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The Use of Personal Disruption Strategies by Female Executives in the Property
Management Industry for Career Advancement

A Dissertation by

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Irvine, California

School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

February 2024

Committee in charge:

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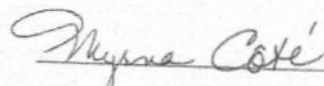
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February 2024

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by Lorri Oliver

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents Gale and Everlena Oliver. They have been a guiding light in my life, and I am forever grateful for their support and love. Though my mom is no longer with us, I know she is in heaven, beaming with excitement. I express my sincere gratitude to my beloved husband, Raimar. Your support and sacrifices have made it possible for me to complete my degree. Thank you for pushing me to be my best, encouraging me when I was down, and believing in me even when I didn't believe in myself. I love you. To my friend Neko Green, thank you for taking this journey with me. I will always cherish the long nights we spent on the phone working through our assignments, our daily check-in calls, and especially the historical laughter that got us through it all. To my amazing village of family, friends, and colleagues, your unwavering belief in me has strengthened me. To all the amazing women in my life and the fierce group of women who participated in the study, I want to express my gratitude for sharing your stories and experiences. The knowledge and insight you have provided have inspired and encouraged me and will undoubtedly inspire and encourage other women who are seeking to advance in their careers. Thank you! To my dissertation committee, Dr. Marilou Ryder, Dr. Myrna Coté, Dr. Marylou Wilson, and my cohort mentor, Dr. Roland, I sincerely appreciate your dedicated time and support throughout my journey. To the amazing women in my cohort and thematic team, thank you for your support and encouragement. I believe our paths have crossed for a reason and I am so excited we had a chance to build relationships that I hope will last for a lifetime.

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

-Philippians 4:13

ABSTRACT

The Use of Personal Disruption Strategies by Female Executives in the Property Management Industry for Career Advancement

by Lorri Oliver

Purpose: This explanatory mixed method study aimed to identify and describe the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's (2019) five disruptive career skills on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions.

Methodology: This mixed method study identified and described the impact of the disruptive behaviors of eight female executives in the property management industry across the United States. Respondents were purposefully chosen based on specific criteria. Using quantitative and qualitative research methods, the researcher gained a transparent view of female property management executives. To elaborate on the findings, the mixed methods design began with quantitative data collection, and then the researcher followed it up with qualitative research to further expand on the findings.

Findings: Examination of mixed method data from the eight female executives in the property management industry participating in this study indicated various findings. First, females who challenge and influence authority are more likely to challenge authority figures by providing indisputable facts and using influence tactics. Second, females are typically comfortable in unfamiliar situations and capable of improvising effective solutions. Third, female executives value their work speaking for itself rather than relying on self-promotion. Fourth, females had no issue welcoming a less prescribed career path to advance their careers, even with lateral career moves or demotions. Fifth, females

often prioritize decision-making abilities over likeability, even if it means making unpopular choices.

Conclusions: The study supported the literature that females possess certain strengths that prove to be useful when utilizing disruptive strategies. The strengths include being able to influence authority, mastering improvisation, openness to alternative paths toward achieving goals, and prioritizing respect over likeability. By leveraging these strengths, women can increase their chances of advancing in their careers.

Recommendations: It is recommended that females in the property management industry invest early in their careers by actively participating in female-to-female mentorship programs, enrolling in relevant leadership training, and joining industry-specific networking groups. By implementing these recommendations, females can master confidence, emotional intelligence, communication skills, and relationship-building.

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PREFACE

One faculty researcher and four doctoral students discovered a common interest in exploring specific behaviors women engage in to disrupt the protocols or processes already identified in the literature to secure promotions or executive leadership positions. The following five disruptive career skills were identified as the framework: (a) challenging and influencing authority, (b) preparing but also improvising, (c) engaging in effective forms of self-promotion, (d) welcoming a less prescribed career path, and (e) aiming for respect over being liked. Through their shared interest, a thematic study was conducted by the four doctoral students to identify whether the identified disruptive skills impacted females securing executive leadership positions. A secondary purpose of the study was that by studying this topic, the researchers can give female leaders the skills they need to break barriers into new and fulfilling careers in upper management. An explanatory mixed method study was used to identify and describe the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's (2019) five disruptive career skills on female advancement to executive leadership positions.

The four doctoral students collaborated with one faculty member to develop the purpose statement and research questions to ensure thematic consistency and reliability. The survey instrument, interview questions, and study procedures were designed as a thematic collaborative effort. The thematic group tested the device among themselves to identify any alterations that may have been needed. Each researcher then administered an online survey to female leaders to identify disruptive behaviors that may have impacted their career advancement to executive leadership. Following the survey, the researchers individually interviewed their study participants to explore the impact of disruptive

behaviors on their career advancement and the skills used to break barriers into new and fulfilling careers in upper management.

The term *peer researcher* was used throughout the dissertation to refer to the researchers involved in this thematic study. The peer researchers studied female leaders in the following fields: Dina Hernandez, Latina superintendents; Lorri Oliver, property management executives; Neko Green, senior pastors; and Tricia Thompson, superintendents from elementary background.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The underrepresentation of women in senior leadership roles in the workplace continues to be an issue even though women have the education and experience to be promoted. Historically, research has suggested that women have been underrepresented in senior leadership roles. Definitive studies on female leadership in the workplace have shown that women, although more educated today, are not advancing to senior leadership positions in their careers (Carlton, 2021; Guy & Fenley, 2013; Johnson & Mohr, 2019; Na & Kawahara, 2022). Specifically, the increase in educational achievement in the late 1960s has served as the foundation for women's advancement in the workforce throughout the past 50 years in the United States (Valerio, 2022). More recent findings from several studies report that most of today's graduates are female (Carlton, 2021; M. J. Perry, 2021; Woman in Academic Report, 2022). According to the Councils of Graduate Schools, in 2021, there were only 100 males enrolled for every 148 women in graduate school; men also earned a smaller percentage of master's degrees (less than 40%) and doctoral degrees (47% of the total) than women (Zhou & Gao, 2021). M. J. Perry (2021) reported that the previous academic year revealed that men were underrepresented in seven out of eleven graduate fields of study at both the masters and doctorate levels for both degrees. Nonetheless, Na and Kawahara's (2022) research stated that "high educational attainment and employment rates do not translate into executive and leadership positions" for women (p. 163).

Ariella (2022) identified that women represented 58.4% of the U.S. workforce, though only 35% held senior leadership positions, and only 8.8% of Fortune 500 chief executive officers (CEOs) are women (Ariella, 2022). In property management, women

make up the majority of real estate property managers but are disproportionately underrepresented in leadership positions. According to Zippia (2022a), 62% of property managers are female, and 38% are male in the United States. In addition, Zippia reported that women hold 23% of executive positions, 29% of senior management positions, 37% of manager positions, 42% of professional jobs, and 47% of support staff positions globally in the property management industry. Consequently, these percentages clearly demonstrate the underrepresentation of female leadership in the property management industry. Why is female executive leadership advancement not at a higher percentage despite women's education and access to gain positions of power and influence?

An abundance of property management research has identified barriers and biases that impact female career advancement to higher positions in property management. The areas identified as impeding factors that influence female advancement include structural barriers, self-barriers, and gendered organizations. Additionally, problems identified through literature include limitations to specific types of careers although qualifications are being met and self-sabotaging behaviors that may impede career advancement. The literature has indicated how these practices may affect the advancement of women to senior leadership roles.

Background

Women have served in leadership roles throughout history. Although women have historically assumed roles of raising children and working as secretaries or nurses, they currently account for most of the earned degrees (Carlton, 2021). Yet, they are not advancing in the areas of executive leadership. Studies show that women are significantly

underrepresented in leadership positions. Despite significant progress, women still face restrictions and obstacles in the workplace (Theodorou, 2022).

History of Women in the Workforce

Since the turn of the 20th century, especially during World War II, much for women in the workforce has shifted. First, women who were never allowed in the workforce had to start working because most men were at war. Before this, women were not allowed in most cases to seek higher education, so they did not have the experience or qualifications to meet the job requirements of a leadership position in the workplace (Gale, n.d.).

Women in the Workplace During World War II

Women have always worked outside the home to some extent but never in such large numbers as they did during World War II (WWII). Before the war, the women in the workforce consisted of lower working classes and minority women. Attitudes toward women in the workforce were diverse. Some thought women belonged in the home raising children, but “government propaganda encouraged women to enter the industrial workforce” (Breen, 2001, p. 62). One of the most iconic symbols of wartime, Rosie the Riveter, symbolized the changing gender roles women experienced during war. For many Americans, the thought of Rosie scared them because she was a strong and self-assured woman, not only saying women could do what men in the workforce had done but demonstrating that it could be done (Ferdinando, 2021; Guy & Fenley, 2013; McEuen, 2016). Six million women worked during the war for a salary, and Rosie was just one of them (The National WWII Museum, n.d.-b). Following men’s return from the war, it was

expected by societal norms that women would return to traditional roles. However, this was not the case for many women who found independence and enjoyed working.

Women in The Workplace Post-WWII

During the 1960s, women generally worked until they were wedded. According to Guy and Fenley (2013), women were expected to stop working and only care for the house and family after marriage. In the 1950s, women felt the pressure of society to get married. According to PBS (n.d.), a common stereotype was that women who went to college during this time usually did so only to find a husband. A husband and family life were far more important to women during this time. However, over time social standards accepted women's choice to work; population growth, economic demands, and legislation positively impacted the increase of women in the workforce (Guy & Fenley, 2013).

Protection for Women in the Workplace Title VII

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits workplace discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, or gender. Although overt discrimination was discouraged, employers continued to discriminate covertly by using seniority or job duration systems to determine promotions. Because women take leave to have and raise children, their career path is impacted differently than that of men. Although Title VII was meant to protect women, it was also a disadvantage for women because the gap in their work history while out having children negatively impacted their career journey. Employers could determine whether sex was a legitimate requirement for a job based on the nature of the position. Title VII was invaluable to establishing the Equal Employment

Opportunities Commission (EEOC), which was founded to enforce Title VII of the act (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2010).

Women's Education and Experience

Women historically have been underrepresented in senior leadership roles in the workplace. Definitive studies on female leadership in the workplace show that women are more educated today yet are not advancing to senior leadership positions in their careers (Carlton, 2021). Valerio (2020) stated, "The progress of women in the workforce in the United States during the past 50 years has rested on a foundation of educational achievement that accelerated in the late 1960s" (p. 180). According to research, women hold most degrees today (Carlton, 2021; M. J. Perry, 2021; Woman in Academic Report, 2022). However, "high educational attainment and employment rates do not translate into executive and leadership positions" (Na & Kawahara, 2002, p. 163). Given that qualified women continue to be underrepresented on boards and senior leadership positions, more research, policy, and practice guidelines are required. (Brancu & Desormeaux, 2022).

History of Women's Advancement Strategies

There have been great women throughout history who have contributed to the advancement of women in the workplace, such as Josephine Lowell, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, May Chen, and Lucy Parsons (Thorpe, 2018). Even with these great women paving the way, "women still face struggles in the workforce to advance into leadership roles" (L. Brooks, 2021, para.1). According to L. Brooks (2021), some of the strategies that women use today to get ahead in their careers include taking the initiative, furthering education, finding a mentor, and working effectively with other women.

The skills that push women to the top of their class at school give them average workplace evaluations (Johnson & Mohr, 2019). Female CEO statistics will continue to improve slowly; however, to make a significant improvement, women will need to acknowledge that the behavioral requirement in school of not being disruptive differs from the same rule used in the boardroom. In other words, to succeed and be recognized, women in the workplace must do what they have always been taught not to do, be disruptive.

History of Women in Property Management

Property management is a term used in the real estate sector to describe the necessity of maintaining and managing property (Denver Metro Association of Realtors, 2021; Plunkett, 2017). Property management, simply put, is the process of supervising and monitoring real estate operations (Aceable, n.d). Typically, a third-party contractor hired by the owner is responsible. According to Aceable (n.d.), there are four types of property management: (a) residential, (b) commercial, (c) industrial, and (d) special purpose. For the purpose of this study, the focus is on residential property management. This type of property management handles residential properties where a tenant might choose to live long-term. The type of properties includes single-family residences, vacation properties, multifamily residences, townhouses, condominiums, apartments, manufactured homes, and real estate owned properties (REO) properties (Aceable, n.d.; Plunkett, 2017).

Before the late 1970s, women were rarely seen in the real estate industry. It was not until the 1970s that they could independently finance purchases (Petry, 2022). Since then, women have made significant progress as homeowners and professionals in the real

estate sector. Outside the workplace, women naturally balance more responsibilities than males, such as maintaining households and raising children (Carey, 2017). These talents transfer easily to fast-paced property management positions.

In 2019, female property managers represented 62% of the industry in the United States with an average age of 47.2 (Zippia, 2022a). According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017), one in every two property and community association managers is a woman. Typically, women have risen through the ranks from administrative to assistant to manager jobs with lower salaries than males (Carey, 2017). Even though women dominate property manager positions and the industry, extensive research has shown that males dominate higher-level positions, limiting female opportunities for advancement to executive positions and access to positions of power and influence.

Leadership Barriers

Although the percentage of women in leadership roles has increased, women continue to face barriers and prejudices as they seek senior positions within the organization. These disruptions will negatively impact female executives' career progression if left unresolved. Three areas identified that impede female executive advancement include (a) structural barriers, which include policies, behaviors, and other conventions that systematically disadvantage a marginalized group and favor an advantaged group; (b) self-barriers, also known as internal barriers, which are obstacles to personal, professional, spiritual, and social development (McQuerrey, 2019); and (c) gendered organizations theory, which looks at organizations as places where gender dynamics and gender order are made and changed (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). Each

area is an influencing factor in the career advancement of female leaders in an organization.

Structural Barriers

Structural barriers refer to integrated experiences within the organization that impede the advancement of women, such as gender-specific environments, intolerance of maternity leaves, and desire for work–life balance. The underrepresentation of women in leadership roles has been touted as a deficit that prevents women from becoming leaders. Impediments to women’s promotion, sometimes known as glass ceilings, prevent or halt their rise to upper-level management and leadership roles (Gonzales, 2022). Equal rights for women have been fought for throughout history, constantly focusing on removing institutional obstacles.

Self-Barriers

In addition to structural barriers, women also serve as their own powerful barriers by engaging in self-sabotaging behaviors (Ryder & Briles, 2003). Self-sabotaging starts with an individual mindset and can limit female career advancement by women’s having false beliefs about themselves. Behaviors include thinking too small, not having a big enough vision to picture themselves as being something more than the position they are in, worrying or being scared that they are not enough, feeling uncomfortable about change, and not taking time to reflect and learn from experiences.

Gendered Organizations

Acker (1990) introduced the concept of gendered organizations in which roles reflect the past and evolve. An example would be organizations or positions that typically identify as a specific gender, such as males to construction and women to nursing.

Traditional gender roles were once held primarily by one gender but have since shifted to include members of the other gender. They represent a small percentage and will slowly grow to equal gender representation over time.

Female Executive Leadership Career Advancement

Women on their way to career advancement must overcome many systemic disruptions. Structural barriers are policies, behaviors, and other conventions that systematically disadvantage a marginalized group that favors an advantaged group. Self-barriers, also known as internal barriers, are obstacles to personal, professional, spiritual, and social development (McQuerrey, 2019). Gendered organization theory examines organizations as places where gender dynamics and gender order are made and changed (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). Once females can overcome systemic disruptions thought unshakeable, a new paradigm replaces the old through questioning old practices and encouraging change. This is known as a paradigm shift (Blount, 1998), a significant change that occurs when a new and different way replaces the traditional method of thinking or doing something.

Strategies for Advancement of Women in Property Management Leadership

Three advancement strategies are identified to support women's advancement in property management. The first is networking, sharing information and ideas with people who share a profession or interest, frequently in an informal setting (Hampel, 1987; Kagan, 2022; Neale, 2022). According to research, women create more value for themselves and others through connection. Neale (2022) added that relationships are necessary for job success, leadership, and career impact.

The second strategy involves professional organizations. Property management is a professional organization that oversees a piece of real estate by having an outside entity, typically an experienced property manager or property management business, oversee it (Brown, 2023). Active involvement in affiliated property management organizations promotes female visibility and supports females in building lasting personal and professional relationships. It presents opportunities to learn and grow from other like-minded professionals. The National Apartment Association, the National Multi-Housing Council, the Institute of Real Estate Management, and their local affiliates are examples of property management professional organizations that women should use as part of their career networking strategy.

Third is mentorship, the direction and advice a mentor gives, typically a more experienced worker or student at an organization or educational institution. A mentor is someone who has been where a person wants to be, has made errors but has learned from them, and is ready to help another avoid making the same mistakes. Women need help, especially those complacent in their property management careers. Strong, influential mentors are a valuable source of assistance (Kramer, 2021).

Theoretical Foundations

Investigating gender theories helps identify specific barriers that stand in the way of career advancement for property managers. This study has four theoretical foundations; they are (a) social theory, (b) role congruity theory, (c) expectancy value theory, and (d) gender organizational theory.

Social Theory

Social theory comprises ideas, hypotheses, thought experiments, and explanations of how and why human societies or their parts are formed, evolve, or even disappear (Harrington, 2022). For example, Eagly and Wood (2012) believed that gender prejudices drive our story and that people establish gender role assumptions through observing male and female behavior and inferring similar traits. Thus, women must work harder than their male counterparts to be noticed.

Role Congruity Theory

According to Eagly and Karau (2002), the role congruity hypothesis causes two types of prejudice against female leaders. Eagly and Karau described the first as considering women less favorable than males as potential leaders and the second as evaluating behavior that meets the expectations of a leadership position less favorably when a woman holds the position. Therefore, based on role congruity theory, women's social identities at work reflect gender stereotypes, especially in jobs in which there are not many women in leadership roles.

Expectancy Value Theory

This theory refers to a person's anticipation of success in a particular endeavor, and their perception of the chances of achievement can differ depending on past success or failure. In their research, Hyde and Kling (2001) identified two factors that relate to achievement expectancy: the confidence in one's ability to succeed in a task and value, which relates to the importance, usefulness, or enjoyment of the person's perceptions of the job. In addition, expectancy value theory stereotypes impact the expectations and success of women and their belief that it is worth it for them to advance to the next level.

Gender Organizational Theory

Gender organizational theory suggests that gender norms are present in businesses and professional relationships and favor men (Acker, 2019) and oppress women. Gender norms continue to be the basis for gender inequality in working life (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). Loden (2017) coined the term *glass ceiling* to describe the sometimes-invisible barrier to success in women's careers.

Theoretical Framework for Disruptive Career Skills

Several theoretical and conceptual frameworks have identified the disruptions that impede female career advancement. Christensen (1997) coined the term *disruptive innovation* to describe newcomers that can disrupt established businesses. Johnson (2015), author of *Disrupt Yourself With a New Introduction: Master Relentless Change and Speed Up Your Learning Curve*, adapted Christensen's disruption theory to develop a seven-point framework of personal disruption. Johnson and Mohr (2019) later identified five disruptive female career skills impacting women seeking advancement to executive leadership positions. These frameworks present a dichotomy of empowerment and connectedness to women who disrupt and sabotage their career advancement.

Disruptive Innovation

Christensen (1997) coined the term disruptive innovation to describe how new market competitors could disrupt established businesses in the mid-1990s. Over the past 2 decades, disruptive innovation has increased in importance, leading companies to implement disruptive change initiatives to upset their respective everyday industries. An example of disruptive innovation is the creation of Uber and how it disrupted the

transportation industry by giving consumers another level of luxury transportation options.

Five Female Disruptive Career Skills

Johnson and Mohr (2019) suggested that the skills that helped women do well in school are probably the same ones putting them in the middle of the pack in the workplace. The authors theorized that these same skills may not always propel women to executive leadership positions in their organizations. The first disruptive career skill identified is figuring out how to challenge and influence authority. Women in the workplace tend to ask what Johnson and Mohr call the “good girl” questions, which are questions like, “What does the boss expect of me?” and “In what ways am I failing to satisfy my boss?” These questions focus on serving and not disrupting. Johnson and Mohr described how students were taught to give the authority figure what they wanted in school to get the desired grade. The second disruptive career skill identified is to prepare but also learn to improvise. In school, everything learned comes from a book. Johnson (2019) explained how in the workplace, not everything can be found in a textbook, and women should learn to improvise and rely on what they know.

The third disruptive career skill identified is finding acceptable forms of self-promotion. In school, the teacher provides the work students complete, and all students are graded according to the teacher’s general expectations. In the workplace, one works hard and performs well; nonetheless, women must make sure people know about the hard work and excellent performance by sharing success. The fourth disruptive career skill involves welcoming a less prescribed, full-of-surprise career path. Johnson and Mohr (2013) gave an example of a trajectory in school that systematically offers students a way

to follow while keeping in mind that the career path may change in the workplace, and there may not be an outlined order for women to follow. Finally, Johnson and Mohr recommended that women go for being respected, not just liked. In the school social environment, to survive students had to act in a sure way to be desired; they had to be more relaxed and more intelligent than everyone else. In the workplace, Johnson and Mohr suggested that women should inspire to be respected over being liked to support career advancement.

Throughout history, women in leadership roles have been researched. Changing times and work situations have modernized previous viewpoints to accommodate shifting environments. The five career skills identified by Johnson and Mohr (2019) will support future research investigating the influence of personal disturbance on women's career advancement to executive leadership positions.

Statement of the Research Problem

Many women in the leadership pipeline aspire to advance to executive roles in their careers. As a result, researchers have spent time and energy studying female leadership to better understand why some women succeed in career advancement but others remain in the same stagnant role.

According to research conducted by Ariella in 2022, women accounted for 58.4% of the workforce in the United States. Zippia (2022a) said that 62% of property managers in the real estate industry are women. In addition, recent studies have shown that most of today's graduates are women. Yet despite their workforce experience, higher education, and dedication to the real estate profession, women hold significantly fewer leadership positions than their male counterparts.

Microaggressions and barriers undermine women's authority, thus making advancement to executive roles more difficult than for their male counterparts (McKinsey & Company, 2022). For example, existing literature identified by McKinsey & Company's (2022) *Women in the Workplace 2022* report stated that women are subjected to discrimination "not only because of their gender but also because of their race, sexual orientation, a disability, or other aspects of their identity," which is a result of women being denied or passed over for raises, promotions, or other chances to advance in their careers (p. 20). Other areas identified as influencing factors that impede female advancement include structural barriers, self-barriers, and gendered organizations (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). As a result, there is a lack of a female pool of candidates for advancement to executive leadership positions.

According to new research, as women advance in their careers, they frequently exhibit disruptive behaviors that may support or hinder their advancement. Crews (2020) and Vennes (2022) both discovered and discussed self-destructive behaviors encountered by female CEOs in their studies and examined the effects these behaviors have had on female career advancement, extending the possibilities for future research. Some of these behaviors include thinking too small, fear and worrying, misunderstanding oneself, acting with confidence, and disempowering other women.

It is paramount that the disruptive career skills that could foster female career advancement be identified and better understood to support female career advancement and diversify their leadership teams across organizations. In addition, identifying and using these disruptive behaviors to women's advantage will support other females who

desire to advance in their careers, allowing them to break the glass ceilings currently confining them.

There is a deficiency in the literature that identifies and describes the perceived impact of disruptive career skills (Johnson & Mohr, 2019) on females in the workplace and specifically, the advancement of female property managers to executive leadership positions. The lack of support for women in the property management industry could make it harder for women to move up in their careers and hurt the industry by not making the executive levels of organizations more diverse.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed method study was to identify and describe the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's five disruptive career skills (2019) on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions.

Research Questions

1. What perceived impact did challenging and influencing authority have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
2. What perceived impact did preparing and improvising have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
3. What perceived impact did engaging in effective forms of self-promotion have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
4. What perceived impact did welcoming a less prescribed career path have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
5. What perceived impact did aiming for respect over being liked have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?

Significance of the Problem

Women have historically been underrepresented in executive leadership roles. Research on women's leadership in the workplace has shown that even though women today have more education, they are not getting promoted to senior leadership positions (Carlton, 2021). According to Zippia (2022a), although women make up a sizable majority (62%) of the property management workforce, men dominate the industry's top leadership roles by 77%, making it harder for women to get to positions of power and influence and move up to executive positions.

Numerous studies on property management have found that although the number of women in leadership positions has increased, impediments and biases may hinder women's professional advancement to executive roles. Recognizing the obstacles women face while trying to move up the ranks in the property management industry is important for various reasons. According to Johnson and Mohr (2019), five disruptive career skills impact female advancement to executive leadership positions. This study's findings fills the literature's deficiency to support their thesis and focus on the perceived impact of disruptive career skills on the advancement of females in the property managers industry to executive leadership positions. The results of this study provide insight into how female executives in the property management industry have used any of these disruptive career skills successfully throughout their leadership journey.

Promoting women in executive leadership roles in property management can benefit the industry and organizations. According to research carried out by Catalyst (2004), there is a significant correlation between gender diversity and the financial performance of organizations; if more women are in leadership positions, the

organization will have a higher financial success rate. In addition, as more females reach executive positions, it will allow for other perspectives and viewpoints to support the growth of the industry and organizations. Based on this analysis, this research study focused on executive females in the property management industry that have broken through the glass ceiling and assumed executive leadership positions in high-level leading property management companies.

The significance of this study is that it identifies and describes the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's (2019) five disruptive career skills on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions. Based on the findings of this research, organizations can reconsider executive leadership recruiting and current promotional practices to diversify their executive levels with equitable gender opportunities. In addition, the study will also support organizations in providing additional support to females, such as assigning mentors. Findings from this study will also support females seeking to advance in their careers with a greater understanding of their disruptive behaviors and the personal and organizational barriers that may impede or support them in advancing their careers to executive leadership positions. Additionally, the study will offer evidence on using disruptive behaviors effectively to ensure female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions. Finally, new research on disruptive career skills will support females in identifying strategies and principles that female property managers have leveraged to attain executive leadership positions before them.

Definitions

The following terms are theoretical and operational terms relevant to the study. Theoretical definitions are cited from the literature, and operational definitions are the working definitions for this study.

Operational

Affirmative action. An active effort to improve employment or educational opportunities for members of minority groups and women (Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, 2022).

Authentic leadership. Leadership that is a result of strong relational capacity and the symbolic relationship of leader and follower (Eagly, 2005).

Barriers. Social constructs that interfere with the advancement of an individual in their career (Cassidy et al., 2021).

Bias. An inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair (J. L. Smith & Huntoon, 2014).

Culture. Learned beliefs, values, symbols, and norms common to a group of people (Northouse, 2010).

Cultural norms. What is encouraged, discouraged, accepted, or rejected within a group (Groysberg et al., 2020).

Discrimination. The act, practice, or instance of discriminating categorically rather than individually (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-a).

Diversity. The distinct traits that make a person unique, such as sex, race, gender, religion, education, age, ability, and national origin and culture (Williams, 2020).

Executive leadership. Executives are “doers,” who hold senior positions and above in an organization (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022a).

Gender role. How people are expected to act, speak, dress, groom, and conduct themselves based upon their assigned sex (Money, 1973).

Glass ceiling. An invisible barrier that prevents women from moving beyond a certain point in an organization (Hamilton, 2023).

Good old boy network. An informal system in which men with the same social and educational background help each other (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-c).

Imposter syndrome. When a person feels unqualified and unworthy of respect. The individual feels underestimated and undervalued despite their abilities (Bahn, 2014).

Inclusion. The act of including someone or something as part of a group, list, or a person or thing is included (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.-a).

Male-dominated. Controlling, prevailing, or powerful position, especially in a social hierarchy (Merriam Webster, n.d.-b).

Prescribed career path. List of steps to take in one’s professional life for progressing into different or more advanced roles at work (BambooHR, n.d.)

Property management. A term used in the real estate sector to describe the necessity of maintaining and managing the property (Denver Metro Association of Realtors, 2021; Plunkett, 2017).

Queen bee syndrome. Coined to describe the general phenomenon that in particular women who have been individually successful in male-dominated environments are likely to oppose the women’s movement (Staines et al., 1974).

Residential property management. A type of property where a tenant might choose to live long-term that includes single-family residences, vacation properties, multifamily residences, townhouses, condominiums, apartments, manufactured homes, and REO properties (Aceable, n.d.; Plunkett, 2017)

Self-barriers. One's mindset that limits advancement by having false beliefs about oneself (Schawbel, 2013).

Self-promotion. Communicating one's skills allows for the recognition of strengths by others (Schawbel, 2013).

Self-sabotage. Internal thoughts and external actions that work against oneself in getting what a person wants (Ryder & Thompson, 2022).

Sexism. Cultural and economic structures divide genders into dominant or subordinate subjects (Frye, 1983).

Social role. The part people play as members of a social group (McLeod, 2023).

Stereotypes. Beliefs about the attributes of people classified into a social category (Eagly & Carli, 2018).

Theoretical

Disruptive behavior theory. A seven-point framework by Johnson (2019) that is a proven algorithm for developing personal disruption and high growth for individuals, which includes

- taking the right risks
- play to your distinctive strengths
- embrace constraints
- battle entitlement, the innovation killer

- step down, back, or sideways to grow
- give failure its due
- be driven by discovery

Disruptive innovation theory. Innovation at the low of the market that eventually upends an industry (Christensen, 1997).

Expectancy value theory. A person's anticipation of success in a particular endeavor and their perception of the chances of achievement can differ depending on past success or failure (Hyde & Kling, 2001).

Five disruptive career skills theory. The five disruptive career skills of women are a proven path to success, which describes innovations that take root at the low end of the market, or create a new market, and eventually upend an industry (Johnson & Mohr, 2019).

Gender organizational theory. Roles that reflect the past and evolve (Acker, 1990).

Role congruity theory. Women's social identities at work reflect gender stereotypes (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Social theory. Comprises ideas, hypotheses, thought experiments, and explanations of how and why human societies or their parts are formed, evolve, or even disappear (Harrington, 2022).

Delimitations

This study was delimited to female vice presidents and above in the property management industry at a U.S. organization with long-term careers in the industry who have been promoted from an onsite position to a corporate leadership position. Only

senior vice presidents and above who (a) had at least 10 years of property management experience as senior leaders and (b) exhibited strong verbal and nonverbal communication skills were included in the sample group. To ensure these delimiters, the researcher used purposeful and convenient sampling.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters, a references section, and the appendices. Chapter II presents a literature review connected to women's educational leadership history and an in-depth look at women's personal disruption strategies to attain high-level positions within the property management industry. Chapter III describes the research design and methodology of the study. Next, it describes the instrument used to collect the data for the study along with the procedures. Additionally, an overview of the sample selected from the study is described. Chapter IV presents an analysis of the data and a discussion of the findings. Chapter V includes a summary, conclusion, and recommendations for the study. Finally, the study ends with a references section and appendices.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The goal of the literature review was to discover, analyze, and synthesize previous literature related to this study (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). It aims to examine and organize the research identified as it relates to the personal disruption of female executive leadership career advancement in the property management industry. Applicable research provided an overview and understanding of female executives with disruptive behaviors and how those behaviors impact women's career advancement in the property management industry.

In addition, the literature review presents the theoretical framework of barriers that stand in the way of the career advancement of females to executive positions in the property management industry. This research reviews the following four theoretical foundations: (a) social theory, (b) role congruity theory, (c) expectancy value theory, and (d) gender organizational theory related to the research. The literature review also includes several theoretical and conceptual frameworks by Johnson (2015) that are believed to impede female career advancement. The foundation of the research examined how gender impacts the career advancement of females in the property management industry. The literature review section provides the historical background of female leadership in the workplace. The review of previous research demonstrates that women, although more educated, have limited opportunities to advance in their careers to executive positions that align with identified behaviors. Other applicable research provides an overview of women in workplace leadership and their historical background, including during and post-WWII. In addition, the literature review introduces Title VII, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which protects women in the workplace by prohibiting

employment discrimination. Furthermore, the literature review sought to understand those females who might have disruptive behaviors and how that might impact women's career advancement in the property management industry by reviewing the background and history of women who have served in leadership roles throughout history, including but not limited to the history of women in the workforce, women's education and experience, history of women's advancement strategies, the history of women in leadership, the history of women in property management, and women currently in leadership roles in property management.

History of Women in the Workforce

Women's work history in the United States has always been a complicated narrative of family responsibilities, discrimination, a shifting economy, technology, and biases (Jacobs & Bahn, 2019). Through research, Goldin (1988), an economist for Harvard University, proved that the history of women's participation in the workforce dates back to as early as the 18th and 19th centuries with poor uneducated women. Goldin's research identified that women, through their active participation in cultivating and producing the goods that their families traded or sold for a living, played an important part in the financial well-being of their families, communities, and the overall economy. According to Lewis (2021), women represented 10% of the workforce in the 1840s, and that increased by 15% in the 1850s because of the Industrial Revolution in the United States. These percentages represent enslaved and indentured servants, Native Americans, and women from Africa and Europe. This shifted after things became more mechanized in the United States, and the number of women in the workforce dropped significantly.

Goldin (1988) cited four periods as part of her research on women's participation in the labor market after the lowest drop of women in the workforce (Jacobs & Bahn, 2019). The four periods are grouped in phases. Goldin framed the first three phases as evolutionary and the fourth as revolutionary. The first phase included the late 19th century to the 1920s. During this period, most of the workforce comprised uneducated, underprivileged women who frequently worked in manufacturing or other households outside their homes. According to Goldin, women who worked during this time were often unmarried and stopped working upon marriage. Because women who often did not work stayed at home to raise and educate their children, in the 1910s, there was a fluctuation of women entering the workforce as teachers or clerical positions based on the experience they cultivated as stay-at-home moms. Goldin's second phase included women between the 1930s to the 1950s. During this era, many married women were in the workforce because of a heightened request for clerical office positions, increasing from 10% to 25% of females in the workforce. Goldin's research also identified a significant increase in the number of married women in the workforce, from 8% in 1890 to a rise of 26% in 1930 to 47% in 1950. In the next phase, Goldin noted the significant increase of married women in the labor force, which became more common based on the growing availability of scheduled part-time employment. Goldin's final stage, "the quiet revolution," was from the 1970s to the early 21st century. During this time, growth was minimal for women in the labor force. Based on Goldin's research, during the 1970s, many women in their late teens shifted their career aspirations to anticipate lengthy, uninterrupted careers that would not be limited by marriage and children (Jacobs & Bahn, 2019).

Research conducted by Margolin (1967) showed that in the 20th century, women represented 18% of the United States workforce at five million women. According to Toossi, (2002), the percentage of women in the workforce has steadily increased from 34% in 1950 to 58% in 1990. According to Zippia's (2022b) research, female labor force participation at the time of this study was 56.8%, equating to 46.6% of the United States workforce and at its highest in 1999 when 60% of the working-age women were employed. Research has shown that female representation in the U.S. workforce has shifted since the turn of the century, especially during WW II. Women have taken advantage of the opportunities to join the workforce and, in some years, led the represented workforce percentage.

Women in the Workplace During WW II

Research has shown that women played a significant role in WWII war efforts. Before WWII, women in the workforce encompassed lower working classes and minority women. Attitudes toward women in the workforce were diverse. Some thought women belonged in the home raising children, but "government propaganda encouraged women to enter the industrial workforce" (Breen, 2001, p. 62). According to the National WWII Museum (n.d.-b), 6 million or more women worked in the factories during wartime, and three million were Red Cross volunteers. Further research indicated that women have always worked outside the home to some extent but never in the number they did in WWII. This was thought to be due to the American armed forces growing from one million at the beginning of 1941 to over 12 million in 1945 (Breen, 2001). With the men fighting in the war, women were asked to fill their positions on the production lines to

keep things going. In February 1942, the United States adopted a national manpower policy called the War Man Power Commission to expand manufactured war materials.

Gender changes in wartime for women were encapsulated in one of the war's most famous icons, Rosie the Riveter. For many Americans, the thought of Rosie scared them because she was a strong and self-assured woman, not only saying women could do what men in the workforce had done but demonstrating that all women could do it. There were 19 million women who worked during the war for a salary, and Rosie was just one of them. During this time, more married than unmarried women participated in the workforce, many of whom were mothers entering the workforce for the first time. Following men's return from the war, it was expected by societal norms that women would return to traditional roles. However, this was not the case for many women who found independence and enjoyed working.

Women in The Workplace Post-WWII

According to the National WWII Museum (n.d.-a), most women returned home to make way for returning servicemen following WWII. There was economic growth in the United States during the 1940s and 1950s because of the postwar reconstruction; labor force expansion was needed. In an effort to fill labor shortages, the government once again launched campaigns to encourage women to enter or stay in the labor market, such as Rosie the Riveter, the iconic image of a female factory worker encouraging females that they could do it (Breen, 2001). Despite the fact that employment was still rigorously separated by gender, the welfare state established jobs for women, such as nurses, midwives, cleaners, administrative employees, secretarial and assembly labor. Research on WWII mobilization has shown an increase in the female labor supply (Acemoglu et

al., 2004). The greatest proportional rise in female labor over the twentieth century was in the 1940s. Anitha and Pearson (2013) identified that female employment grew from 28% in 1940 to topping at 34% in 1945. In 1955 this number increased to 45.9%, and research found states that women in the labor force increased again to 51% by 1965. Over time, societal norms acknowledged women's decision to work, population expansion, economic pressures, and laws all contributed to a rise in the number of women in the labor force (Guy & Fenley, 2013). Despite the increase of women in the workforce during this time, women were still considered secondary workers. Research identified that females were paid less than males because their wages were not essential to the household and were considered extra wages (Striking Women, n.d.).

In the early 1950s, discriminatory practices were in place to ensure that women could only work in particular jobs or occupations, such as teaching and secretarial work. Women still working in the 1960s generally worked until wedded. After marriage, women were forced to stop working and only care for the house and family (Guy & Fenley, 2013). This was known as a "marriage bar," and it allowed employers to treat women as supplementary staff and required women, once married, to leave their employment (Goldin, 1988). Women who went to college during this period did so primarily to find a partner. Although it was common for married women to work part-time in the 1950s and 1960s, they continued to be paid less than men, often doing the same job, and once pregnant, they were often fired.

Equal pay continues to be an issue. In 2020, the gender pay gap was projected to be 80 cents for every \$1 men earn, according to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS Reports, 2021). Women have been campaigning for equal pay since the

1950s. The first females to actually receive equal pay based on being in the same job as a male were teachers and civil servant workers in 1961 and 1962 (Anitha & Pearson, 2013). However, occupations considered to be gender-segregated, such as secretaries, housekeepers, and clerical positions for women only, were excluded from equal pay and continued to receive minimum wage based on being labeled unskilled workers.

Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) was founded in America in 1903 as the first national organization to mobilize women employees (Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2023). According to the VCU Libraries Social Welfare History Project (n.d.), WTUL was originally founded 30 years priorly as a British organization. It united women of all classes to advocate for improved and more equitable working conditions (Fugiero, 2023). The WTUL succeeded in passing legislation that led to the elimination of child labor, an 8-hr workday, and minimum wages between 1907 and 1922 (VCU Libraries Social Welfare History Project, n.d.). Based on the findings of the research, WTUL membership increased through the 1950s and the 1960s. In 1946, approximately 1.6 million women workers (24% of all women workers) were unionized; by 1969, this number had increased to 2.5 million, representing 29% of all women workers (Undy, n.d.). The WTUL's main focus was to support women during this time to receive equal pay for the same assembly work women did as men.

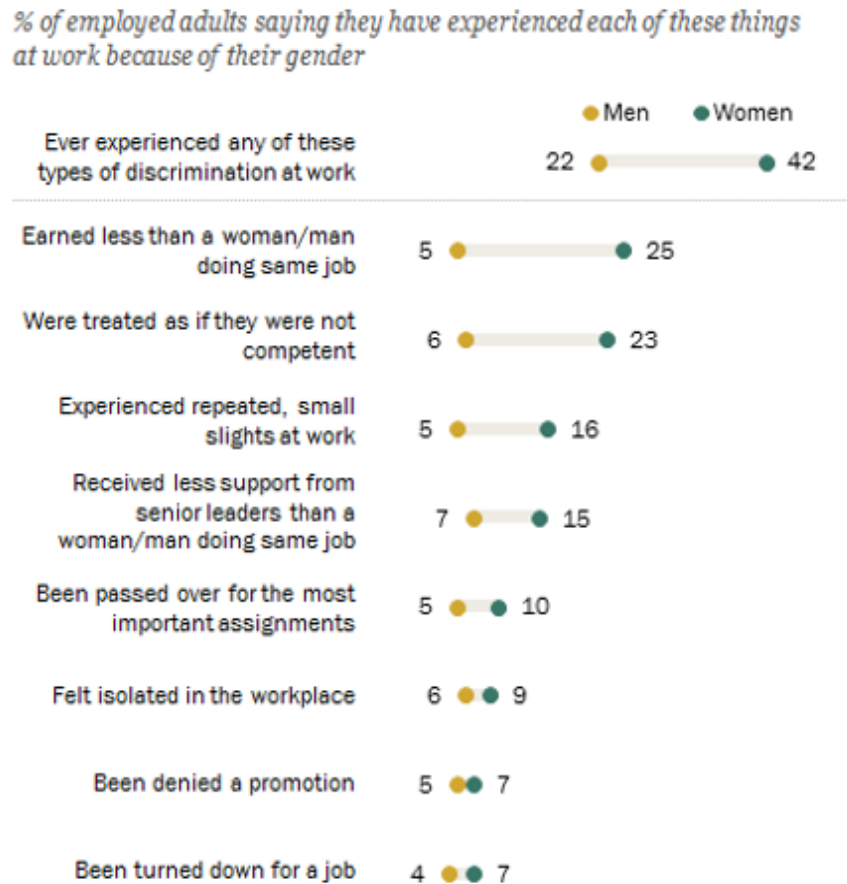
Protection for Women's in the Workplace Title VII

Gender equality in the workplace is a widespread problem that has existed for years. Despite regulations safeguarding employees' rights in the workplace against discrimination, research has shown that women still face significant disparities in the

workplace. Figure 1 shows that 42% of working women in the United States say they have experienced discrimination because of their gender.

Figure 1

Percentage of Working Women That Have Experienced Gender Discrimination



Note. From “Gender Discrimination Comes in Many Forms for Today’s Working Women,” by K. Parker and C. Funk, 2017, Pew Research Center, p. 1 (<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2017/12/14/gender-discrimination-comes-in-many-forms-for-todays-working-women/>).

Women are frequently overlooked for leadership positions although they often have greater experience and education, and if they do get promoted, the choice to promote them is often challenged or questioned by their male peers. Throughout history,

legislation has been established to protect all individual rights in the workplace, particularly women's working rights.

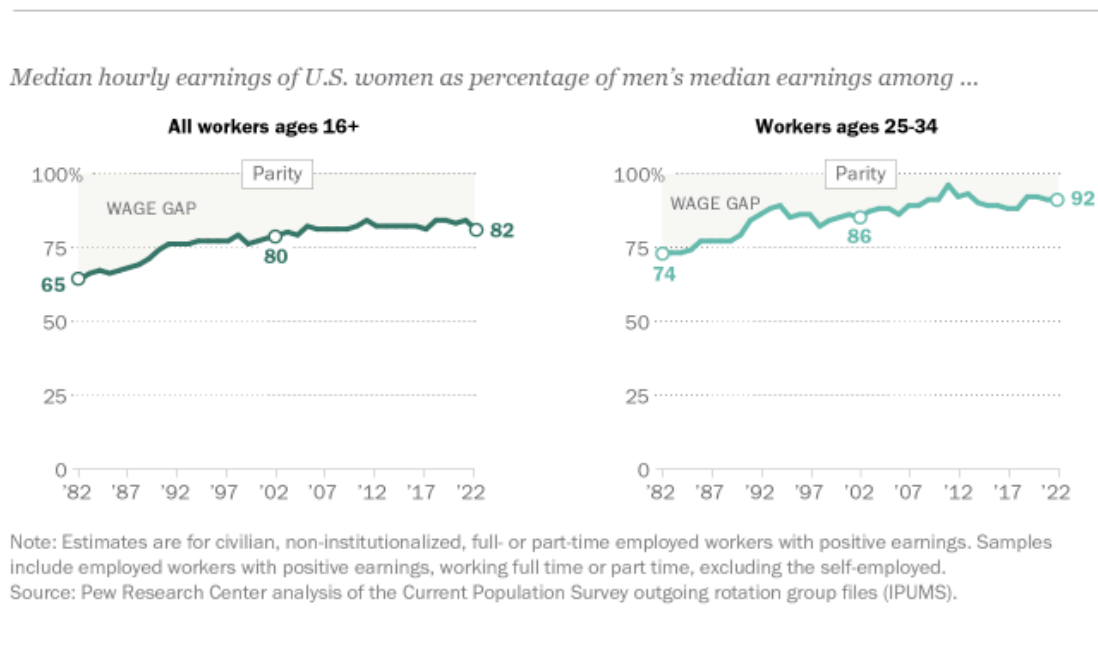
In 1942, The National War Labor Board advocated equal pay for equal work, which led to The Equal Pay Act of 1963, signed by President John F. Kennedy as U.S. legislation that mandated equal pay for equal work to end wage disparities based on gender (Fugiero, 2023). Before the Equal Pay Act, organized labor was devoted to the concept of a family wage, which was a wage for men who could support an entire family without the wife's contribution to the household (VCU Libraries Social Welfare History Project, n.d.). The concern was that increased female labor-force participation would reduce men's wages. Today, studies have revealed that the wage difference between men and women persists, and women receive only 82 cents for every dollar given to men (Aragao, 2023; BLS Reports, 2021). The gender pay disparity in the United States has remained persistent in recent years, as shown in Figure 2, with no significant improvement observed. However, it is worth noting that this gap has shown some signs of narrowing among younger employees. According to Parker and Funk (2017), 25% of working women reported earning less than a man doing the same job; however, only 5% of males reported making less than a female doing the same job. Although the Equal Pay Act of 1963 was enacted to support gender pay equality, the research identified that there is still a lot of work to be done.

The well-known Civil Rights Act of 1964, known as Title VII, declared that all humans are equal and prohibited workplace discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, or gender. Blatant discrimination was frowned upon; however, it did not stop employers from discriminating discreetly using employment duration or seniority

systems to determine employment promotions. Women’s job paths are influenced differently than men’s because they take time off to have and raise children. Although Title VII was intended to protect women, it was also a disadvantage for women because their gaps in work history while raising children harmed their career journey. Depending on the nature of the position, employers could determine whether sex was a legitimate requirement for the position. In short, Title VII was invaluable to improving gender equity, but it was imperfect. Despite its deficiencies, the act established a new standard for gender as a relevant identity that justified protection from discriminatory practices.

Figure 2

Median Hourly Earnings of U.S. Women as Percentage of Men’s Median Earnings



Note. From “Gener Pay Gap in U.S. Hasn’t Changed Much in Two Decades, by C. Arago, 2023, Pew Research Center, p. 1 (<https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/03/01/gender-pay-gap-facts/>).

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978, which amended Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prevented workplace discrimination based on a woman's pregnancy, childbirth, or associated medical conditions (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration & Management, n.d.). Before the act, businesses could and were laying women employees off or firing them based on pregnancy. According to the Institute for Women's Policy Research, for "women who took just one year off from work, annual earnings were 39% lower than women who worked all 15 years between 2001 and 2015" (Rose & Hartmann, 2018, p. 8). The Pregnancy Discrimination Act was enacted to establish that any adverse treatment of an applicant or employee based on their pregnancy is considered pregnancy discrimination, "including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoffs, training, fringe benefits (such as leave and health insurance), and any other terms or conditions of employment" (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration & Management, n.d., para. 1).

Age discrimination is another area in which women in the workplace have been discriminated against and often not considered for leadership positions. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 was made to protect applicants and workers who are 40 years old or older from age-based discrimination in hiring, promotion, firing, pay, terms, conditions, or benefits of employment (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.).

Ageism was traditionally defined as bias, stereotyping, and discrimination toward older workers; nevertheless, gendered age biases still thrive in workplaces for women ages 40 to 60 compared to male counterparts considered in their prime at the same age (Diehl et al., 2023). As part of their study, Diehl et al. (2023) surveyed 923 women leaders in higher education, faith-based nonprofits, law, and health care with open-ended

questions to determine the bias they may have faced in their jobs. The study found that middle-aged women, compared to their male counterparts, were viewed as more difficult to manage because of the perception of menopause-related issues or having more family responsibilities than males. Older and younger women in the workplace are often seen as invaluable and unworthy of advancement. What is clear in the ageism research found is that supervisors and coworkers can put a woman down at any age to make it seem as if she is not necessary or good enough to be a leader (Diehl et al., 2023; Torres, 2023). Despite the existence of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act for more than 5 decades, empirical research has demonstrated the persistent need for systemic reforms to address gendered ageism within the workplace. These reforms are crucial to facilitate increased representation of women in leadership positions.

The EEOC, which was first established to ensure compliance with Title VII of the Act (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2010), also ensures that all employees are treated fairly. To ensure that there is no discrimination based on gender in the workplace, the EEOC is empowered to investigate claims of discrimination made against organizations covered by the law. However, there are issues with the procedural requirements of the act. As the overseeing agency, the EEOC has no authority to bring suits, cease orders, or any other strictly speaking enforcement authority impacting female career advancement in the workforce.

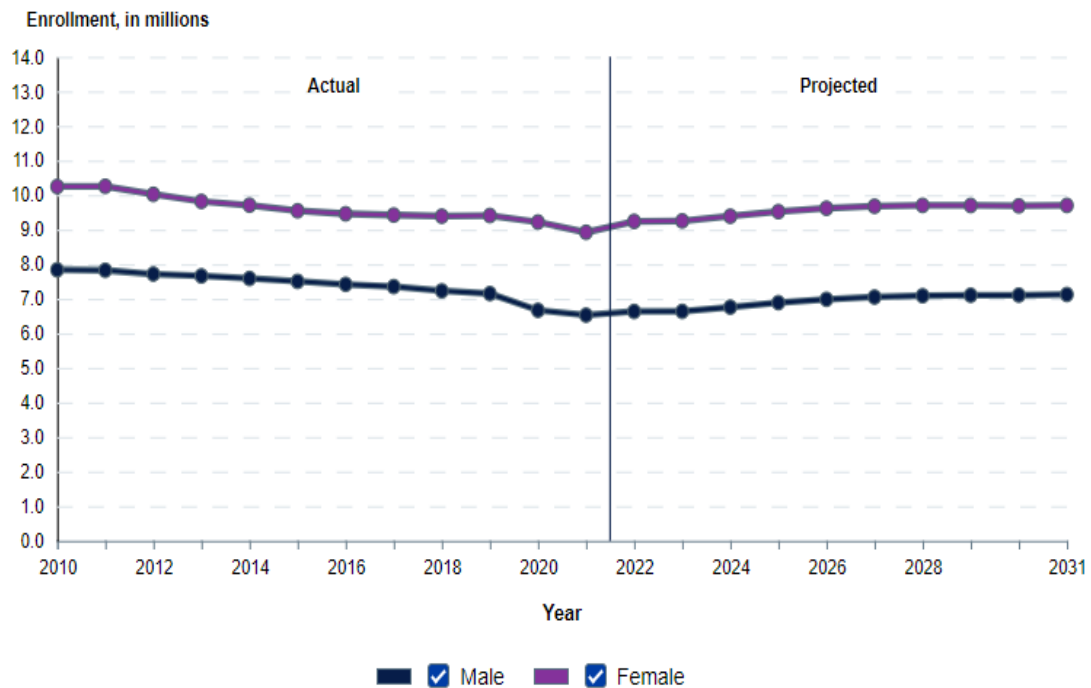
Women's Experience in Education

Over the last 50 years, women have improved their labor force participation, wages, and access to higher-paying jobs based on educational achievement (Geiger & Parker, 2018; Valerio, 2022). Women have traditionally held fewer positions of power

and influence in the workplace despite seeking higher education more than most males in higher positions. Female students made up 58% (8.9 million) of all undergraduate enrollment in degree-granting research institutions between fall 2010 and fall 2021, and male students made up just 42% (6.5 million) according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2022). In the following 10 years, it is anticipated that females will continue to enroll at a higher rate than males, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3

Undergraduate Enrollment by Sex



Note. From “Undergraduate Enrollment. Condition of Education,” by National Center for Education Statistics, 2022, U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, p. 3. (<https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/cha>).

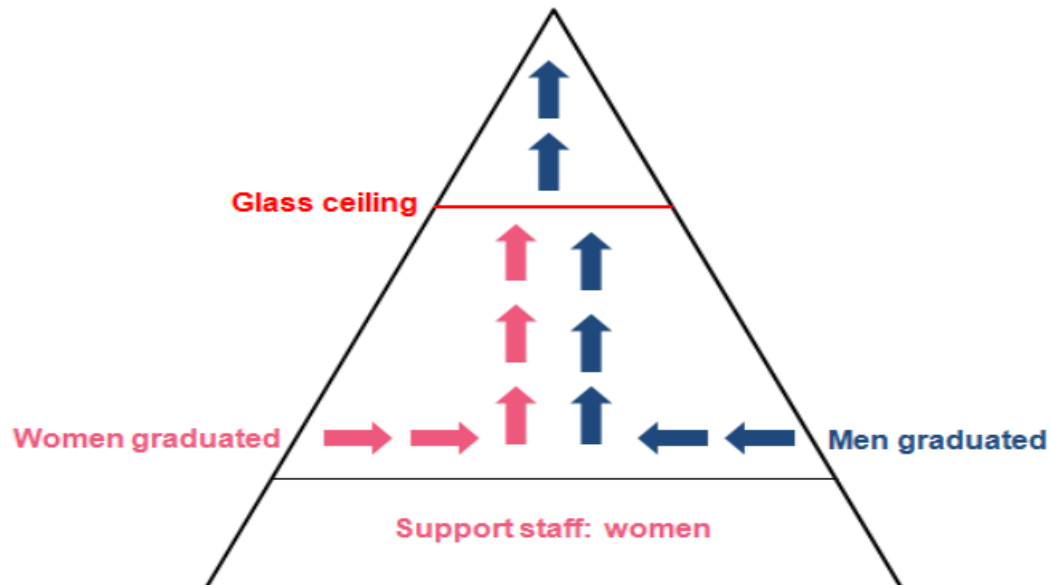
Many more women in the labor field between the ages of 25 and 64 have earned college degrees in the past 2 decades. A bachelor’s degree or above was the highest level

of education held by 39.0% of women and 36.2% of men aged 25 and up in 2022 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2023). Women account for most bachelor's degrees today (Carlton, 2021). Increases from 25% in 1992 to 38% in 2012 were seen in the proportion of this population possessing a bachelor's degree. (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). High levels of education and employment, however, do not necessarily convert into executive or leadership roles (Na & Kawahara, 2022).

Although women have the same education and abilities as their male counterparts in the office, research on the glass ceiling theory has identified there is a systematic disadvantage that blocks women from career advancement as demonstrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4

Glass Ceiling Discrimination



Note. From “The Influence of Leadership Styles on Women’s Glass Ceiling Beliefs,” by F. Mohammadkhani and D. Gholamzadeh, 2016, *Journal of Advanced Management Science*, 4(4), p. 278 (<https://doi.org/10.12720/joams.4.4.276-282>).

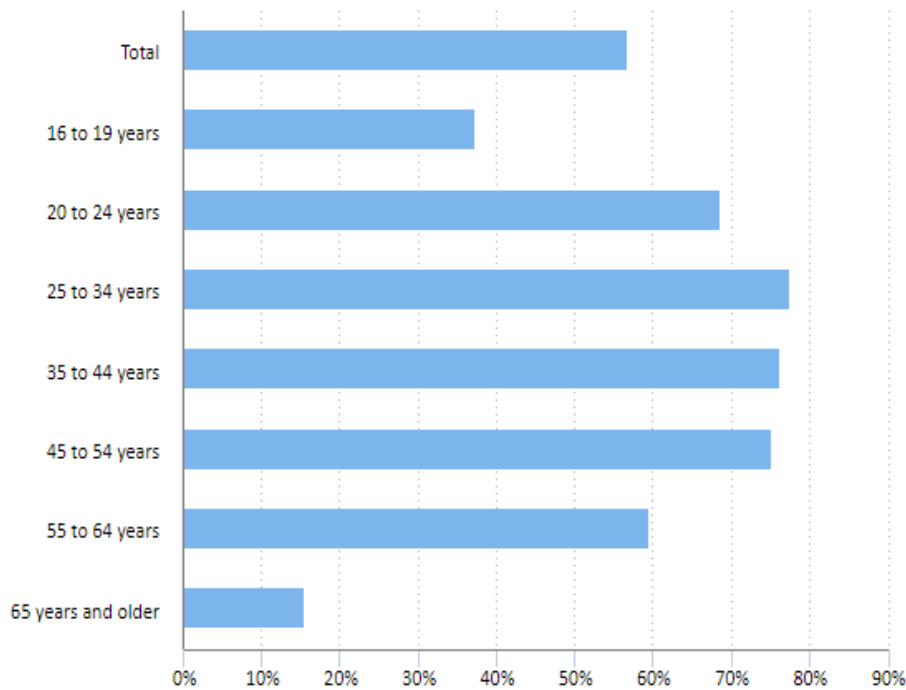
According to the EEOC’s findings, the glass ceiling is the unjust system of discrimination against women in the workplace, including but not limited to discrimination based on gender, harassment, and unfavorable social norms in the workplace.

History of Women of Women in Leadership

There is no shortage of qualified women leaders in the workforce, especially when research has identified that women make up almost half of the U.S. labor force. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2023), women represent 56.8% of the nation’s labor force from ages ranging from 16 to 65. See Figure 5 for the proportion of female involvement by age in 2022, based on data from local area unemployment statistics and the current population survey program.

Figure 5

Female Participation in the U.S. Labor Force by Age in 2022

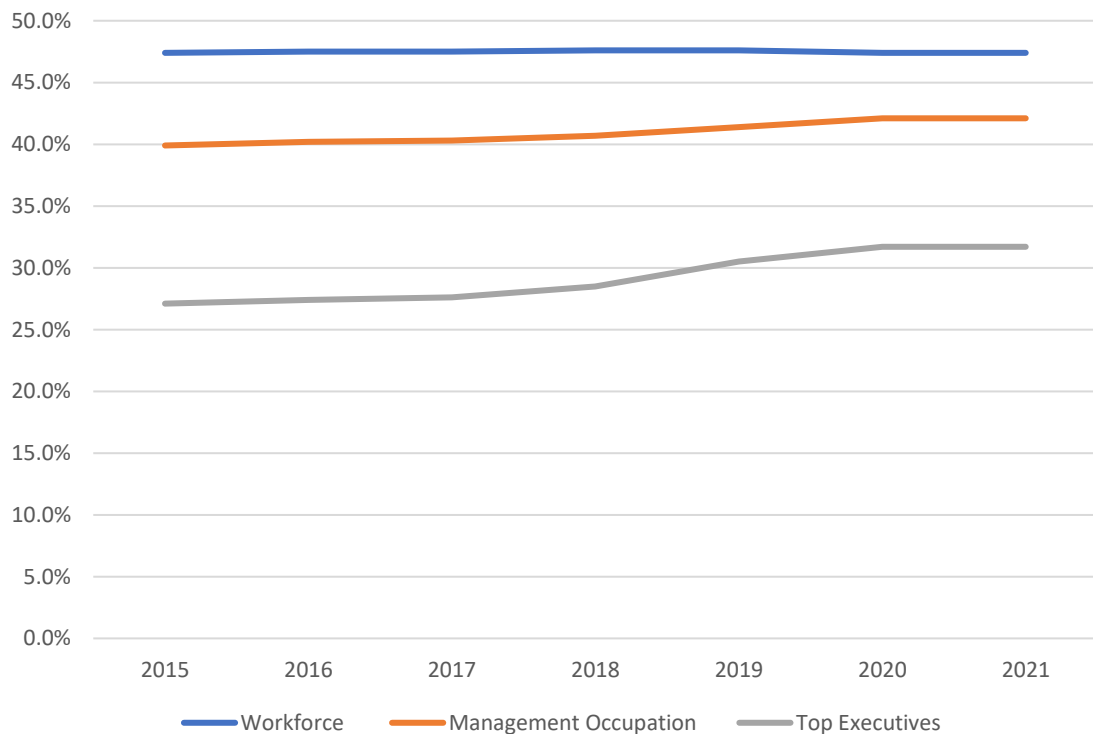


Note. From “Labor Force Participation Rate for Women Highest in District of Columbia in 2022, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statics, 2023, p. 2 (<https://www.bls.gov/opub/led/2023/labor-force-participation-rate-for-women-highest-in-the-district-of-columbia-in-2022.htm>).

According to data from the U.S. Census Bureau (2023), the proportion of women in senior executive positions in the United States has gradually increased in recent years. According to Gilligan (2023), in 2021 women made up 31.7% of all C-suite executives, an almost five percentage point rise from 2015’s 27.1%. Of the 17 million people in management roles in 2015, 39.2% were women (U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2016). In 2022, the number of women in senior management roles globally grew to 32% (Amar, 2023). Although these rates have gotten close recently, men still hold the majority of leadership roles (Gilligan, 2023). See Figure 6 for a visual representation.

Figure 6

The Number of Women in Business Leadership Roles



Note. Adapted from “States With the Highest Percentage of Female Top Executives,” by C. Gilligan, 2023, U.S. News and World Report (<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/articles/2023-03-06/states-with-the-highest-percentage-of-women-in-business-leadership-roles>).

Having diversity in all forms, from gender to culture to age to race, in the workforce today inspires new ideas and innovation through different lenses of life experiences and perspectives (Amar, 2023). In 2016, research on soft skills for effective leadership and superior business performance was conducted by Korn Ferry. Data from 55,000 professionals in 90 countries revealed that women outperform males in 11 of the 12 key emotional intelligence competencies. The research revealed that women in the study outperformed men in most characteristics of being an effective leader, such as emotional self-awareness, empathy, conflict resolution, adaptability, and teamwork. The Korn Ferry research also identified that women outperform men in coaching, mentoring, influence, inspirational leadership, conflict management, organizational awareness, adaptability, teamwork, and achievement orientation. Despite research on women in leadership roles being good for business and the efforts of many CEOs to prioritize gender diversity by establishing objectives for the number of women in leadership roles, women continue to struggle to find acceptance in the workplace because of societal expectations and stereotypes (Martin, 2023).

Although proven qualified for leadership positions, women are not often empowered or encouraged to accept or succeed in leadership. Most women do not have an equal seat at the table, and many organizations are not often committed to providing women with seats. It is known that the boardroom table is the most powerful and influential place in an organization where decisions on policies impact an organization's employees, shareholders, suppliers, customers, and communities (Amar, 2023). Multiple studies have demonstrated the positive effects of a diverse board on an organization's strength and performance. According to Mangan (2023), 40% of the boards of privately

held, high-growth firms are made up entirely of men, and 78% of the boards have no women of color serving on them, which is impacting the outcomes that will best serve these organizations in the future. Konigsburg and Thorne reported that in 2022, women made up only 20% of board members worldwide and are still underrepresented in executive positions. Today, females represent 32% of the S&P 500 (Green, 2022). The fourth annual study of gender diversity on private business boards, conducted by Him For Her and Crunchbase, found that between 2019 and 2022, women won an average of just over half a board seat (0.6) compared to 2023 when about one in seven board members are women (Shepherd, 2023). The survey sample included 667 company boards with more than 265,000 workers and about \$200 billion in capital.

Figure 7 shows that women currently hold 16% of board seats in the companies assessed, up 7% in Crunchbase's initial 2019 study and 14% in 2021 (Shepherd, 2023). According to Shepherd (2023), women have an inherent capacity for leadership that is underutilized. Despite being fully competent for leadership roles, women do not always receive the respect or flexibility needed to strike a healthy work-life balance while still meeting domestic obligations and expectations. For women getting a place at the table, the needle moves slowly.

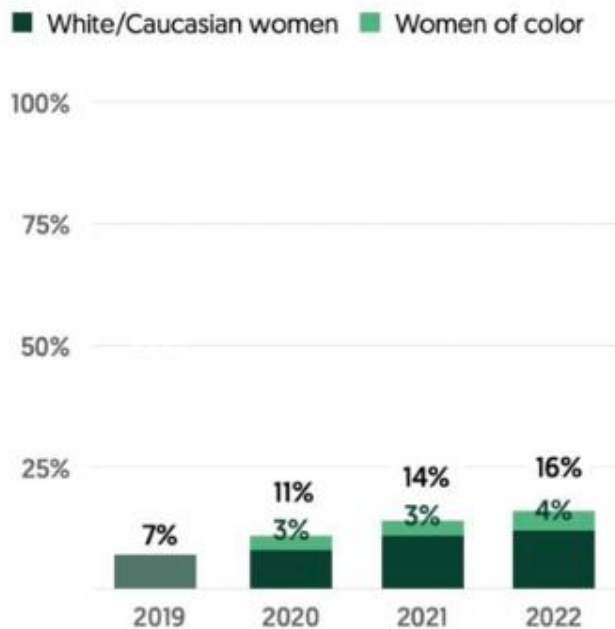
Born leaders are effective leaders with an innate capacity to manage effectively and lead groups of people to achieve collective goals. Although not always seen as such, females are also born leaders. Despite this, many female leaders often hit internal and external factors that can constrain them in their journey to leadership (Gonzales, 2022).

Female leaders are progressing in advancement to corporate leadership roles; however, statistics show male and female leaders are far from equally proportionate in

position and salary in corporate America. In 2021, women earned just 83% of every dollar earned by males (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statics, 2022). Additionally, according to Castillo (2023), 33% of businesses globally have no women in senior leadership management roles, and worldwide, women hold only 24% of senior leadership positions; in the United States, women only hold 26% of leadership roles, and only 41 of Fortune 500 companies were lead by female CEOs in 2021.

Figure 7

Women Representation on Boards by Year



Note. From “Him For Her and Crunchbase 2022 Study of Gender Diversity on Private Company Boars, by A. Shepherd, 2023, *Crunchbase News*, p. 5 (<https://news.crunchbase.com/diversity/2022-gender-study-private-boards/>).

Throughout history, there have been many attempts to improve gender equality in the workplace. Pew Research Center (2015) reported that women held managerial and professional occupations at 52.2% in 2013, up from 30.6% in 1968. Despite having many

traits and skills to lead successfully, women have historically been underrepresented in senior leadership roles. According to World Economic Forum (2023), LinkedIn statistics reveal that the share of women in senior leadership roles—director, vice-president, or C-suite executive—was 32.2% in 2023, about 10 percentage points lower than women’s overall workforce participation of 41.9% in 2023. Though women have demonstrated they are more empathic, detail-oriented, and collaborative than men, they continue to be outnumbered by males in senior leadership roles across industries (Baird, 2023; Janjuha-Jivraj, 2023; World Economic Forum, 2023). In recent years, it has been an upward struggle for women taking up senior leadership roles in director and above positions. The World Economic Forum research showed an increase for women in senior leadership roles from 31.1% in 2016 to 32.6% in 2022 before dropping to 32.2% in the first quarter of 2023.

Woman’s Qualification for Leadership Positions

Women are not typically viewed as natural leaders. Therefore, they must work harder to be acknowledged and included in male-dominated work environments (Bishop, 2022). According to the studies analyzed, most females are more qualified for leadership roles than their male counterparts. They are more educated and have more experience yet have fewer opportunities for professional advancement. The foundation of most female qualifications is believed to come from years of domestic responsibilities in their personal lives. The reviewed research revealed that, on average, females receive higher ratings for performance than males but lower ratings for potential, resulting in a 14% lower likelihood of promotion than male counterparts.

In recent decades, women's educational attainment has increased significantly, positioning them better for career success and leadership positions. According to Pew Research Center (2015), female enrollment and completion rates have been outnumbering male college enrollment since the 1990s. Further research has identified that women today are more likely than men to continue their education after completing their undergraduate degree, reversing a trend that persisted through the 1960s and 1970s.

History of Women's Advancement Strategies

An essential component of female professional development is having career advancement strategies in place. Career advancement strategies can be defined as striving for and achieving promotions and other forms of professional advancement on the job and taking on additional tasks and duties (Gibson, 2023). Throughout history, numerous strategies have been contributed by women who support women's career advancement in the workplace today, such as Josephine Lowell, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, May Chen, and Lucy Parsons (Thorpe, 2018).

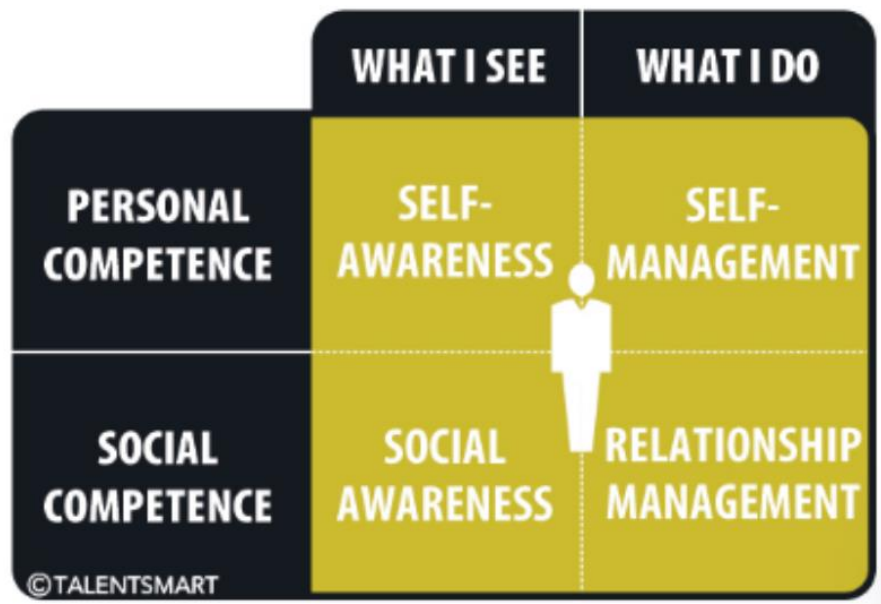
Over the past decade, research has been done to identify the best strategies for females to use in their journey to career advancement. According to Gibson (2023), for women to be successful in career advancement, they need internal and external allies to partner in industry and workplace cultures that will support them in thriving in their career journey. Gibson identified the following five strategies to jump-start career advancement: (a) envision goals, (b) effectively communicate, (c) check internal job postings, (d) network outside the organization, and (e) continue education.

According to research by the World Economic Forum, emotional intelligence is the best predictor of success at work, and 90% of top workers have this ability (Grant,

2017). Grant (2017) stated that emotional intelligence is an intangible trait that affects how people manage their behavior, deal with social complexity, and make good choices for themselves. Grant went on to say that emotional intelligence is made up of four core skills that fit together under two main competencies: personal competence and social competence, as shown in Figure 8.

Figure 8

Emotional Intelligence Core Skills and Primary Competencies



Note. From “Emotional Intelligence: What is it and Why You Need it,” by A. Grant, 2017, World Economic Forum, p.1 (<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2017/02/why-you-need-emotional-intelligence/>).

Morris (2023) suggested that for women to make their case for career advancement effectively, they must know the power of asking for what they deserve, asking for visibility in a role in high-level projects, and asking for what is earned, such as a raise or salary adjustment. Morris, a legal career advisor, shared advice regarding

supporting women in career advancement. The following advice came from women in an online community, Forbes Coaches Council Women Coaches Group:

- Tanya Chernova, of Tanya Chernova Global Corp., recommended women challenge themselves and take on new tasks that will support them in growing.
- Angela Sedran, of The Business Growth Accelerator, encouraged women to be courageous and tenacious and never to accept no as an answer.
- Alla Adam, of Alla Adam Coaching, challenged women to dare to be excellent by being attentive to their needs, forceful, and faithful to their principles.
- Leeza Carlone Steindorf, of Core Success Coaching, recommended that women take pride in their status without feeling intimidated.
- Sonia Maslovskaya, of SoniaMPower, recommended that women learn how to negotiate.
- Julia Cenac, PH.D., of The Leader Channel, said that women should establish a leadership presence by acknowledging and supporting others on their team to grow to improve team effectiveness.
- Tammy Kling, of Voices Speakers Bureau, encouraged women to network with top executives and other influential people in their workplaces.
- Afsheen Ismail-Wey, of the Phoenix Coaching Co., advised women to self-advocate. This is something that women struggle with in their personal and professional life.
- Tinna Jackson, of Jackson Consulting Group, LLC, suggested that women empower themselves in career advancement by developing emotional intelligence and speaking up.

- Savannah Rayat, of Rayat Leadership Coaching, gave the key advice to women seeking to advance in their careers to find mentors and sponsors who can offer guidance and advocate. Savannah also recommended that women take the initiative within their organization or industry to build their networking skills and be seen.

History of Women in Property Management

Since the inception of the real estate industry in 1794, female accomplishments and industry opportunities have been diminished by male-biased laws (The CE Shop, n.d.). Gender discriminatory laws were not dropped until the early 1950s. It was not until the 1970s that women could finance their home purchases independently (Petry, 2022; Segal, 2023). Women make up more than 65% of active realtors today, yet when the National Association of Realtors was founded in 1900, the organization was solely comprised of men. It was not until 1910 that the first women were allowed to join. Women in real estate are now supported by a number of groups, including the Commercial Real Estate Women Network, the National Association of Women in Real Estate Business, and the Women’s Council of Realtors®.

In the real estate industry, the word *property management* refers to the overarching responsibility of maintaining and managing properties (Plunkett, 2017). Property management is the process of overseeing and managing real estate operations. The research has identified that there are four types of property management, (a) residential, (b) commercial, (c) industrial, and (d) special purpose. This research focuses on residential property management, which deals with residential properties where a tenant may choose to live for an extended period. Single-family homes, vacation

homes, multifamily homes, townhomes, condominiums, apartments, mobile homes, and REO properties are among the types of properties (Aceable, n.d.; Plunkett, 2017).

Women have achieved high levels of success in the property management industry, professionally and personally; however, they have remained underrepresented in executive leadership positions. In the real estate industry, the gender ratio varies greatly: women make up 77% of residential real estate professionals (Mega, 2019). According to Zippia (2022a, 2023), women represent 62% of property managers, 35.1% of the vice president, and according to Rastegar (2020), 17.2% of all board members within multifamily corporations. According to World Economic Forum (2022), men hold the majority of higher-level roles in the real estate sector and property manager positions, which limits women's possibilities for development to executive positions and access to positions of power and influence.

Leadership Barriers

Despite women's strides in the workplace in the last decade, career advancement barriers remain an issue. Unresolved, these disruptions will hinder the career progression of female executives. Legislation alone cannot address all the barriers women face in the workplace because some factors may be caused by personal attitudes and behaviors of the individual or the unconscious behaviors of others. In 2013, the Committee for Economic Development of Australia surveyed the business community, predominantly its members and previous women leadership event attendees, to identify women's workplace barriers. Respondents were also allowed to add other significant barriers experienced as part of the survey. See Figure 9 for survey results.

Figure 9

Women's Workplace Barriers

Workplace Barriers	Other Barriers Identified
Workplace culture	The boys' club, all-male workplace, and machismo
Gender stereotypes	Workplace design, one-income household model, and school/work hours
Lack of flexible work practices	Workplace design, one-income household model, and school/work hours
Affordability and accessibility of childcare	Struggling with work-life balance being a caregiver for children and elderly parents
Sexism	Lack of female mentors, lack of self-confidence and lack of sponsorship from women in the workplace
Lack of mentors	Lack of commitment from leaders and executive teams toward gender diversity
Societal expectations regarding gender roles	Unconscious bias

Note. Adapted from *Women in Leadership: Understanding the Gender Gap*, by the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (<https://cedakenticomedia.blob.core.windows.net/cedamediacontainer/kentico/media/researchcataloguedocuments/pdfs/15355-cedawiljune-2013final.pdf>).

When it comes to advancing their careers, women frequently experience prejudice, fewer chances, and a lack of support (Mageira, 2023). According to research conducted by Mageira (2023), men are generally evaluated based on their vision and potential when being considered for a managerial position or a promotion, but women are evaluated based on their past contributions.

Structural Barriers

Women on their way to career advancement must overcome many systemic disruptions. Structural barriers are policies, behaviors, and other conventions that

systematically disadvantage a marginalized group that favors an advantaged group. Self-barriers, also known as personal barriers, are obstacles to personal, professional, spiritual, and social development (McQuerrey, 2019). Gendered organization theory examines organizations as places where gender dynamics and gender order are made and changed (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). A paradigm shift (Blount, 1998) is a significant change that occurs when a new and different way replaces the traditional method of thinking or doing something.

Self-Barriers

Personal barriers, or self-barriers, are impediments to one's own personal, professional, spiritual, and social development (McQuerrey, 2019). According to Usmani (2022), not all barriers are harmful; some can protect a person from real or perceived harm. Barriers can also support a person to grow and develop based on learned habits. Overcoming barriers is as easy as being able to communicate effectively. Barriers can be either psychological or emotional. Psychological barriers are considered as a state of mind that can limit a person from making the right decision or any decision at all. Psychological barriers can also impact the way a person communicates with others, limiting the capacity to communicate with a logical mind. According to Usmani, psychological barriers can directly affect human behavior and are not gender specific, negatively impacting decision-making capabilities by demonstrating the following emotions:

- Poor attention: ignores what a person says because they do not understand the message.

- Premature evaluation: jumping to an inclusion before listening to what is being said.
- Lack of retention: inability to retain/recall information when making a decision.
- Transmission loss: missing or not communicating entirely.
- Emotions: allowing in-the-moment feelings to impact decisions.
- Distrust: is considered the worst of the psychological barriers because of the negativity and the impact it can have on the environment.
- Uncertainty and doubt: can create confusion surrounding a fact and needs to be managed accordingly.
- Resistance to change: fearing change because of not being open to change.
- False assumptions: can negatively affect an outcome when messaging is miscommunicated or misunderstood.
- Anger: can cause a feeling of threat because of broken communication.

An emotional barrier is a mental block that impacts how someone's perception of another's actions can affect their ability to communicate their emotions effectively (Gratis, 2022). According to Gratis (2022), examples of emotional barriers include the following:

- Anger, which can impact how information is processed.
- Pride, the need always to be right or overexplain.
- Anxiety, which can cause a person to avoid certain situations.
- Apathy can show up in the form of lack of interest or emotion when there should be.

Gendered Organizations

Success in organizations is often measured by what men do and how they provide. Discussing gender roles in an organization can be uncomfortable because these conversations impact society, contributing to norms and behaviors (Acker, 1990; Chawdhry, n.d.). O'Neil and Hopkins (2015), proposed that to pave the way for female career advancement to higher-ranking positions in the organization's gendered aspects of the workplace need to be challenged by directing organizational focus to systemic norms and structure. An example provided by O'Neil and Hopkins included individual-level issues that should be focused on, such as women opting out because of lack of confidence, which can detract from what needs to be done. O'Neil and Hopkins said that although this can be true for some women, it does not represent all women. This can highlight men as natural leaders and women as not.

Female Executive Leadership Career Advancement

A paradigm shift for women occurs when the typical approach to a task is replaced with a new and different method resulting in significant change (Lombrozo, 2016). Today's society has a belief that women should be able to handle everything, which can have a negative impact on organizations and female career advancement. In the modern workplace, women are taking on greater responsibilities and focusing on long-term goals and financial stability, moving away from traditional paradigms. Chawdhry (n.d.) suggested that society needs to move away from the argument of which gender is superior in the workplace and instead focus on what each gender can contribute. This means aiming for individuality rather than equality.

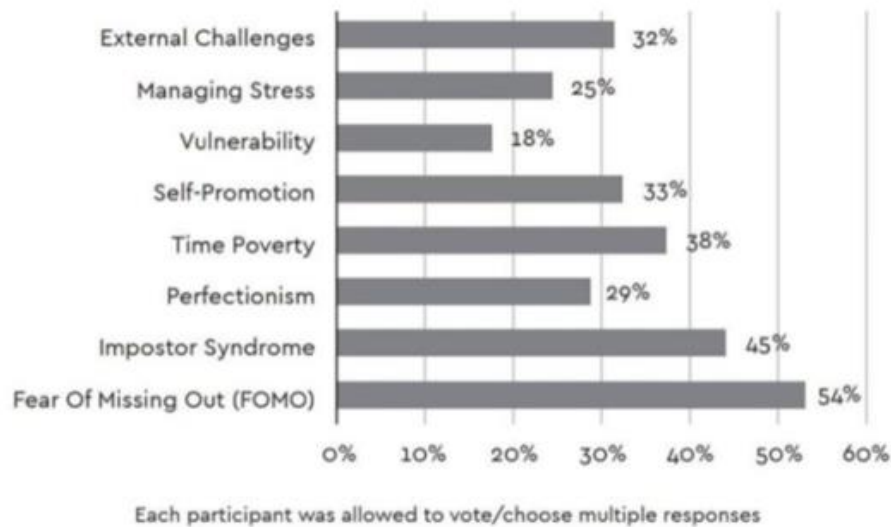
Internal Barriers

Internal barriers are associated with a person's beliefs, values, dispositions, or even eccentricities (Bailon, 2022). They are obstacles that prevent people from accomplishing their personal goals. Internal barriers block success and come from within. Internal barriers can be caused by learned behaviors from childhood, emotional barriers based on life experiences that affect self-confidence, a lack of goals or a sense of purpose, or physical or mental impairments that make learning difficult. Previous studies have indicated a significant number of obstacles, such as lack of confidence, lack of self-advocacy, and lack of social role models (Ryder & Briles, 2003), are socially rooted in the upbringing of girls (Ali, 2019).

Ali's 2020 study of 300 women worldwide found that many of these internal challenges women face on their route to the top are identical to those faced by minorities. The barriers identified include "imposter syndrome, fear of missing out (FOMO), minority stress, perfectionism, stereotype threat, inability to self-promote and set up, fear of failure, fear of judgment, and fear of vulnerability" (Ali, 2020, para 2). Ali found a commonality in how women and ethnic minorities are accustomed to being treated. They are often ignored, trivialized, and debased in the workforce. As part of Ali's research, 30 women surveyed responded to the question, "What career challenges are holding you back?" Figure 10 captures their responses. Figure 10 identifies the three biggest career challenges—fear of missing out, imposter syndrome, and time poverty (having too much to accomplish and not enough time). Barriers come in many forms, such as self-sabotaging, negative self-talk, or even imposter theory, that can limit women from advancing in their careers.

Figure 10

Challenges Holding Women Back



Note. From “The ‘internal roadblocks’ faced by women that defy country boundaries,” by H. Ali, 2019, DiversityQ, p. 11 (<https://diversityq.com/the-internal-roadblocks-faced-by-women-that-defy-country-boundaries/>).

Self-Sabotaging

According to Cooks-Campbell (2022), “Self-sabotage is when people do (or don’t do) things that block their success or prevent them from accomplishing their goals” (para. 5) and is not specific to gender. A sign of self-sabotage is when someone gets in the way of their own success (Silva & Ross, 2022). Self-sabotaging behaviors are demonstrated through a misalignment between values and actions. Cooks-Campbell gave examples of self-sabotaging behaviors, which include the following: (a) refusing to ask for help; (b) controlling or micromanaging behavior; (c) picking fights or starting conflicts with colleagues and loved ones; (d) setting goals that are too low or too high; (e) avoiding or withdrawing from others; (f) negative self-talk and extreme self-criticism; (g) making excuses or blame-shifting; (h) undermining your goals and values; (i) substance abuse,

overspending, or overdoing it in other ways; (j) constantly seeking approval; and (k) reluctance to speak up for yourself.

Self-sabotage often serves as a coping mechanism for people to deal with stressful situations and past traumas (Field, 2023). Self-sabotaging behavior is very common for most women in the workforce. Since birth, women have been conditioned to play a role that still impacts their careers today, taught not to boast about success, told to be modest and soft-spoken (Arora, 2021). Women develop conscious and unconscious self-destructive habits because of conditioning and environmental pressure. Women in the workforce often appear as pleasers because they want to be liked. They may blame men and workforce constraints for their lack of professional growth when women may be accomplices in unconsciously undermining their career success (Tardanico & Hedges, 2011). Seeking perfection all the time and not moving ahead is another thing women do in their careers instead of accepting perceived flaws (Arora, 2021). Trying to be a perfectionist in everything is unrealistic. Women often set the bar high for themselves and second guess their decisions, talking themselves down and beating themselves up (Warrell, 2019). Women often look for validation or permission, which is perceived as self-doubt (Arora, 2021).

Negative Self-Talk

Another common internal hurdle women face is engaging in negative self-talk, which is an inner voice that ends up being an inner critic (E. Scott, 2022). Negative self-talk combines conscious thoughts of how the person is feeling about their skills with inbuilt beliefs and biases. Negative self-talk can be damaging and has the potential to do harm. There is evidence suggesting a correlation between this negative self-talk and

heightened health risks like stress. Other research found that negative self-talk can also lead to the ability to see and capitalize on opportunities.

Negative self-talk can be restrictive for women in their careers it can lead to limited thinking, feelings of depression, and relationship challenges (E. Scott, 2022). The internal dialogue of negative self-talk allows women to believe that they can't do something. Feelings of depression lead to low mood and loss of interest. Furthermore, women may also encounter changes in appetite, sleepiness, fatigue, feelings of guilt, and impaired concentration, and thoughts of death may also occur (Schimelpfening, 2022).

Negative self-talk undermines self-efficacy and confidence, making it challenging for leaders to present their best selves to their teams (Buchanan, 2018). Harris (2017), introduced the concept of how negative self-talk can sabotage a leader's brand by diluting the leader's value proposition, stagnating the leader's ability to self-promote, lessening leadership presence, and reducing the likelihood to take risk.

A study conducted by Stahl (2016) examined a common type of internal conversation called self-talk. The research identified four distinct categories of self-talk. There are four patterns that individuals may engage in that can hinder their personal and professional growth. First, catastrophizing involves envisioning the worst possible scenario. Second, blaming others for career setbacks, not taking responsibility for their own actions. Third, rehashing refers to not trusting oneself based on previous mistakes. Last, rehearsing involves delaying action because of a fear of negative reactions.

Imposter Syndrome Theory

According to Time magazine research (Abrams, 2018), imposter syndrome affects an estimated 70% of the population. A KPMG study reported that "75% of female

executives across industries have experienced imposter syndrome” and “85% believe women in corporate America commonly experience imposter syndrome” (Knopp & Newinski, 2020, p.4). High achievers are often afflicted by imposter syndrome, making it difficult to recognize despite academic and professional accomplishments (Tulshyan & Burey, 2021). According to Knopp and Newinski (2020), “Fifty-seven percent of female executives felt like an imposter when they assumed a new leadership role or became an executive” (p. 8).

Imposter syndrome is characterized as experiencing self-doubt over one’s own talents and the belief of being an impostor. According to 47% of executive women, their emotions of self-doubt are a result of never anticipating achieving the degree of success they have (Knopp & Newinski, 2020). The feeling of self-doubt is a feeling that women have experienced all too often in the workplace and is often self-inflicted. According to Knopp and Newinski (2020), 81% of female executives believe they put more pressure on themselves not to fail than men do. According to Beranek (2023), women frequently convince themselves that they don’t belong and perceive that everyone knows it.

External Barriers

External barriers are beyond our control and manifest as outside pressure. Based on research conducted by Ali in 2020, 300 women worldwide revealed an interesting discovery: the external barriers that women often experience are the same barrier that minorities face. The top external barriers described by women surveyed that provide unequal advanced male opportunities in the workplace prevalent across the world stem from pressures from outside barriers such as peer pressure, working in a male-dominated

industry, workplace issues, and organizational practices that do not support women caregivers (Ali, 2019).

Glass Ceiling

Federal Glass Ceiling Commission was established as part of the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1991 to study and recommend to Congress how to remove artificial barriers to women's advancement to top management positions in organizations (Insch et al., 2008). The Glass Ceiling Commission identified that women were being hired in feminized positions. Women continue to be disproportionately underrepresented in positions of power in the workplace even after major efforts have been made to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the past decade (Babic & Hansez, 2021). This demonstrates that there is still an invisible barrier that prevents women from advancing beyond a certain point in their corporate careers (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Hamilton, 2023). The glass ceiling theory was described by Yildirim (2023) as a "systemic exclusion of qualified women from top-level management positions in public, private, and nonprofit organizations due to their gender," which is identified as vertical discrimination (para 3).

Queen Bee Syndrome

Research on females in the workplace has confirmed that women in the workplace are beneficial; they are often more efficient than their male counterparts, better at pivoting between tasks, and better at declining requests once they have children (Brody, 2019). However, an external barrier that characterizes females in power in an organization, often referred to as queen bees, disadvantages the career advancement of females reporting to them.

Beehive structures are similar to workplace structures except the workplace queen bee is not likely to have the same power position, and males in the hive are dispensable because they are only used for reproduction. The queen bee in the hive is associated with fertility, growth, and motherhood, but queen bees in the workplace are associated with disruptive workplace behaviors. The term queen is often used to describe female solitary bees that live and work alone, and the bee is associated with female fertility, growth, and motherhood (Burlew, 2016). Both words together are a derogatory term used to describe women in power who abuse or harm those below them in the workplace. According to the BBC Reality Check Team (2018), the term queen bee syndrome was first defined in 1973 by a psychologist at the University of Michigan. The first researchers to link traits to the metaphor queen syndrome were Travis and Jayaratne in 1974 (da Rocha Grangeiro et al., 2022).

Researchers have hypothesized that queen bee syndrome happens when women who achieve a high-ranking position or with higher authority treat subordinate female colleagues differently in a hostile or condescending manner (Elsesser, 2020; Pelago, n.d.). According to Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.-b), the term queen bee is a derogatory term used to describe females in a group who deem themselves and behave as the most important person. When it comes to queen bee syndrome, it is not that women are being mean; research reveals that it is how women cope with their own experiences of gender discrimination (Elsesser, 2020). Women who have been treated unfairly may start to focus on how they are different from other women using gender stereotypes they have seen. Queen bee syndrome is all about control and dominant power, eventually leading to discriminating behavior against other females.

Behaviors of queen bee syndrome include creating a hostile work environment, separating subordinates, making others feel inferior, taking credit for others' work, and refusing to give credit (Pelago, n.d.). Characteristics of the queen bee syndrome include extremely competitive females who have low levels of empathy. They are perfectionists at heart, fearing failure, and prefer working with men (PeopleHum, n.d.).

Bias

In the 21st century, women still experience bias in the workplace. Based on extensive research, the most common external bias is gender bias, which continues to impact female advancement to executive positions in all industries. According to research from 100 female executives worldwide, 42% of women experience gender discrimination, 59% experience workplace harassment or microaggressions, and 93% fear that reporting noninclusive behaviors will negatively impact career advancement (Ammerman & Groyberg, 2022).

Workplace biases affect how women are assessed and awarded. Ammerman and Groyberg (2022) identified three main challenges that emerge in female workplace bias that impede women in their careers' all-inclusive workplace behavior: (a) unfair assumptions rooted in gender stereotypes such as women with children are less committed to their career; (b) unhelpful attention, distorted forms of attention, manifest themselves in the well-documented competence versus likability, conflicting messaging, which can be especially detrimental during the high-stakes midcareer period; and (c) unequal access to networks in midcareer because males have better access to senior leaders and positions.

Strategies for Advancement of Women in Property Management Leadership

Property management organizations benefit financially and professionally by ensuring women have internal and external resources to support career advancement. There are three primary areas in which women in the property management industry are underrepresented; they are (a) the talent pipeline, (b) senior executive leadership, and (c) the corporate board level (Crew Network, 2019). These can be improved with the following three advancement strategies: (a) networking, (b) joining professional organizations, and (c) mentorship (Cosentino et al., 2021; Crew Network, 2011; Parris, 2021).

Networking

According to Eatough (2023), “Networking is a mutually beneficial interaction that involves exchanging ideas and information between individuals who are connected by a common career, industry, or interest” (para 5). Networking can feel awkward when a person is put in a situation in which they don’t know anyone or feel as if they do not belong. However, networking is important to a female’s career and offers many advantages, influence, and significance in expanding professional networks inside and outside of organizations. Eatough identified the following five reasons why networking is also important for career development:

- Networking contributes to social well-being.
- Networking leads to the exchange of ideas.
- Networking allows for opportunities to meet professionals at all levels.
- Networking boosts professional confidence.
- Networking expands visibility.

The benefits of having a solid, well-developed networking strategy include the opportunity to collaborate on professional topics with someone who can bring a fresh new perspective and an opportunity to share knowledge, help solve problems, get career advancement support from peers, create opportunities to advance career (Ahamed, 2021; Maderazzo, 2022) and an opportunity to sharpen personal development skills.

Although networking fundamentals are essential, it may be challenging for female associates who may not know where and how to start networking professionally.

According to Eatough (2023), the following are five ways to network professionally:

- Attend industry events such as conferences, industry-specific educational forums, and industry events outside the organization.
- Participate in online communities such as LinkedIn and participate in platforms that offer an opportunity to share resources and connect with like-minded professionals.
- Join industry-specific professional groups such as the National Apartment Association, Institute of Real Estate Management, and National Multi-Housing Council.
- Seek mentorship and coaching opportunities with experienced property management industry leaders.
- Leverage social media platforms demonstrating a work-life balance and network with individuals with the same interests.

Professional Organizations

Research that focuses on career advancement for women has recommended that women identify and join relevant professional organizations that can challenge them to

get uncomfortable and push themselves. Joining a professional organization creates opportunities to connect with colleagues, nationally and globally, both inside and outside the organization. Organizations that promote and support women's voices play a crucial role in the success of businesses. They uplift and encourage women to speak up, highlighting the importance of diverse perspectives (Our Little Roses, 2020).

Most industry-specific professional organizations aim to support organizations and individuals through services that will enhance personal and professional growth. Professional organizations provide training, opportunities, resources, industry connections, and contributions to political advocacy campaigns. Professional women's organizations are dedicated to mentoring females in their careers and present opportunities.

Mentoring

One of the most effective strategies for women to bridge the gender gap in business leadership is through mentoring (Bruce, 2021). A mentor is someone who takes an interest in a person's career. They serve as a well-documented role in supporting the development of people providing guidance, trust, and stability (Barry, 2023). Women mentoring women is powerful; it provides access to opportunities where very few women represent and can cultivate confidence in male-dominated workplace environments (Bruce, 2021).

It can be challenging for females to find other females to mentor them in the property management industry. Mentoring allows individuals to grow and become more effective in their current roles while preparing them for the next step in their careers. Although mentoring supports a mentee, it is equally beneficial for the mentor and

organizations (Castrillon, 2023). Mentoring provides a sense of fulfillment for both the mentee and the mentor while adding value to the organization.

Women need help, especially those complacent in their property management careers. Strong, influential mentors are a valuable source of assistance (Kramer, 2021). When a woman has a mentor, it can support her professional networking growth and improve her visibility in the workplace. It can set her up effectively for success in the future.

Theoretical Foundation to Explain Gender Roles With Property Management Social Role Theory

Social role theory is also known as a social psychological theory that pertains to gender differences and similarities in social behavior (Eagly & Wood, 2016). It is a vital component of the theoretical framework; it comprises ideas, hypotheses, thought experiments, and explanations of how and why human societies or their components emerge, change, or even disappear (Harrington, 2022).

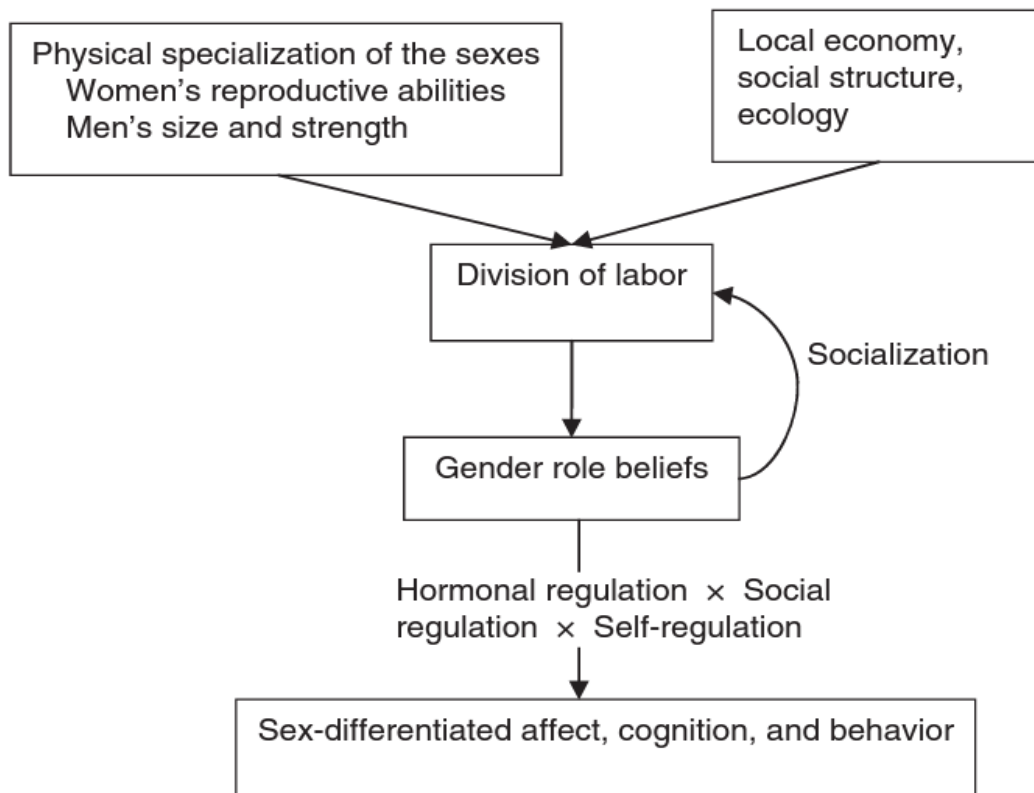
Eagly and Wood (2012) stated that gender biases drive story-based gender role assumptions formed by observing male and female behavior and inferring similar traits. According to Ridgeway (2011), there are gender stereotypes that are being shared as common knowledge to initiate how genders and society should coordinate interaction with new activities and procedures to reinvent gender inequality. These preconceived stereotypes promote gender prejudice and discrimination and hurting the career advancement of females to executive positions within an organization.

In the workplace, leaders have gender expectations related to behavioral tendencies and activities that correspond with social roles based on gender, economic

standing, or other demographic subsets (Skelly & Johnson, 2011). Social role theory explains how socially constructed gender lines, such as the treatment of women who act in a certain way are treated differently than men who do the same thing but are held to a different standard which result in gender stereotypes in the workplace (Eagly, 1997; Koenig & Eagly, 2014). Because women throughout history have been characterized as caregivers and males as leaders, these are the types of roles they are often given and expected to demonstrate in the workforce. Figure 11 diagram is a visualization of social role theory provided by Eagly and Wood (2012).

Figure 11

Gender Roles Guide Sex Differences and Similarities Through Biosocial Processes



Note. From “Social Role Theory,” by A. H. Eagly and W. Wood, 2012, in P. A. M. Van Lange, Kruglanski, and E. T. Higgins (Eds.), *Handbook of Theories of Social Psychology*, p. 465, SAGE Publications.

Figure 11 illustrates the influence of physical differences, along with economic and group norms, that have caused a division of labor (Eagly & Wood, 2012). This division in labor continues through gender stereotype narratives that dictate gender role beliefs, creating division through socialization. The behavior of hormonal regulations, social regulations, and self-regulations fuels gender role beliefs. This leads to the most fundamental factors that affect both males and females who progress toward the immediate factor that shapes behavior: the social role theory. In the property management industry, this translates into females taking onsite property manager leadership roles and leasing positions; however, at the executive level, these positions translate to human resources, training, or marketing positions.

Descriptive and injunctive norms are the two types of expectations or norms identified as part of social role theory. According to Cialdini and Trost (1998), what a gender does is described as a descriptive norm whereas what a gender is supposed to do is described as an injunctive norm. Understanding these expectations and norms is essential when discussing female executives because it could speak to what others may have regarding their performance expectations related to explicit or implicit expectations.

Role Congruity Theory

Role congruity theory, coined by Eagly and Karau (2002), is defined as a prejudice against women leaders based on associated stereotypical characteristics. Eagly and Karau identified two biases that directly impact the career advancement of females to leadership roles. The first is the perception of women when placed in leadership roles. Women are considered less favorable as leaders than their male counterparts. The second bias is that a leadership position is valued less when a woman is in the position. These

discriminatory biases put women at a disadvantage in the workplace to move up to executive positions.

Since its inception, the role congruity theory has been used to understand the consequences of prejudices in organizations and their impact on organizational culture (del Carmen Triana et al., 2023). The consequences, according to role congruity theory, are that attitudes are less favorable toward women than males, and it is more difficult for women to be considered for leadership roles. When women are given a leadership position opportunity, it is difficult for them to succeed because of preconceived stereotypes or negative perceptions of women in leadership positions. Role congruity theory is required for leadership research to comprehend the masculine expectations of a leadership role that become aspirations for both genders and can hinder career advancement.

Expectancy Value Theory

According to research, expectancy-value theory is a motivational theory that relates to a person's anticipation of success in a particular endeavor and attainment of a goal. Perception of the chances of achievement can differ depending on past success or failure. In their research, Hyde and Kling (2001) identified two factors that relate to achievement expectancy: the ability for a person to succeed at a task based on confidence and the enjoyment the person perceives in the job based on value. These two factors directly relate to the importance or usefulness. Additionally, prejudices based on the expectancy-value theory impact women's achievement expectancies and their perception of the value of advancing in their careers.

Gendered Organizational Theory

Despite key improvements to social, political, and economic status, females remain underrepresented in executive leadership positions in the property management industry. Gendered organizational theory refers to gender dynamics and order within an organization that primarily focus on how genders interact at different social, political, economic, and technological dimensions (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). Under the gendered organizational theory, organizations must think about fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion to tackle new and reformulated gender inequalities (Clark-Saboda & Lemke, 2023b).

The phrase gendered organization was coined by Acker (1990) as “advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity of men and women” within an organization (p. 146). Researchers have used gendered organizational theory to support organizations in their efforts to identify and eliminate targeted discrimination toward women in the workplace. The concept of gendered organizations in which roles reflect on the past and evolve was first introduced by Acker in 1990. An example is organizations or positions typically identifying as a specific gender, such as male executives and women receptionists. Before the evolution of other genders into these roles, a single gender dominated the roles; however, other genders are at a small percentage and will slowly grow to equal gender representation over time. Gendered norms that are present in business professional relationships and favor men are gender organizational (Acker, 2019) and oppress women, which continues to be the basis for inequality in working life (Rodriguez & Guenther, 2022). Loden (2017) coined the

term glass ceiling to describe the sometimes invisible barrier to success in women's careers.

Theoretical Framework

Over the last decade, various theoretical and conceptual frameworks have identified the disruptions that stall female career advancement. Christensen (1997) coined disruptive innovation to describe newcomers who can disrupt established businesses. Johnson and Mohr (2019) introduced five areas in which the skills women honed as high achieving in school are likely doing them a disservice in their careers. Johnson (2015) adapted Christensen's disruption theory to develop a seven-point framework of personal disruption. Johnson and Mohr (2019) later identified five disruptive female career skills impacting women who aspire to advance to senior leadership roles. These frameworks present women who disrupt and undermine their own career advancement with a separation between empowerment and connectedness.

Disruptive Innovation

In the mid-1990s, Christensen (1997) introduced the term disruptive innovation to explain how newcomers can disrupt a market's existing businesses. Johnson (2015) defined disruptive innovation as innovation near the end of a market that has the potential to disrupt an industry. Leading companies have implemented disruptive change initiatives to upset their respective everyday industries over the years. Uber is an excellent example of disruptive innovation. It provided customers with a new high-end transportation affordable option that existing transportation businesses could not compete with.

Disruptive innovation has also been introduced to the workplace to detect people who disrupt their careers. An example of career disruption is when associates try

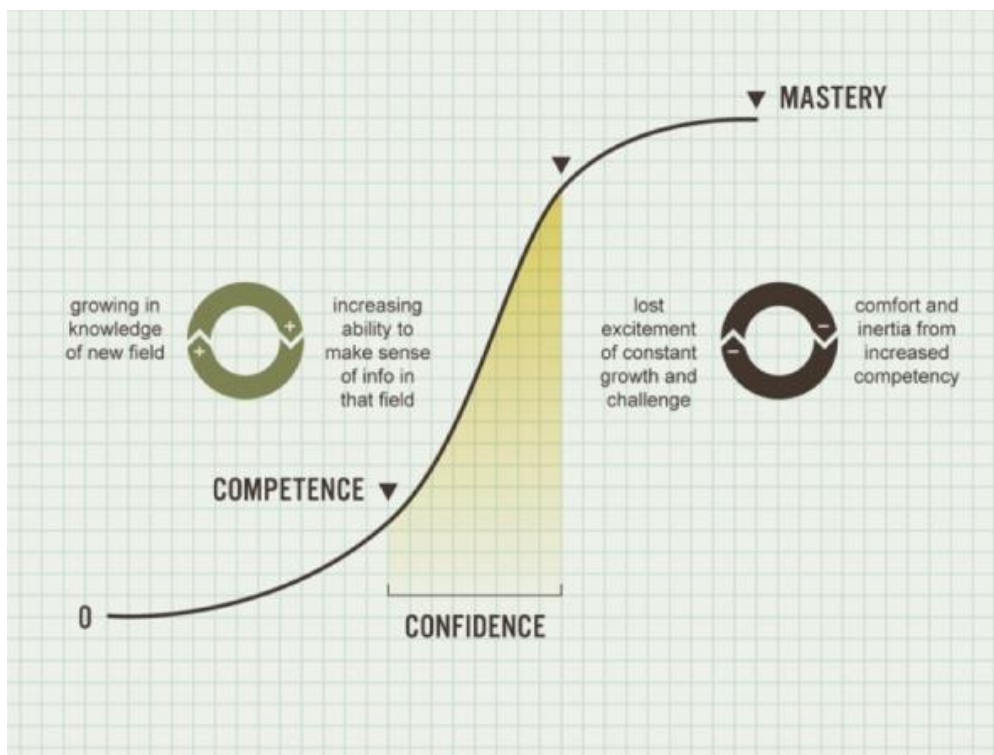
something new, such as a new lateral position in a different department, taking a promotion, or even starting a new job with a different employer (Johnson, 2019).

Disrupting their career is something that women must do in the workplace to ensure that they don't become stagnant but advance in their journey to becoming executive leaders.

Johnson (2019) used the S-curve model developed by E. M. Rogers in 1962 to determine how quickly disruptive innovation is adopted. Johnson had an aha moment that disruption innovation is not just about products but also about people. The S-curve can assist with understanding the psychological level of how people learn and grow as illustrated in Figure 12.

Figure 12

The S-Curve



Note. From “Surfing the S-Curve: How to Disrupt Yourself and Why,” by W. Johnson, 2016, *Lean In*, p. 1 (<https://leanin.org/news-inspiration/surfing-the-s-curve-how-to-disrupt-yourself-and-why#!>).

The base of the S model is where everything starts: a new job, a new relationship, a new hobby, and so forth. This is the level at which growth happens but feels slow. The base of the S is where people feel awkward because it is a new and unfamiliar territory. Effort and commitment move upward to the steep part of the S-curve model. In this area, people start to feel comfortably confident, meaning it is not too hard or too easy, but there is an understanding that this is the right place. Johnson (2015) described that the steep part of the S is where people should spend most of their time in life, career, and relationships. The high end of the S curve is that area of accomplishment; people know they have figured things out. The area of accomplishment is also where most people become stagnant in their careers. This area is considered a red flag area because it is comfortably satisfying; however, it may not always be a safe area to stay in. Someone else may come along and do it better, or as in 2020, COVID-19 disrupted the workplace, and there were massive layoffs. Johnson identified two choices people have at the top of the S-curve: either wait to be disrupted or disrupt themselves. When waiting to be disrupted, a person must figure out how to ensure the top of the S curve is not the top. To disrupt oneself, the person must jump to another unfamiliar curve and repeat the S-curve actions again. Johnson's mental model for career growth is to learn, leap, and repeat. Johnson explained that the foundation is that people are wired to learn and grow to build a more purpose-driven life and career.

Seven-Point Framework of Personal Disruption

Females on the right track of a traditionally achievable career path advancing in their careers are pursuing what Christesen (1997) called sustaining innovation. An example is when a company understands the value of its female associates and naturally

advances the female in her career path. This is not the case for most females in the property management industry who have reached a plateau in their careers.

Innovation and personal disruption expert Johnson (2015) shared a seven-point framework for individuals seeking career advancement. By embracing and using disruptive forces, individuals can navigate their paths more effectively, speeding up or slowing down on the S curve of learning. This allows individuals to operate outside of their comfort zones, which Johnson highly recommends. It is all about deciding to start something new.

The seven variables identified by Johnson (2015) include the following to avoid complacency and reinvest in oneself: (a) taking the right risk, (b) playing to our distinctive strengths, (c) embracing constraints, (d) battling entitlement, (e) stepping back to grow, (f) giving failure its due, and (g) being discovery-driven. These variables apply to strong performers from all situations and are necessary to advance their careers.

Five Disruptive Career Skills

Johnson and Mohr (2019) suggested that the skills that helped women do well in school are probably the same ones stalling females in middle management and hindering advancement to executive positions. Johnson and Mohr later wrote in their 2019 article that the path to female success depends on being disruptive in the workplace. The following five areas were identified by Johnson and Mohr as disruptive behaviors that women need to address to be seen as leaders in the organization: (a) figure out how to challenge and influence authority; (b) prepare but also learn to improvise; (c) find effective forms of self-promotion; (d) welcome a less prescribed, full of surprise, career path; and (e) go for being respected, not just liked.

Examples of Career Disruption Skills for Women

When considering women's struggles in the workplace, it is hard to believe that many women are seen as disruptive leaders who have broken free from traditional expectations and comfort zones within their industries. Among these examples is Indra Nooyi, a business leader and strategist; she shattered gender norms when she became the CEO of PepsiCo and is now considered one of the world's top CEOs (Sayantika, 2023). Another example is Susan Wojcicki, YouTube CEO, reshaping things through her devotion and commitment to diversity and female representation in the tech industry. Another example is Mary Barra, CEO of General Motors. She is known for her commitment to innovation and sustainable practices. The five disruptive key areas are outlined by Johnson and Mohr (2019).

Challenge and Influence Authority

Rather than giving in to authority, Johnson and Mohr (2019) recommend that women learn how to challenge and influence authority figures by being persuasive. The ability to persuade to alter hearts and minds can give women the competitive edge they need when challenging authority (Gallo, 2019). When women question authority, they represent an inclusive and effective leadership style that promotes distinctive leadership abilities (Eagly et al., 2003). Female leaders must challenge the status quo by developing an appropriate and influential leadership style incorporating the qualities and values people expect from women and the agentic qualities traditionally associated with successful leaders (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Questioning authority challenges the status quo bias that men are better than women at leading an organization. Bruckmüller and Branscombe (2010) considered traditional notions when women receive a leadership

position when the organization is challenged with a crisis and their male counterparts have failed the organization.

Research has suggested assertive communication will benefit women in challenging authority (Babcock & Laschever, 2003; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Menzies, 2018). When women use assertive communication, they convey confidence and competence, which is a strength. To be assertive, women must practice expressing thoughts, feelings, and opinions without emotion to demonstrate openness and respect for others (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Studies have shown that women perceived as credible and capable leaders can communicate assertively, breaking the status quo that assertive women come on too strong. In contrast, assertive men are perceived as having positive leadership qualities. This is because women often use qualifiers and permissions to soften their language, which can negatively affect perceptions of competence and be seen as a trait of weakness (Menzies, 2018). Another way research has recommended that women challenge authority is by negotiating to assert their interests while advocating for themselves to bring attention to important issues that can impact decisions and policies (Babcock & Laschever, 2003). To change the perception of women in leadership roles in a company, women must continue to challenge authority even when facing setbacks and bias (Dweck, 2006).

Women's flexibility in the workplace sets them up for extraordinary success in navigating leadership roles (Rigoglioso, 2011). Effective networking with leaders in the organization when an opportunity presents itself is another excellent way for women to influence authority (Ibarra, 1993). To continue with leadership advancement, women

must overcome stereotypes, support organizational culture, and be authentic leaders when influencing authority figures in the organization.

Prepare but Also Learn to Improvise

When it comes to work tasks and assignments, solutions are not always as readily available in a textbook as they are in school. Johnson and Mohr (2019) suggested using preparation time wisely by learning to improvise in place of the way women learned to prepare for school assignments. Improvisation is defined as unforeseen or unexpected. Improvisation in the workplace can be defined as a mix of creative thinking and a natural sense of what will assist in solving a problem (Leybourne, 2017).

Improvisation is essential in today's workforce when things are so unpredictable. In times of crisis or unexpected disruptions to routines, improvisation becomes necessary. It requires thinking on one's feet without the luxury of preparation. Mannucci et al. (2021) identified the following three distinct types of improvisation based on live-action role playing games: (a) imitative improvisation, (b) reactive improvisation, and (c) generative improvisation.

Imitative improvisation takes the least amount of practice because the inexperienced person basically matches the most experienced person's responses or actions almost verbatim (Mannucci et al., 2021). An example of this would be the first time a person attends a company dinner; they would observe the more experienced person and take that person's lead on whether they should order a drink or not. This allows the new person to feel included in the choice not to partake in drinking with a client and saves them from making a decision that could harm their career later.

Reactive improvisation considers the environment and the people to support one's own unique response to an unexpected scenario based on input from the environment and others involved (Mannucci et al., 2021). An example would be when a manager is about to lose a client and must defend their actions and respond during a meeting with the client and leadership. They must be able to listen, think, and react successfully, coming up with their own idea quickly for how to solve the problem based on what others have said. According to Mannucci et al. (2021), this type of improvisation requires associates to build on their previous experience of imitative improvisation prior to mastering reactive improvisation.

Generative improvisation is described by Mannucci et al. (2021) as the most advanced and the riskiest of improvisation is exploring the future and taking into account proactive steps to try new things that can help anticipate and potentially even influence outcomes. Generative improvisation can be the most effective because it produces unique and original ideas.

Women are often planners, so it can be challenging when they are put in a situation where they do not have the opportunity to prepare. Good leaders are analytical, flexible, and creative (Gardner & Laskin, 1995). According to Madison (2005), improvisation can benefit individuals in the workplace. It allows them to concentrate on the current task instead of feeling inundated by what duties they need to complete next. When done right, improvising is often perceived as authentic and genuine. When women take the initiative to explore strategies that promote flexibility and adaptability, they enhance their capacity to seize opportunities and deal with unexpected situations in a confident, cheerful, and successful manner (C. Brooks, 2012; Eagly & Carli 2007;

Madison, 2005; McGrory-Dixon, 2012). In today's world, female leaders must be quick thinking and cannot leave their ability to improvise up to chance. It is important to understand that improvisation is a talent that can be learned rather than an innate trait (Mannucci et al., 2021).

Find Effective Forms of Self-Promotion

Women have been expected to be quiet and look pretty for years in the workplace (Reeves, 2019). Promoting oneself can demonstrate competence and status, but it can also be risky for women in the professional environment (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Successful women are expected to be modest in the workplace, but their male counterparts can boast and are often perceived as doing more (Reeves, 2019). Individuals who speak louder typically get promoted faster and are more likely to advance their careers compared to those who possess quiet talent and focus on combining hard work with humility and discretion (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2021).

Women are penalized in the workforce for being supportive and kind because it is expected of them. Women are often seen as submissive and followers whereas men who demonstrate the same trait are seen as significant (Eagly & Carli, 2007). In the 21st century, antiquated leadership standards still exist to support men advancing to the top of their careers but keep women in support positions (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2021). To change, these women need to self-promote whenever possible and also promote other women within the organization to break genderized leadership standards.

Effective ways for women to self-promote include acknowledging, embracing, celebrating, and sharing accomplishments and failures. Reeves (2019) provided great information on ways women can self-promote. These steps include:

- Taking responsibility for failures and successes alike.
- Not downplaying life's accomplishments in fear others will be turned off.
- Showing confidence in oneself and taking pride in what one has to offer.
- Finding a balance between self-defeating modesty and courageous self-promotion.
- Taking charge of one's career by leaning into success.
- Not playing it safe and finding new ways to challenge oneself.
- Be one's own brand ambassador and advocate for success and achievements.

Women have worked hard and earned success; they need to focus on self-promotion to advance in their careers beyond management levels. Women should seize the moment like men and not wait for opportunities to be presented to them (Warrell, 2017).

Most self-promotion these days happens online. According to Reed and Saunders (2020), men use assertive tactics to present themselves, such as emphasizing their privilege, skills development, and self-promotion, more often than women. In college, women feel uncomfortable with self-promoting, limiting their success (Lindeman et al., 2018). According to Chamorro-Premuzic (2021), women tend to be more self-aware of their limitations, and because of their awareness, they self-promote less.

Welcome a Less Prescribed Career Path

Regarding careers in the workplace, things are less structured than the course of study followed in school (Johnson & Mohr, 2019). There is no clear-cut path to achieving executive-level positions. According to Johnson and Mohr (2019), the new normal is an unconventional career path, which is also considered an alternative career path or job search method that deviates from the norm. The benefits and possibilities of a less

prescribed career path include quicker career advancement, higher salary, exciting job opportunities, job satisfaction, learning new skills, and self-sufficiency (Indeed Editorial Team, 2022b).

Although professional titles may vary depending on the property management company, overall the property management industry has a well-defined career path for onsite operations associates. A female career path follows the following journey: leasing consultant, assistant manager, property manager, senior property manager, regional manager, and regional vice president (JWilliams Staffing, 2020). The career path for males in property management is often unique. Many males do not start in entry-level positions but instead transfer from other industries in their 30s and 40s, allowing them to bring valuable life skills and experience to higher-level, specialized positions within the property industry (Carey, 2017).

Welcoming a less prescribed career path for females who started their careers on the traditional path may look different than just taking a lesser position. Some examples of taking a lesser career path may include transferring to another property out of state, moving to a different property managed by a different client, or working at a less attractive property to gain well-rounded experience to be promoted to the next level. The industry is full of reasons why males are promoted over females; however, the bottom line is that women have to do what it takes if getting promoted to the next level is what they are seeking to do.

Aim for Being Respected, not Just Liked

Women frequently encounter a challenging choice between earning respect and being well-liked, referred to as the competence-likability trade-off (Ibarra et al., 2013).

This is difficult for women rising in their careers. It can be a benefit to be liked and respected when it comes to being an executive or advancing in a career. It is important to strike a balance between being well-liked and earning respect (Nanda, 2022).

According to Nanda (2022), respect is more valuable because respect is earned from being a leader and a professional. Respect starts with the individual; when shown, it is received and an essential workplace component. The level of respect present in a workplace significantly impacts the overall culture. Respect can mean different things to different people. Some may see respect as being seen, others may see respect as being included, some see respect as being appreciated, and others may see respect as being heard (E. Perry, 2023). Treating others as they want to be treated is a good place to start. That means as a leader, it is important to connect with each associate. Get to know the associate's name and use it whenever possible, be polite, and greet associates. It is impossible for a leader to fulfill every expectation of their associates and gain respect from every generation in today's workforce. Nonetheless, leaders should strive to establish a fundamental standard of respect.

Byrant McGill (as cited in Show Up Team, 2021) stated, "One of the most sincere forms of respect is listening to what another has to say" (Conclusion section, para, 9). Research has suggested that women have a stronger ability to comprehend the emotional aspects of a message in comparison to men (Jansen, n.d.). Although research identified that both men and women equally prefer a collaborative team environment,

A study by Thomason Reuters of more than 1,000 professionals from five countries, found that while both male and female professionals are collaborative,

entrepreneurial, and share similar work style habits, women tend to place a higher respect in the workplace than their male counterparts. (Turiano, 2013, para. 1)

Gender differences involve physical and emotional factors that influence male and female behavior in the workplace; these differences stem from psychological factors like upbringing and physical factors like job capabilities (S. Scott, 2019).

Women are often expected to be team players, accepting, and content in the workplace. Women need to gain validation for who they are and their achievements; it must be exhausting for women always to feel the need to show the world their value versus their male counterparts who focus on interaction with executive leaders who can advance them in their careers (Sankar, 2017). Women need to take the lead of their male counterparts and focus more on being respected for core competencies and abilities by leaders who can advance their careers and support their growth. After all, research has shown that well-respected leaders are also well-liked (Clegg, 2022).

Gap in Research

Historically, women in leadership have been limited to specific types of careers. The qualifications for women in the workplace are being met. The concern is that women may have barriers and self-sabotaging behaviors that impede their progress. The problem is lack of research on how these personal disruption behaviors might impact women seeking executive leadership careers in property management. Are they working, and is there something else they should know? This study examined the impact of personal disruption behaviors on a group of female property management executives in the United States. Limited research is available on this topic, making this study an important contribution to the field.

Synthesis Matrix

A synthesis matrix is provided, highlighting how the academic and professional literature matches the variables of this study (see Appendix A).

Summary

Although research has been done on women's career advancement to executive positions, research has not been done specifically on the property management industry. Chapter II provided a literature review that examined those females who might have disruptive behaviors, how those disruptive behaviors might impact female career advancement, and how to support females in the property management industry in the future. The study examined personal disruption and female executive leadership career advancement. The impact personal disruption has on women's career advancement to executive leadership positions in the literature review identified self-sabotaging behaviors. However, further research into other causes of personal disruptions is needed to identify and determine personal disruptions that may benefit women's career advancement.

Social role theory, role congruity theory, and expectancy-value theory were discussed as part of the theoretical foundation review. These theories provide vital social insights into gender norms and expectations held by both men and women in the workplace. The literature has provided examples of how Johnson and Mohr's (2019) five disruptive behaviors, such as (a) challenging and influencing authority, (b) prepare but also learn to improvise, (c) find effective forms of self-promotion, (d) welcome a less prescribed career path, and (e) aim to be respected, not just liked. The chapter concluded

with gaps in research and a description of the synthesis matrix used to ensure all sources were used appropriately, as shown in Appendix A.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

To prepare future females in the property management industry for advancement to executive positions, it is important to identify whether specific disruptive behavioral strategies currently support female executives in advancing their careers. Johnson and Mohr (2019) believed that disruptive behaviors can lead to the successful advancement of females to executive positions in organizations. The research framework of this study was based on Johnson and Mohr's five key behaviors identified as part of personal disruptions to serve as the focus of the research. The five key behaviors identified are as follows: (a) challenge and influence authority, (b) prepare but also learn to improvise, (c) find effective forms of self-promotion, (d) welcome less prescribed career path, and (e) aim for being respected not just liked.

Chapter III describes the research design and methodology selected by the researcher as the most effective means to study the impact of the disruptive behaviors of female advancement to executive leadership positions in the property management industry. The chapter starts by outlining the purpose of the study and research questions, followed by the research design, including the researchers' rationale for using an explanatory mixed method design. An extensive description of the instrumentation is given, including both quantitative and qualitative measures and the researcher's involvement and field testing for each. Finally, validity, reliability, data collection methodology, data analysis, ethical consideration, and study limitations are presented.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed method study was to identify and describe the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's five disruptive career skills (2019) on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions.

Research Questions

1. What perceived impact did challenging and influencing authority have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
2. What perceived impact did preparing and improvising have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
3. What perceived impact did engaging in effective forms of self-promotion have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
4. What perceived impact did welcoming a less prescribed career path have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
5. What perceived impact did aiming for respect over being liked have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?

Research Design

The research design for the study was an explanatory mixed method design. The design was selected based on the following: (a) the ability to collect various quantities of comprehensive data, (b) the option to analyze processes and outcomes, (c) the ability to use a single method of limitations, and (d) the assurance to enhance a single method based on credibility (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Another advantage of using a mixed method design is that it allows the researcher to further explore quantitative results in greater detail by designing complex research questions. Five research questions were designed to analyze the personal disruption strategies used by women

seeking to advance in their careers. The researcher gained a transparent view of the female property management executives to determine whether quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. To elaborate on the findings, the mixed methods design began with quantitative data collection, and then the researcher followed it up with qualitative research to further expand on the findings.

Quantitative Research Design

For the quantitative portion of the research, nonexperimental descriptive research was used to understand the disruptive career skills perceived to impact female property managers' when advancing to executive leadership positions. The methodology was appropriately identified based on the qualitative foundation question, which asked about the career advancement experiences of female executives when advancing in their careers. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), the definition for qualitative research is "a type of research that refers to an in-depth study using face-to-face or observation techniques to collect data from people in their natural state" (p. 5). Another way to think of qualitative research is by exploring people's meanings and experiences.

A Google Form survey was designed in the study's first phase to learn whether and how female property management executives used Johnson and Mohr's (2019) five personal disruptive strategies and whether the strategies impacted their ability to advance in their careers (see Appendix B). Part 1 of the survey was designed as a Likert scale and included six questions that focused on providing an example of the females' career skills. To further collect information, if the survey respondents answered *definitely yes* or *generally yes* to a question, Part 2 questions were asked to focus on the impact of the disruptive skills.

To avoid respondents being neutral, the researcher developed scales to ensure that surveyed respondents would have to agree or disagree with each statement (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). To make sure data could be analyzed in terms of mean, mode, and frequency analysis, the researcher guaranteed the receipt of descriptive quantitative data.

Qualitative Research Design

The research design and methodology are strong. The researcher provided an in-depth description of the methods used to address the research questions. The study was qualitative based on data collection. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), the definition for qualitative research is “a type of research that refers to an in-depth study using face-to-face or observation techniques to collect data from people in their natural state” (p. 5). The qualitative research method allowed the researcher to be open-minded in exploring multiple interrelationships without making prior assumptions (Patton, 2015). The researcher collected the study participants, Google Form survey quantitative data in a semi structured manner and then interviewed study participants in an open-ended manner to gather further data. Virtual interviews were scheduled for 60 min using the Zoom platform, and an Outlook calendar meeting invite was sent to the selected study participants. This allowed the researcher to explore the disruptive career skills perceived to impact female property managers when advancing to executive leadership positions in a more in-depth manner.

The virtual interviews were structured and included an agenda of 12 qualitative open-ended questions. The interview started with the researcher thanking the participants for their time. The researcher confirmed that the participant had received prior to the interview the 12 qualitative questions that focused on Johnson and Mohr’s (2019) five

personal disruptive behaviors and the quantitative survey previously completed as part of the meeting invite. Prior to the interview starting, participants were asked whether they had taken the time to review the questions and whether there were any questions that they had prior to getting started. Then, the official interview began with the participants introducing themselves and giving a brief background on their name, industry tenure, current company name, current role held in the company, and how long they had been in their current role. The official interview commenced, using 12 preprepared questions to guide the conversation. The interview concluded with additional probing questions, also known as sub questions (see Appendix C), to gather further data on examples of how the study participant may have used the disruptive strategies. The probing questions were designed using a phenomenological framework. The phenomenology framework supported identifying the core questions of “meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of the person” (Patton, 2015, p. 98). The interviews lasted anywhere between 45 and 60 min.

Each participant was consistently interviewed using the same questions; however, based on the participant’s answers to the questions, additional probing questions were asked to explore the participant’s experience further related to the five disruptive behaviors. Each Zoom interview was recorded using the platform, and the audio was transcribed to allow the researcher to analyze themes and write an analysis of each respondent’s lived experience.

Method Rationale

The rationale method used was based on a thematic study formed to investigate how females use disruptive strategies for executive career advancement. A common interest in personal female executive disruptive strategies in various populations was

shared between one faculty researcher and four doctoral students. Each thematic group member selected leaders from their prospective industry, identifying seven to ten participants each to interview. The thematic researchers included the following along with their identified industry used in the study: Lorri Oliver, female executives in property management; Dina Hernandez, Latinx superintendents; Neko Green, female pastors; and Tricia Thompson, female K-12 superintendents from an elementary background.

There was consistent collaboration between the thematic group to ensure the success of the female disruptive behavior study. Ongoing face-to-face Zoom group meetings were scheduled to work on various aspects of the research, including the purpose statement, research questions, quantitative and qualitative instruments, and research procedures. Individually, the thematic group members supported each other in their selected sample of the population of leaders, which supported the depth of the quantitative and qualitative research of the explanatory mixed methods study. Based on the mixed method research design, each researcher could collect, analyze, and explore further data systematically to support the study's validity (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Choosing the sequential explanatory design allowed each researcher to collect quantitative data first, followed by qualitative data in the form of open-ended interview questions to allow the respondents to elaborate further on the results from the quantitative survey.

Population

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) stated, "Population is defined as a group of individuals having one or more characteristics that distinguish them from other groups" (p. 390). This study identified the population as female executives working in the

property management industry throughout the United States. Executives are managers or supervisors in an organization; although many firms consider C-suite jobs executive, any managerial position is executive (Betterteam, n.d.). Indeed Editorial Team (2022a) stated that executive titles, such as chief, executive, and vice president, hold the most influence in an organization, and the exact titles depend on the organization's size. The study defined executives as C-suite, division presidents, executive vice presidents, and senior vice presidents. According to Burke (2022), women represent 20.73% (1,146) of the CEOs in the real estate industry. Zippia (2023) reported that women represent 34.2% (39,490) of the vice president demographics and statistics. Based on this data, the study population comprised 39,490 female property management executives in the United States.

Sampling Frame

McMillan and Schumacher (2014) referred to sampling as a list of criteria or qualities used to select samples for analysis. A sampling frame was used to identify the population from which the participants were selected. This study's sampling frame included female property management executives across the United States with the following qualifications outlined for the study:

1. Current female executive at a property management company in the United States.
2. A minimum of 2 years in the current position.
3. Property management industry experience of 5 or more years as a manager or above before working as an executive in a corporate office.

Sample

A sample is a subset of people from whom data are drawn and is frequently a useful indicator of the entire population (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The researcher chooses the sample. According to Patten and Newhart (2018), the researcher assumes that the sample's characteristics are most likely the same as those of the whole population. Patton (2015) explained that the sample size in qualitative studies is frequently small. To collect rich data, researchers carefully choose participants using deliberate or nonprobability sampling techniques such as surveys, qualifying interviews, or establishing qualifying research.

Based on McMillan and Schumacher's (2014) definition of convenience sampling, convenience sampling was used to select a minimum of eight participants. McMillan and Schumacher defined convenience sampling as "a nonprobability method of selecting subjects who are accessible or available" (p. 2). To ensure that participants exhibit the criteria stated in the sampling frame, participants were carefully selected.

A sample of female property management executives was randomly selected for individual virtual and in-person interviews. The identified property management executives were selected based on their position, years working in the industry, and the progression of their careers within the industry. Based on this information, the sampling group was considered convenient sampling because the data set platform was available to extract information.

Sample Selection Process

During the selection process for the study, the researcher attended several property management industry events nationwide to collect data on present female executives in the property management industry who fulfilled the study's requirements.

Subsequently, the researcher identified four female executives who met the criteria. Additionally, the researcher asked four female executives throughout the country within her midsize organization, which consisted of over 2000 associates who met the study criteria, to participate in the survey. The researcher emailed 34 industry executives to explain the study's purpose and gauge their interest in participation. Networking with past associates from various organizations also supported the researcher in identifying study participants. After identifying the eight females who were willing to participate, the researcher sent them an email containing the Informed Consent, UMass Global Internal Review Board (IRB) Participant's Bill of Rights, interview protocol, and survey protocol (refer to Appendices D, E, B, and C). All interviews were conducted via Zoom, which offered video, audio, chat, and recording features. Before the interview, the study participant signed an audio release for approval to digitally record the interview and the personal disruption and impact on career development interview questions. To ensure consistency and integrity throughout the interview, a protocol was established with follow-up and confirmation questions to support study participants struggling to answer questions.

Instrumentation

A sequential explanatory mixed method design was used for the two-phase quantitative and qualitative data collection process “with the primary emphasis on quantitative methods” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014, p. 401). Initial quantitative and qualitative survey instruments were designed and developed by a faculty member and four thematic researchers to align with the frameworks Johnson and Mohr (2019) created on personal disruption strategies.

Contributors were surveyed using a Likert scale to collect initial quantitative data on their experiences. This allowed contributors to answer each question regarding how often they engaged in each career skill on a four-category continuum with the following choices: (4) *definitely yes*, (3) *generally yes*, (2) *generally no*, and (1) *definitely no*. If a respondent answered (4) *definitely yes* or (3) *generally yes*, additional questions were used to evaluate the impact of each behavior on the respondent's career advancement. The following Likert scale was used: (4) *high degree*, (3) *some degree*, (2) *little or no degree*, or (1) *detrimental to my career advancement*.

The qualitative survey was structured as an open-ended interview and followed the quantitative survey using an interview protocol developed by the thematic group. Using an open-ended format allowed contributors to expand on their original survey questions as part of the quantitative part of the research. This process was valuable because it provided phenomenological data that could be used to find and code themes to conclude the contributor's disruption methods and the impact these strategies had on career advancement.

Quantitative Instrumentation

Instruments developed by the thematic group for the study were based on the five personal disruption strategies designed by Johnson and Mohr (2019). Each researcher administered the instruments in two phases. Phase 1, a quantitative online survey, was used (see Appendix B) to determine which personal disruption behaviors each participant experienced throughout their career development and how the disruptive behaviors impacted those careers. The thematic team worked together to create an alignment table (see Appendix F) to ensure the qualitative instrument aligned with the study's purpose and research questions. The researcher considered the

quantitative instrument valid based on the ability to abstract data analysis quickly (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The instrument and the procedure in which it was used supported the researcher by showing how likely a broad generalization from a small population subset could be associated, also known as inferential statistics. According to researchers, quantitative data is less influenced because it provides objective data that can be communicated clearly through statistics and numbers. This allows decisions to be made based on observation and experience.

Qualitative Instrumentation

In Phase 2, the researcher conducted qualitative interviews using scripted open-ended questions (see Appendix C) suited for the study and developed by the thematic group (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). The thematic team worked together to create a qualitative alignment table (see Appendix G) to ensure the qualitative instrument aligned with the study's purpose and research questions. The purpose of the second phase of the survey was to gather additional details regarding the responses from the initial quantitative survey. Follow-up questions were prepared in advance "to increase the depth and breadth of responses" (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019, p. 149). Before the study was launched, to ensure the validity and dependability of the instruments, the thematic group conducted pilot testing on a small number of individuals who met the same criteria as the intended participants.

To ensure consistency and integrity of the interview, all respondents were asked the same questions in the same order. According to Patten and Newhart (2018), asking research questions consistently and in order increases the likelihood of accurate response comparison. Zoom, an online meeting platform, was used to conduct virtual interviews, which "are by far the most widely used type of measure for collecting data

for qualitative research” (Patten & Newhart, 2018, p. 163). Based on the preplanned interview structure, an interview guide and protocol were formulated in advance to support the structure of the interview process. The interview followed the flow of the conversation, and the guide was not used exactly the same way during each interview; according to Patten and Newhart (2018), this interview process was considered a semi structured interview.

To ensure successful interviews and allow study participants to prepare, they each received a copy of the quantitative survey and predetermined interview questions 48 hr. before the interview and a push notification reminder to be sent automatically the day of the interview 2 hr. prior to it. Interviewees were asked to join the call 10 min priorly to ensure they successfully logged in and that microphones were working properly. Once housekeeping items were completed and before recording began, the interviewee’s permission to record was obtained. The interview began with asking rapport questions such as the following:

- What is your name?
- How long have you been in the industry?
- What company are you currently with?
- Where is the company located?
- What position do you currently hold in the company?
- How long have you been in your position?

These questions were asked to establish rapport and make the interviewee feel comfortable (Patten & Newhart, 2018). The study’s purpose and interview safeguards were then briefly summarized. During each interview, Patten and Newhart’s (2018) process was followed starting with listening attentively to gain a thorough

understanding and searching for cues to ask further questions. Each interview was transcribed using the app Rev and identified recurring patterns based on themes and concepts in the data through coding. According to Patten and Newhart, “Coding themes is a way of analyzing the data for theory building” (p. 168). The researcher reads the transcript to identify concepts that can be categorized.

Researcher as the Instrument

Qualitative research views the researcher as an instrument because it is collected using human methods, and the researcher is one of them (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014; Patten & Newhart, 2018; Pezalla et al., 2012). Based on the researcher being considered an instrument, this can open the study to biases. According to Enago Academy (2021), qualitative research is subjective to the researcher and situation, making it difficult to avoid bias. Research has identified many types of research biases, including but not limited to the following:

- Procedural bias when the interviewer does not give study participants enough time to respond to questions; therefore, they rush in their response.
- Interview bias is when the interviewer influences the interviewee’s responses by using their opinion as an example to explain the question further.
- Response bias refers to the interviewee giving a response they believe the interviewer wants to hear.

Recommended research processes were followed to avoid bias, as identified in an article written by the Indeed Editorial Team (2022b). These processes were (a) the researcher ensured that all interviews were conducted in a consistent manner; (b) each interviewee was provided with the same set of questions to minimize the chance of bias

in the process 48 hr before the interview; and (c) during the interview, interviewees' responses were reiterated in their own words to prevent any misinterpretation.

Quantitative Field Test

The quantitative survey was field-tested to verify that there was no bias in procedures or questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014) and to validate the validity of the content (Patten & Newhart, 2018). A vice president who met all the sampling criteria qualifications as the target population was identified. The study target population had been in the industry for at least 20 years, worked at various companies in various positions, and has been in the current position for 4 years. The feedback provided allowed the thematic group to restructure some questions and create more strategic probing questions. Upon completing the quantitative field test, the field-test participant provided a feedback form for the interviewee to fill out to ensure there was no evidence of bias (see Appendix H).

Qualitative Field Test

The qualitative field test was the next step in the interviewing process. The researcher used the same respondent as in the quantitative survey. Before scheduling the field test interview, the researcher collaborated with a team member from the same thematic group, and agreed to observe each other's field test interviews. The observer's responsibility during the interview process was to sit in the background of the interview silently, observe the process flow, take notes, and provide feedback to the interviewer after the interview. The researcher identified a participant for the field test who met the same criteria as the study participants. The researcher sent a study introduction letter (see Appendix I) and an Outlook email calendar invitation, which included interview questions 48 to 72 hr before the scheduled interview. The interview occurred in a Zoom

virtual meeting room; the researcher used the field test interview question designed previously (see Appendix C). After the field test interview was complete, the researcher thanked the participants and asked them to fill out a survey to provide feedback on the interview process (see Appendix J). After the meeting, the researcher asked the observer for feedback using a form (see Appendix K). One change was made to the interview resource tools based on the feedback of the observer and participant feedback; the word “challenge” was mistakenly repeated on two questions but was subsequently fixed.

Validity

The term *validity* is used in research involving measures, also known as instrument measurement, to describe when a measurement accurately reflects the performance of a function for which it was designed to be measured (Patten & Newhart, 2018). This is especially the case in quantitative research; however, it is also a valid statement in qualitative and mixed method research studies. According to Middleton (2023), there are four types of validity in research to determine the accuracy of the measures of actual components: (a) construct validity determines whether the test measures what it was designed to, (b) content validity answers whether the research is fully representative of what it is aiming to measure, (c) face validity answers whether the research is appropriate for its purpose, and (d) criterion validity whether the results accurately measure the intended outcome. As part of the quantitative research, the researcher had to consider the reliability and validity of the methods and measurements used.

Study validity applies to all studies and refers to how the results among the study participants represent the true findings among similar individuals outside the

study (Patino & Ferreira, 2018). Study validity consists of two components: internal and external. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2014), external validity is a generalization of study results, and internal validity refers to controlling confounding variables. An observer was used during the qualitative field test to confirm the validity of the questionnaire and interview process. Additionally, the team used an evidence-based internal structure to design questions closely linked to the theory or intended use of the scores and personal disruptive strategies. Delve software supported identifying the qualitative themes, assigning codes, and triangulating data. The researcher assured the accuracy of the measurement being used during the interviews by explaining the purpose of the study. The study focus was a subset of female executives in the property management industry; the researcher assured that external validity was limited to individuals who met the study criteria.

Reliability

When a study yields the same results, it is considered reliable (Patten & Newhart, 2018). In this study, the researcher used interobserver and parallel form reliability to increase the chances of similar results. The researcher ensured that the survey content was developed using the thematic team, thus covering interobserver reliability. Also, the parallel forms of reliability were protected based on the subjects being assessed via quantitative survey and qualitative interview. A standard open interview was conducted using a thematic teammate as the observer for the survey field test to ensure consistency. To support the security intercoder reliability, all interviews were recorded, and transcribed content was presented to the respondent for final approval to ensure the integrity of the data validity. To limit data bias, Delve was used to code themes.

Data Collection

There were two phases of data collection used for the explanatory mixed method study. The first was a 12-question Likert scale electronic survey designed in Google Forms to collect responses and allow for impact responses based on the disruption behavior as *definitely yes* or *generally yes*. Next, each contributor was interviewed using Zoom online video conference platform. Finally, data collection was considered completed upon the researcher's certification by the National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research to conduct human research and the approval from the UMass Global IRB to conduct the study (see Appendix I), which granted permission to start collecting data. All eight prospective participants received a copy of the UMass Global IRB Informed Consent (see Appendix D) and UMass Global Bill of Rights (see Appendix E) to ensure they were "fully informed about the procedure and risk involved in the research project" (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019, p. 36) along with an email including a link to the electronic survey. Once participants consented to participating in the study, the researcher began data collection. According to Roberts and Hyatt (2019), it is the researcher's responsibility to exercise responsibility for the collected data. The researcher ensured data collection was protected using this study's limited-access, password-protected digital device.

Quantitative Data Collection

As part of the quantitative data collection, the participants were emailed an informed consent and bill of rights forms, including a description of the use of data and guaranteed confidentiality by the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Once the participant read and consented to participate in the study survey, participants were given 1 week to complete the estimated 10- to 15-min survey. The researcher

established a follow-up survey email plan that included sending participants two reminder emails to ensure surveys were completed within the allotted time.

Qualitative Data Collection

Qualitative data collection strategies were implemented as a follow up to the electronic survey. The interview process was structured. The major methods used to collect the qualitative data included structured interview questions, prewritten probing questions to abstract further detail when needed, and Zoom online video platform. Before the qualitative data collection interview, the researcher provided the study participants with a copy of their previous quantitative electronic survey results and a copy of the 12 open-ended questions that would be used during the interview.

At the start of the interview, the researcher gained permission from the respondent to record the session and explained that recording the session would later assist in transcribing the data verbatim, “providing material for reliability checks” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014, p. 386). The interview was effective based on efficient probing and sequence of the questions. The researcher started the interview by stating the study’s purpose and focus. Next, the researcher used open-ended general questions to initiate conversation, such as the respondent’s full name, how long in the industry, current company, current position at the company, and the time in the current position. The researcher used an open-ended interview style to capture the respondent’s data. The eight recorded interviews took approximately 45 to 60 min and were later transcribed using Temi software. The researcher then returned the transcribed data to the respondent for final accuracy. Once they were approved, the researcher uploaded results to the qualitative data analysis software Delve to identify themes and code the data.

Data Analysis

To accomplish the objectives of this mixed method sequential explanatory design, qualitative data analysis was used to organize the data collected into categories to support identifying patterns and relationships among the categories (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The process may vary depending on the researcher; however, the steps are the same (analyze, summarize, and interpret). This process allows the researcher to learn more about the participants' quantitative responses by connecting the stories and experiences of the females' use of disruptive behaviors and how the strategy impacted their individual careers. As a result of the quantitative and qualitative data being combined, the triangulation of the data allowed the researcher to make some generalizations regarding the impact of the strategy being supportive or not to the females' career advancement.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The collection and analysis of the data were derived from the online Google Forms survey, which was used for the quantitative data analysis. Data gathered from survey results were then compiled, organized, and summarized using descriptive statistics. An example of the descriptive data collected includes the measurement of the central tendency, also known as the mode of the strategies used (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). For this study, the researcher evaluated the mode to identify the most frequently occurring personal disruptive behaviors. The electronic survey questions were closed-ended and based on predetermined response scales using a 4-point Likert scale, which included the following numerical assignment: 4 = *definitely yes*, 3 = *generally yes*, 2 = *generally no*, and 1 = *definitely no*. The survey was

completed first, and the interview followed. Tables 1 through 4 reflect the tables that will be used to track the data in Chapter IV of the research.

Table 1

Personal Disruption Behaviors as Reported by Participants in the Survey

Personal disruption strategy use	<i>n</i> = number of respondents who answered definitely yes or generally yes	% of participants
Challenging authority		
Influencing authority		
Preparing but also improvising		
Engaging in effective forms of self-promotion		
Welcoming a less-prescribed career path		
Aim for being respected, not just liked		

Table 2

Personal Disruption Impact as Reported by Participants in the Survey

Personal disruption strategy impact	<i>n</i> = number of respondents who answered high degree or some degree	% of participants
Impact of challenging authority		
Impact of influencing authority		
Impact of preparing but also improvising		
Impact of engaging in effective forms of self-promotion		
Impact of welcoming a less-prescribed career path		
Impact of aiming for being respected, not just liked		

Table 3

Average Score of Personal Disruptive Behavior by Participants on Survey

Personal disruption strategy use	Average
Challenging authority	
Influencing authority	
Preparing but also improvising	
Engaging in effective forms of self-promotion	
Welcoming a less-prescribed career path	
Aim for being respected, not just liked	

Table 4

Average Score of Personal Disruptive Behavior Impacts by Participants on Survey

Personal disruption strategy impact	Average
Challenging authority	
Influencing authority	
Preparing but also improvising	
Engaging in effective forms of self-promotion	
Welcoming a less prescribed career path	
Aim for being respected, not just liked	

Qualitative Data Analysis

According to Patton (2015), “qualitative data analysis transforms data into findings” (p. 521). Qualitative data are often unstructured and can answer questions the researcher may have about the quantitative data and help formulate hypotheses to build an understanding of the research (Dye, n.d.). To determine the significance of the responses, the researcher arranged the data by coding themes (Creswell & Guetterman,

2019). Eight interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed. Next, the researcher verified that each respondent was quoted correctly by sending the transcription to the respondents for verification. Approved transcriptions were put into Delve to identify and code themes. Then, the researcher reviewed all text for categories relevant to the research questions; codes were created within Delve reflective of the common themes. The researcher checked each code thoroughly to ensure all codes answered the study's research questions. Codes with few frequencies had to be reevaluated by the researcher to determine appropriate identification.

Ethical Considerations

A credible research design was implemented and adhered to for the purpose of the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). The IRB approved the research study. Before gathering data, the researcher ensured that each respondent received written consent and that measures were taken to ensure the confidentiality and the rights of the female executives in the property management industry were upheld. The Bill of Rights given to participants explained that they could withdraw anytime, and all ethical protections were adhered to (Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). The researcher also ensured that the data were stored in a password-protected digital device to which only the researcher had the password.

Limitations

Limitations are uncontrollable factors present in all research studies that can impact research results and a researcher's ability to generalize findings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014; Roberts & Hyatt, 2019). According to Patten and Newhart (2018), sampling and measurement limitations exist, and other methodological issues may impact the result of interpretation. This study's limitations included the study's

location, the sample criteria for participants, the sample size of the participants, and researcher bias.

Location of the Study

One of the study's limitations was the location, because it was limited to female executives in the United States located in the following states: Arizona, California, Maryland, Texas, and Washington. Convenience and purposeful sampling were used to identify the chosen female executives based on the researcher's access to them. Because of this, the results can only be generalized to female executives in limited areas.

Sample Criteria for Participants

The next limitation was the sample criteria for participants. Because of the number of property management companies in the United States and female executives in the industry who met the study's criteria, the researcher used convenience and purposeful sampling. Given these limitations, the study's participants were limited to female executives based on the researcher's networking groups and organizations. As a result of the limitation, the study's results cannot be generalized to the total population of female executives in positions lower than senior vice presidents.

Sample Size of the Participants

A total of eight female executives participated in the study, which is an appropriate sample size for a mixed method study according to Patton (2015). However, the impact of the study participants' responses is more important than the number of participants in the study. Again, these findings cannot be generalized to the overall population of female executives in the property management industry.

Time Constraints

An additional limitation identified was time constraints. The one-on-one interview was scheduled for 1 hour; however, the time allocated may not have been sufficient for the study participants to answer the open-ended questions and may have limited the depth of the information participants shared.

Bias of the Researcher

Finally, researcher bias was another limitation; it is a concerning factor in qualitative research (Patton, 2015). The researcher has worked in the property management industry for at least 25 years and currently holds a leadership position in the property management industry. The researcher remained neutral and aware of personal bias because it may have related to the study of female executive's career advancement in the property management industry. If researchers are unaware of bias, it can impact their ability to collect data, develop themes, and code in the qualitative portion of the research. Because the researcher was part of a thematic team, the researcher had the support needed to ensure opinions and emotions were not included in the research interview process and practiced with the thematic team prior to conducting interviews to gain feedback.

Summary

Chapter III described the sequential explanatory mixed methods study and explains the methodology used for the research. The chapter began with an overview that included the purpose statement and research questions. This was followed by the method of rationale for the use of the mixed methods selection, followed by the quantitative and qualitative research design that included the data collection process. Next was an explanation of the population, sampling frame, and sample. Then the

quantitative and qualitative instruments were reviewed along with the validity and reliability of the research. Chapter III concluded with information on data collection analysis, ethical considerations, and limitations of the study. The overall quantitative and qualitative analysis is presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V concludes the study with findings and consideration for future research.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Chapter IV of the study provides an overview of the study process, including the research, data collection, and findings. The chapter begins by restating the study's purpose statement and research questions. It then describes the research methods and data collection process, including details about the study's population, sample, and demographic data. The majority of this chapter is dedicated to presenting and analyzing the collected data. The major common findings of disruptive behaviors are explored thoroughly and categorized into themes. Finally, the findings summarize all the major elements of the study's research, data collection, and procedures related to the study's research.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed method study was to identify and describe the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's five disruptive career skills (2019) on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions.

Research Questions

1. What perceived impact did challenging and influencing authority have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
2. What perceived impact did preparing and improvising have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
3. What perceived impact did engaging in effective forms of self-promotion have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
4. What perceived impact did welcoming a less prescribed career path have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?

5. What perceived impact did aiming for respect over being liked have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

A mixed method explanatory study was used to identify and describe the use and impact of personal disruption strategies on female executives' advancement to leadership positions in the property management industry in the United States. The objective of the qualitative and quantitative analyses was to determine the use of the strategy and the degree to which it positively or negatively influenced the individual's career trajectory. A framework authored by Johnson and Mohr in 2019 was used to establish the foundation of the study. In their article, Johnson and Mohr presented that women must address the following five disruptive behaviors to be seen as leaders inside an organization:

- Figure out how to challenge and influence authority.
- Prepare but also learn to improvise.
- Find effective forms of self-promotion.
- Welcome a less prescribed, full-of-surprise career path.
- Go for being respected, not just liked.

The data collection procedure was a two-part process. First, a Google Form six-question Likert scale survey was designed and administered to study participants via email to learn whether and how female property management executives used Johnson and Mohr's five personal disruptive strategies and whether the strategies impacted their ability to advance in their careers (see Appendix A). Next, study participants were scheduled for a one-on-one virtual interview with the researcher to understand possible disruptive behaviors further and whether those behaviors supported or hindered their

career trajectory to executive positions within the organization. Interviews were recorded via Zoom with prior participant permission and transcribed via the Zoom platform. To ensure the validity and reliability of the transcribed data, the researcher sent recorded transcripts to participants via email to review and offer further feedback prior to coding data. All data were stored and secured by the researcher.

Population

A population is defined as a group of individuals with one or more distinguishing characteristics that set them apart from other groups (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). This study identified the population as female executives working in the property management industry throughout the United States. Executives are individuals who hold management or supervisory roles in an organization. Although some companies specifically classify C-suite positions as executive roles, any administrative position can be considered executive (Betterteam, n.d.). Indeed Editorial Team (2022a) stated that executive titles such as CEO, chief operating officer, and chief financial officer hold the most influence in an organization, and the specific titles vary depending on the size of the organization. Executives were identified in the study as the C-suite, vice presidents, senior vice presidents, division presidents, and executive vice presidents. According to Burke (2022), women make up 20.73% (1,146) of CEOs in the real estate industry. Zippia (2023) reported that within the demographic and statistical analysis of vice presidents, women represent 34.2% (39,490) of the total number. Based on this data, the study population consisted of 39,490 female property management executives in the United States.

The target population was identified by the researcher attending and networking at several property management events across the country, including within the researcher's own organization. Next, the researcher used the LinkedIn platform further to confirm the study participants' qualifications. The researcher identified a target population of 38 female property management executives across the United States.

Sample

The researcher used purposeful and convenience sampling to randomly select the sample based on property management positions, years working in the industry, and the progression of their careers within the property management industry (Patton, 2015). Using purposeful sampling helped the researcher identify the elements from female property management executives. Convenience sampling is a nonprobability technique employed to choose participants according to their accessibility or availability (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

The sample group is considered a convenience sample based on the researcher's technique to identify participants who were accessible or available during the study time frame (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Eight of the targeted population of 38 women willingly agreed to participate in the study. Four were from the researcher's organization, and four were identified from other property management organizations across the United States. All study participants were interviewed virtually.

Demographic Data

To protect the privacy and confidentiality of the study participants, all identifying information was removed from the results. As shown in Table 5, the eight study participants were identified numerically from 1 to 8. The sample consisted of female executives currently working at a property management company in the United States.

They had a minimum of 2 years of experience in their current position and a minimum of 5 years of experience as a manager or above before transitioning into an executive role in a corporate office. In November 2023, the researcher effectively conducted interviews with all eight study subjects through rigorous planning and organization.

Table 5

Participants Demographic Information

Participant ID	Years in property management	State	Starting position	Current position
P1	33 years	DC	Manager	Chief officer
P2	34 years	CA	Leasing agent	Senior vice president
P3	20 years	CA	Leasing agent	Executive vice president
P4	34 years	WA	Leasing agent	Divisional president
P5	19 years	TX	Apprentice	Chief officer
P6	11 years	FL	Leasing director	Senior vice president
P7	24 years	OR	Leasing agent	Executive vice president
P8	37 years	CA	Leasing agent	Senior vice president

Participants acknowledged receipt and reading of the Research Participants Bill of Rights as part of the survey. Age and executive experience were collected from participants. Six participants were between 50 and 59 years old, and two were between 40 and 49 (see Figure 13). Further information collected identified that three participants had been executives for less than 10 years, two for 10-plus years, two for 20-plus years, and one for 31 years.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

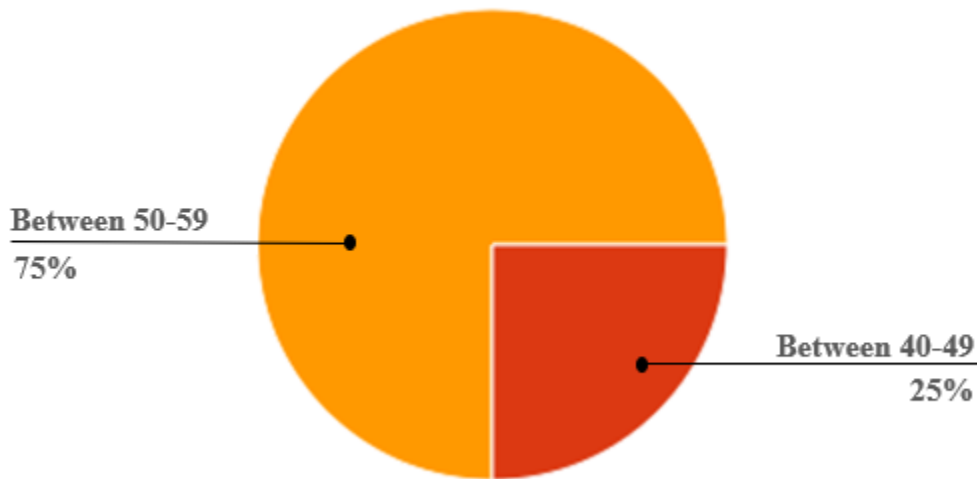
Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to answer the study’s research questions. The data and analysis presented directly pertain to the research study questions. As a reminder, Phase I of the study involved an electronic Google form survey

distributed to executives via email, followed by Phase II, which involved prescheduled virtual one-on-one recorded interviews where in which participants could expand on disruptive behavior experiences.

Figure 13

Participants Age Range

Question: What is your current age range?



Quantitative Data Analysis

An electronic survey was created using Google Forms, information was collected in a semi structured manner, and the findings were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The study examined how participants responded to each question based on a percentage. The electronic survey included 13 questions with predetermined response scales. Each question pertained to a disruptive career skill and was answered using a 4-point Likert scale. The questions related to the use of certain behaviors were assigned the following numerical value: 4 = *definitely yes*, 3 = *generally yes*, 2 = *generally no*, and 1 = *definitely no*. To further collect information, if the survey respondents answered *definitely yes* or

generally yes (4 or 3, respectively), further questions were asked to focus on the impact of the disruptive skills. The impact measurement questions were based on the following Likert scale: 4 for *high degree*, 3 for *some degree*, 2 for *little or no degree*, and 1 for *being detrimental to my career development*. The participants were asked to complete the survey first and then were scheduled for an interview.

Qualitative Research Design

Phase II of the study involved conducting qualitative interviews with participants to gain a more in-depth understanding of their experience. The interviews were conducted virtually, using the Zoom platform, and were one-on-one. The researcher asked 12 semi structured interview questions based on Johnson and Mohr's (2019) five personal disruptive behaviors and several probing questions to encourage participants to elaborate on their responses. The interviews were scheduled for 60 min, but the average length was 45 min. All interviews were recorded using Zoom and were transcribed using Rev software. The transcribed interviews were then analyzed using Delve, a qualitative analysis software program. The researcher used inductive analysis to extract themes from the interviews. There was no preconceived structure for coding the data. Instead, the researcher developed themes based on initial readings and refined them by combining similar themes and removing those that had minimal reference or support.

Intercoder Reliability

The intercoder reliability procedure was used to reduce errors and ensure study reliability (Lombard et al., 2005). The intercoder reliability method ensured independent coder agreement and reduced qualitative research bias while checking for consistency in data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014; Patton, 2015). This study's qualitative data were

reviewed by an additional peer researcher to determine intercoder reliability. According to Delve et al. (2023), a score of 0.8 or higher is often considered good. In this study, coding agreement measurement had a coefficient level of 82%.

Research Question 1: Challenging and Influencing Authority

The first research question asked, “What perceived impact did challenging and influencing authority have on female property management advancement to an executive leadership position?” This first research question was divided into two components because confronting and influencing authority exhibit distinct differences in practical application. As part of the quantitative survey, participants were provided with statements related to the question and then asked to rate their level of agreement using a Likert scale. The follow-up question focused on whether the participants believed that using the expertise had positively impacted their professional growth.

Quantitative Data Analysis and Presentation

Figure 14 displays that when it comes to challenging authority, 37.5% of the participants agreed that they engage in it, and 62.5% agreed that they generally do so. In Figure 15, when evaluating its impact, 37.5% of the participants believed to a high degree that challenging authority had a positive impact on their career trajectory, 50% somewhat believed in its positive impact on their career, and 12.5% believed that it had little to no positive impact on their career progression.

Figure 16 shows that 25% of participants highly influence authority and 75% influence authority to some degree. As shown in Figure 17, when evaluating the perceived impact that influencing authority has on career advancement to an executive leadership position, 50% believed to a high degree that influencing authority had a

positive impact on their career trajectory, 37.5% rated this as having some degree of a positive impact on their career trajectory, and 12.5% believed influencing authority had little to no degree of impact on their career trajectory.

Figure 14

Quantitative Response to the Use of Challenging Authority

Challenging Authority: I speak up to my superiors rather than tell my bosses what they want to hear.

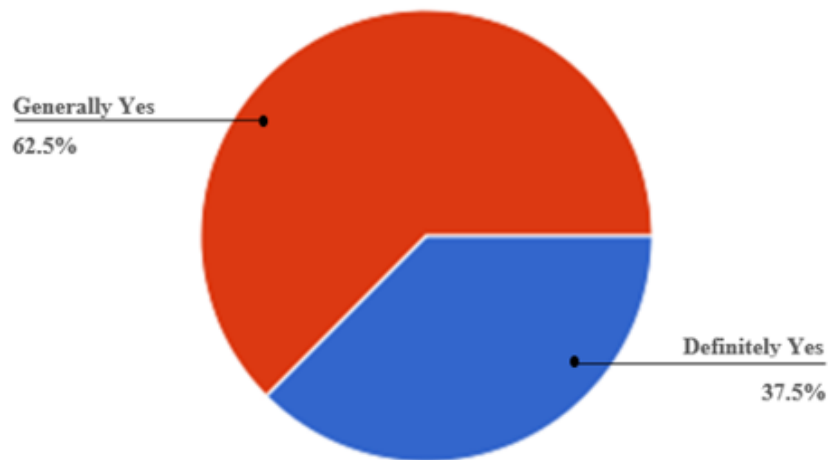


Figure 15

Quantitative Responses: Perceived Impact of Challenging Authority

Challenging Authority Impact: How much did Challenging Authority positively impact your advancement to executive leadership?

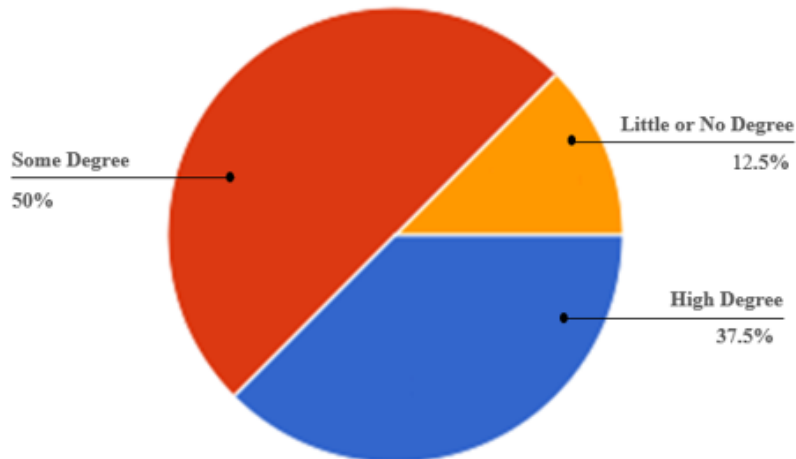


Figure 16

Quantitative Responses to the Use of Influencing Authority

Influencing Authority: I often find a problem that needs to be solved and persuade others in the direction of what I feel to be the correct answer.

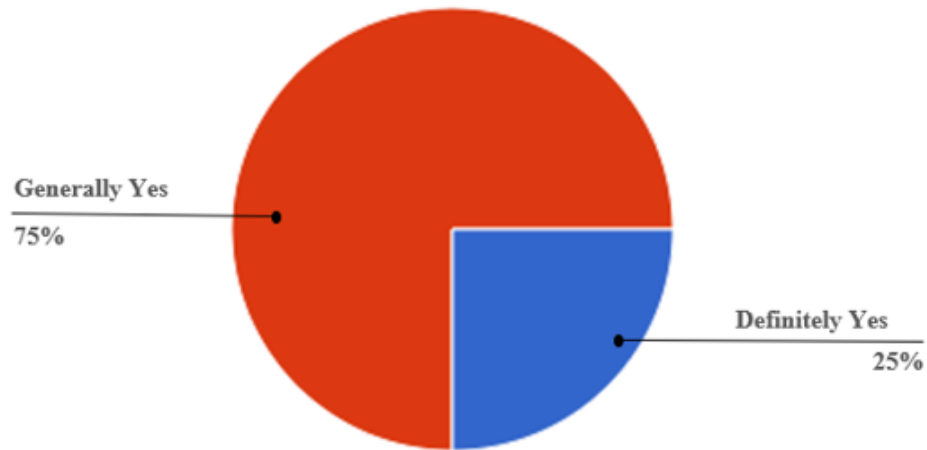
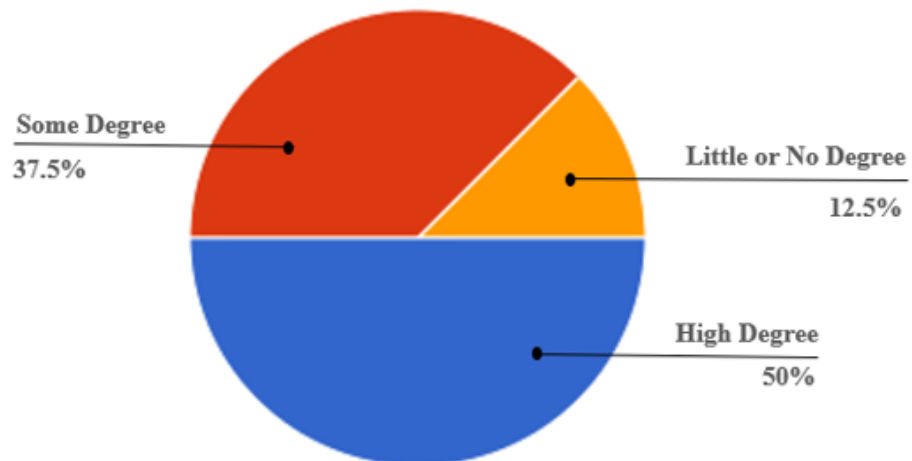


Figure 17

Quantitative Responses: Perceived Impact of Influencing Authority

Influencing Authority Impact: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Influencing Authority had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?



Qualitative Data Analysis and Presentation

Challenging Authority

Various challenges exist when challenging authority. Societal norms and biases have historically made it difficult for women to navigate these structures. However, the participants interviewed for this study highlighted their strategies and successes through their career experiences. During the interviews regarding challenging authority, the following five themes emerged: career strategies and challenging norms, assertive communication styles, decision making, conflict resolution and negotiation, and advocacy change. See Table 6 for the theme, the number of participants who referenced the theme when asked the question regarding challenging authority, and the percentage of participants who referenced the theme overall in the study. Each theme listed in Table 6 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 6

Themes Related to Challenging Authority While Advancing to Executives in Property

Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Career strategies and challenging norms	34	7	87%
Assertive communication styles	51	6	75%
Decision making	29	5	62%
Conflict resolution and negotiation	24	3	38%
Advocacy for change	22	3	38%

Career Strategies and Challenging Norms. Career strategies and challenging norms were referenced 34 times by seven participants, representing 87% of participants. Study participants shared reflections on their early careers, in which they challenged

authority and led initiatives for improvements. The theme of challenging norms was defined based on examples provided by participants. It included challenging the norm of complacency, the norm of career path, the norm of conformity, and challenging norms related to stereotypes in certain fields and positions.

Study participants made the following statements related to career strategies and challenging norms. P1 stated, “It was a conscious decision to challenge the norm of enduring work that did not align with personal fulfillment.” This allowed P1 to speak the truth and be assertive without fear. P2 gave an example of challenging established norms, including being posed as a threat when she gave opinions and recommendations to male supervisors. She eventually learned to give feedback and recommendations in the form of questions, which made her less intimidating. She gave an example of challenging the norms by taking risks to advance her career. P3 stated, “I have kept that mentality about questioning respectfully throughout my career.” P5 stated, “So when I am challenging and pushing back, I have to use more of my influencing skills than my challenging skills to move faster and advance.” P6 stated, “Challenging the norm of humility and letting one’s work speak for itself.”

Assertive Communication Styles. To question authority, a person must be able to articulate their views, wants, and opinions while respecting the rights of others. This is accomplished through assertive communication styles that convey confidence and competence. Six participants referenced the theme 51 times under challenging authority, representing 75% of participants. One of the ways these female executives have taken an assertive, innovative communication style is by being humble. As a leader, P1 challenges traditional expectations of her role by aiming to be assertive without falling into typical

Black female stereotypes of being loud and outspoken. She told a story of often being the only female at the table in the boardroom and quite often the only person of color. She had to learn quickly to be heard without sounding intimidating. P2 talked about being versatile and not being afraid to listen to what everyone says before speaking. This allows her to be seen as knowledgeable. P4 said she learned quickly to listen carefully and to speak once the men at the table had finished their debate. This allows her voice to be heard, and she has earned the respect of her male counterparts. P5's communication style when challenging authority is to keep the mentality of questioning respectfully. Her advice is to "jump right in and question how things are being done."

Decision Making. Five participants referenced the theme 29 times, representing 62% of participants. The participants highlighted the importance of aiming for respect, mentoring, and taking a strategic approach while making decisions and providing service until selective growth is achieved. When making confident decisions, participants felt it is important to challenge traditional expectations, avoid stereotypes, be versatile, and not compromise values for financial gain. During her interview, P1 discussed her experiences of challenging authority in boardrooms and council meetings where she was often dismissed. She took the assertive approach of expressing her expertise without conforming to stereotypes, demonstrating great courage in standing up for herself. Additionally, she shared two instances when she had to make the difficult decision to terminate management contracts because of conflicts with clients on racial behavior, demonstrating a willingness to make tough decisions in the face of disrespectful behavior. P4 shared, "In my mind, there are always multiple ways to approach a situation

or a challenge.” P8 shared, “Putting things into perspective and leading by example influences others in the direction you are swaying them to go.”

Conflict Resolution and Negotiation. Three participants referenced the theme 24 times when asked about their experience with challenging authority, representing 38% of total participants. P1 shared an instance when clients disrespected her team, and she took a firm stand, insisting on mutual respect. This action exemplified conflict resolution and negotiation skills used with clients to establish clear expectations and boundaries. P4 gave the following example: “I had these guys constantly coming into the office and complaining, and finally, one day, they came in, and I just said, I want to help you, and I am not sure how to help you.” P6 shared an experience about a reputation that follows her of having sharp elbows because she pushes back and challenges authority. She stated, “It is frustrating because men do not get that same reputation when they challenge and push back.” She went on to say, “So, when I am challenging and pushing back, I have to use more of my influencing skills than my challenge to move faster and advance.”

Advocacy for Change. Advocacy involves speaking up for oneself or others to bring attention and effect change. Three participants referenced the theme 22 times when asked about their experience with challenging authority, representing 38% of total participants. One of the experiences a participant shared was the challenge of being perceived as an angry Black woman and the need to navigate stereotypes. Her approach challenges dismissiveness and stereotypes, advocating for change in perceptions of women and women of color in professional settings. P4 shared, “And I always have the company’s best interest.” Advocating for ethical standards or the company’s well-being could be considered acting in its best interests. PF shared experience in addressing issues

related to gender bias and leadership expectations. She shared, “I think there is an opportunity for us as leaders to do better with gender-related expectations, not to make certain expectations for a female leader when we do not make it a requirement of a male leader.” She went on to share how she can advocate change by stating, “I have the opportunity to do better to articulate my role in that because some people do not correlate the two with each other.”

Impact on Challenging Authority

All the participants believed the impact of challenging authority positively impacted their career advancement. During the interviews regarding the impact of challenging authority on one’s career, the following themes emerged: positive recognition and influence, gender dynamics and speaking with authority, mixed impact on career progression, influence of leadership style, and impact on leadership dynamics. Each theme listed in Table 7 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 7

Themes Related to Impact of Challenging Authority Experienced While Advancing to Executives in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Positive recognition and influence	37	7	87%
Gender dynamics and speaking with authority	21	5	62%
Mixed impact on career progression	17	4	50%
Influence of leadership style	16	5	62%
Impact on leadership dynamics	14	4	50%

Positive Recognition and Influence. When asked about their experience with challenging authority and whether it had a positive or negative impact, seven out of eight

participants referenced the theme of positive recognition and influence 37 times, representing 87% of the total study population. Participants frequently received recognition for their expertise when colleagues sought their advice on specific topics. The remarks that follow are direct examples of participant knowledge of the personal impact of positive recognition and influence. P1 talked about being the only female in a board meeting, expressing her opinion on a topic once the males in the room had finished and the focus was on her, and acknowledging that people listen when she speaks. This positively impacted her career within the organization and the industry. She was able to build connections and join in conversations in which she could positively influence decisions and discussions. P3 believed that self-promoting played a part in her receiving positive recognition. Her adaptability and ability to think quickly on her feet have allowed her to influence decisions and get positive recognition in her organization. P8 believed positive recognition from her leadership team came from taking on projects and finishing them. This led to positive recognition because her success inspired her to demonstrate her capabilities.

Gender Dynamics and Speaking With Authority. Five participants referenced the theme of gender dynamics and speaking with authority 21 times when asked about their experience with the impact of challenging authority and whether it was positive or negative, representing 62% of the total study population. Gender dynamics and speaking with authority are inferred through dealing with dismissiveness. The participants reflected on the challenges and dynamics related to gender in the workplace, emphasizing the importance of doing the right thing, being heard, and gaining respect, especially in situations with gender disparity. P1 reflected the need to balance passion with a calming

voice, indicating an awareness of gender expectations in communication style. All participants mentioned being dismissed and having to navigate situations in which their authority is challenged based on their gender dynamics. P2 provided an example of a male leader. She said, “He always accused me of trying to stretch my authority and do things my way, regardless of what I said or did.” She remembered being told, “This is my office, and you will do things my way.” P5 stated that she believes women are held to a different standard when speaking with authority. She said, “Women cannot show their passion for a subject. They must remain levelheaded and back up what they are saying with facts to be heard, unlike their male counterparts speaking on the same topic.” Overall, participants felt that when speaking with authority, they were dismissed and had to navigate situations in which their authority was challenged, and they felt gender dynamics influenced this.

Mixed Impact on Career Progression. Four participants referenced the theme of mixed impact on career progression 17 times when asked about their experience with the impact of challenging authority and whether it was positive or negative, representing 50% of the study population. Participants shared experiences and insights that touched upon positive and challenging aspects of their career choices. The following are instances in which the mixed impact on career progression was inferred. P7 mentioned taking a demotion in the job title and getting a pay cut. She acknowledged that although it was a challenging decision, it provided valuable insights and later contributed to her career progression. Another example given by P7 was dealing with disagreements and providing thoughtful feedback. This example indicated that not every interaction resulted in her getting her way, but the process had a mixed impact on career progression.

Influence of Leadership Style. Five participants referenced the theme influence of leadership style 16 times when asked about their experience with the impact of challenging authority and whether it was positive or negative, representing 62% of the study population. The participants recognized that their expertise, positive influence, relationship-building, and emotional balance contributed to their career success and leadership style. P1 discussed the challenges of balancing passion and professionalism, demonstrating emotional intelligence in her leadership style. P2 shared how her influence on leadership style supported her in influencing her male boss to be open to her ideas and suggestions. She stated, “Putting things into place and leading by example influenced my boss in the direction I was swaying him to go.” P5 said, “And our leader is as interested in our advancement as the success of the organization.” The mention of the leader’s interest in the team’s advancement suggests a positive influence of leadership style on career development. P7’s strategic decision making, and thoughtful communication are examples of finding a balance between pushing back and letting go, which highlights the participant leadership style. P8 mentioned that strategic collaboration with her team has influenced others and her leadership style. She takes a hands-on approach when collaborating with her team and leads by example.

Impact on Leadership Dynamics. Four participants referenced the theme of impact ownership dynamics 14 times when asked about their experience with the impact of challenging authority and whether it was positive or negative, representing 50% of the total study population. Participants shared experiences that proved various factors, such as changes in perception, career progression, gender dynamics, and leadership styles, collectively impact leadership dynamics. The participants reflected on the change in

perception over time when colleagues began to value their opinions, showcasing an impact on leadership dynamics. P4 told a story of how she felt being the youngest person in her position would impact her leadership dynamics. If others knew her age, they would not give her the same respect as an older person would receive, which would directly impact her emotional state.

Influencing Authority

Effective communication tactics, leadership styles, and organizational support are all a part of influencing authority, attributed to trust built over time. During the interviews regarding the impact of influencing authority, the following themes emerged: building relationships and trust, confidence and professional maturity, emotional intelligence and effective communication, and personal professional development. Each theme shown in Table 8 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 8

Themes Related to Influencing Authority While Advancing to Executive Position in Property

Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Building relationships and trust	35	7	87%
Confidence and professional maturity	30	7	87%
Emotional intelligence and effective communication	27	6	75%
Personal professional development	19	5	50%

Building Relationships and Trust. Seven participants referenced the theme of building relationships and trust 35 times when asked about their experience with influencing authority, representing 87% of the study population. Participants’ experiences

include leveraging preexisting relationships, gaining trust to secure careers, and gaining the trust of leaders within their organizations. P1 expressed the importance of building connections and relationships in professional settings. She gave examples of how, over time, the owner has depended on her expertise, demonstrating trust. P4 shared that keeping the company's best interest in mind earned her the respect and trust of her boss. She recalled her boss saying, "I love that you always have an opinion and a voice, and I love that you have company in mind." She also said, "I have tried to continue with that behavior because people know what your impact is; they know what you are doing behind the scenes, which leads to trust." P6 shared gaining respect by providing thoughtful pushback, suggesting the importance of building trust through meaningful interactions and contributions.

Confidence and Professional Maturity. Seven participants referenced the theme of confidence and professional maturity 30 times when asked about their experience with influencing authority, representing 87% of the study population. The participants discussed how having the confidence to speak up, sharing their thoughts, and standing firm on their principles led to career advancement. In reflecting on her career, P4 shared her belief that anyone who desires to advance in their career must possess the confidence to speak up and let their leaders know about their abilities. She emphasized that sometimes, the quietest individuals on the team possess incredible talents but are often held back by fear or self-doubt. P5 shared,

This is another area where I am very different from other people in that I do not typically come into situations fully prepared because I am still getting all of the inputs that I need to determine the best course of action.

This action demonstrates self-assurance and a level of professional maturity. P6 thought challenging authority implies a level of confidence in expressing oneself. P7 discussed finding a balance between pushing back and letting go, highlighting a mature approach to decision making and communication. P8's confidence and professional maturity shone through her preparation in handling interactions with leadership.

Emotional Intelligence and Effective Communication. Six participants referenced the theme of building relationships and trust 27 times when asked about their emotional intelligence and effective communication, representing 75% of the study population. During the interviews, participants shared stories that highlighted the importance of acknowledging the emotional aspect of challenging situations. They emphasized that as a female leader, they needed to exercise a calm and compromising communication style when being challenged. They also expressed their concerns about the impact of emotions, if shown, and the practices they put in place, such as taking a moment before addressing issues presented.

Personal and Professional Development. Five participants referenced personal and professional development 19 times when asked about their experience with influencing authority, representing 50% of the study population. When participants reflected on personal strengths and weaknesses, they shared the importance of being open to feedback. P5 shared, "I have done a number of assessments to understand where I have the opportunity to grow and develop." They discussed how they used feedback to enhance their abilities and gain the respect of leaders by speaking up over time. During the conversation, participants also emphasized the significance of consistently engaging in learning and development for personal growth.

Impact on Influencing Authority

When participants were asked about the impact influencing authority had on their career advancement, six said it was positive, one was neutral, and one thought it was negative. During the interviews regarding the impact of influencing authority on their career, the following themes emerged: the positive impact of supportive leadership, success, and career growth linked to leadership style and challenges with perception and peer relationships. Each theme listed in Table 9 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 9

Themes Related to the Impact of Influencing Authority Experienced While Advancing to Executive Position in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Positive impact of supportive leadership	20	5	62%
Success and career growth linked to leadership style	16	5	62%
Challenges with perception and peer relationship	15	4	50%

Positive Impact of Supportive Leadership. Five participants referenced the theme positive impact of supportive leadership 20 times, representing 50% of the total study population when asked what impact they believed positive or negative influencing authority had on their career advancement. The participants attributed their career advancement to the supportive recognition of their leaders and their team and gaining confidence over time. Participants received the following supportive comments. P3 replied, “But the leadership team that I had believed in me, and so I was able to get in front of the leadership team in Southern California.” P4 replied, “And I wanted to

continue to be with that leader who helped me grow my career to the next step.” P5 replied, “And our leader is as interested in our advancement as the success of the organization.” The desire to work with a leader who supports growth suggests a positive impact of supportive leadership on career development.

Success and Career Growth Linked to Leadership Style. Five participants referenced the theme of success and career growth linked to leadership style 16 times, representing 62% of the study population when asked what impact they believed positive or negative influencing authority had on their career advancement. The participants continued to speak about being recognized for their expertise throughout the interview, attributed it to their leadership style, and how it has played a role in their success. They also emphasized the importance of building connections and positive relationships, which have been attributed to their leadership style. Through the participants’ shared experience, they aligned their interest in organizational success and personal advancement to leadership style and career growth.

Challenges With Perception and Peer Relationship. Four participants referenced challenges with perception and peer style 15 times, representing 50% of the study population, when asked what impact they believed positively or negatively influencing authority had on their career advancement. Participants emphasized that they must be mindful of how they present themselves to overcome negative perceptions and female stereotypes. P1 shared her experience of constantly being told she was too passionate throughout her career. She also said that managing perceptions in a professional setting requires a delicate balance for females. P3 shared,

So back when I was an assistant or a property manager, it was easier to make those leaps and to go to my boss and say, hey, I've got a great idea. Why don't we try this? I think this could help the property. However, as I advanced in my career, my bosses often saw my recommendations as a threat or challenging their authority.

Most of the stories shared by participants suggested challenges in protection and peer relationships, particularly in communication with male supervisors.

Research Question 2: Preparing but Also Improvising

The second research question asked, "What perceived impact did preparing and improvising have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?"

Quantitative Data Analysis and Presentation

According to Figure 18, 75% of participants are generally comfortable in unfamiliar situations and capable of providing solutions on the spot, and the remaining 25% are definitely comfortable in such situations. In Figure 19, when evaluating the perceived impact of preparing but also improvising has had on career advancement to an executive leadership position, 50% believed preparing but also improvising had a high degree of impact on their career trajectory, 37.5% stated the impact of preparing but also improvising had some degree of a positive impact on their career trajectory, and 12.5% believed preparing but also improvising had little to no degree of impact on their career trajectory.

Figure 18

Quantitative Response to Preparing but Also Improvising

Preparing But Also Improvising: While I like to prepare in advance, I am also comfortable going into unfamiliar situations and capable of providing on-the-spot solutions.

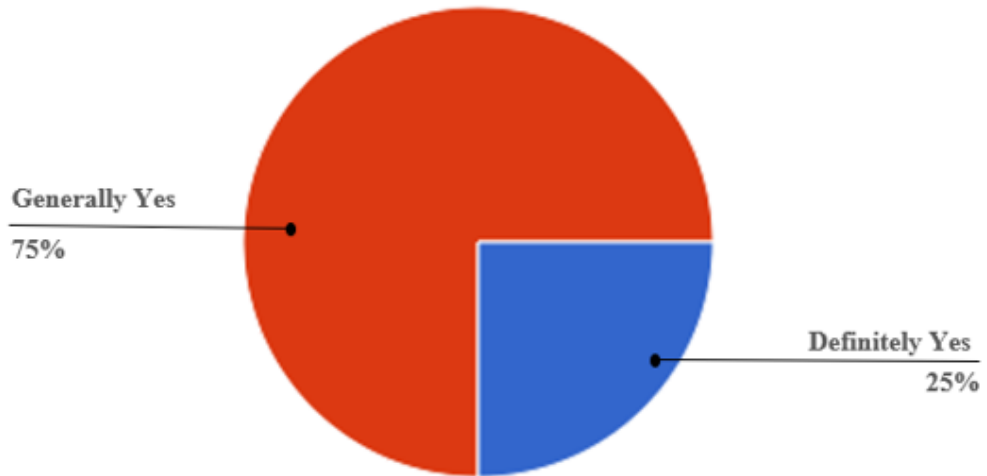
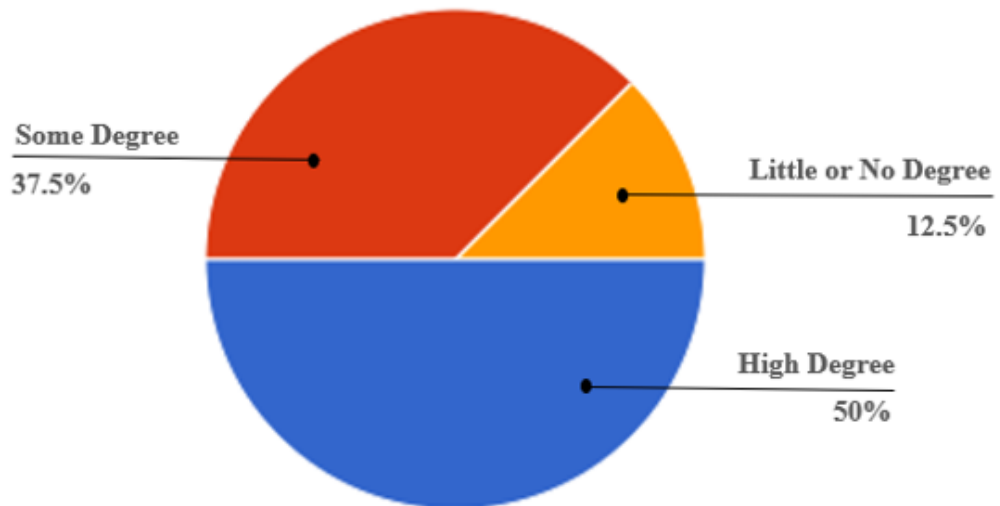


Figure 19

Quantitative Responses: Perceived Impact of Preparing but Also Improvising

Preparing But Also Improvising Impact: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Preparing but also Improvising had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?



Qualitative Data Analysis and Presentation

Preparing but Also Improvising

During the interviews on preparing but also improvising, the following themes emerged: effective communication, empathy and relationship building, adaptability and flexibility, and honesty and transparency. Each theme shown in Table 10 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 10

Themes Related to Preparing but Also Improvising Experienced While Advancing to Executive Position in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Effective communication	28	7	87%
Empathy and relationship building	23	5	62%
Adaptability and flexibility	15	4	50%
Honesty and transparency	14	4	50%

Effective Communication. Seven participants referenced the theme of effective communication 28 times, representing 87% of the study population when asked about what preparing but also improvising had on their career advancement. Effective communication emerged as a consistent theme as participants reflected on their experiences and challenges in professional settings. P1 discussed the challenges of being dismissed and the need to articulate herself calmly to get her point across when the prepared conversation did not go her way, and she had to improvise. Participants also mentioned the importance of managing their perception, tone, and passion to avoid being seen as not prepared, which is also a focus on effective communication because they had to improvise to get their point across. Finally, participants highlighted effective

communication through nonverbal cues such as body language and eye contact when caught off guard during meetings to ensure their conversation did not appear as if they were improvising.

Empathy and Relationship Building. Five participants referenced the theme of empathy and relationship building 23 times, representing 62% of the study population when asked about what preparing but also improvising had on their career advancement. P4 shared the following story about coming into a situation with a client who was not fully prepared but was able to improvise without prior planning:

Every day, we are pivoting; no matter how prepared we are, something gets tossed into the mix. One of the things I can remember is that I had a large meeting, and it was with one of our owners. We put together our information in packets and were ready to go. We were fully aware of the client's expectations. We were confident that our information was on point. Well, 30 minutes before arriving at the property, we got word that the client was bringing her boss. We were not familiar with her boss. We all had to hold it together and figure out our best plan of action. We all agreed to say it with conviction, no matter what we said. If we say it with conviction, they are going to believe it. We still had our presentation to review with them, so we had to listen carefully and watch for his cues, and if there were things he was pivoting in directions, we had to be ready to pivot. Nevertheless, at the same token, I ensured that the client's priorities were met while still meeting the necessary requirements. The meeting was successful; the investors provided the necessary funding. However, it was a nerve-wracking experience.

P4 demonstrated empathy while trying to build a solid relationship. She and her team were able to quickly improvise, and the perception of the client was that they were prepared for the meeting.

Adaptability and Flexibility. Four participants referenced the theme of adaptability and flexibility 15 times, representing 50% of the study population, when asked about what preparing but also improvising had on their career advancement. Participants shared their experiences of being strategic thinkers, suggesting they possessed both adaptability and flexibility throughout their careers. Participants gave examples of taking various roles, handling unexpected situations, and being able to speak on various topics. P2 said, “Every day, we are pivoting, and no matter how prepared we are, something always gets tossed into the mix. So, it is just figuring out what they are looking for and maneuvering.” P4 said, “And sometimes, I have gotten through, and sometimes I have not. However, again, it is all about putting your reasons behind it.” Both comments highlight the importance of being adaptable and flexible in response to unexpected challenges or changes in different professional situations.

Honest and Transparent. Four participants referenced the theme of honesty and transparency 14 times, representing 50% of the study population, when asked about what preparing but improvising had on their career advancement. P2 said, “So I think leaders appreciate that I am honest enough to give them open feedback and tell them what will happen and why.” P4 said, “I think it is important that you really see things through other people’s eyes.” P8 shared that being transparent about a lack of knowledge builds trust. These instances suggest the importance of honesty, openness, and transparency in communication when preparing but also improvising.

Impact of Preparing but Also Improvising

During the interviews on preparing but also improvising, the following themes emerged: connection and relationship building, adaptability and improvisation as strengths, critical thinking and adaptability across personalities, and preparation builds trust and respect. Each theme shown in Table 11 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 11

Themes Related to the Impact of Preparing but Also Improvising Experienced While Advancing to Executive Position in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Connection and relationship building	24	7	87%
Adaptability and improvisation as strengths	15	5	62%
Critical thinking and adaptability across personalities	15	5	62%
Preparation builds trust and respect	10	4	50%

Connection and Relationship Building. Seven participants referenced connection and relationship building 24 times, representing 87% of the study population, when asked about the impact preparing and improvising had on their career advancement. Participants shared instances in which they advocated for their colleagues, counterparts, and clients. P2 shared that building relationships is easier when your team works together and helps develop other players. P3 shared that when working with startups, she always moves fast and challenges the norm. However, she also takes the opportunity to build relationships with everyone involved from the ground up. P4 mentioned the importance of connecting as a commitment to understanding others and building meaningful

connections. P8 shared the importance of building relationships and being respected as a leader. She also emphasized that building connections and fostering relationships within the team and with associates is equally as important.

Adaptability and Improvisation as Strengths. Seven participants referenced adaptability and improvisation as strengths 15 times, representing 62% of the study population, when asked about the impact of preparing and improvising on their career advancement. P1 mentioned leasing, inspecting apartments, and interacting with clients showcased her hands-on and adaptable approach. The ability to prepare but also improvise positively impacted her career. P4 mentioned that her ability to find balance while improvising and adapting to changing circumstances has been a key strength in her career journey.

Critical Thinking and Adaptability Across Personalities. Five participants referenced the theme of critical thinking and adaptability across personalities 15 times, representing 62% of the study population, when asked about the impact preparing and improvising had on their career advancement. Participants shared that engaging with diverse audiences, the importance of critical thinking, and being able to adapt across personalities supported them in their career advancement. P1's experience participating in board meetings, council meetings, and management pitches allowed her to adapt her communication style when interacting across personalities. P5 talked about being a critical thinker and having the flexibility to think in different ways, whether negotiating, expanding upon ideas, or following a more controlled thought process.

Preparation Builds Trust and Respect. Four participants referenced the theme of preparation building trust and respect 15 times, representing 50% of the study

population, when asked about the impact preparing but also improvising had on their career advancement. P4 shared her situation about a client bringing their boss to a meeting, causing the agenda to change at the last minute. Despite this, P4 and her team improvised and were able to impress the client with their preparedness, therefore building trust. P6 mentioned how she frequently enters meetings to discuss initiating projects, leaving just enough leeway for her to have to change course or think up an absurd answer that no one else has considered. P8 emphasized the positive impact of being prepared for meetings, indicating that preparation contributes to building trust and respect in a relationship.

Research Question 3: Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion

The third research question asked, “What perceived impact did engaging in effective forms of self-promotion have on female property managers’ advancement to executive leadership positions?”

Quantitative Data Analysis and Presentation

Figure 20 shows that 50% have not generally found ways to highlight accomplishments effectively, 37.5% generally feel they have found ways to highlight accomplishments effectively, and 12.5% definitely have found ways to highlight accomplishments effectively. Figure 21 shows that all participants believed that highlighting accomplishments has somewhat impacted their career trajectory.

Figure 20

Quantitative Responses to Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion

Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion: While I believe in allowing my work to speak for itself, I have found ways to highlight my accomplishments effectively.

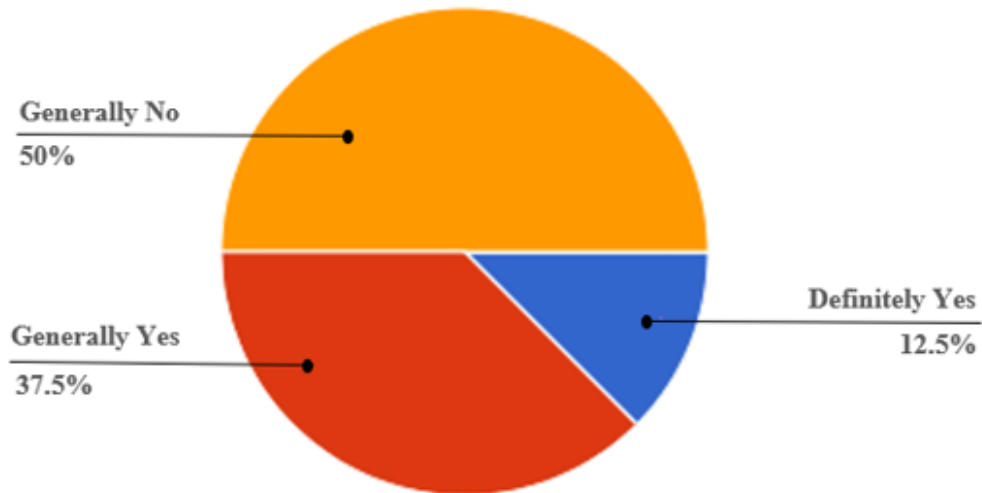
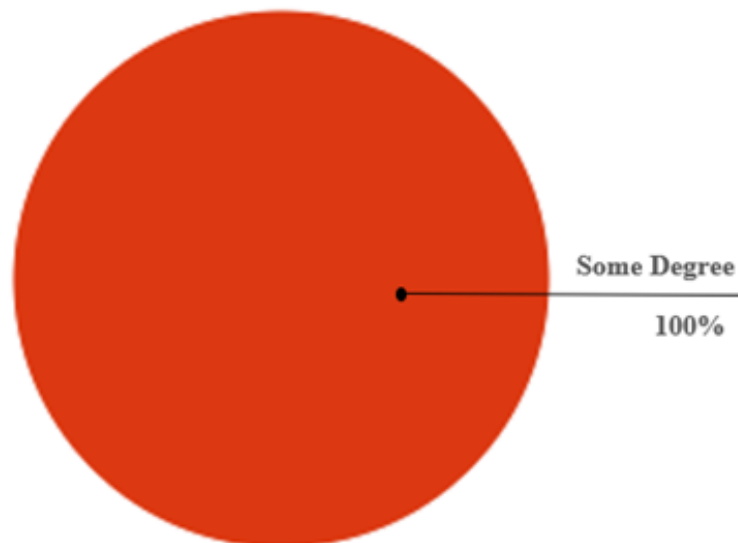


Figure 21

Quantitative Responses: Perceived Impact of Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion

Effective Forms of Self-Promotion Impact: While I believe in allowing my work to speak for itself, I have found ways to highlight my accomplishments effectively.



Qualitative Data Analysis and Presentation

Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion

Based on comments made by study participants, engaging in effective forms of self-promotion has not always been their strong point. One participant's comment that stood out was P8. She replied,

As a person, I do not think I did this enough. I did not do enough. Furthermore, I should have done more of this throughout my career. I probably would have advanced faster in my roles. I always prioritized my work performance, focusing on financial impact, reputation, and client satisfaction to advance my career. But while all those things are important, I think when somebody can be a self-promoter, they are more likely to advance in their career faster.

During the discussion on effective self-promotion in interviews, the following themes were identified: recognition of others, discomfort with self-promotion, selective self-promotion and advocacy, and promoting the team. Each theme shown in Table 12 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 12

Themes Related to Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-promotion Experienced While Advancing to Executive Position in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Recognition of others	15	6	75%
Discomfort with self-promotion	15	5	62%
Selective self-promotion and advocacy	13	5	62%
Team promotion	12	5	62%

Recognition of Others. Six participants referenced the theme of recognition of others 15 times, representing 75% of the study population, when asked about how engaging in effective forms of self-promotion had on their career advancement. P1 consistently acknowledged and attributed her success and the company's success to the efforts and competence of her team. She mentioned specific team members and their qualifications, expertise, and impact on the company. P2 shared that she chooses to promote her teams and their great work. P4 gave recognition to her team through her comment: "I think I show my skills through my team." P6 gave recognition to her boss and said, "He is a great example of someone who advocates for his team and helps explain me to others in the organization so that I am not directly promoting myself, but rather indirectly through him."

Discomfort With Self-Promotion. Five participants referenced the theme of discomfort with self-promotion 15 times, representing 50% of the study population, when asked how engaging in effective forms of self-promotion had affected their career advancement. Females have felt uncomfortable with self-promoting. This was clear based on the comments made during the interview. P1 shared, "I think I am really bad about self-promotion as many women, and there are people who are self-promoters." P4 shared that she does not like to self-promote. P5 stated, "I want my work to speak for itself versus me to stand up and say, hey, I am good. I am not comfortable with this type of self-promotion." P6 replied, "I am not great at effectively promoting myself, and I am frustrated that we, as females, must do it." P8 said, "We cannot just hope people see what we have done. We need to say, this is what we did, and just put it out there."

Selective Self-Promotion and Advocacy. Five participants referenced the theme of selective self-promotion and advocacy 13 times, representing 50% of the study population, when asked how engaging in effective self-promotion affected their career advancement. P5 stated, I self-promote in a slightly different way. I self-promote based on listening first. That has always been my strategy in a boardroom with all-male peers. So, my self-promotion is that when people look at me, they know I am thinking about things they are talking about. Thus, I silently self-promote by giving information towards the end with something factual and concise, understanding my audience, and being unbiased.

P6 stated, “I have also been looking at working with other female leaders and being intentional about having them be advocates for me.” P7 shared how she uses her annual performance self-evaluation as an opportunity to remind people about her accomplishments.

Team Promotion. Five participants referenced the theme of recognition of others 12 times, representing 50% of the study population, when asked about how engaging in effective forms of self-promotion had on their career advancement. Based on comments made by participants, the majority identify as an indirect promoter. P3 shared that as a good team people manager, she always plays off her team’s strengths. P6 shared,

Where I found the most success is promoting my team and the results that we are achieving, which is a reflection on me, but where I think I have the opportunity to do better is to articulate my role in that because some people do not correlate the two with each other.

P7 stated, “I choose to promote my teams and the great things they have done known by leadership. Self-promotion increases as more people recognize the team’s accomplishments.”

Impact of Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion

Based on comments made by study participants when asked about the impact engaging in effective forms of self-promotion had on their career advancement, the following themes emerged: team and collective success, women’s self-promotion challenges, and personal growth and adaptability. Each theme shown in Table 13 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 13

Themes Related to the Impact of Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion Experienced While Advancing to Executive Position in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Team and collective success	14	5	62%
Challenges women face when self-Promoting	12	4	50%
Personal growth and adaptability	12	4	50%

Team and Collective Success. Five participants referenced the theme team and collective success 14 times, representing 62% of the study population, when asked about the impact engaging in effective forms of self-promotion had on their career advancement. P1 mentioned being a leader who prefers to let the team’s work speak for itself rather than seeking personal credit. She expresses pride in the team’s accomplishments rather than personal achievements. P2 collaborates with her team by working together on their projects to ensure collective success. P3 emphasized the impact

of letting someone else have the win, suggesting a focus on collective success. She mentioned that one of her biggest turnoffs is when someone takes credit for the accomplishments of others. P6 shared that her team's success reflects her own achievements, so she promotes them. P7 expressed her satisfaction when her team receives accolades and recognition, highlighting the importance of recognizing the team's collective success rather than her individual achievements.

Challenges Women Face When Self-Promoting. Four participants referenced the theme of challenges women face when self-promoting 12 times, representing 50% of the study population, when asked about the impact of engaging in effective self-promotion on their career advancement. P1 stated, "I do not think that my personality lends itself to being a self-promoter." She shared the challenges she faces, particularly as a Black woman, in terms of recognition, dismissiveness, and the need to justify her credentials. P3 discussed the challenges of being a woman in a male-dominated industry and the importance of ethical decision making in such situations. P4's self-promotion challenges shared were being uncomfortable with self-promotion, addressing emotions in a professional context, and the boss suggesting improvements in self-promotion, which is also a challenge.

Personal Growth and Adaptability. Four participants referenced the theme of challenges for women in self-promotion 12 times, representing 50% of the study population, when asked about the impact of engaging in effective self-promotion on their career advancement. Each participant in the study revealed her personal growth through her reflection on her career and admitted that today she can see that engaging in effective forms of self-promotion could have supported her in a more successful career sooner. The

most compelling statement was shared by P1: If I had been more self-promoter, maybe we would have gotten more contracts. However, I still believe in the quality of my work, which speaks for itself. My personality does not lend itself to self-promotion. I have attended national conferences, and many people know me because I have been the only Black woman in my field for a long time. It is not hard to recognize me as a Black woman. People know me because of my work, but they do not know that I am the president of a company unless they research me. None of them knew I owned a company, and I sold it. Perhaps having been more of a self-promoter would have positively impacted my career advancement.

P2 shared,

Showing everything we have done has helped in my promotion. If I stayed super quiet and did not do some of those things, I think I would just get lost in the background, and people would think of me as a worker bee, and they would keep giving me more work, but then I would remain in that position.

P3 proved that her personal growth showed itself by accepting challenging situations and identifying ways to support her associates and the organization in moving forward. P4 shared a story about a client who did not believe her manager was the right person for the job. Instead of taking over the meeting, she told her associate, "I cannot be the voice today. You must be the voice. I believe in you." Not only did the client compliment her as a leader for allowing her associate to take the lead, but he also agreed that the manager was the best person for the property.

Research Question 4: Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path

The fourth research question asked, “What perceived impact did welcoming a less prescribed career path have on female property managers’ advancement to executive leadership positions?”

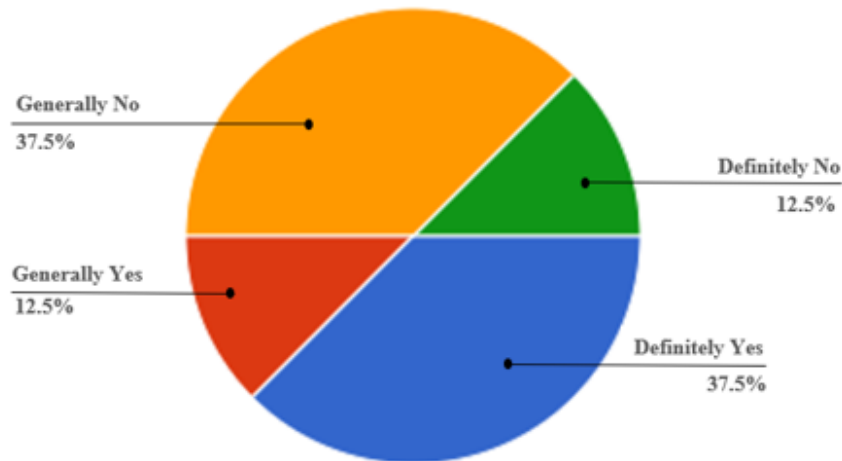
Quantitative Data Analysis and Presentation

According to Figure 22, half of the surveyed participants have either definitely or generally taken a lateral move or job outside their career path, and the other half have either generally or not taken such a move. Specifically, 37.5% of participants have taken a lateral move or job outside of their career path, and an equal percentage of 37.5% have generally not taken a lateral move or job outside of their career path. Moreover, 12.5% of participants have generally taken a lateral move or job outside their career path, and another 12.5% have not taken a lateral move or job outside their career path.

Figure 22

Quantitative Responses Welcoming a Less Prescribed Career Path

Welcoming A Less Prescribed Career Path: I have taken a lateral move or a job outside my career field.

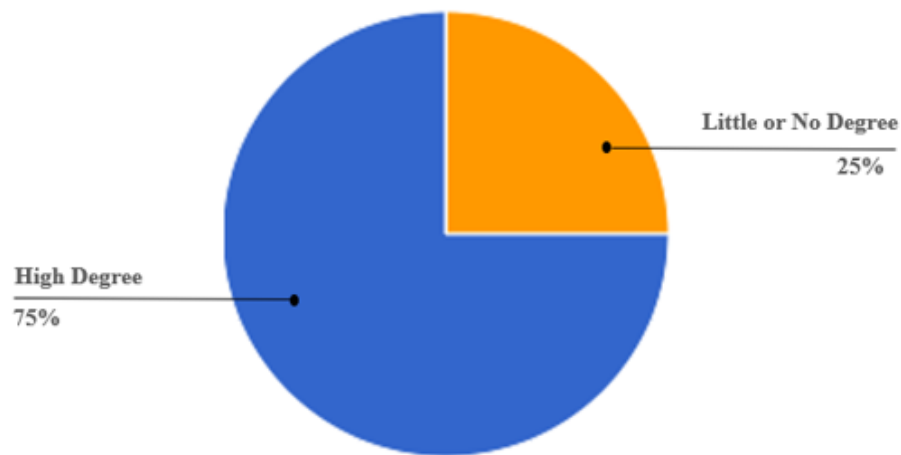


In Figure 23, when evaluating how taking a lateral move or job outside of their career path has impacted their career trajectory, 75% believed welcoming a less prescribed career path has had a high degree of positive impact on their career advancement to an executive leadership position. In comparison, 25% believed it had little to no degree of impact on their career advancement to an executive position.

Figure 23

Quantitative Responses: Perceived Impact of Welcoming A Less-Prescribed Career Path

Welcoming A Less Prescribed Career Path Impact: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Welcoming a Less Prescribed Career Path had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?



Qualitative Data Analysis and Presentation

Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path

During the interview discussion on welcoming a less-prescribed career path, the following themes emerged: personal growth and self-promotion, continual learning and adaptability, and risk-taking and willingness to step out of comfort zones. Each theme shown in Table 14 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 14

Themes Related to Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path Experienced While Advancing to an Executive Position in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Personal growth and self-promotion	15	5	62%
Continuous learning and adaptability	14	5	62%
Risk-taking and willingness to step out of comfort zones	11	4	50%

Personal Growth and Self-Promotion. Five participants referenced the theme of personal growth and self-promotion 15 times, representing 62% of the study population, when asked about the impact welcoming a less-prescribed career path had on their career advancement. P3 reflected on her personal growth and the role of self-promotion in her career journey. P4 recognized that self-promotion causes discomfort and that it is a step toward developing personal growth. P6 shared a deep dive into personal strengths, assessments for personal development, and a focus on self-promotion. She replied, I think that I have only recently done a deep dive into my strengths in the past couple of years, and I have done a number of assessments to really understand where I have the opportunity to grow and develop.

P7 shared personal growth in expressing opinions, offering thoughtful pushback, and presenting well-thought-out arguments. P8 has undergone personal growth by making lateral moves for personal reasons.

Continual Learning and Adaptability. Five participants referenced the theme of continual learning and adaptability 14 times, representing 62% of the study population, when asked about the welcome a less-prescribed career path had on their career advancement. During P1’s interview, she reflected on the need for continual learning and

the ability to adapt in various professional situations. P2 reflected on continual learning and adapting to the impact of decisions made based on her comment: “I feel like in our industry, it is a constant; you are never fully prepared for what is going to happen.” P6 shared instances when she discussed her approach to personal development, assessments, and learning from experiences. P7 had aspects in her interview when she shared her experience of working in various roles. P8 shared her diverse career experiences, representing a journey of constant learning and adaptability. She mentioned a willingness to make lateral moves and changes, suggesting adaptability to different roles and regions.

Risk-Taking and Willingness to Step Out of Comfort Zones. Four participants referenced the theme of risk-taking and willingness to step out of their comfort zones 11 times, representing 50% of the study population, when asked about the impact welcome a less-prescribed career path had on their career advancement. P3 presented instances when she took risks and stepped out of her comfort zone. She shared a story about challenging a supervisor who falsely said there was no position open in a different region. She took a chance, got in front of the leadership team for that region, and got the position. P4 shared that she had taken a risk by taking a job that paid slightly less money. She also shared that she believes she must make decisions every day, which implies a level of risk-taking. P6 took a risk by accepting a lesser role for 18 months rather than accepting a same-level position offered to her. P7 stated, “Stepping outside the traditional path may not pay off in the short term. However, I do not think I would be in my current position if I had not taken those steps to explore new possibilities.”

Impact of Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path

During the interview discussion on the impact of welcoming a less-prescribed career path, the following themes emerged: learning and skill development and gaining opportunities for advancement/promotion. Each theme shown in Table 15 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 15

Themes Related to the Impact of Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path Experienced While Advancing to Executive Position in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Learning and skill development	14	5	62%
Gaining opportunities for advancement/ promotion	16	3	37%

Learning and Skill Development. Five participants referenced the theme of learning and skill development 14 times, representing 62% of the study population, when asked about the welcoming a less-prescribed career path had on their career advancement. Participants expressed the importance of acquiring knowledge through education, training, and practice. They expressed how this process enhanced their expertise, improved their performance, and supported them in achieving both personal and professional goals. P3 reflected on her experiences in taking on a new challenge. She said, “It’s all improvising at the beginning.” She also shared,

“And I just jumped right in and said, okay, what are we doing here? I just took the reins and had no idea what was going on, but I was confident we could make a difference together under my leadership.”

P6 discussed her deep dive into her strengths, assessments for understanding her growth opportunities, and her desire to continue learning. P7 shared a story of her taking on a quality control role at the corporate level. In this role, she explained that she had to develop skills in overseeing and improving processes. The skills she developed in the position changed her presentation approach, allowing her to convey her capabilities better. She learned that leadership matters more than just knowing every statistic. P8 shared that making lateral moves and minor changes in her career supported her in learning and developing leadership skills. She discussed her experiences in different states, cities, and building types, which opened her up to a continuing learning process throughout her career.

Gaining Opportunities for Advancement and Promotion. Three participants referenced the theme of gaining opportunities for advancement and promotion 16 times, representing 37% of the study population, when asked about the welcome a less-prescribed career path had on their career advancement. Gaining opportunities for career advancement is essential for career growth. P3 reflected on instances when she took proactive steps to create opportunities for herself and gain recognition throughout her career. She shared her experience of challenging her manager to support her moving to a new, elevated position in another state. She realized that if she did not take the initiative, her manager would never let her go because she was so good at her current role. She recalled the situation and stated, “I think that was my first kind of toe into it for sure.” P6 shared her experience in her career trajectory, challenges in gaining promotions, and the need to pursue opportunities actively. She shared a story of her moving from a national role and stepping down to a local level. She shared her perspective: “Still, it certainly

gave me a broader perspective and allowed me to gain additional credibility because I have sat in that seat.” She then went on to say, “I have done the role so that when I came back to the national team, I had more credibility, which allowed me to have greater influence.” P7 described actions and decisions with an eye toward career advancement through accepting different roles, making strategic career moves, and joining industry organizations for future growth.

Research Question 5: Aim for Being Respected Over Being Liked

The fifth and final research question asked, “What perceived impact did aiming for respect over being liked have on female advancement to executive leadership positions in the property management industry?”

Quantitative Data Analysis and Presentation

Figure 24 shows that 75% of participants generally have undertaken actions that may not necessarily enhance popularity but have garnered respect for decision-making abilities. In comparison, 25% have undertaken actions that may not necessarily enhance popularity but have garnered respect for decision-making abilities. The results of the evaluation of the perceived positive impact of aiming for respect over being liked on the advancement to an executive leadership position (shown in Figure 25) indicate that 50% of the participants believed that it had some degree of positive impact, and 37.5% believed that it had a high degree of positive impact. In comparison, 25% believed that it was detrimental to career development.

Figure 24

Quantitative Responses Aim for Being Respected Over Being Liked

Aim For Being Respected Over Being Liked: I have undertaken actions that may not necessarily enhance my popularity but have garnered respect for my decision-making abilities.

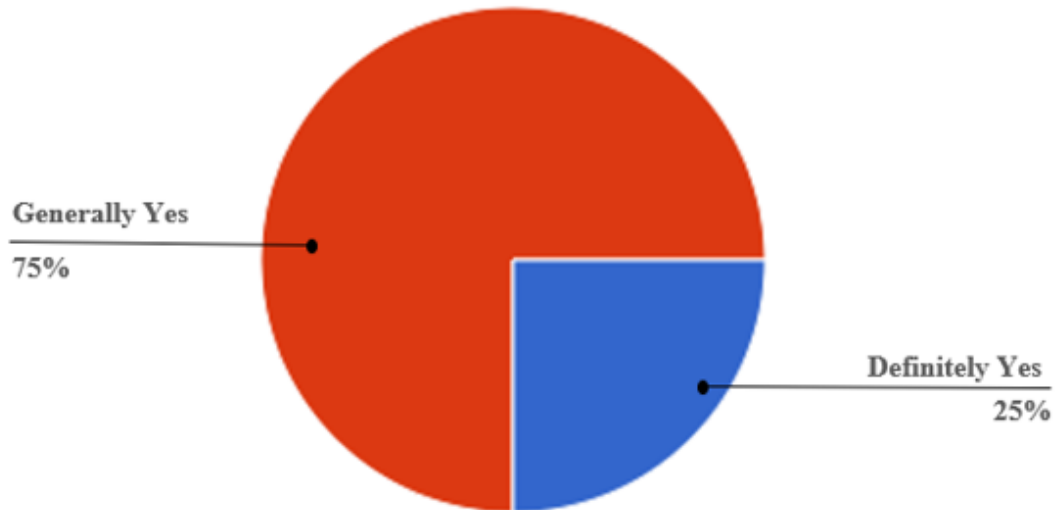
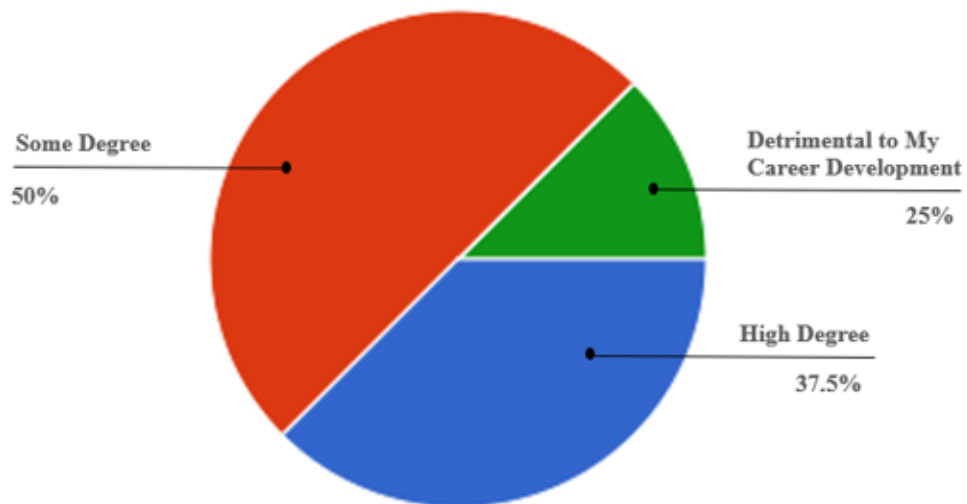


Figure 25

Quantitative Responses: Perceived Impact of Aiming for Being Respected Over Being Liked

Aim For Being Respected Over Being Liked Impact: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Aiming for Respect over Being Liked had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?



Qualitative Data Analysis and Presentation

Aiming for Respect Over Being Liked

During the interview discussion on aiming for respect over being liked, the following themes emerged: prioritizing respect over likability, challenging authority with respect, and focusing on fairness and career development. Each theme shown in Table 16 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 16

Themes Related to Aiming for Respect Over Being Liked Experienced While Advancing to an Executive Position in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Challenging authority with respect	6	3	37%
Prioritizing respect over likability	5	3	37%
Focusing on fairness and career development	4	3	37%

Challenging Authority With Respect. Three participants referenced the theme of challenging authority with respect six times, representing 37% of the study population, when asked about aiming for respect over being liked had on their career advancement. P3 reflected her approach to questioning authority respectfully throughout her career. She stated, “I think I have just kept that mentality about questioning respectfully, obviously, regardless of whether it is an authority figure or not, throughout my career.” P6 stated, “I often found the need to challenge how others think about something and share my perspective because I usually have a couple of better ways, if not just a better way, to approach any challenge.” P7 talked about thoughtful pushback, expressing disagreement with respect, and engaging in thoughtful conversations. She discussed gaining confidence within the industry and how she has learned over her career that people want thoughtful

pushback. This implies a willingness to challenge ideas or authority while being mindful of being considerate and respectful. She also shared that she developed the ability to disagree with something using facts rather than feelings while presenting opinions well and diplomatically.

Prioritizing Respect Over Likability. Three participants referenced the theme of prioritizing respect over likability five times, representing 25% of the study population, when asked about aiming for respect over being liked had on their career advancement. P3 discussed the challenges of being a woman in a male-dominated industry and emphasized the importance of doing the right thing, regardless of likability, setting boundaries and expectations. She demonstrated no concern about being liked and stands against discrimination and unfair treatment. This theme was inferred when she stated, “I mean, it is a daily, especially being a woman with many men in the industry; I think it is doing the right thing and expecting the same from others. This is what earns you the respect.” P5 made the following statement:

I do not base my actions on personal reasons. I make decisions based on what is best for the company and the results we are trying to achieve. However, this approach has been a challenge for me because I have not focused enough on earning the respect of my colleagues. While I do not necessarily care if people are like me, I recognize the importance of earning respect. I must consider altering my actions to achieve this while achieving the desired results.

P7 identified instances when she mentioned a shift in priorities toward being respected rather than liked. She described a transition that naturally happens through giving tough feedback. She emphasized the importance of telling team members hard

things, when necessary, even if it may have made her temporarily unpopular. She provided examples and insights that imply a value in earning respect.

Focusing on Fairness and Career Development. Three participants referenced the theme of focusing on fairness and career development three times, representing 37% of the study population, when asked about aiming for respect over being liked had on their career advancement. P3 reflected on the importance of fairness in daily interactions, particularly in career development and being a woman in a male-dominated industry, by ensuring people are heard and all sitting at the table are included in the conversation. P5 shared the following regarding the focus on fairness: “I am a firm believer that if somebody performs a service, they are paid for that service. As I have advanced in my career, I noticed that sometimes we are expected to perform services and not be paid for them.”

She went on to explain that although this did not make her popular, it did support her in managing her career to achieve her professional goals along her career journey. P7, touched upon aspects related to fairness and career development through accepting positions for career growth and acknowledging competence over likeability, even if everyone does not always agree or is happy with the decision. She demonstrated that aiming for respect over being liked was a decision with fairness and development throughout her career journey.

Impact of Aiming for Respect Over Being Liked

During the interview discussion on the impact of aiming for respect over being liked, the following themes emerged: strategic decision making for growth and balancing

likability and respect. Each theme shown in Table 17 is addressed sequentially following the table.

Table 17

Themes Related to the Impact of Aiming for Respect Over Being Liked Experienced While Advancing to an Executive Position in Property Management

Theme	Referenced	Participants	% of participants
Strategic decision making for growth	7	3	37%
Balancing likability and respect	4	3	37%

Strategic Decision Making for Growth. Two participants referenced the theme of strategic decision making for growth six times, representing 25% of the study population, when asked about the impact of aiming for respect over being liked. The decision to expand and prioritize respect in P5’s strategy was determined based on the following statement:

“Personally, I am aware that I am not always well-liked by those around me. However, I am confident that I am respected because I approach situations unbiased and factually. Ultimately, earning respect through honesty and accuracy is more important than being well-liked or career growth.”

P6 shared that aiming for respect over being liked was tough because she does not see herself as acting for either. She stated, “My actions are typically governed by the right thing to do for the business and the results we are trying to achieve.” She expressed how overall growth in her career is important to her, and being able to make decisions strategically has supported her in career growth. P7 shared that she makes decisions for personal and professional development by accepting opportunities for learning and

joining industry organizations for future opportunities. She shared the experience of accepting a brand new position with a brand new organization in a smaller region for less compensation and how it was a strategic move on her part with a vision of the bigger picture and potential for future career advancement.

Balancing Likability and Respect. Two participants referenced the theme of balancing likability and respect three times, representing 25% of the study population, when asked about the impact of aiming for respect over being liked. P1 stated,

“Being selective about who you do business with is the greatest freedom ever. I do not have to manage everything that comes along just because I am so fortunate that I had the support, and we were not growing for the sake of growing. I wanted to grow strategically and aim to be respected over liked.”

P3 shared, “So, it is a fine balance, and not everyone is going to respect you, and not everyone is going to like you, but you have just to do what you know is right every day.”

P7 touched on the balance between being liked and being respected. She shared that early in her career phase, she may have initially wanted to be liked but later shifted her focus to preferring respect over likability. She went on to share how she learned that you could earn respect even when delivering difficult messages. She mentioned that as she has advanced in her career, she has recognized the importance of both likability and respect and places a higher value on earning respect.

Key Findings

After conducting quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with eight executives with a property management background, key findings related to the use of personal disruption strategies, as outlined by Johnson and Mohr (2019), were identified

and analyzed. The following sections discuss the key findings and unexpected findings that were discovered from the research.

Summary of Findings: Challenging Authority

The following are the key findings related to challenging authority:

- Female executives in property management express frustration about the different reputations women often receive for challenging authority compared to men.
- Navigating gender and professional stereotypes impacts female executives' preparation when challenging authority.
- The majority of female executives who challenged authority led an initiative or were tasked with a project to improve an initiative.
- Female executives in property management are more likely to challenge authority figures by providing indisputable facts.

Summary of Unexpected Findings: Challenging Authority

The following are the unexpected findings related to challenging authority:

- Female executives are often seen as a threat when giving opinions and recommendations.
- Women may be expected to seek consensus more actively than men, which can be discouraging because of gender bias in expectations.

Summary of Findings: Influencing Authority

The following are the key findings related to influencing authority:

- Female executives who influence authority exhibit confidence, emotional intelligence, effective communication, relationship-building, and trust.

- Female executives who kept the company's interest in mind over their own advanced in their careers.

Summary of Unexpected Findings: Influencing Authority

The following are the unexpected findings related to influencing authority:

- In terms of career trajectory, influencing authority is generally more effective than challenging authority.
- The importance of maintaining a calm and composed communication style is especially significant for women in leadership positions.

Summary of Findings: Preparing but Also Improvising

The following are the key findings related to preparing but also improvising:

- Female executives are generally comfortable in unfamiliar situations and capable of providing effective solutions on the spot.
- Female property management executives reflected on the challenges in professional settings, identifying effective communication and being dismissed.

Summary of Unexpected Findings: Preparing but Also Improvising

The following are the unexpected findings related to preparing but also improvising:

- Female executives advocate for their colleagues, counterparts, and clients; however, they are not often advocated for.
- Participants frequently find themselves in situations in which they are not fully prepared because of unexpected changes or additional information; however, they are taught to overprepare early in their careers, contributing to their ability to improvise successfully.

- Female executives' emphasis on maintaining composure in high-pressure situations is a notable and significant impact of their calm demeanor on team dynamics and overall success.

Summary of Findings: Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion

The following are the key findings related to engaging in effective forms of self-promotion:

- Female executives strategically use silence and thoughtful contributions, actively listening and choosing impactful moments to create a lasting impression.
- Female executives prefer their work to speak for itself, emphasizing achievements and contributions through results and impact rather than self-promotion.
- Female executives emphasized the importance of letting team members take credit and have their moments of recognition because it reflects directly on the leader and serves as a form of indirect self-promotion.

Summary of Unexpected Findings: Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion

The following is the unexpected finding related to engaging in effective forms of self-promotion:

- Female executives did not agree that self-promotion positively impacted their career trajectory; however, they all agreed that self-promotion is uncomfortable and a learned skill.

Summary of Findings: Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path

The following are the key findings related to welcoming a less-prescribed career path:

- Female executives openly admitted to passing on opportunities because they did not think they were ready, and they were open to sharing and acknowledging that it may have been a mistake.
- Female executives had no issue taking risks even with lateral career moves or demotions to advance their careers.

Summary of Unexpected Findings: Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path

The following are the unexpected findings related to welcoming a less-prescribed career path:

- Only one female executive mentioned having a mentor throughout her career, and only one female executive mentioned being involved in specific groups to support her career advancement.
- All the executives interviewed agreed that welcoming a less subscribed career path positively impacted their career advancement.

Summary of Findings: Aim for Being Respected Over Being Liked

The following are the key findings related to aim for being respected over being liked:

- Female executives often prioritize decision-making abilities over likability even if it means taking unpopular actions.
- Some female executives believed that aiming for respect over being liked was detrimental to their career advancement.

Summary of Unexpected Findings: Aim for Being Respected Over Being Liked

The following are the unexpected findings related to aim for being respected over being liked:

- There is a shift in priority to being respected rather than being liked as executives grow in their careers.
- Executives who communicate effectively and provide constructive feedback tend to earn respect, which positively impacts their career advancement.

Summary

The purpose of this explanatory mixed method study was to identify and describe the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's five disruptive career skills (2019) on eight females advancement to executive leadership positions in the United States. The data collection procedure was a two-part process. Data collection included a six-question Likert scale survey administered via email to collect initial quantitative data on experience. Next, study participants were scheduled for a one-on-one virtual interview. This chapter provided an analysis of the data related to the use of career skills and female executives' perceived impact on career advancement in the property management industry. Chapter V presents an overview of the key findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This mixed methods study identified how female executives in the property management industry used Johnson and Mohr's (2019) personal disruption strategies to support them in career advancement. It aimed to clarify whether personal disruption strategies were used, provide specific examples of disruptive usage, and determine whether disruptive behaviors had a perceived impact on female career advancement. The foundation of the study was based on a Harvard Business Review article coauthored by Whitney Johnson and Tara Mohr titled "Women Need to Realize Work Is Not School." In the article, Johnson and Mohr argued that the skills that females traditionally excel at in school may not necessarily support them in career advancement to executive leadership roles. Chapter V provides an overview of the study, including the purpose statement, research questions, methodology, population, and sample. It also includes a summary of the study's data collection from Chapter IV, unexpected findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for future research. The chapter closes with research reflections.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this explanatory mixed-method study was to identify and describe the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's (2019) five disruptive career skills on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions.

Research Questions

1. What perceived impact did challenging and influencing authority have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?

2. What perceived impact did preparing and improvising have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
3. What perceived impact did engaging in effective forms of self-promotion have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
4. What perceived impact did welcoming a less prescribed career path have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?
5. What perceived impact did aiming for respect over being liked have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions?

Methodology

The research design chosen for this study was an explanatory mixed method design. The study examined how disruptive behaviors impact female advancement to executive leadership positions in the property management industry in the United States. The design was chosen based on the following factors: (a) the ability to collect a comprehensive range of data, (b) the option to analyze both processes and outcomes, (c) the ability to address limitations using a single method, and (d) the assurance of enhancing the credibility of a single method (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). For the quantitative portion of the study, nonexperimental descriptive research was used to understand the disruptive career skills perceived to impact female property managers' advancement to executive leadership positions. The researcher formulated five questions to identify the strategies used by women to advance their careers. This was followed by qualitative research, which included a scheduled 60 min virtual interview of study participants using open-ended structured questions. Using quantitative and qualitative research methods, the researcher gained insight into the extent to which female property

management executives used personal disruption strategies outlined by Johnson and Mohr (2019) to advance in their careers. To explore the findings further, the researcher used a mixed methods design consisting of quantitative survey data collection followed by qualitative research interviews to expand on the findings.

Population

The population studied was defined as female executives working in the property management industry across the United States. The researcher defined executives as individuals holding positions such as C-suite executives, division presidents, executive vice presidents, and vice presidents. According to Burke's (2022) research, only 1,146 of the CEOs in the real estate industry are women, representing 20.73%. Based on Zippia (2023) reporting, the study population included 39,490 female property management executives in the United States.

Sample

The researcher selected a group of people to study, a representative sample of the entire population (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014), assuming that the characteristics of the sample were representative of the entire population (Patten & Newhart, 2018). Knowing that the sample size in a qualitative study is frequently small (Patton, 2015), the researcher collected rich data and then thoughtfully chose study participants using deliberate or nonprobability sampling techniques such as surveys, qualifying interviews, or establishing qualifying research to ensure study participants exhibited the criteria stated in the sampling frame. Next, the researcher used convenience sampling based on McMillan and Schumacher's (2014) definition of easily accessible subjects to select eight study participants. Then, the researcher randomly selected a sample of female property

management executives based on their position, tenure in the industry, and the progression of their careers in the industry for individual virtual interviews. Given that the data set platform was available, the sampling group was considered convenient sampling.

Summary of Major Findings

Challenging and Influencing Authority: Major Findings

The first major finding related to challenging and influencing authority was that female executives in property management expressed frustration regarding the different reputations women often receive for challenging authority compared to men. This discovery aligns with the social role theory proposed by Eagly and Wood (2012), which suggests that gender stereotypes influence narratives that may result in assumptions about gender roles through the observation of how males and females behave in situations. In this situation, it is how women challenge and influence authority. In the study, female participants identified with the reputations they often received when challenging authority, some of which included being sensitive, aggressive, or negative. Over time, these reputations have easily become stereotypes for women and have impacted their career trajectory. To overcome gender stereotypes, the participants learned to speak confidently rather than show fear or hesitation. They learned to use more influencing strategies instead of the challenging skills they used earlier in their career. Examples given included making decisions that align with business performance instead of personal fulfillment, taking assertive communication styles by being humble, giving feedback in the form of questions, and questioning respectfully. These women advocate for change by speaking up to bring attention and to impact organizational change.

The second major finding related to challenging and influencing authority was that navigating gender and professional stereotypes has an impact on female executives' preparedness when challenging authority. Being over-prepared was something that all the participants had in common when challenging authority. Over the years, gaining knowledge and becoming subject matter experts within their departments and organizations has been rewarding. However, it has also resulted in the stress of feeling as if they always have to be the smartest person in the room to gain recognition. Later in their careers, they learned to be selective and come from a place of humility, which has proven to support their career advancement and work–life balance.

The third major finding was that female property manager executives felt comfortable challenging authority when leading company projects or when tasked with improving a company initiative. These leaders were presented with an opportunity to challenge authority and influence leadership to impact organizational change effectively. By taking on these extra duties, they were able to provide support to their departments while they also created other opportunities to contribute to the organization and be recognized for their abilities. The opportunity also allowed the female leaders to cultivate strong relationships and earn respect for their skills, work ethic, and leadership. By spearheading an initiative, they became experts in their field. Study participants believed that leading organizational initiatives has positively impacted their career trajectory and changed preconceived notions about women in leadership roles.

The fourth major finding was that female property management executives are more likely to challenge authority figures by providing indisputable facts and using influential tactics. Participants' comments in the study aligned with Johnson and Mohr's

(2019) recommendation that women should learn how to challenge and influence authority figures by being persuasive. These women wanted to ensure they seized the opportunity to acquire factual knowledge to support their information while also preparing for possible variations of the conversation to influence leadership. Throughout their careers, they have influenced authorities with their charisma, confidence, and knowledge of topics, positively impacting these women's career trajectories in the property management industry.

Challenging and Influencing Authority: Unexpected Major Findings

The major finding related to challenging and influencing authority was that female property management executives perceive challenging authority as giving opinions and recommendations. Study participants shared that they felt the behavior was often welcomed when they engaged in this behavior early in their careers. However, when they continued to do so at higher levels in their careers, they were often perceived as threatening or not team players.

According to Mary Ann Sieghart (2022), the author of *The Authority Gap*, gender norms create social expectations for behavior based on gender from a young age. This causes traditional stereotypes about masculine behavior to lead to unfair judgments of women in the workplace (King, 2021). These female executives shared that early in their careers, they focused on challenging authority as a path to advancement. Many participants shared that they have learned to use effective career strategies, assertive communication styles, and decision-making skills to challenge authority figures successfully. When challenging career strategies, they have learned to challenge the norms of complacency, career path, conformity, stereotypes, and positions they identified

as supporting them in career advancement. Study participants also concluded that a person's views, wants, opinions, and plans must be clearly communicated when questioning/challenging authority. They shared that this can be accomplished through confidence and competence. This is accomplished by challenging stereotypes, being flexible, listening before speaking, and questioning respectfully. The participants also shared the importance of aiming for respect, mentoring, and taking a strategic approach when making decisions pertaining to influencing authority. They felt that to make competent decisions, it was important to challenge traditional expectations, avoid stereotypes, be versatile, and not compromise values for financial gain. These females have demonstrated the intangible trait of emotional intelligence when they challenged and influenced authority. Emotional intelligence is the best predictor of success at work (Grant, 2017). This affects how they manage their behavior, deal with social complexity, and make good choices for themselves (Grant, 2017).

All participants believed that challenging and influencing authority has positively impacted their career trajectory. They shared the positive recognition they received when they challenged gender dynamics by learning to speak with authority. They discussed the mixed impact this had on their career progression, the importance of learning to influence different leadership styles, and its impact on their own leadership dynamics.

Preparing but Also Improvising: Major Findings

The first major finding related to preparing but also improvising was that female property management executives are generally comfortable in unfamiliar situations and capable of providing effective solutions on the spot. Men and women have different biological and psychological responses to stress, indicating that women may be better

equipped to handle high-stress scenarios in the workplace than their male counterparts (Frankland, 2023). All participants shared that they were comfortable in situations in which they had to be flexible and improvise. The participants also shared that effective communication supported them in overcoming being dismissed and focusing on empathy when building relationships, allowing them to articulate themselves calmly and avoid being seen as unprepared. Being adaptable in situations counteracted the perceived perception of women while embracing being flexible when changes arose and supported them in controlling their tone to get their points across effectively. They also shared that being honest and transparent has supported them throughout their career advancement to executive positions and is vital when improvising. Preparation is important, but improvisation is key at any organization's most influential decision-making table, the boardroom table, where policies affect all levels (Amar, 2023).

The second major finding from the theme of preparing but also improvising was that female property management executives reflected on the challenges in professional settings, identifying effective communication and being dismissed. Men and women interrupt each other; however, men tend to talk and interrupt more frequently than women, a male behavior often considered acceptable in society (Maderer, 2021). Female participants in the study were ignored and dismissed when they tried to use the same tactics as their male counterparts. This is congruent to Eagly and Karau's (2002) role congruity theory, which is defined as a prejudice against women leaders based on associated stereotypical characteristics.

The participants confirmed they needed internal and external allies in the industry and workplace to support their voices and be accepted as resourceful (Gibson, 2023).

When presented with an opportunity for change, participants gave examples of challenging norms, building relationships by including team members, and improvising while finding balance in adapting to circumstances. They shared their experiences of being strategic thinkers, suggesting they possessed both adaptability and flexibility throughout their careers.

The majority of participants agreed that the perceived impact of preparing and improvising positively impacted their career advancement. Only one participant could not confirm or deny its positive impact. The participants talked about how establishing rapport, exercising critical thought when adjusting to other personalities, and being well-prepared promoted mutual respect and trust, strengthening improvisational skills. They gave examples of taking various roles throughout their careers, which allowed them to handle unexpected situations and gave them the knowledge to speak on various topics.

Preparing but Also Improvising: Unexpected Major Findings

The first unexpected major finding related to preparing but also improvising was that female property management executives advocate for their colleagues, counterparts, and clients; however, they are not often advocated for. Many women are very good at advocating for others but often neglect advocating for themselves (Wahler, 2020). During interviews, female executives shared how they supported their teams by preparing them with topic knowledge and allowing their team members to share the information in meetings so they could advocate for their associates and show solidarity for responses. They also shared that building relationships with everyone involved in a project from the ground up makes improvising easier because they are not only aware of each person's expectations but also able to achieve them while earning leadership respect. This is in

line with the expectancy-value theory. The theory is based on two factors: a person's belief in their ability to perform a task and their perceived value of the task based on enjoyment (Hyde & Kling, 2001).

The second unexpected major finding related to preparing but also improvising was that female property management executives frequently find themselves in situations where for which they are not fully prepared because of unexpected changes or additional information; however, they are taught to overprepare early in their careers, contributing to their ability to improvise successfully. Women tend to exhibit more perfectionist tendencies than men, such as overpreparing and overdelivering at work (M. Smith, 2023). The study participants shared that they tend to manage their time more effectively with fewer conflicts, proving their ability to improvise. They also shared that they must be flexible because unexpected changes arise daily, even after thorough preparation. No matter what situations participants shared, they believed preparing but also improvising is all about supporting responses with reason, giving open feedback, and being transparent no matter the professional situation.

Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion: Major Finding

The first major finding related to engaging in effective forms of self-promotion was that female property management executives strategically use silence, thoughtful contributions, and active listening and choose impactful moments to create a lasting impression. During the interviews, participants shared experiences about engaging in effective forms of self-promotion; it was discovered that these females believed silence could be a powerful form of self-promotion. Words cannot always express emotions and opinions or build connections the way that silence can. Silence can be useful for defusing

tense situations or debates (Emam, 2023). For years, women have been expected to be quiet and only focus on their appearance in the workplace (Reeves, 2019). This is equally true in the property management industry. However, these females learned how to use the silence expectation to their advantage.

During a discussion of hiring for onsite positions, one participant shared her experience of a challenging conversation in which female candidates were judged based on their appearance rather than their ability to do the job of an onsite manager for a new property. She explained how she sat silently, waiting for the opportunity to express her opinion. She listened attentively to what everyone was saying about the expectations for the position. Once the room was quiet, she gave her response and backed it up with facts that were beneficial for both the client and the organization. She explained that it was not that the pretty female could not do the job; the other candidate, who was an in-house candidate, was more qualified and had a very diverse background, which could also be a deciding factor for people looking for the perfect home.

The second major finding related to engaging in effective forms of self-promotion was that female executives in property management prefer their work to speak for itself, emphasizing achievements and contributions through results and impact rather than self-promotion. Many women have worked hard to be recognized for their skills and talents regardless of gender (Ibarra, 2019). Although it can be difficult for some people to openly self-promote their own achievements, doing so can help women gain visibility in the workplace (Reynolds, 2022). Male counterparts often boast in the workplace, but successful women are expected to be modest (Reeves, 2019), leading to unequal perceptions of productivity. The study participants reported feeling penalized in their

career advancement for being too kind and supportive. However, they expressed the importance of seeing things through someone else's eyes, a habit that has assisted them in supporting their teams. Supporting their teams has proven to benefit the business, which reflects the leader's ability, another example of indirect self-promotion.

The third major finding related to engaging in effective forms of self-promotion was that female property management executives emphasized the importance of letting team members take credit and have their moments of recognition because it reflects directly on the leader and serves as a form of indirect self-promotion. Women who took the greatest initiative to showcase their accomplishments progressed faster, experienced higher levels of job satisfaction, and attracted sponsors more frequently (Miller, 2021). Study participants shared that engaging in self-promotion has never been their strong point. These females promoted their team's accomplishments to be visible in their organization, hoping they would be given credit as the leader. It is well documented that women admire and publicize the successes of others to recognize their own accomplishments. The study participants expressed that being open to collaborating with diverse groups of people and audiences is the best way to positively impact organizational cultures and be self-promoters to get recognized in their careers. This form of self-promotion is rooted in their authenticity.

Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion: Unexpected Major Finding

The unexpected major finding related to engaging in effective forms of self-promotion revealed that female property management executives advocate for their colleagues, counterparts, and clients; however, they are not often advocated for by others. Women often support their colleagues, counterparts, and clients in the workplace by

advocating for them, recommending them for promotions, sharing their successes, and making sure their voices are heard (Qween Network, 2023). However, they fall short regarding self-advocacy or others advocating for them in the workplace. Study participants admitted that not being a self-promoter has possibly hurt their career advancement. Looking back over their career, they admit that not self-promoting allowed others to take credit for their work throughout their career. They shared that in their experiences today, self-promoting would have proven that they were excellent promoters of the organization, product, and self. They expressed that not self-promoting allowed others to take credit for their work and accomplishments as their own. One participant shared that if she had self-promoted more, she would have advanced quickly in her career. Aligning her accomplishments with the organization's accomplishments would have benefitted her and the organization. Promoting her abilities and achievements would have put her and the organization in the spotlight. It would have proven that she was an excellent promoter of the organization, product, and self.

All study participants agreed that learning to engage in effective forms of self-promotion positively impacted their career advancement. One study participant shared that allowing her work to speak for itself only got her so far in her career. She prioritized her team's accomplishments over her own, which sometimes did not yield the impact she hoped for. The study participants said, "Self-promoting still makes them uncomfortable." However, she is slowly learning how to embrace self-promoting and now shares the importance of self-promoting with her associates.

Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path: Major Finding

The first major finding related to welcoming a less-prescribed career path was that female property management executives openly admitted to passing on opportunities because they did not think they were ready. They were also open to sharing and acknowledged that it may have been a mistake. In her article titled “Why Women Don’t Apply for Jobs Unless They’re 100% Qualified,” Tara Sophia Mohr (2014) shared an interesting finding: “Men tend to apply for a job when they meet only 60% of the qualifications, while women only apply if they meet 100% of them” (p. 2). This frame of thinking is what participants in the study claimed had stopped them from taking a less prescribed career path. They shared that in their experience when they applied for positions that didn’t necessarily fall into the traditional career path, they were told they didn’t have enough experience. Other participants shared that after being dismissed for many different career opportunities, they decided to remain on their current career path although that path often slowed their career trajectory.

The second major finding related to welcoming a less-prescribed career path was that female property management executives had no issue taking risks, even with lateral career moves or demotions, to advance their careers. The executives in the study who were willing to take risks, even if it meant moving laterally or accepting demotions, referred to this as breaking the glass ceiling, which Loden (2017) described as the invisible barrier to success in women's careers, to advance their careers. This phrase is used worldwide throughout many industries to describe the various obstacles faced by women in the workplace despite their qualifications and abilities. Hearing the study participants' experiences demonstrated that there is no conventional way to achieve an

executive-level position in the property management industry. The new normal is an unconventional career path, which also considers an alternative career path or job search method that deviates from the norm (Johnson & Mohr, 2019). The participants shared the benefits of choosing a less conventional career path, including higher salaries, opportunities to travel to other states, and exposure to leadership teams throughout the country.

Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path: Unexpected Major Finding

The first unexpected major finding related to welcoming a less-prescribed career path was that only one female property management executive mentioned having a mentor throughout her career, and only one mentioned being involved in a female networking group to support her career advancement. Women may struggle to see themselves as leaders without strong role models for guidance (Semeshkina, 2023). Mentorship can support women in getting in touch with their unique gifts and improvement areas (Castrillon, 2023). Some of the strategies that women use today to get ahead in their career paths include mentors and networking groups (L. Brooks, 2021). Study participants shared that having a mentor early on in their careers would have provided them with career direction and advice to support their career trajectory. Another participant admitted that once she reached the executive level, she tried to find a female mentor in the same position but was unsuccessful. She explained that the females she reached out to said they were busy treading water and trying to prove themselves. One participant recommended that organizations assign mentors to female executives who have advanced careers because it is uncommon for women to hold certain positions in the

property management industry. Often, leadership in the C-suite has a larger networking group.

The second unexpected major finding related to welcoming a less-prescribed career path was that female property management executives often feel they are seen as a threat when giving opinions and recommendations to leaders. According to King (2021), women are still not given the same level of consideration and respect as men regarding leadership positions. Male authority and privilege have long perceived female leadership as a danger (Perdue, 2017). One participant said her personal growth has come in expressing opinions, offering thoughtful pushback, and presenting well-thought-out arguments. However, she shared that this was not always the case. She recalled when she felt dismissed and unheard early on in her career. Others shared that being humble when approaching a situation has been perceived as less of a threat. One participant shared that she needed to continually learn and adapt to various professional situations after being viewed as a threat for providing opinions and recommendations.

Aim for Being Respected Over Being Liked: Major Findings

The first major finding related to aiming for being respected over being liked was that female property management executives often prioritize decision-making abilities over likability, even if it means taking unpopular actions. Zenger and Folkman's (2013) research on male and female leaders concluded that likeability and success go hand in hand for female leaders. According to Strunck (2023), a likeability paradox states that women are less likable when they succeed in the workplace than when they do not versus males who become likable as they advance in their careers. During the discussion, a female participant highlighted the difficulty she faced while working in a male-

dominated industry. She expressed feeling left out of the good old boy network, which is defined by Merriam-Webster (n.d.-c) as a knowledgeable system in which men with similar social and educational backgrounds assist each other. There is a likeability trade-off between women earning respect and being well-liked (Ibarra et al., 2013). A participant stated that choosing to be liked over being respected can be a tough call for women who have had no luck advancing in their careers.

The second major finding related to aiming for being respected over being liked was that some female property management executives believed that being liked was detrimental to their career advancement. It is a common societal expectation that women should be warm and likable whereas men are not expected to possess these traits (Sieghart, 2022). This aligns with the role congruity theory introduced by Eagly and Karau (2002), which refers to the prejudice against female leaders based on stereotypical characteristics.

One participant shared how she was forced to go to lunch with a female peer because her male boss thought they did not like each other. She shared her frustration by saying, “If I were a male, would I be forced to go to lunch with someone because they did not like me?” During the study, one of the participants shared her experience of being told that she and another female colleague did not like each other, which was apparently hurting the company’s business. She said that this was not a fair comment because the two had disagreed on something. The participant also raised a question about whether the same perception would have been made if the two colleagues were male and had disagreed with each other. In these examples, respect is earned from being a leader and a professional (Nanda, 2022). Disagreeing involves defending one’s ideas but also

admitting when one is wrong (Nakamuro, 2016). The participants did not attach any value judgment to the disagreement in both examples. However, the disagreement was automatically assumed to be a negative encounter rather than a healthy discussion of opinions.

Aim for Being Respected Over Being Liked: Unexpected Finding

The unexpected major finding related to aiming for being respected over being liked was that female property management executives who communicate effectively, listen attentively, and provide constructive feedback tend to earn respect. According to Clegg (2022), research has shown that well-respected leaders are also well-liked. One participant stated, “In my experience when I challenge authority with respect, I have earned their respect.” Another participant emphasized the importance of doing the right thing even if it is not popular. All participants agreed that prioritizing respect over being liked is important in their careers. However, they disagreed on the extent to which this has affected their professional growth.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on the study's major findings and supported by a review of the literature regarding the use of Johnson and Mohr's (2019) personal disruption strategies by female executives in the property management industry.

Conclusion 1: Effective Communication Style and the Ability to Challenge and Influence Authority Will Support Female Advancement in the Property Management Industry.

One conclusion that is supported by the major findings is that female advancement in the property management industry is dependent on female

communication style and the ability to challenge and influence authority. It is important to note that when women use assertive communication, they can convey confidence and competence, which are great strengths. Females should not simply comply with authority figures but rather challenge and influence them (Johnson & Mohr, 2019). According to the literature, women who question authority exhibit effective leadership that promotes inclusion and distinctive abilities (Eagly et al., 2003).

Conclusion 2: Female Property Management Executives Challenge Authority When They Can Influence With Facts

Another major conclusion is that females are more likely to challenge authority when they have all the relevant information and are fully prepared. Navigating gender and professional stereotypes impacts female executives' preparation when challenging authority. In terms of career trajectory, female property management executives found that influencing authority is generally more effective than challenging authority. Female property management executives who influence authority exhibit confidence, emotional intelligence, effective communication, relationship-building, and trust. The research supports that the ability of female managers to persuade and change minds can give them a competitive edge when challenging authority (Gallo, 2019).

Conclusion 3: Female Property Management Executives Over-Prepare but Have Learned to Pivot and Improvise

It is concluded that women overprepare; however, many have learned to improvise when necessary. In the workplace, improvisation is a combination of creative thinking and a natural understanding of what will assist in solving a problem (Leybourne, 2017). Female property management executives often face unexpected situations for

which they're unprepared. However, they are often confident in new situations and adept at providing effective solutions quickly. Johnson and Mohr (2019) recommended using preparation time effectively by learning to improvise rather than overpreparing.

Overpreparing early in their career supported them in improvising successfully.

Conclusion 4: Female Property Management Executives Can Excel in Their Careers Through Emotional Intelligence Development

Another major conclusion is that females must learn to be self-aware of their emotions while leading. Women have been expected to be quiet and look pretty for years in the workplace (Reeves, 2019). Female property management executives have learned to use gender bias to their advantage by strategically using silence and thoughtful contributions, actively listening, and choosing impactful moments to create a lasting impression. This practice has allowed female executives to be heard and valued by those sitting at the table.

Conclusion 5: Female Property Management Executives Want to Be Recognized Through Leadership, Not by Self-Promoting

Another conclusion drawn from the major findings is that female property management executives prefer to highlight their team's accomplishments rather than their own, hoping their leadership will be recognized, versus self-promoting. Chamorro-Premuzic (2021) suggested that women are often more self-aware of their limitations, leading them to self-promote less frequently. They also prefer their work to speak for itself, emphasizing achievements and contributions through results and impact rather than self-promotion. They emphasized the importance of letting team members take credit and have their moments of recognition because it reflects directly on the leader.

Conclusion 6: Female Property Management Executives Are Expected to Seek Consensus or Approval Prior to Advancing

Another major conclusion is that because of gender bias, female property management executives are frequently expected to seek consensus or approval prior to advancing. Women are often seen as submissive and followers whereas men who demonstrate the same trait are seen as significant (Eagly & Carli, 2007). They admitted passing on advancement opportunities because they lacked endorsement from a leadership team member. Because of their lack of self-confidence, they refrained from applying for higher positions. The female executives acknowledged that not having the confidence to take risks and apply may have been a mistake.

Conclusion 7: To Advance in Their Careers, Females in Property Management Should Invest Time in Female-to-Female Mentoring and Networking.

The conclusion drawn from the major findings is that females in property management should invest time in supportive elements such as female-to-female mentorship and networking groups early in their careers, especially when considering career advancement. Only one of the eight executives interviewed had a mentor throughout her career, which she credited for her success and quick career trajectory. However, other study participants shared that they wish they had a mentor and felt having one would definitely have impacted their career. In an article titled “Women Leaders of Real Estate,” author Jason Hartman (2021) interviewed Cynthia Cuccuini of Hey Rich Girl. Cuccuini shared that women should seek a mentor or coach who has their back and can answer their questions. According to Cuccuini, finding a mentor can dramatically shorten the learning curve and provide a valuable support system that boosts women's

confidence. When women connect and support each other, their trust and self-confidence grow, leading to greater success (Weiler, 2021). Strong, influential mentors are a valuable source of assistance (Kramer, 2021). The majority of the female property management executives stated that they did not have a mentor to go to when they had challenges in their positions or careers. Networking is important to a female's career advancement. It offers many advantages (Eatough, 2023). The best way for females to network is by joining female-specific networking groups in and out of the industry.

Conclusion 8: A Less-Prescribed Career Path Can Positively Impact Female Property Management Executive Advancement

A conclusion supported by the study's major findings is that welcoming a less-prescribed career path can positively impact the advancement of females in the property management industry. There is no clear-cut path to achieving executive-level positions. Johnson and Mohr (2019) defined the new normal as an unconventional and alternative career path that deviates from traditional norms. Female executives had no issue taking risks for lateral career moves or demotions to advance their careers.

Conclusion 9: There is a Shift in Priority of Being Respected Over Being Liked as Female Property Management Executives Advance in Their Careers

Another conclusion identified through the major findings is that there is a shift in priority to being respected rather than being liked as females grow in their careers. It is important to strike a balance between being well-liked and earning respect (Nanda, 2022). As executives advance in their careers, it is equally important to earn both respect and likability. Female executives strive to establish a fundamental standard of respect.

Conclusion 10: Effective Communication and Constructive Feedback Earn Respect

Another conclusion identified through the major findings is that female property management executives who communicate effectively and provide constructive feedback tend to earn respect. According to Jansen (n.d.), women are better at understanding the emotional aspect of messages than men. Female executives often prioritize decision-making abilities over likability even if it means taking unpopular actions.

Conclusion 11: Aiming for Respect Over Being Liked Can be Detrimental to Female Property Management Executives' Career Advancement

The conclusion drawn from the major findings is that female executives in property management believe that aiming for respect over being liked is damaging to their career advancement. Women are often expected to be team players, accepting, and content in the workplace. There is a societal expectation for women in the workplace to be always friendly and likable (Sankar, 2017). When they were not perceived as likable, these female executives received backlash in the form of stalled careers.

Conclusion 12: Having More Female Property Management Executives Will Pave the Way for Other Females to be Promoted

Based on the major findings, it can be concluded that having a greater number of female executives in property management will create opportunities for them to serve as role models and inspire other women to advance in their careers. The study participants emphasized the significance of women supporting each other through networking and mentoring. According to Jeti (2023), as women, it is important to promote a culture of empowerment, mentorship, and solidarity to pave the way for gender equality by breaking down barriers and creating opportunities. Jeti continued that with joint efforts,

women can challenge gender biases, break down obstacles, and pave the way for future generations of women to thrive in male-dominated professions.

Implications for Action

Based on the major findings and conclusions of this study, the following implications for action are recommended for female managers' advancement to executive leadership positions in the property management industry:

- Without female-to-female mentorship, females will continue to struggle in their career advancement to executive levels in property management. Women need to actively participate in mentorship and coaching programs to develop their leadership skills. To succeed and advance in their careers in property management, female professionals must master the art of exhibiting confidence, emotional intelligence, effective communication, relationship-building, and trust to influence authority. By doing so, they will better understand themselves, their strengths, and their weaknesses and reap the benefits of their efforts.
- It is crucial for women working in the property management industry to prioritize investing in their careers. They cannot simply rely on their organizations to invest in their career growth if they wish to advance professionally. It is advisable for individuals to enroll in appropriate training programs that specifically target leadership skills. They should also consider taking assessments that help them identify their level of self-awareness. Furthermore, it is important for them to work on enhancing their emotional intelligence. This will enable them to identify, understand, and manage their own emotions as well as those of others.

- Networking can be key for women in male-dominated fields. If females join industry-specialized networking groups, it will support them in advancing their careers. According to the article “Why Women’s Networks Are Crucial” by Sternbauer (2013), networking groups provide a secure environment for women to connect, share information, and find opportunities to meet other like-minded women, hence supporting them in building long-lasting relationships.

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendations for further research regarding the use and impact of personal disruption strategies by female executives from a property management background are as follows:

- A replication of the research to provide an overview and understanding of female property management executives from diverse ethnic backgrounds exhibiting disruptive behaviors identified by Johnson and Mohr (2019) and to analyze the impact of such behaviors on the advancement of female careers in the property management industry.
- A replication of the study that specifically explores different age groups and generations of female property management executives of varied ethnicities with disruptive behaviors and how those behaviors impact women’s career advancement in the property management industry.
- Replicate the study by including a 360 assessment component for the associates of female property management executives. This will help identify disruptive behaviors that associates who report to them may exhibit and how such behaviors

impact the female executive's associates' career advancement in the property management industry.

- Conduct a study to examine the impact of disruptive behaviors of female property managers who have mentors to support their career advancement in the property management industry. The study will replicate previous research to provide an overview and understanding of this phenomenon and the role of mentoring in it.
- Conduct a study on the impact of female self-promotion: Does learning effective self-promotion impact women's career advancement? The study would replicate previous studies and provide an overview of and understanding of the impact of self-promotion.

Concluding Remarks and Reflection

In my 35 years of experience in the property management industry, I have always wondered why there seems to be a gender disparity in career advancement in the property management industry. It was concerning to see that women were underrepresented in senior roles. I have worked for inspiring and strong female leaders throughout my career, but often, they did not advance in their careers, or if they did, it took them years.

I still remember the first time I met a female CEO in property management. She always wore a dark two-piece Brooks Brothers suit, a white collared shirt, and a delicate string of pearls. This was her daily work attire. One day, I saw her wearing a cute summer dress and sandals outside of work. I complimented her on her outfit and asked why she did not dress like that at work. She laughed and explained that to be taken seriously as a woman in a boardroom dominated by men, she had to dress like them. It was already challenging enough to fight the female stereotypes, and dressing in a

feminine way would only make it worse. Another high female executive once shared that she wears two bras to flatten her chest so that she doesn't feel like a distraction in a room full of men. The fact that women in our industry felt that was the only way they could be taken seriously upsets me.

Through my review of the literature, I confirmed that female struggles in the real estate industry have existed throughout history, and today, woman are still challenged with advancing in their career to executive positions. Throughout my career in property management, I have observed a double standard in the treatment of females compared to males. I have witnessed instances in which qualified females were passed over for a job while less qualified males were selected instead. The literature reviewed on female career advancement has offered resources and tools to support females in advancing their careers.

I had the privilege and honor of listening to eight amazing women share their stories with me, and now I am thrilled that I had the opportunity to share their experiences and knowledge with others. Their stories and career advancement supported the literature and their use of the majority of the five Johnson and Mohr (2019) disruptive strategies. All of them had learned how to influence rather than challenge authority. They had taken a less traditional career path that they believed supported their career advancement. All the study participants shared that they did not feel comfortable self-promoting, but they believed that sharing what their teams were doing was a tribute to their leadership and was a form of self-promoting.

The study findings revealed that when women use disruptive behaviors to their advantage, they can put them in a position of career advancement. Skills such as being

able to influence authority, mastering improvisation, being open to taking a different path to reach goals, and choosing respect over likeability will assist females in being promoted. My implications for action are intended to be used by women in the property management industry to aid their personal growth and career advancement to leadership positions. The goal is for women to be recognized as qualified candidates for any job in the property management industry regardless of industry stereotypes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Synthesis Matrix

Work Cited	History of Women in Leadership	Educational Experience	History of Women in Property Management	History of Women in the workforce	External/Internal Barriers	Advancement Strategies	Social Role Theory	Role Congruity Theory	Expectancy Value Theory	Gendered Organisation Theory	Challenge and Influence Authority	Prepare, But Also Learn to Improve	Find Effective Forms of Self-Promotion	Welcome a Less Prescribed Career Path	Aim for Being Respected, Not Just Liked	Disruption	Methodology
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Work Cited	History of Women in Leadership	Educational Experience	History of Women in Property Management	History of Women in the workforce	External/Internal Barriers	Advancement Strategies	Social Role Theory	Role Congruity Theory	Expectancy Value Theory	Gendered Organization Theory	Challenge and Influence Authority	Prepare, But Also Learn to Improve	Find Effective Forms of Self-Promotion	Welcome a Less Prescribed Career Path	Aim for Being Respected, Not Just Liked	Diagnosis	Methodology
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APPENDIX B

Quantitative Survey Instrument

INTRODUCTION

Thank you so much for agreeing to meet with me regarding your leadership and what has led to your success as a female leader. It is my hope that by studying this topic, we can give female leaders the skills they need to break barriers into new and fulfilling careers in upper management.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research on Johnson and Mohr's **FIVE DISRUPTIVE CAREER SKILLS** on female (career focus, i.e., exec) advancement to an executive leadership position. The five identified disruptive career skills include the following:

1. Challenging and Influencing Authority
2. Preparing but also Improvising
3. Engaging in Effective Forms of Self Promotion
4. Welcoming a Less-Prescribed Career Path
5. Aiming for Respect Over Being Liked

It's best not to 'overthink' the statements and respond with your first perceptual thought. This survey should only take about 10-15 minutes. After you complete and submit the survey, the researcher will contact you to schedule an interview to explore your thoughts on these career skills and how they may have an impact on women's ability to move forward in her career.

Directions:

PART I: The following survey represents the five DISRUPTIVE CAREER SKILLS. For each skill there is an example of behaviors associated with each category. Using the four-point scale for each Disruptive Career Skill, please indicate how frequently you have engaged in each career skill as you progressed along in your leadership career.

4= Definitely Yes

3= Generally Yes

2= Generally No

1= Definitely No

PART II: If you checked *Definitely Yes or Generally Yes* how much of a positive impact do you perceive it had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?

4= High Degree

3= *Some Degree*
 2= *Little or No Degree*
 1= *Detrimental to My Career Advancement*

DISRUPTIVE CAREER SKILLS SURVEY

1. CHALLENGING AND INFLUENCING AUTHORITY

Challenging Authority: Challenging authority refers to the act of questioning, opposing, or pushing back against those in positions of power or leadership who make decisions or enact policies. It involves a willingness to challenge the status quo, question assumptions, and propose alternative ideas or solutions.

	4 Definitely Yes	3 Generally Yes	2 Generally No	1 Definitely No
EXAMPLE: I speak up to my superiors rather than tell my bosses what they want to hear.				
If you checked “ <i>Definitely Yes</i> ” or “ <i>Generally Yes</i> ” Above				
IMPACT: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Challenging Authority had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?	4 High Degree	3 Some Degree	2 Little or no Degree	1 Detrimental to my Career Advancement

Influencing Authority: Influencing authority refers to the act of using persuasive communication and other means to affect the decisions and actions of those in positions of power or leadership. It involves a willingness to engage with authority figures, build relationships, and make reasoned arguments to shape outcomes that align with one’s goals or values.

	4 Definitely Yes	3 Generally Yes	2 Generally No	1 Definitely No
EXAMPLE: I often find a problem that needs to be solved and persuade others in the direction of what one feels to be the correct answer.				

If you checked “ <i>Definitely Yes</i> ” or “ <i>Generally Yes</i> ” Above				
IMPACT: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Influencing Authority had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?	4 High Degree	3 Some Degree	2 Little or no Degree	1 Detrimental to my Career Advancement

2. PREPARING BUT ALSO IMPROVISING

Preparing But Also Improvising: While it is important for all leaders to go into situations with a game plan, it is equally important that they also go in with the skills to pivot and stray from the game plan as the situation prescribes.

	4 Definitely Yes	3 Generally Yes	2 Generally No	1 Definitely No
EXAMPLE: While I like to prepare in advance, I also am comfortable going into unfamiliar situations and capable of providing on the spot solutions.				

If you checked “ <i>Definitely Yes</i> ” or “ <i>Generally Yes</i> ” Above				
IMPACT: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Preparing but also Improvising had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?	4 High Degree	3 Some Degree	2 Little or no Degree	1 Detrimental to my career advancement

3. ENGAGING IN EFFECTIVE FORMS OF SELF-PROMOTION

Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion: For anyone to recognize and appreciate the uniqueness and excellence they bring to a leadership role; it is essential that they actively showcase their achievements. Self-promotion can be achieved through direct and indirect methods.

	4 Definitely Yes	3 Generally Yes	2 Generally No	1 Definitely No
EXAMPLES While I believe in allowing my work to speak for itself, I have found ways to effectively highlight my accomplishments.				
<i>If you checked “Definitely Yes “or “Generally Yes” Above</i>				
IMPACT: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Engaging in Effective Forms of Self Promotion had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?	4 High Degree	3 Some Degree	2 Little or no Degree	1 Detrimental to my career advancement

4. WELCOMING A LESS PRESCRIBED CAREER PATH

Welcoming a Less Prescribed Career Path: While many believe playing it safe and following a prescribed career path will lead to career advancement, some suggest that being open to and pursuing alternative career paths will lead to career advancement.

	4 Definitely Yes	3 Generally Yes	2 Generally No	1 Definitely No
EXAMPLES: I have taken a lateral move or a job outside my career field.				

If you checked “*Definitely Yes*” or “*Generally Yes*” Above

IMPACT: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Welcoming a Less Prescribed Career Path had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?	4 High Degree	3 Some Degree	2 Little or no Degree	1 Detrimental to my career advancement
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5. AIMING FOR RESPECT OVER BEING LIKED

Aiming for Respect Over Being Liked: This happens when you choose the path that is not precisely what will make you popular but rather garner you the most respect.

	4 Definitely Yes	3 Generally Yes	2 Generally No	1 Definitely No
EXAMPLES I have undertaken actions that may not necessarily enhance my popularity but have garnered respect for my decision-making abilities.				

If you checked “*Definitely Yes*” or “*Generally Yes*” Above

IMPACT: How much of a positive impact do you perceive Aiming for Respect over Being Liked had on your advancement to an executive leadership position?	4 High Degree	3 Some Degree	2 Little or no Degree	1 Detrimental to my career advancement
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APPENDIX C

Qualitative Survey Instrument

Interview Question

OPENING QUESTIONS

- Can you tell me a little about your career journey that brought you to the role you currently serve today?
- What positions did you hold, and for how long?

1. CHALLENGE AND INFLUENCE AUTHORITY

Challenging Authority: Challenging authority refers to the act of questioning, opposing, or pushing back against those in positions of power or leadership who make decisions or enact policies. It involves a willingness to challenge the status quo, question assumptions, and propose alternative ideas or solutions.

- As you reflect on your career, can you share any stories or examples of how you may have challenged authority while advancing your career?
- In reflecting on this career area, what impact, positive or negative, do you believe challenging authority had on your career trajectory?

Influencing Authority: Influencing authority refers to the act of using persuasive communication and other means to affect the decisions and actions of those in positions of power or leadership. It involves a willingness to engage with authority figures, build relationships, and make reasoned arguments to shape outcomes that align with one's goals or values.

- As you reflect on your career, can you share any stories or examples of how you may have influenced authority while advancing your career?
- In reflecting on this career area, what impact, positive or negative, do you believe you challenging authority had on your career trajectory?

2. PREPARING BUT ALSO IMPROVISING

Preparing but also Improvising: While it is important for all leaders to go into situations with a game plan, it is equally important that they also go in with the skills to pivot and stray from the game plan as the situation prescribes.

- As you reflect on your career, can you share any stories or examples of how have come into situations fully prepared, but you were able to make

something up on the spot, without prior planning or preparation in a way that achieves a desired outcome?

- In reflecting on this career area what impact, positive or negative, do you believe preparing but also improving had on your career trajectory?

3. ENGAGING IN EFFECTIVE FORMS OF SELF-PROMOTION

Engaging in Effective Forms of Self-Promotion: For anyone to recognize and appreciate the uniqueness and excellence they bring to a leadership role; it is essential that they actively showcase their achievements. Self-promotion can be achieved through direct and indirect methods.

- As you reflect on your career can you share any stories or examples of how have effectively promoted the work you have done in a way that achieves a desired outcome?
- In reflecting on this career area, what impact, positive or negative, do you believe engaging in effective forms of self-promotion had on your career trajectory?

4. WELCOMING A LESS PRESCRIBED CAREER PATH

Welcoming a Less Prescribed Career Path: While many believe playing it safe and following a prescribed career path will lead to career advancement, some suggest that being open to and pursuing alternative career paths find themselves in more senior positions.

- As you reflect on your career, can you share any stories or examples of how you have welcomed a less prescribed career path in a way that helped you see your organization from a wider lens?
- In reflecting on this career area, what impact, positive or negative, do you believe welcoming a less prescribed career path had on your career trajectory?

5. AIMING FOR RESPECT OVER BEING LIKED

Aiming for Respect Over Being Liked: This happens when you choose the path that is not precisely what will make you popular but rather garner you the most respect.

- As you reflect on your career, can you share any stories or examples of how you have taken actions to be respected over being liked?
- In reflecting on this career area, what impact, positive or negative, do you believe aiming for respect over being liked had on your career trajectory?

POSSIBLE PROBING QUESTIONS

1. What is your opinion about that?
2. Can you expand upon that a bit more?
3. Do you have more to add?
4. Please describe an example of...
5. Can you provide an example of...
6. Can you discuss ...
7. Tell me about a time when

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent

INFORMATION ABOUT: Personal Disruption Strategies Used By Female Executives in the Property Management Industry for Career Advancement

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: *Lorri Oliver, M.B.A.*

PURPOSE OF STUDY: You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by *Lorri Oliver*, a doctoral student from the School of Education at Umass Global. The purpose of this explanatory mixed methods research study is to identify and describe the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's five disruptive career skills (2013) on female Executives in the Property Management Industry to their advancement to executive leadership positions.

The interview(s) will last approximately 45 – 60 minutes and will be conducted in a one-on-one virtual interview setting (using Zoom).

I understand that:

- a) There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the Investigator will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying codes and research materials in a locked file drawer that is available only to the researcher.
- b) I understand that the interview will be audio recorded. The recordings will be available only to the researcher and the professional transcriptionist. The audio recordings will be used to capture the interview dialogue as a text document and to ensure the accuracy of the information collected during the interview. All information will be identifier-redacted, and my confidentiality will be maintained. Upon completion of the study, all recordings will be destroyed. All other data and consents will be securely stored for three years after completion of data collection and confidentially shredded or fully deleted.
- c) The possible benefit of this study to me is that my input may help add to the research regarding personal disruption strategies used by female executives for career advancement. The findings will be available to me at the conclusion of the study and will provide new insights about this study in which I participated. I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation.
- d) If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact oliv4103@mail.umassglobal.edu or by phone at 949-363-6000 or Dr. Marilou Ryder (Chair) at ryder@umassglobale.edu.
- e) My participation in this research study is voluntary. I may decide to not participate in the study and I can withdraw at any time. I can also decide not to answer particular questions during the interview if I choose. I understand that I may refuse to participate or may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the Investigator may stop the study at any time.

f) No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, UMass Global, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the “Research Participant’s Bill of Rights.” I have read the above and understand it and hereby consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

Signature of Participant

Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

APPENDIX E

UMass Global Internal Review Board Bill of Rights



Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment or who is requested to consent on behalf of another has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.
2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.
3. To be told about the risks, side effects, or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.
4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.
5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.
6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.
7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.
8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.
9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.

10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You also may contact the UMASS Global Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The UMASS Global Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, UMASS Global, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.

Appendix F

Quantitative Instrument Alignment Table

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5
What perceived impact did challenging and influencing authority have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?	X				
What perceived impact did preparing and improvising have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?		X			
What perceived impact did engaging in effective forms			X		

of self-promotion have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?					
What perceived impact did welcoming a less prescribed career path have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?				X	
What perceived impact did aiming for being respected over being liked have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?					X

Appendix G

Qualitative Instrument Alignment Table

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5
What perceived impact did challenging and influencing authority have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?	X				
What perceived impact did preparing and improvising have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?		X			
What perceived impact did engaging in effective forms			X		

of self-promotion have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?					
What perceived impact did welcoming a less prescribed career path have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?				X	
What perceived impact did aiming for being respected over being liked have on female property managers' advancement to executive leadership position?					X

APPENDIX H

Quantitative Feedback Form

Field-Test Survey Feedback Questions

Included in Electronic Survey: As a doctoral student at UMASS Global, I appreciate your feedback as it helps me to build the most effective survey instrument possible. Your participation is crucial to this effort. Please respond to the following questions after completing the survey. Your answers will assist me in refining the survey items. This will allow me to make edits to improve the survey prior to administering it to potential study participants. A copy version of the survey is provided as an attachment to the email that contained this feedback form to refresh your memory of the instrument if needed. Thank you very much for your assistance. Your participation is greatly appreciated!

1. How many minutes did it take you to complete the survey, from the moment you opened it on the computer until the time you completed it?
2. Did the portion up front that asked you to read the consent information and click the agree box before the survey opened concern you at all?
3. The first paragraph of the introduction included the purpose of the research study. Did this provide enough clarity as to the purpose of the study?
4. Was the Introduction sufficiently clear (and not too long) to inform you what the research was about? If not, what would you recommend that would make it better?
5. Were the directions to Part 1 clear, and did you understand what to do? If not, would you briefly state the problem.

6. Were the brief descriptions of the 5 choices prior to your completing the 12 items clear, and did they provide sufficient differences among them for you to make a selection? If not, briefly describe the problem.
7. As you progressed through the 12 items in which you gave a rating of 1 through 5, if there were any items that caused you to say something like, “What does this mean?” Which item(s) were they? Please use the paper copy and mark those that troubled you. Or if not, please check here:

APPENDIX I

Introduction Letter to Study Participants

Date

Dear (Name),

My name is Lorri Oliver, and I am conducting research into female leadership in conjunction with my Doctoral studies at UMass Global. The purpose of this explanatory mixed methods research study is to identify and describe the perceived impact of Johnson and Mohr's five disruptive career skills (2019) on female Executives in the Property Management Industry to their advancement to an executive leadership position.

You have been identified as a female Executive in the United States and as someone ideal for this study. This study will explore how personal disruption strategies have impacted the career advancement of female executives. The data collected from surveying and interviewing female executives are intended to increase the understanding of the impact of personal disruption strategies on women's careers in educational leadership. Findings gathered from the research are anticipated to be used to describe personal disruptive strategies and measure the extent to which they are believed to impact female career advancement.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and your identity as a participant will remain confidential during and after the study. As a participant in this study, your contributions may assist other female managers striving for the executive position. The study consists of an electronic survey that will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete and a follow-up interview that will take approximately 60 to 90 minutes. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate, you can withdraw at any time. Thank you in advance for your acceptance of my request. Your involvement is critical to the success of this study. If you have any questions, please contact me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX or by email at XXXXXXXX@mail.umassglobal.edu.

Sincerely,

Lorri Oliver Doctoral Candidate, UMass Global

APPENDIX J

Qualitative Participant Feedback Form

1. How did you feel about the interview? Do you think you had ample opportunities to describe your experiences with self-sabotaging behaviors, the impact, and strategies used to overcome the barriers?
2. Did you feel the amount of time for the interview was ok?
3. Were the questions by and large clear or were there places where you were uncertain what was being asked?
4. Can you recall any words or terms being asked about during the interview that were confusing?
5. And finally, did I appear comfortable during the interview?

APPENDIX K

Interview Observer Feedback Reflection Questions

1. How long did the interview take?
2. Were the questions clear, or were there places when the interviewee was unclear?
3. Were there any words or terms used during the interview that were unclear or confusing?
4. How did you feel during the interview?
5. Did you feel prepared to conduct the interview? Is there something you could have done to be better prepared? a. For the observer: how did you perceive the interviewer regarding the preceding descriptors?
6. What parts of the interview went the most smoothly, and why do you think that was the case?
7. Are there parts of the interview that seemed to be awkward, and why do you think that was the case?
8. If you were to change any part of the interview, what would it be, and how would you change it?
9. What suggestions do you have for improving the overall process?