well.  So it's all about having this balance of being able, I mean, it's not a perfect world, but we need to find some sort of balance of how we sustain jobs, together with how we meet our sustainability goals. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Thank you so much for that. I definitely learned so much. I think it was very refreshing for me because this was, I think, one of the few interviews that I had with rich, rich information. |
| **PARTICIPANT** | You're so welcome Chloe cause I sit on a lot of these platforms and digitisation is one of my specialities so I'm glad that we got the opportunity to discuss and to have a chat. And I hope that you know, I wish the best for you for your research and hopefully we'll be able to read the actual final outcome once it's completed. |
| **INTERVIEWER** | Oh, definitely! I think along the line once it is completed, I'll send you a copy as well so you can read it. |