

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

ScholarWorks@UARK

Agricultural Education, Communications and
Technology Undergraduate Honors Theses

Agricultural Education, Communications &
Technology

12-2023

Navigating Leadership Pathways: Learning Module Development

Alana Skogen

University of Arkansas, Fayetteville

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/aectuht>



Part of the [Agribusiness Commons](#), [Agricultural Education Commons](#), [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Gender, Race, Sexuality, and Ethnicity in Communication Commons](#), [Leadership Studies Commons](#), and the [Organizational Communication Commons](#)

Citation

Skogen, A. (2023). Navigating Leadership Pathways: Learning Module Development. *Agricultural Education, Communications and Technology Undergraduate Honors Theses* Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/aectuht/19>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Agricultural Education, Communications & Technology at ScholarWorks@UARK. It has been accepted for inclusion in Agricultural Education, Communications and Technology Undergraduate Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UARK. For more information, please contact scholar@uark.edu, uarepos@uark.edu.

Navigating Leadership Pathways: Learning Module Development

Alana Skogen

University of Arkansas

Table of Contents

Abstract	3
Introduction	5
Background and Need	5
Problem Statement	7
Purpose Statement	8
Creative Project Objectives	8
Literature Review	9
Differences in Leadership Styles Between Men and Women	9
Culturally Based Biases Women Face in the Workplace	11
Challenges Women with Additional Intersecting Identities Face	12
Challenges Women Face in Agriculture	12
Development Plan	14
Design Process and Creative Works	14
Module Outlines	15
Conclusion and Discussion	34
References	37

Abstract

Navigating Leadership Pathways is an innovative learning initiative designed to address the challenges and barriers faced by women in their pursuit of mid to high-level leadership positions. Comprising three self-paced modules, this project delves into the intricate landscape of gender bias, second-generation biases, and cultural norms that hinder women's progression in the workplace. Drawing on extensive research and real-world insights, each module provides a dynamic and interactive learning experience.

Module 1: Introduction to Gender Bias in Leadership

This module lays the foundation by exploring second-generation biases, leadership style differences between men and women, the glass ceiling, diversity, and inclusion. Participants engage in a fictional company case study, identifying challenges and biases, and choosing strategies to overcome them.

Module 2: The Ag Glass Ceiling – Identifying and Overcoming Leadership Barriers for Women in Agriculture

Focused on the agricultural sector, this module addresses specific challenges women face in this industry. A detailed case study of an inclusive gender-equal company in agriculture allows participants to simulate decision-making and understand strategies to overcome biases.

Module 3: Playing your Part: Creating a Gender-Equal Workforce

The final module guides participants on their role in reducing gender discrimination. Individualized responses offer tailored advice for various demographics, empowering participants to actively contribute to a more inclusive work environment.

This project leverages research findings on leadership styles, biases, and cultural influences. Interview data from professionals enhances real-world perspectives, contributing to a holistic

understanding of the challenges women encounter in their leadership journeys. The modules aim not only to inform but also to inspire positive change, fostering workplaces where diversity is celebrated, and leadership knows no gender bounds.

Introduction

Background and Need

Research exploring gender inequality in the workplace shows companies are demonstrating great strides towards equality, but not at a great enough rate in today's society (Barger, 2021). While the number of women in Fortune 500 leadership positions is gradually rising, up to 8.2% from 6.6% in 2019, progress is still slow. The number of women running these types of companies hit an all-time high of only 41 in 2021 (Women Business Collaborative, 2021). The low number of women in top corporate positions is often ascribed to a discriminatory glass ceiling (Vinkenburg et al., 2011).

Even though there is a gradual increase in gender diversity in leadership positions, women still suffer certain biases and stereotypes when compared to men. One of these biases, called second-generation bias, is a result of cultural assumptions (Vehige, 2020). This type of bias can be hard to detect, as it is not always intentional or directly harmful. Second-generation bias instead creates a context in which women fail to thrive or reach their full potential. It is typically embedded in stereotypes and organizational practices within a business environment. Feeling less connected to one's male colleagues, being advised to take a staff role to accommodate family, or finding oneself excluded from consideration for key positions are all examples of how second-generation bias can put women at a disadvantage in the workplace (Ibarra et al., 2013).

There is another long-standing bias that assumes women are meant to be mothers and care for their children instead of working. This bias can lead to doubts from company leaders, and sometimes even demotion from higher positions. With the advancements made in society, it is clear women do not hold the same priorities as in the past (Parker, 2020). While family life is

still important, women have the ability to adjust and advance in the workplace. This adjustment; however, proves to be hard due to the generalization of women taking care of their families. Women are most often the ones who adjust their schedules and make compromises when the needs of children and other family members collide with work, according to Parker (2020).

While women represent nearly half of the United States workforce, they still tend to devote more time than men to housework and childcare and less time to paid work, although the gap has significantly narrowed over time (Parker, 2020). Due to the assumption housekeeping and childcare are too time-demanding, women often face discrimination in promotions. Women are also excluded from professional networking activities outside of work, which is necessary for employees to socialize, politic, and build social capital for advancements to managerial roles. According to a study on the effects on COVID-19 on women in agricultural leadership positions, familial responsibilities for women with and without children were commonly referenced. Respondents acknowledged; however, maintaining a balance of responsibility allowed them to fulfill their roles at both home and work (Gardner, 2021). During the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the line between home and work life has blurred, as many women, at some point, converted to remote and virtual working styles. Three common themes emerged from the participants' experiences: the need for work-life balance, team empowerment, and communication, according to Gardner's (2021) study.

Problem Statement

With the number of women in leadership positions within the agricultural industry steadily increasing, it is important to recognize the challenges and biases they face, as well as how to overcome them. As of 2017, 36% of farms in the United States were primarily led by women, and women were outpacing men in bachelor's degrees earned in the fields of agriculture and natural resources (Louder, 2020). A lack of women in leadership positions within the agricultural industry still exists.

There have been various studies regarding gender biases and inequality, but there needs to be more outreach and educational efforts made to further eliminate these challenges. According to Vehige (2020), women in the agriculture industry experience an array of challenges due to their gender. Additionally, around 40% of the respondents reported less access to financing and lower income than men. These agricultural women's main concerns were financial stability, the welfare of their families and achieving a work-life balance (Schmidt, 2018). The COVID-19 pandemic has created even more barriers for women, as 54 million women around the world were displaced from work during the first year of the pandemic, which in turn widened the gender gap in employment (Rauhala, 2021). In order to lessen the biases and challenges women face in attaining agricultural leadership positions, future agricultural leaders must be aware of the biases and challenges to eliminate the glass ceiling.

Purpose Statement

Preceding this project, data was gathered to further identify the most common biases and challenges women leaders in middle and upper-management positions with companies earning \$50 to \$100 million dollars annually. The data was collected as part of a faculty research project and the sample was balanced by gender so true biases and challenges could be identified. The resulting data was implemented into self-paced learning modules to educate future agricultural leaders and prepare them for the challenges they might face. These modules will be distributed to those seeking leadership positions, regardless of gender, age, or ethnicity, to make as many people aware of these issues as possible.

Creative Project Objectives

The following research objectives guided this project:

1. Analyze and implement research data from the Women's Giving Circle grant project
Implement the data into leadership-based learning modules to be distributed throughout the University of Arkansas and future leadership development courses.
2. Conduct interviews with females in agriculture focused careers and develop a case study for a gender-inclusive agricultural organization.

Literature Review

Numerous efforts have been dedicated to discerning distinctions between men and women in professional settings. These variances serve as the foundational source of biases and obstacles encountered by women in the agricultural workforce and various other occupational domains. This review of existing literature sheds light on the underlying factors contributing to the discrimination experienced by women in the workplace. Whether stemming from differences in leadership styles, cultural norms, other marginalized identities, or the nature of predominantly male industries like agriculture, this examination unveils the multifaceted nature of challenges faced by women in these settings.

Differences in Leadership Styles Between Men and Women

Men and women typically display differences in leadership styles and work values. Women, when compared with men, more often display 'classic' leadership behaviors, such as idealized influence-behavior, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. Idealized influence entails serving as ethical role models with exceptionally high standards. Followers are inspired to emulate these leaders, fostering deep respect, trust, and a shared sense of vision and mission (Towler, 2019). Intellectual stimulation involves challenging assumptions, taking risks, and actively seeking followers' input to foster creativity and innovation. With this approach, the leader promotes independent thinking, encouraging followers to develop autonomy in their decision-making processes (Towler, 2019). Finally, individualized consideration in leadership is exemplified by a leader's dedicated attention to each follower's needs, assuming roles of mentor, coach, or guide. This entails active listening, empathetic support, and an understanding of each individual's background. Moreover, leaders demonstrating individualized consideration

recognize and nurture the unique talents of each follower, fostering intrinsic motivation and a desire for further development in the workplace (Towler, 2019).

Men usually display significantly more of the behaviors described by the 'laissez-faire' scale and the active and passive management-by-exception subscales of transactional leadership (Vinkenbunrg et al., 2011). Laissez-faire leadership is a hands-off approach where leaders give team members a high degree of autonomy and decision-making freedom. In this style, leaders offer minimal guidance and involvement in day-to-day tasks, allowing team members to self-direct (Cherry, 2022). Active management-by-exception involves the leader actively monitoring task execution and implementing corrective measures as needed to ensure that the work aligns with established standards (*Leadership Behaviours and Styles*, n.d.). In the passive management-by-exception approach, leaders await signals such as performance deviations, rule or procedure violations, complaints, and similar indicators before initiating corrective action (Blom & Alvesson, 2014).

For example, these differences can be observed through the decision of obtaining a college education. The choice to go to college is often financially influenced for men, whereas women tend to perceive it more as an opportunity their families' value. Men also tend to report college as a jump start into their career, while women report viewing college as more of a learning opportunity (Barger, 2021). When it comes to leadership values in the workplace, men assign more importance to power, conformity, and tradition values, while women assign more importance to stimulation, self-direction, benevolence, universalism, and hedonism (Consiglio et al., 2016).

It has been shown that typical gender stereotypes for women weaken their advancement within their careers and related areas. These stereotypes provide different forms of acceptability

for how men and women should demonstrate their leadership styles (Vehige, 2020). Women often face challenges in moving to higher leadership positions due to differences in leadership styles, which likely stem from English and American cultural perceptions of women being ‘weaker’ than men (Vehige, 2020).

Culturally Based Biases Women Face in the Workplace

Many of the challenges women face within the workplace are derived from outdated cultural norms. Business leadership positions are primarily male-dominated, and men tend to value power, achievement, conformity, and tradition within work environments (Burkard et al., 2002). Women usually value universalism, benevolence, stimulation, self-direction, and hedonism (Burkard et al., 2002). With more men than women in leadership positions, the ‘traditional’ work values lead to gender discrimination. Most women perceive gender discrimination as widespread, and less than half say they feel they have the same opportunities as their male counterparts. Many also experience difficulties in maintaining financial stability, work-life balance, and family welfare (Schmidt, 2018).

In a study conducted to identify cultural gender biases, all the women interviewed noted they, at some point in their career, felt they had been treated differently because of their gender. It was also a common theme among the respondents they felt obligated or expected to perform certain tasks simply because they were women (Gardner, 2021). Work done by women is typically not valued as highly by employers, and women are less likely to have access to mentors, sponsors, networks, and financial support than their male colleagues (Vehige, 2020). A 2012 Pew Research study found women tended to spend more time on average than men attending to housework and childcare and less time on paid work (Parker, 2020). The notion women are expected to stay at home and care for their children was also validated through this

study. Only 16% of participants thought a mother should work full time, while the rest of the respondents thought a mother should work part-time or not at all (Parker, 2020). These gender biases have created a glass ceiling women must break through, which proves to be a challenge in a predominately male-led society. In addition to gender discrimination, some women face additional challenges due to other types of discrimination.

Challenges Women with Additional Intersecting Identities Face

In addition to gender-based biases, some women face additional minority-based biases, such as racial discrimination, that can make it harder for them to obtain a leadership position. While women face a glass ceiling, Black and minority ethnic (BME) women typically encounter a ‘concrete ceiling’ in obtaining leadership positions within organizations; this represents “a barrier that is both denser and less easily shattered” (Wyatt et al., 2015, para. 5). It has also been found that BME employees tend to have work-relationship networks at lower organizational levels compared with those of their white colleagues. There is also evidence BME employees are less likely than white employees to find powerful mentors who are racially similar. This results in less opportunity for promotion, as the employees are not able to establish quality connections with higher-up individuals who are able and willing to share information about the more covert aspects of organizational functioning (Wyatt et al., 2015).

Challenges Women Face in Agriculture

Adding to the challenges women face in the agricultural workforce is the fact the field of agriculture is a male-dominated industry. As of 2019, the Census of Agriculture showed 36% of United States farmers were women (Shearing, 2019). This, in turn, causes unique challenges for women pursuing agricultural leadership positions. Most agriculture-based organizations have

more male employees than female, and a gender wage gap often plays a role in the lack of encouragement women receive for their personal involvement within the industry. In a survey intended to determine some of the barriers women face in the agricultural workforce, half of the survey respondents stated they experienced barriers in advancing in their careers due to their gender. One of the survey respondents noted, “sometimes I feel that if I was a man, I would have advanced faster” (Vehige, 2020, p. 23). The agricultural industry also involves the use of certain technology essential for success and environmental stewardship. Many women within the industry said they needed more training to take advantage of these technologies. This desire for training is one of the most cited needs for women trying to overcome the challenges they face specifically within agriculture (Schmidt, 2018).

Some of the challenges women face while pursuing leadership positions within agricultural organizations are derived from differences in men and women’s leadership styles, traditional beliefs about the role of women in society, other minority characteristics such as race, and the fact the industry consists of mostly male employees. Developing an understanding of how these factors affect women in the agricultural leadership realm is crucial to eliminating the glass ceiling so many face. Examining these challenges and developing ways to overcome them is essential in improving workplace equality and efficiency.

Development Plan

After examining past literature investigating these issues and reviewing data collected by University of Arkansas researcher about the barriers faced by women leaders, conversations with women working in a gender-equal workplace were held to draw real-world scenarios for inclusion in the planned learning modules. Using a technology-based platform, Adobe Captivate, three self-paced development learning modules were created. The following outlines guided the development of the learning modules:

The successful implementation of these steps allowed more in-depth leadership development courses to increase awareness of gender equality in the agricultural workplace. The qualitative nature of the chosen data collection methods will provide context about lived real-world experiences and case studies to better prepare future leaders in overcoming the challenges that women face. The goal was to develop modules to raise awareness about the challenges and biases women face in the agricultural workforce so the industry can evolve and become more inclusive.

Design Process

The journey to design these e-learning modules on breaking gender barriers using Adobe Captivate has been a methodical and strategic process, tailored to engage users on the complexities of gender biases in leadership.

Module Outlines with Research and Data: In-depth research and data analysis were conducted to create comprehensive module outlines. These outlines defined the content, structure, and learning objectives based on real-world challenges faced by women in leadership. Statistical insights and case studies were incorporated to substantiate the learning materials.

Implementation in Adobe Captivate: Adobe Captivate served as the primary tool for translating module outlines into visually appealing and informative content. Multimedia elements such as images, videos, and infographics were integrated to enhance the learning experience.

Interactive Design: Utilizing Adobe Captivate's interactive features, engaging scenarios and simulations were developed. This allowed learners to apply theoretical knowledge in practical, real-world contexts. Clickable elements, drag-and-drop interactions, and decision-making scenarios were implemented to keep users actively engaged.

Assessment Integration: Quizzes and assessments were seamlessly integrated within Adobe Captivate. These assessments served as checkpoints to evaluate learners' comprehension of the material. Immediate feedback was incorporated to reinforce key concepts and guide learners on their educational journey.

User-Friendly Navigation: An intuitive and user-friendly interface was designed within Adobe Captivate to facilitate seamless navigation. Progress trackers, clear instructions, and a logical sequence were implemented to enhance the overall user experience.

Accessibility and Inclusivity: Accessibility features such as closed captions, alternative (alt) text for images, and navigational aids were implemented to ensure inclusivity for diverse learners. Scenarios and case studies were crafted to be inclusive, representing a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

Module Outlines:

Module 1: Introduction to Gender Bias in Leadership

Objective: To introduce learners to the concept of gender bias in leadership, including its impact on leadership styles and values.

Content: Welcome to Module 1, where we explore the concept of gender bias in leadership. Today, we'll delve into second-generation biases, leadership style differences between men and women, the glass ceiling, diversity, and inclusion. We'll also examine the challenges faced by women in leadership positions.

Section 1: Breaking Through the Glass Ceiling

Content: The glass ceiling is a metaphorical concept that describes the invisible, yet persistent, barrier women face in their pursuit of leadership positions. Understanding this concept is essential for addressing gender-based leadership barriers. In the following slides, we will look at the factors that play into the formation of the glass ceiling and how they hinder women's pursuits of leadership positions.

Section 2: Leadership Styles and Values: Explain how men and women tend to display different leadership styles and work values (Consiglio et al., 2016; Vinkenbug et al., 2011).

Content: Men and women typically exhibit different leadership styles, which can be influenced by cultural and societal norms. Understanding these differences is crucial to addressing gender-based leadership barriers. Men often display more "laissez-faire" leadership behaviors, allowing for greater autonomy among their team members.

Additionally, men may employ both active and passive management-by-exception, where they intervene only when issues arise. In contrast, women often demonstrate leadership behaviors associated with idealized influence, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. They tend to set positive examples, show personalized care for their team members, and encourage creative thinking and innovation.

Click on each of the leadership styles to learn more about them.

Button: Laissez-Faire - Laissez-faire leadership is a hands-off approach where leaders give team members a high degree of autonomy and decision-making freedom. In this style, leaders offer minimal guidance and involvement in day-to-day tasks, allowing team members to self-direct (Cherry, 2022).

Button: Active Management-by-Exception - Active management-by-exception means leaders actively monitor their team, stepping in when issues arise to provide guidance and corrective action (*Leadership Behaviours and Styles*, n.d.).

Button: Passive Management-by-Exception - Passive management-by-exception is when leaders allow autonomy but intervene only when problems become significant, acting reactively (Blom & Alvesson, 2014).

Button: Idealized Influence - Idealized influence is a leadership behavior where a leader sets a positive example, demonstrating high moral and ethical standards. This behavior inspires trust and admiration among team members (Towler, 2019).

Button: Individualized Consideration - Individualized consideration is a leadership approach that involves recognizing the unique needs, goals, and strengths of each team member. Leaders who practice this behavior provide personalized support and development opportunities (Towler, 2019).

Button: Intellectual Stimulation - Intellectual stimulation is a leadership behavior that encourages creativity and critical thinking in team members. Leaders who stimulate intellect foster an environment where innovative ideas are valued and encouraged (Towler, 2019).

Section 3: Unveiling Second-Generation Biases

Content: Second-generation biases are subtle and often unintentional biases that hinder women's progress in leadership positions. These biases result from cultural assumptions, stereotypes, and organizational practices.

Section 4: Promoting Diversity and Inclusion

Content: Promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace is essential in helping women obtain leadership positions. Click on each of these concepts below to learn more about what they are:

Button: Diversity - Diversity recognizes the strengths of individuals from various backgrounds, including gender, race, and more.

Button: Inclusion - Inclusion goes beyond diversity to create an environment where all are valued and have equal opportunities.

Section 5: Intersectionality

Discuss how some women face additional minority-based biases, such as racial discrimination, which compounds the challenges they face (Wyatt et al., 2015).

Content: Understanding the challenges faced by women in different contexts is essential to addressing gender bias comprehensively. The challenges go beyond just gender and often intersect with other factors like race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation.

For example, women from Black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds often encounter a "concrete ceiling," which is a more significant barrier to leadership positions. They also tend to have fewer opportunities for powerful mentors and networking, further limiting their chances for promotion.

Section 6: Knowledge Check: Recognizing Gender-Based Bias in Leadership Scenarios

Content: In this knowledge check, you'll step into various leadership situations and be presented with challenges related to gender-based bias. Your task is to identify the type of bias present in each scenario based on the concepts we've discussed in this module.

Question 1: You discover a significant gender wage gap within your department, with women being paid less than men for similar roles. Addressing this issue is crucial for promoting gender equality. What type of bias might have contributed to this wage gap?

Answer Choices:

Option 1: Active Management-by-Exception (Incorrect)

Feedback: This answer is incorrect. Active management-by-exception typically involves leaders intervening proactively, but it does not directly relate to the gender wage gap issue.

Hint: Consider biases that could contribute to a wage gap based on gender.

Option 2: Second-Generation Bias (Correct)

Feedback: This answer is correct. Second-generation bias refers to subtle biases deeply ingrained in organizational cultures. In this scenario, it's possible that second-generation biases have contributed to the gender wage gap.

Option 3: Idealized Influence (Incorrect)

Feedback: This answer is incorrect. Idealized influence involves setting positive examples with high moral and ethical standards, which might not be the primary cause of the gender wage gap.

Hint: Think about biases that could lead to unequal pay based on gender.

Option 4: Intellectual Stimulation (Incorrect)

Feedback: This answer is incorrect. Intellectual stimulation is about encouraging creativity and critical thinking, which may not be directly related to the gender wage gap issue.

Hint: Consider biases that could lead to unequal pay based on gender.

Question 2: In your organization, you observe women from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds encounter greater challenges in obtaining leadership positions compared to their white counterparts. They face a "concrete ceiling." What type of bias is reflected in this situation?

Answer Choices:

Option 1: Glass Ceiling (Incorrect)

Feedback: This answer is incorrect. The glass ceiling is more commonly associated with invisible barriers limiting women's advancement in leadership roles, but it may not directly address the "concrete ceiling" faced by women from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Hint: Consider a bias that might create additional challenges for women of color in leadership positions.

Option 2: Idealized Influence (Incorrect)

Feedback: This answer is incorrect. Idealized influence involves setting positive examples and might not directly explain the "concrete ceiling" faced by women from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Hint: Think about a bias that might create additional challenges for women of color in leadership positions.

Option 3: Intersectionality Bias (Correct)

Feedback: This answer is correct. Intersectionality bias recognizes the unique challenges faced by individuals with multiple minority characteristics, such as race and gender. Women of color often face an intersectionality bias, leading to a "concrete ceiling."

Option 4: Passive Management-by-Exception (Incorrect)

Feedback: This answer is incorrect. Passive management-by-exception typically involves leaders intervening reactively, but it may not directly explain the "concrete ceiling" faced by women from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds.

Hint: Think about a bias that might create additional challenges for women of color in leadership positions.

Question 3: Promoting diversity in the workplace recognizes the strengths of individuals from various backgrounds, including gender and race. What does "diversity" primarily focus on?

Option 1: Gender equality

Feedback: Incorrect. While gender equality is an essential aspect of workplace diversity, it's just one component. Diversity encompasses various backgrounds, including race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, and more.

Hint: Diversity extends beyond gender. Think about the broader concept that includes a range of backgrounds and identities.

Option 2: Racial equity

Feedback: Incorrect. Racial equity is a critical aspect of diversity, but diversity itself is a more comprehensive term that includes various aspects beyond race.

Hint: Consider the multiple dimensions of diversity, not just racial diversity.

Option 3: Inclusion (incorrect)

Feedback: Incorrect. Inclusion is a vital element in promoting diversity, but it's not the primary focus. Diversity and inclusion are related but distinct concepts.

Hint: Think about the broader term that encompasses both diversity and inclusion.

Option 4: Variety of backgrounds (correct)

Feedback: Correct! Diversity primarily focuses on a variety of backgrounds, including but not limited to gender and race. It recognizes the strengths that individuals from diverse backgrounds bring to the workplace.

Question 4: Men often display which type of leadership behavior characterized by minimal guidance and a hands-off approach, allowing team members to self-direct?

Option 1: Active Management-by-Exception (incorrect)

Feedback: This option is incorrect. Active Management-by-Exception is a different leadership behavior where leaders actively monitor their team and step in when issues arise.

Hint: This style involves leaders actively intervening when problems arise, which is quite the opposite of a hands-off approach.

Option 2: Laissez-Faire (correct)

Feedback: This is the correct answer. Laissez-faire leadership involves a hands-off approach, giving team members a high degree of autonomy.

Option 3: Idealized Influence

Feedback: This option is incorrect. Idealized Influence is a leadership behavior where a leader sets a positive example, demonstrating high moral and ethical standards.

Hint: Idealized Influence is about setting a positive example and inspiring trust, not a hands-off approach.

Option 4: Intellectual Stimulation

Feedback: This option is incorrect. Intellectual Stimulation is a leadership behavior that encourages creativity and critical thinking in team members.

Hint: Intellectual Stimulation fosters an environment where innovative ideas are valued, which is different from a hands-off approach.

Question 5: D

Option 1: Second-Generation Bias

Feedback: This option is incorrect. Second-Generation Bias refers to subtle and unintentional biases that hinder women's progress, not the term for the invisible career barrier.

Hint: Second-Generation Bias relates to subtle biases, while we're looking for a term that symbolizes a career barrier.

Option 2: Diversity and Inclusion

Feedback: This option is incorrect. Diversity and Inclusion are important concepts related to workplace equality but are not the term used to describe the invisible career barrier.

Hint: These concepts focus on creating a fair and inclusive workplace, not the term for the barrier women face.

Option 3: Glass Ceiling (correct)

Feedback: This is the correct answer. The term "glass ceiling" is used to describe the invisible, yet persistent, barrier that women often encounter in their pursuit of leadership positions.

Option 4: Laissez-Faire

Feedback: This option is incorrect. Laissez-Faire is a leadership style, not the term for the invisible career barrier faced by women.

Hint: Laissez-Faire is a leadership style, not the term representing the challenge women face in their career advancement.

Module 2: Breaking Agricultural Barriers – Overcoming Leadership Challenges for Women

Slide 1: Introduction to Agricultural Leadership Barriers for Women

Content: Welcome to Module 2, where we will explore the specific challenges and leadership barriers women face in the agriculture industry. This module is dedicated to identifying and overcoming the "Ag Glass Ceiling." In this section, we will provide an overview of the unique challenges women encounter in agricultural leadership.

Background: Agriculture is a traditionally male-dominated field, but the landscape is evolving. As of 2019, the Census of Agriculture showed 36% of U.S. farmers were women (Shearing, 2019). Despite this, there are specific challenges that women encounter in agriculture.

Slide 2: The Ag Glass Ceiling

Content: The term "Ag Glass Ceiling" refers to the invisible yet formidable barrier that women in agriculture often face in their quest for leadership positions. This concept mirrors the more general "glass ceiling" but focuses on the agricultural sector.

Background: While women have made significant progress in agriculture, they still confront unique obstacles. According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, women make up only about 24% of leadership roles in the agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting industry (BLS, 2021).

Slide 3: Generational Biases in Agriculture

Content: Generational biases are deeply rooted in agriculture and affect women's ability to rise in leadership roles. Understanding these biases is crucial to addressing them.

Background: The agricultural industry has been historically male-dominated, which has perpetuated biases. These biases can affect hiring, promotions, and leadership opportunities for women in agriculture.

Slide 4: Gender Wage Gap in Agriculture

Content: The gender wage gap is a persistent issue in agriculture. It reflects the difference in earnings between men and women in the industry.

Background: Data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) indicates that the gender wage gap in agriculture exists at various levels. On average, women in agriculture earn less than men, and this wage gap is more pronounced for women of color (USDA, 2017).

Slide 5: Overcoming Agricultural Leadership Barriers

Content: To address the Ag Glass Ceiling, women in agriculture need to take specific steps to overcome these barriers.

Strategies for overcoming these barriers can include advocating for women in leadership roles, mentoring and networking opportunities, and challenging traditional stereotypes in the agricultural sector. Providing women with the necessary tools and training to succeed in their field can help them overcome the Glass Ceiling, as well. When faced with making decisions from a leadership perspective, it is important to minimize gender bias and make choices that are fair to all.

Slide 6: Case Study

Scenario 1: You are part of the hiring committee for a leading agricultural research institute, CropTech Innovations. Your committee is reviewing applications for a prestigious research position. Two candidates stand out, one male and one female, who both have impressive credentials and research backgrounds. During a discussion about who to interview, you notice a subtle bias emerging in favor of the male candidate. What should you do in this situation?

Option 1: Address the Bias: Choose to address the bias by acknowledging it and actively promoting fair evaluation and decision-making.

Feedback: Addressing the bias and promoting fair evaluation is the correct approach, aligning with leadership principles focused on inclusivity and diversity.

Option 2: Continue with Discussion: Allow the bias to continue without intervening in the conversation, following a laissez-faire approach to leadership.

Feedback: Allowing bias to persist is not an effective leadership strategy. It is essential to intervene when bias emerges.

Option 3: Promote Female Candidate: Counteract the bias by strongly advocating for the female candidate, prioritizing gender diversity in the team.

Feedback: While promoting diversity is valuable, the best approach is to address the bias and ensure fair decision-making.

Slide 7: Case Study

Scenario 2: You manage a team of farmworkers at a large agricultural cooperative, FarmLife Co-op. You have both male and female employees who are juggling demanding agricultural work and family responsibilities. One of your female employees has requested a modified work schedule to accommodate her childcare needs.

Option 1: Accommodate the Request: Choose to accommodate the female employee's request for a modified work schedule, recognizing the importance of work-life balance.

(correct)

Feedback: This approach demonstrates understanding and support for the employee's work-life balance, fostering a positive work environment.

Option 2: Deny the Request: Deny the request as you believe that work should always come first in the agriculture industry, following a passive management-by-exception approach.

Feedback: Deny the Request: Denying the request may disregard the importance of work-life balance, which can negatively affect employee satisfaction and performance.

Option 3: Extend the Offer to All: Extend the offer of a modified work schedule to all employees, ensuring fairness and equal treatment.

Feedback: While promoting fairness is essential, addressing individual needs for work-life balance is also important. Accommodating such requests is a best practice.

Slide 8: Case Study

Scenario 3: You're a supervisor at a mid-sized family-owned farm, GreenAcres Farms. Two employees, one male, and one female, have been working on your farm for several years. Both have consistently displayed dedication and skill. A leadership position has been posted, and it's time to choose the right person.

Option 1: Promote Based on Merit: Choose the employee who has consistently demonstrated the highest level of skill and dedication, irrespective of gender.

Feedback: This approach aligns with fair and effective leadership practices by promoting based on qualifications and performance.

Option 2: Promote Female Employee for Diversity: Prioritize promoting the female employee to enhance gender diversity within leadership, even though both employees are equally qualified.

Feedback: While diversity is valuable, the best choice is to promote based on merit to ensure the right fit for the role.

Option 3: Promote Male Employee for Tradition: Choose the male employee based on the tradition that leadership roles have typically been filled by men in the agriculture industry.

Feedback: Prioritizing tradition may perpetuate gender bias. The best choice is to promote based on qualifications and skills.

Slide 9: Conclusion

Content: Congratulations on completing Module 2! You've explored the unique challenges women face in the agriculture industry and learned how to overcome them. With this knowledge, you can contribute to breaking down barriers for women in ag leadership.

Reference: Understanding and addressing gender biases in agriculture is essential for creating a more inclusive and equitable industry (Schmidt, 2018).

Module 3: Playing your Part - Creating a Gender-Equal Workforce

Slide 1: Introduction to Gender Equality in the Workplace

Content: Welcome to Module 3, where we will explore how you can play a crucial role in creating a gender-equal workforce. This module focuses on practical steps and strategies you can take to contribute to a more inclusive and non-biased work environment.

Background: Gender equality in the workplace is essential for organizational success and employee well-being. It's not just about women's issues; it's about creating a fair and diverse workplace for everyone.

Slide 2: Your Role in Promoting Gender Equality

Content: Your role in promoting gender equality depends on your demographic and the specific challenges you might face or observe in the workplace.

Background: Your ability to contribute to gender equality is influenced by your unique characteristics and experiences. Understanding this is essential to play your part effectively (Heilman, 2001).

Slide 3: Gender Bias in Leadership Styles

Content: Understanding gender bias in leadership styles is the first step in addressing biases.

Background: Research by Vinkenburg et al. (2011) has shown that men and women tend to display different leadership styles. Recognizing these differences can help you challenge biases and support gender equality.

Slide 4: Bias in Decision-Making

Content: Bias in decision-making can hinder progress towards a gender-equal workforce.

Background: Decision-making biases can lead to unfair hiring practices and unequal opportunities for leadership roles. Recognizing and addressing these biases is crucial (Hekman et al., 2017).

Slide 5: Intersectionality and Multiple Biases

Content: Intersectionality highlights how multiple biases can intersect and compound the challenges individuals face.

Background: As mentioned in Wyatt et al.'s study (2015), women from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds often encounter both gender and race-related biases. Understanding intersectionality helps in addressing these complex challenges.

Slide 6: Strategies for Gender Equality - Women

Content: For women, promoting gender equality may involve strategies such as seeking mentorship and challenging stereotypes.

Background: Women in the workplace often face stereotypes and lack access to crucial support systems. Seeking mentorship can help them break through these barriers (Ibarra et al., 2013).

Slide 7: Strategies for Gender Equality – Men

Content: Men also play a crucial role in promoting gender equality. Strategies include challenging traditional norms and being active allies.

Background: Men can be allies in promoting gender equality by challenging stereotypes and supporting women in leadership roles. This can help break down the glass ceiling (Heilman, 2001).

Slide 8: Case Study - Promoting Gender Equality at GreenTech AgriCorp

Content: In this case study, we'll explore the experiences of employees at GreenTech AgriCorp, an agricultural technology company committed to gender equality.

Background: GreenTech AgriCorp has implemented various gender equality initiatives. By examining the experiences of employees in this company, we can gain insights into the potential solutions for creating a gender-equal workforce (Heilman, 2001).

Slide 9: Individualized Responses

Content: In this section, you will receive personalized advice and strategies based on your demographic and the information provided in this module. The goal is to empower you to take actionable steps towards creating a more inclusive and non-biased work environment.

Background: Your role in promoting gender equality can be tailored to your unique characteristics and experiences. Select your demographic to see how you can contribute to overcoming the challenges and biases women face within the workforce:

Button: Women in the Workplace:

Content: Women often face unique challenges in their pursuit of gender equality. As a woman, you can consider the following strategies:

Seek Mentorship: Connect with experienced mentors who can provide guidance and support in your career development. This can help you navigate challenges and break through the glass ceiling.

Challenge Stereotypes: Be an advocate for challenging gender stereotypes in your workplace. By demonstrating your capabilities and leadership skills, you can debunk biased assumptions.

Button: Men in the Workplace:

Content: Men can be powerful allies in the quest for gender equality. As a man, consider these strategies:

Challenge Traditional Norms: Recognize and challenge traditional gender norms that may contribute to bias. Support women in leadership roles and actively challenge stereotypes.

Be an Active Ally: Actively support your female colleagues and promote their leadership.

Allyship involves advocating for gender equality and demonstrating it in your actions.

Button: Minorities in the Workplace:

Content: Individuals with intersecting identities, such as race and gender, may face additional biases. If you belong to a minority group, consider the following strategies:

Advocate for Inclusivity: Encourage a workplace culture that values diversity and inclusion. Engage in discussions and initiatives that promote a more inclusive environment.

Networking and Support: Seek out networks and support systems that cater to your unique experiences. Building strong connections can provide valuable insights and opportunities.

Button: Managers and Leaders:

Content: If you hold a management or leadership position, consider the following strategies to foster gender equality in your organization:

Mentorship Programs: Implement mentorship programs to support the career growth of women in your organization. Encourage senior leaders to become mentors.

Equal Opportunities: Ensure that promotions and opportunities for leadership roles are based on merit and not influenced by gender biases. Promote a culture of fairness.

Button: Organizations:

Content: Organizations play a pivotal role in promoting gender equality. If you are part of an organization's leadership, consider these strategies:

Gender Equality Policies: Develop and enforce policies that explicitly promote gender equality and diversity in all aspects of the organization.

Training and Awareness: Conduct training sessions and awareness programs to educate employees on gender bias, diversity, and inclusion.

Slide 10: Continuing Your Journey

Content: As you continue your journey in leadership and advocacy, keep these key takeaways in mind:

Diversity Matters: Embrace and celebrate diversity in all its forms. Recognize the unique strengths and perspectives that individuals from various backgrounds bring to the table.

Challenge Biases: Actively challenge gender biases and stereotypes in your workplace. Be an advocate for fairness and equality.

Be an Ally: Whether you're a man or a woman, actively support your colleagues in their pursuit of leadership roles. Your allyship can break down barriers.

Inclusivity is Key: Inclusion goes beyond diversity; it's about creating a workplace where all individuals are valued, heard, and offered equal opportunities.

Continuous Learning: Stay informed about the latest developments in gender equality and leadership. Knowledge is a powerful tool for change.

Slide 11: Conclusion - Your Role in a Gender-Equal Workforce

Content: Congratulations! You've completed Module 3, where we explored the vital role you can play in creating a gender-equal workforce. By understanding the challenges, biases, and strategies discussed in this module, you're better equipped to contribute to a workplace where everyone has equal opportunities to thrive.

Promoting gender equality in the workplace is a collective effort, and your commitment to this cause can drive positive change. Remember, a gender-equal workforce benefits everyone, enhancing organizational performance and individual well-being.

We hope you found this module insightful and empowering. Your commitment to promoting gender equality is essential for building a more equitable and prosperous future!

Conclusion and Discussion

The development of the e-learning modules focused on unraveling the intricacies of gender biases and breaking barriers for women in leadership roles. This discussion section encapsulates the key insights, challenges, and implications derived from the entire project.

Key Insights:

- **Understanding Gender Biases:** The project delved into second-generation biases, leadership style disparities, and the pervasive influence of the glass ceiling on women's career trajectories. Real-world data and case studies were instrumental in illustrating the nuanced challenges faced by women.
- **Agricultural Sector Dynamics:** Module 2 spotlighted the unique challenges within the agricultural sector, shedding light on the gender wage gap, generational biases, and the need for overcoming these hurdles to promote gender equality.
- **Inclusive Solutions:** The modules went beyond merely highlighting the issues; they equipped learners with practical, inclusive solutions. Interactive case studies and assessments fostered a deeper understanding of how to navigate these challenges in different professional contexts.

Challenges Faced:

- **Complexity of Bias:** Unraveling the multifaceted nature of biases proved to be a challenge. Second-generation biases, cultural norms, and stereotypes required careful articulation to ensure learners grasped the subtle yet powerful forces at play.
- **Adapting to Diverse Fields:** Tailoring content for the agricultural sector involved extensive research to capture the industry's unique nuances. Ensuring universality while addressing sector-specific challenges required meticulous attention.
- **Balancing Realism and Optimism:** Striking the right balance between presenting the harsh realities of gender biases and fostering optimism for change was a delicate task. The modules aimed to inspire action rather than discouragement.

Implications and Future Directions:

- **Educational Impact:** The modules are poised to have a lasting impact on learners, offering a rich educational experience backed by research and real-world scenarios. The interactive nature encourages active engagement and application of knowledge.
- **Continued Iteration:** Ongoing refinement, based on user feedback and data insights, is crucial for maintaining relevance. Future iterations will address emerging challenges and incorporate updated research.
- **Scaling Inclusivity:** Beyond gender biases, future modules could explore intersectionality further, acknowledging and addressing biases related to race, ethnicity, and other aspects of diversity.
- **Organizational Integration:** Encouraging organizations to incorporate these modules into their training programs could catalyze systemic change. Recognizing the role of leadership in fostering inclusivity is pivotal for organizational growth.

In conclusion, "Navigating Leadership Pathways" aspires to be a catalyst for change. By illuminating the challenges, fostering understanding, and empowering individuals to act, these modules contribute to the broader dialogue on gender equality in leadership.

References

- Barger, K. (2021). *Gender inequality in the workplace* [Undergraduate Honors Thesis, University of Arkansas]. Scholarworks.
- Blom, M., & Alvesson, M. (2014). Leadership On Demand: Followers as initiators and inhibitors of managerial leadership. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, 30(3), 344–357.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scaman.2013.10.006>
- Cherry, K. (2022, November 14). *What is Laissez-Faire leadership?* Verywell Mind.
<https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-laissez-faire-leadership-2795316>
- Gardner, K. (2021). *Leading during COVID-19: Women in the agricultural industry*. [Undergraduate Honors Thesis, University of Arkansas]. Scholarworks.
- Ibarra, H., Ely, R., & Kolb, D. (2013, August 21). *Educate everyone about second-generation gender bias*. Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2013/08/educate-everyone-about-second>
- Leadership behaviours and styles*. (n.d.). Impact Factory.
<https://www.impactfactory.com/resources/leadership-behaviours-and-styles/>
- Louder, E. R. (2020, December). *Leadership styles and barriers to leadership for women in agriculture: A mixed methods study*. Utah State University Digital Commons.
<https://digitalcommons.usu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=9138&context=etd>
- Parker, K. (2020, August 14). *Women more than men adjust their careers for family life*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/10/01/women-more-than-men-adjust-their-careers-for-family-life/>

- Rauhala, E. A. N. (2021, August 28). *How the coronavirus pandemic threatens women's progress in the global workforce*. Washington Post.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/interactive/2021/coronavirus-women-work/>
- Schmidt, G. (2018, October 15). *Women in agriculture say barriers persist*. Corteva AgriScience. <https://www.corteva.com/resources/media-center/women-in-agriculture-say-barriers-to-equality-persist.html>
- Shearing, C. (2019, May 1). *Women Count in Agriculture*. Farm Bureau.
<https://www.fb.org/viewpoints/women-count-in-agriculture>
- Towler, A. (2019). The qualities of transformational leaders and what distinguishes them from transactional leaders. *CQ Net*. <https://www.ckju.net/en/dossier/qualities-transformational-leaders-and-what-distinguishes-them-transactional-leaders>
- Vehige, G. (2020). *Professional women in agricultural industry*. [Undergraduate Honors Thesis, University of Arkansas]. Scholarworks.
- Vinkenburg, C., Engen, M., Eagly, A., & Johannesen-Schmidt, M. (2011, February 1). An exploration of stereotypical beliefs about leadership styles: Is transformational leadership a route to women's promotion? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(1).
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1048984310001839?via%3Dihub>
- Women Business Collaborative. (2021, October 14). *8.2% of fortune 500 CEOs are women, according to the 2021 women CEOs in America report*. Cision PR Newswire.
<https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/8-2-of-fortune-500-ceos-are-women-according-to-the-2021-women-ceos-in-america-report-301400856.html>

Wyatt, M., & Silvester, J. (2015). Reflections on the labyrinth: Investigating black and minority ethnic leaders' career experiences. *Human Relations*, 68(8).

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726714550890>

