

MANAGING MERCADO DEL MAR. A CASE OF WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY

CARMEN PEDROZA-GUTIÉRREZ

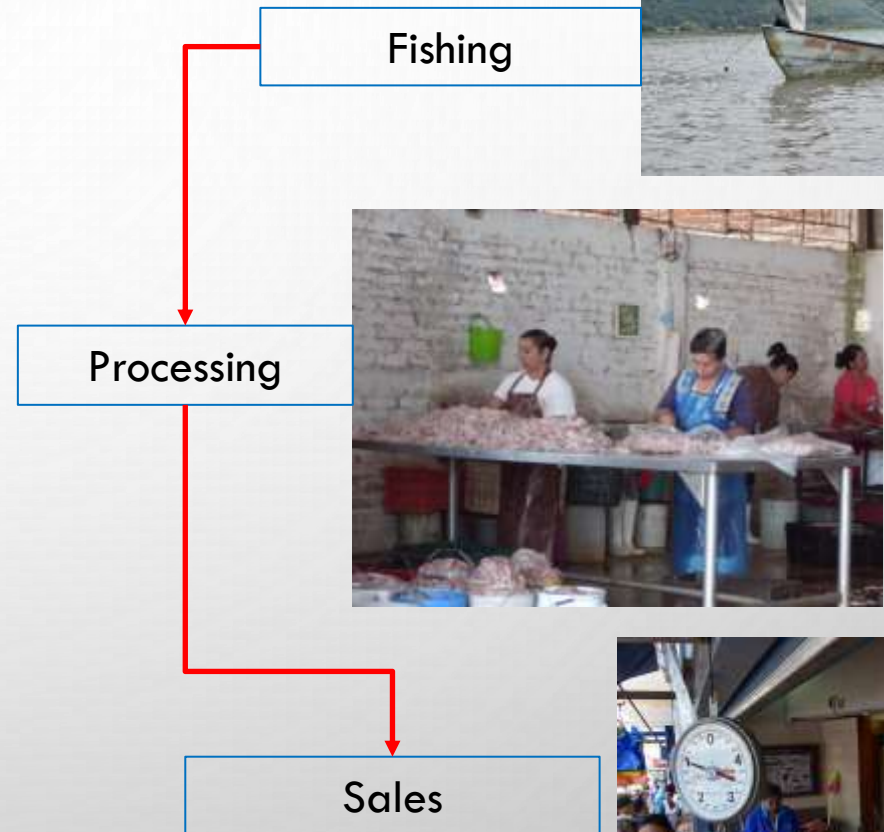
UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL AUTÓNOMA DE MÉXICO
(UNAM)



BACKGROUND

- Currently, women's work in fisheries has been identified all along the value chain, dominating in **post-harvest** and **administrative** activities.
- However, most studies talk about women's work in **low payment** employments and not influencing positions. Studies about women's participation in the fishing industry as business leaders are not so common in literature.

Fish value chain with female participation



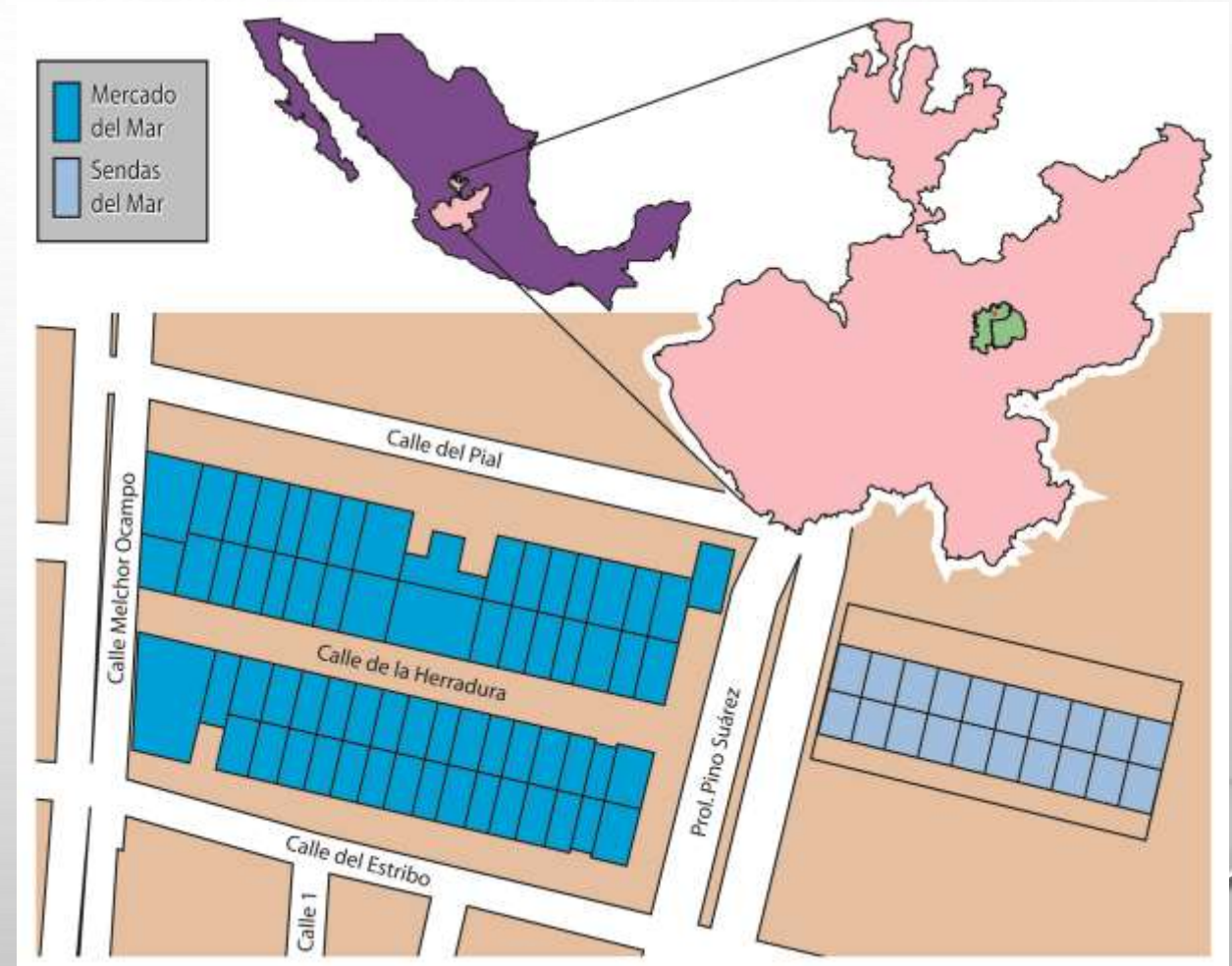
RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- The purpose of this article is to develop insights into this line of research, **women in managerial positions** within the fishing industry, by exploring women's experiences and hindrances in the Mercado del Mar, the second largest wholesale fish market in Mexico.
- More precisely, this paper attempts to **identify the main drivers that led women in the Mercado del Mar into fish trading and to accomplish the main managerial positions into their fishing businesses**, and an influential position in the MM.



METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND STUDY SITE

- The methodological approach used in this paper was A **qualitative case study**.
- Field data collection was between **2015** and **2017**.
- The main data collection source were the **in-depth interviews** to most businesswomen in the fish market and observation from the daily activities in the market.



THE MERCADO DEL MAR

- The Mercado del Mar was created in **1982**, and today is the second largest fish market in Mexico, and number one in the amount and variety of shrimp traded.
- About **80** percent of fish from the **Pacific Ocean** side of Mexico passes through this market.
- It is possible to find more than **350** fish varieties throughout the year.



THE NATURE OF TRADE

- Guadalajara has a strong **trading heritage** that, in part, explains the strong presence of women fish traders in the management of the **Mercado del Mar**.
- Jalisco is one of the Mexican states with the highest rate of female labor force 40.1%, even higher than the national media 38.5%.



A photograph of two women in a fish market stall. They are both wearing white aprons over dark clothing. The woman on the left has her arm around the woman on the right. They are standing behind a large, fresh pile of fish. In the background, there are white tiled walls, a straw hat hanging on the wall, and a plastic water bottle on a table. The entire image is framed with a decorative border of water bubbles.

RESULTS

Managing Mercado del Mar



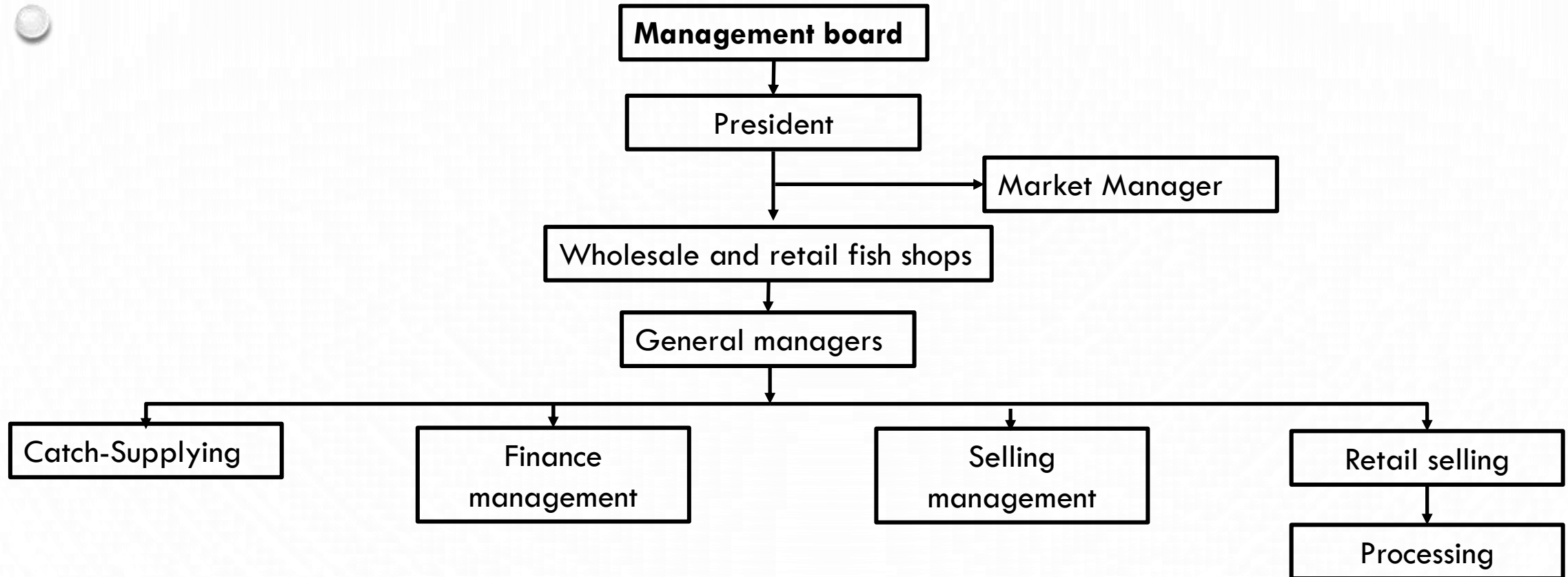
**Managing
Mercado del Mar**

Family networking

Gender division of labor

Perceptions and challenges

MANAGING MERCADO DEL MAR



- The market is organized as an **association**, headed by a management board, with a President and a manager, both of whom are women, and both of whom have vast experience in fish trade.

FAMILY NETWORKING

- Inheritance
- Family support – managerial skills
- Family value chain

Catch-Supplying

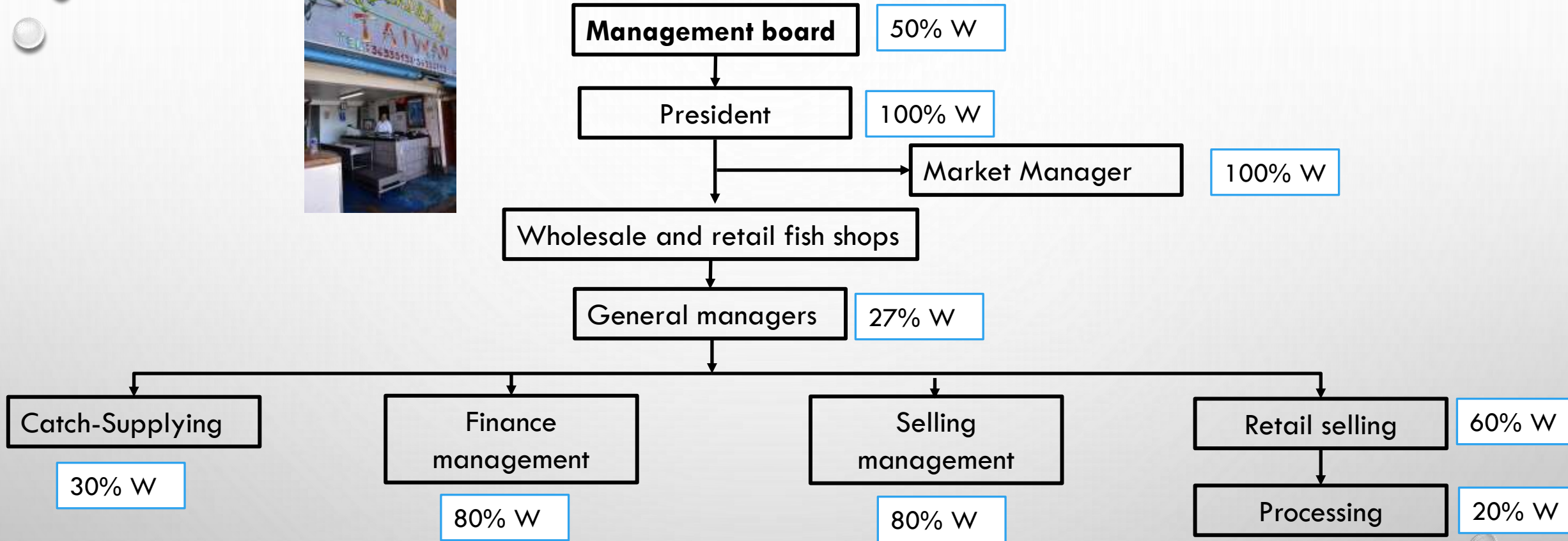
Processing

Selling

- The fish trading businesses are **family run**, many into their second or third generation.
- They grew up while selling fish, and most of their knowledge and skills about a job or how to manage a business were learned by living the experience of trading fish into their families' fishing businesses.
- Each family member is in charge of different links or activities within the value chain.



THE GENDER DIVISION OF LABOR IN THE MARKET



PERCEPTIONS AND CHALLENGES IN THE PATH TO EMPOWERMENT

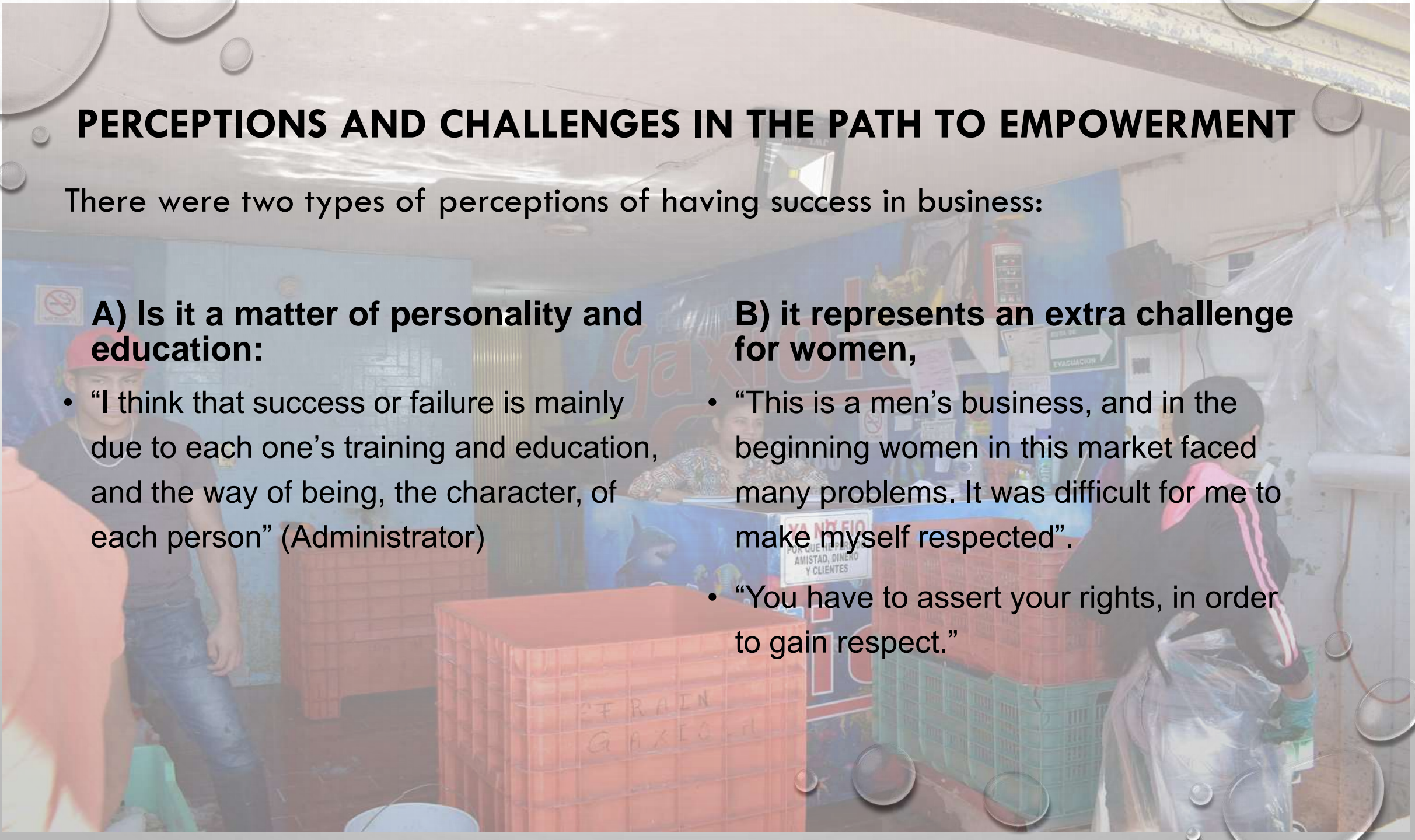
There were two types of perceptions of having success in business:

A) Is it a matter of personality and education:

- “I think that success or failure is mainly due to each one’s training and education, and the way of being, the character, of each person” (Administrator)

B) it represents an extra challenge for women,

- “This is a men’s business, and in the beginning women in this market faced many problems. It was difficult for me to make myself respected”.
- “You have to assert your rights, in order to gain respect.”



CONCLUSION

Empowering through:

- Family as a supportive structure
- Managerial abilities
- The division of labor is not exclusively gender-based, but also ability-based.
- Different ways of being – life training
- The opportunity to live in a city like Guadalajara.
- Despite the obstacles, these women have achieved a saying in the market decision-making processes (manage their households and take care of children)
- Empowerment is more likely to happen in the lives of women who are employed than in those of women who are not employed.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:
UNAM-PAPIIT IN301517**