

(REVIEW ARTICLE)



## Redefining leadership: the role of gender in shaping organizational culture

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### Abstract

This review paper explores the evolving dynamics of gender and leadership, emphasizing how gender-inclusive leadership shapes organizational culture. The study begins by examining the historical perspectives on leadership and gender, highlighting how traditional views have often marginalized diverse leadership styles. It then delves into modern leadership paradigms, showcasing the positive cultural shifts from gender diversity in leadership roles. The discussion extends to the impact of gender-inclusive leadership on innovation, employee engagement, and organizational performance. Key findings indicate that inclusive leadership fosters a more collaborative and adaptive culture and enhances innovation and employee morale. The paper concludes with practical recommendations for organizations to promote gender-inclusive leadership and suggests future research directions further to understand the complex interplay between gender and leadership.

**Keywords:** Gender-inclusive leadership; Organizational culture; Diversity and innovation; Employee engagement; Leadership paradigms

### 1 Introduction

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping the organizational culture of any institution, whether corporate, educational, governmental, or non-profit (Kalkan, Altınay Aksal, Altınay Gazi, Atasoy, & Dağlı, 2020). Organizational culture, defined as the shared values, beliefs, and norms that influence the behavior of individuals within an organization, is essentially a reflection of the leadership at the helm. Leaders set the tone, create the vision, and model the behavior others in the organization are expected to follow (Zain-Ul-Abidin, Qammar, Nadeem, & Farhan, 2020). Therefore, leadership is not just about making decisions and driving performance; it is also about creating a culture that supports the organization's goals and fosters a positive work environment. This underscores the critical importance of leadership in ensuring organizations' long-term success and sustainability.

In recent decades, there has been a growing recognition of gender's role in leadership. Historically, leadership has often been associated with masculine traits such as assertiveness, competitiveness, and decisiveness, while feminine traits like empathy, collaboration, and nurturing were undervalued. This gendered perspective on leadership has led to a disproportionate representation of men in leadership roles across various sectors, reinforcing stereotypes about what effective leadership should look like (Mercer-Prowse, 2022; Palmer, Sackmann, & Wüthrich). However, the understanding of leadership is evolving. As society becomes more aware of gender biases and as more women enter

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leadership positions, the notion of leadership is being redefined. This shift challenges traditional gender roles and highlights the importance of diverse leadership styles incorporating masculine and feminine qualities (Riley, 2023).

The evolving understanding of gender in leadership has significant implications for organizational culture. Integrating different leadership styles becomes essential as organizations strive to be more inclusive and diverse. Gender-inclusive leadership broadens the perspective at the leadership level and fosters an organizational culture that values Diversity, equity, and inclusion (Radomski, 2023). This, in turn, can lead to more innovative solutions, improved employee engagement, and better overall organizational performance. Therefore, exploring the intersection of gender and leadership is crucial for understanding how leadership can be redefined to create more effective and inclusive organizational cultures.

### **1.1 Purpose and Scope**

This research paper aims to examine how gender influences leadership styles and, subsequently, organizational culture. By exploring the intersection of gender and leadership, this paper provides insights into how different leadership styles—whether traditionally seen as masculine or feminine—can contribute to or hinder the development of a positive organizational culture. The scope of this research includes an analysis of existing literature on gender and leadership and a discussion on the impact of gender-inclusive leadership on organizational culture.

This research is particularly relevant in today's globalized and increasingly diverse work environment, where organizations recognize the need to embrace different perspectives and leadership styles to stay competitive. By focusing on the role of gender in leadership, this paper aims to highlight the benefits of a more inclusive approach to leadership and how it can lead to a more dynamic and adaptable organizational culture. Additionally, this research will address the challenges and barriers different genders face in leadership positions, offering recommendations for overcoming these obstacles and promoting a more inclusive leadership environment.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

To guide this exploration, the following key research questions will be addressed:

- How do traditional gender roles influence perceptions of effective leadership?
- What are the differences between masculine and feminine leadership styles, and how do they impact organizational culture?
- How does gender diversity in leadership contribute to or hinder the development of a positive organizational culture?
- What challenges and barriers do different genders face in leadership roles, and how can organizations overcome these obstacles?
- How can organizations foster gender-inclusive leadership to enhance organizational culture and performance?

By addressing these questions, this research aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on gender and leadership, providing a framework for understanding how leadership can be redefined better to reflect the diverse realities of today's organizations. This exploration will also offer practical insights for leaders and organizations seeking to create more inclusive and effective leadership structures that positively shape organizational culture.

In conclusion, the relationship between gender and leadership is complex and multifaceted, with significant implications for organizational culture. As traditional notions of leadership are challenged and redefined, it becomes increasingly important to understand how gender influences leadership styles and how these styles, in turn, shape the culture of organizations. Through this research, a deeper understanding of these dynamics will be developed, offering valuable insights for scholars and practitioners in leadership and organizational development.

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## **2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Historical Perspectives on Leadership and Gender**

Historically, leadership has been closely tied to masculinity, with traditional views often equating effective leadership with traits typically associated with men. The early 20th century, for example, saw the development of leadership theories that emphasized qualities such as assertiveness, decisiveness, and control—attributes that aligned with societal expectations of male behavior (Benson, Woodley, Jensen, & Hardy, 2024). The Great Man Theory, one of the earliest leadership concepts, posited that leaders are born, not made, and often implied that these "great men" were naturally endowed with the leadership qualities necessary to guide others (Rossini, 2024).

This perspective reinforced gender stereotypes, as leadership was predominantly seen as a male domain. The notion that men were naturally suited for leadership roles while women were better suited for supportive or nurturing roles became deeply ingrained in organizational structures. As a result, women who aspired to leadership positions often faced significant barriers, including biases that questioned their ability to lead and a lack of opportunities for advancement. Even as women began to enter the workforce in more significant numbers, their leadership potential was frequently overlooked, and when women did rise to leadership roles, they were often expected to adopt a leadership style that mirrored masculine traits, sometimes at the expense of their authenticity (Peters, 2023).

These traditional views on leadership and gender have had lasting effects on organizational cultures, contributing to a leadership landscape that has been slow to embrace diversity. The underrepresentation of women in leadership positions across various sectors is a testament to the enduring influence of these historical perspectives. However, as societal attitudes towards gender roles have evolved, so too has the understanding of what constitutes effective leadership, leading to new theories that challenge the status quo and recognize the value of diverse leadership styles (Hunt, Prince, Dixon-Fyle, & Dolan, 2020).

## 2.2 Theories of Gender and Leadership

In response to the limitations of traditional leadership theories, more contemporary models have emerged that consider the influence of gender on leadership styles. One of the fundamental theories in this area is the Social Role Theory, which suggests that gender differences in behavior, including leadership, are primarily the result of socialization processes that assign different roles and expectations to men and women (Anglin, Kincaid, Short, & Allen, 2022). According to this theory, men and women develop different leadership styles not because of inherent differences but because they have been conditioned to behave in ways that align with societal expectations of their gender (Netchaeva, Sheppard, & Balushkina, 2022).

Transformational and transactional leadership theories have also been explored through the lens of gender. Transformational leadership, which focuses on inspiring and motivating followers to achieve higher levels of performance and develop their leadership potential, has often been associated with stereotypically viewed feminine qualities, such as empathy, collaboration, and supportiveness. On the other hand, transactional leadership, which is more focused on the exchange process between leader and follower—rewarding compliance and punishing deviations—has traditionally been linked to masculine traits such as authority, control, and competitiveness (Dartey-Baah, Quartey, & Adotey, 2021; Palmer et al.). Additionally, the concept of androgynous leadership has gained traction, suggesting that the most influential leaders can blend masculine and feminine qualities, adapting their leadership style to suit the situation's needs. This perspective challenges the binary view of gendered leadership styles and encourages a more flexible and inclusive approach to leadership (Sharma, 2022).

Theories like these highlight the complexity of gender and leadership, emphasizing that leadership effectiveness is not determined by gender itself but rather by the ability of leaders to draw on a diverse set of skills and behaviors. As organizations increasingly recognize the value of gender diversity in leadership, these theories provide a framework for understanding how gender influences leadership styles and the impact this has on organizational outcomes (Afolabi & Aghaunor, 2024; Calvin, Mustapha, Afolabi, & Moriki, 2024).

## 2.3 Gendered Leadership Styles

Gendered leadership styles refer to how societal expectations of gender influence leadership behaviors and practices. Research has shown that men and women often exhibit different leadership styles, though these differences are not absolute and can vary widely depending on the individual and the context.

Masculine leadership styles have traditionally been characterized by assertiveness, competitiveness, and decisiveness. Leaders who adopt this style are often seen as solid and authoritative figures prioritizing results and efficiency. This style can be effective in situations that require quick decision-making and clear direction, but it may also be perceived as rigid or lacking in empathy (Zijlstra, 2020).

On the other hand, feminine leadership styles tend to emphasize collaboration, empathy, and the development of interpersonal relationships. Leaders who employ this style are often seen as nurturing and supportive, creating environments that encourage open communication and teamwork. While this style can foster a positive and inclusive organizational culture, it may sometimes be undervalued in contexts prioritizing assertiveness and control (Kachniewska & Para, 2023).

Research has also explored the concept of authentic leadership, which encourages leaders to be true to their values and beliefs, regardless of gender norms. Authentic leadership allows individuals to draw on masculine and feminine qualities, depending on the situation's demands. This approach challenges traditional gendered leadership stereotypes and highlights the importance of adaptability and emotional intelligence in effective leadership (Crawford, Dawkins, Martin, & Lewis, 2020; Gardner, Karam, Alvesson, & Einola, 2021). The recognition of these gendered leadership styles has important implications for organizations. By understanding and valuing the diverse leadership approaches that different genders bring, organizations can create a more inclusive and dynamic leadership culture that leverages the strengths of all employees.

## **2.4 Impact on Organizational Culture**

The impact of gendered leadership styles on organizational culture is significant and multifaceted. Organizations led by leaders who embrace a diverse range of masculine and feminine leadership styles tend to develop more inclusive, innovative, and adaptable cultures. This Diversity in leadership styles can lead to a more balanced approach to decision-making, where both task-oriented and people-oriented perspectives are considered (Baczor, 2022).

Research suggests that gender-inclusive leadership can positively influence organizational culture by promoting collaboration, respect, and empathy. These values, in turn, can lead to higher employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention levels. Employees who feel that their leaders are approachable and supportive are more likely to be motivated and committed to their work, contributing to a positive organizational atmosphere. Moreover, gender diversity in leadership has been linked to increased organizational creativity and innovation. Diverse leadership teams bring various perspectives and experiences to the table, which can lead to more creative problem-solving and a more remarkable ability to adapt to changing market conditions. This is particularly important in today's fast-paced business environment, where organizations must be agile and responsive to stay competitive (Baczor, 2022; Caminong, Tanpoco, Morales, & Pitargue, 2023).

However, the impact of gendered leadership on organizational culture is not always positive. Organizations that adhere to traditional, masculine-dominated leadership models may sometimes struggle with issues such as a lack of inclusivity, high employee turnover, and resistance to change. These challenges underscore the importance of rethinking leadership models to reflect the diverse realities of today's workforce better. In conclusion, the literature on gender and leadership reveals a complex and evolving relationship between these two factors. Traditional views on leadership have been slow to change, but there is growing recognition of the value that diverse leadership styles bring to organizations. Organizations can create more supportive, innovative, and compelling environments by embracing masculine and feminine leadership qualities and fostering a gender-inclusive leadership culture (Chikwe, Eneh, & Akpuokwe, 2024; Ediae, Chikwe, & Kuteesa, 2024).

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## **3 Gender and Leadership in Modern Organizations**

### **3.1 Evolving Leadership Paradigms**

In modern organizations, the leadership paradigm is undergoing a significant transformation, influenced mainly by increasing gender diversity. Traditionally, men have predominantly occupied leadership roles, with leadership qualities being narrowly defined by masculine traits such as assertiveness, control, and decisiveness. However, as more women and gender-diverse individuals enter leadership positions, understanding what constitutes effective leadership is evolving (Galsanjigmed & Sekiguchi, 2023; Shen & Joseph, 2021).

This shift towards a more inclusive definition of leadership is rooted in recognizing that diverse leadership styles can bring different perspectives and strengths to an organization. Modern leadership is increasingly seen as a collaborative and adaptive process rather than a one-size-fits-all approach. Today's Leaders are expected to be empathetic, inclusive, and emotionally intelligent, qualities often associated with feminine leadership styles. This evolving paradigm acknowledges that effective leadership is not confined to a specific set of gendered traits but rather is about the ability to connect with others, inspire teams, and drive innovation (Khan, 2023; Shen & Joseph, 2021).

The rise of transformational leadership, which emphasizes motivation, inspiration, and employee development, reflects this shift. Transformational leaders are known for their ability to create a vision, communicate it effectively, and empower others to achieve it. This leadership style is often linked to feminine qualities such as nurturing and supportiveness, but it is increasingly recognized as a critical leadership approach for all genders. The growing acceptance of diverse leadership styles is reshaping organizational cultures and challenging long-standing stereotypes about gender and leadership (Manu, 2022; Wilson, 2020). Furthermore, the integration of technology and the rise of

remote and hybrid work environments have also influenced leadership paradigms. Leaders must be more flexible, communicative, and supportive in these new settings, as managing teams from a distance requires skills different from traditional in-person management. Gender-diverse leadership teams, with their varied approaches to communication and collaboration, are often better equipped to navigate these changes, making the case for continued efforts to diversify leadership within organizations (Calvin et al., 2024; Homan, Gündemir, Buengeler, & van Kleef, 2020).

### 3.2 Challenges and Barriers

Despite the progress toward gender diversity in leadership, significant challenges and barriers remain for women and other underrepresented genders in leadership roles. One of the most persistent challenges is the presence of unconscious bias, which influences how individuals are perceived and evaluated in the workplace. For instance, women leaders are often judged more harshly than their male counterparts, especially when displaying assertive behaviors typically expected of leaders. This double standard can result in women being overlooked for promotions and leadership opportunities or not receiving the same support and mentorship as men.

Another significant barrier is the "glass ceiling," a metaphorical barrier that prevents women and other marginalized groups from rising beyond a certain level in organizations. Despite being qualified and capable, these individuals often find their career progression stalled due to systemic biases, lack of access to networks, and organizational cultures that favor men. The glass ceiling is particularly prevalent in male-dominated industries such as technology, finance, and engineering, where leadership remains homogeneous mainly (Bruckmüller, Ryan, Haslam, & Peters, 2013).

The issue of work-life balance also presents a unique challenge for women in leadership. Traditional gender roles often assign the primary responsibility for caregiving and household duties to women, which can create additional pressures for women leaders. Balancing these responsibilities with the demands of a leadership role can be challenging, particularly in organizations that do not offer flexible working arrangements or supportive policies such as parental leave. This can lead to burnout or the difficult decision to opt out of leadership roles altogether, further perpetuating the gender gap in leadership (Hein, 2005; Toffoletti & Starr, 2016).

Moreover, women and other underrepresented genders often face the challenge of having fewer role models and mentors in leadership positions. This lack of representation can make it harder for these individuals to envision themselves in leadership roles and navigate their unique challenges. Mentorship and sponsorship programs are critical for addressing this gap, yet they are often underutilized or not sufficiently tailored to the needs of diverse leadership candidates (Heath, 2012). Finally, cultural and societal expectations continue to influence the opportunities available to women and gender-diverse individuals in leadership. In many cultures, leadership is still closely associated with masculinity, and deviations from this norm are often met with resistance. Women leaders may find themselves in a "double bind," where they are expected to conform to traditional gender roles while also exhibiting the qualities associated with effective leadership, a balancing act that can be difficult to achieve (J. B. Chapman, 2019; Madaan & Pradhan, 2017).

### 3.3 Case Examples

The influence of gender on leadership is evident in various real-world examples across different sectors. One notable example is the rise of female leaders in the political arena, where women like Jacinda Ardern, former Prime Minister of New Zealand, have garnered international attention for their leadership style. Ardern's approach, characterized by empathy, transparency, and a focus on community well-being, contrasted with more traditional, authoritarian leadership styles. Her leadership during crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the Christchurch mosque shootings, highlighted the effectiveness of a compassionate and inclusive approach, challenging the notion that leadership must be tough or uncompromising to be effective (M. Chapman, 2020; Tyner & Jalalzai, 2022).

In the corporate world, companies like PepsiCo, under the leadership of Indra Nooyi, have demonstrated how gender-diverse leadership can drive organizational success. Nooyi, who served as CEO from 2006 to 2018, is known for emphasizing sustainable growth, Diversity, and employee well-being. Her leadership style, which integrated traditionally feminine qualities like empathy and nurturing with strategic decision-making, helped PepsiCo navigate challenging market conditions and emerge as a leader in sustainability. Nooyi's tenure is often cited as an example of how gender-inclusive leadership can lead to positive organizational outcomes (Kamalath, 2022; Kaur, 2021).

Another example can be found in the tech industry, where companies like IBM have made strides toward gender diversity in leadership. Ginni Rometty, who served as IBM's CEO from 2012 to 2020, was one of the few women leading a major technology company during her tenure. Rometty's leadership was marked by a focus on innovation and the inclusion of diverse perspectives, which she believed were essential for driving the company's transformation in a

rapidly changing industry. Her leadership journey underscores the importance of creating environments that support diverse leadership and the impact that such leadership can have on driving organizational change (Kamalath, 2022; Masumba, 2019).

These examples highlight how gender influences leadership and the benefits of embracing a more inclusive approach. Leaders like Ardern, Nooyi, and Rometty demonstrate that effective leadership is not confined to a specific gender or set of traits. Instead, the most successful leaders can draw on a range of qualities, adapting their leadership style to meet the needs of their organizations and the challenges they face.

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## **4 Impact of Gender-Inclusive Leadership on Organizational Culture**

### **4.1 Cultural Shifts**

Gender-inclusive leadership has the potential to drive significant cultural shifts within organizations. Traditionally, many organizational cultures have been shaped by hierarchical and masculine leadership styles prioritizing control, competition, and authority. However, as organizations increasingly recognize the value of Diversity and inclusivity, gender-inclusive leadership is emerging as a transformative force that fosters more collaborative, empathetic, and adaptive cultures (Fagan, Wells, Guenther, & Matkin, 2022).

Inclusive leadership practices prioritize the creation of environments where all employees, regardless of gender, feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute. This approach often leads to a more open and transparent organizational culture, where communication flows freely and decision-making processes are more participatory. By encouraging a culture of inclusion, gender-diverse leadership teams can help break down silos within organizations, promoting cross-functional collaboration and knowledge sharing (Vohra et al., 2015).

One of the critical cultural shifts driven by gender-inclusive leadership is the move towards greater flexibility and work-life balance. Leaders prioritizing inclusivity are more likely to implement policies supporting diverse working arrangements, such as remote work, flexible hours, and parental leave. These policies not only accommodate the needs of a diverse workforce but also contribute to a more supportive and trusting organizational culture. Employees who feel that their personal and professional needs are recognized and respected are more likely to be engaged and committed to their work (Afolabi & Aghaunor, 2024; Akpuokwe, Chikwe, & Eneh, 2024; Rosa, 2022).

Additionally, gender-inclusive leadership often promotes a culture of continuous learning and development. Leaders who value Diversity are more likely to invest in training and development programs that enhance the skills and capabilities of all employees, regardless of their gender. This commitment to growth and development creates a culture of empowerment, where employees are encouraged to take on new challenges and pursue leadership opportunities. As a result, organizations that embrace gender-inclusive leadership are better positioned to adapt to change, innovate, and maintain a competitive edge in their industries (Bonesso, 2022; Grogan & Dias, 2020).

### **4.2 Diversity and Innovation**

The relationship between gender diversity in leadership and innovation within organizations is well-documented. Research consistently shows that diverse leadership teams, particularly those with gender diversity, are more likely to foster innovation and drive creative problem-solving. This is because diverse teams bring a more comprehensive range of perspectives, experiences, and ideas to the table, which can lead to more robust and innovative solutions.

Gender-diverse leadership teams are better equipped to understand and address the needs of a diverse customer base. In a globalized and interconnected world, organizations must be able to respond to their customers' diverse preferences and expectations. Leaders from different gender backgrounds are likely to approach challenges and opportunities from different angles, leading to more comprehensive and innovative strategies that resonate with a broader audience. For example, in product development, a gender-diverse team is more likely to consider the needs and preferences of all potential users, resulting in products that are more inclusive and widely accepted in the market (Hemmert, Cho, & Lee, 2024; Ruiz-Jiménez & Fuentes-Fuentes, 2016).

Furthermore, gender-inclusive leadership fosters a culture of psychological safety, where employees feel comfortable sharing their ideas and taking risks without fear of negative consequences. This environment is critical for innovation, as it encourages experimentation and the exploration of new concepts. When employees see that their ideas are valued and can contribute to the organization's success, they are more likely to think creatively and push the boundaries of what is possible (Baczor, 2022).

The impact of gender diversity on innovation is not limited to product development or customer engagement; it also extends to organizational processes and business models. Gender-diverse leadership teams are more likely to challenge the status quo and seek new working methods, leading to process improvements and more efficient operations. This drive for innovation can give organizations a significant competitive advantage, enabling them to stay ahead of market trends and respond effectively to changing industry dynamics (Afolabi, 2024; Offermann & Foley, 2020).

### **4.3 Employee Engagement and Morale**

Gender-inclusive leadership profoundly impacts employee engagement and morale, both of which are critical to organizational success. When employees perceive that their leaders are committed to creating an inclusive environment, they are more likely to feel a sense of belonging and loyalty to the organization. This sense of belonging is a crucial driver of employee engagement, as it motivates individuals to invest their energy and creativity into their work (Akpuokwe et al., 2024; Ediae et al., 2024).

Inclusive leaders who prioritize gender diversity are more likely to engage in behaviors that build trust and strengthen relationships with their teams. These leaders are often more approachable, empathetic, and supportive, which helps to create a positive and collaborative work environment. When employees feel supported by their leaders, they are more likely to take initiative, contribute ideas, and go the extra mile to achieve organizational goals. This heightened level of engagement boosts individual performance and contributes to overall organizational productivity (Gardner et al., 2021; Kusi Appiah, 2017).

Moreover, gender-inclusive leadership can lead to higher levels of job satisfaction and morale among employees. When employees see that their organization values Diversity and inclusivity, they are more likely to feel that their contributions are recognized and appreciated. This recognition is significant for women and other underrepresented groups, who may have previously felt marginalized or overlooked in traditional, male-dominated leadership structures. By creating a more equitable and inclusive environment, gender-diverse leaders can help elevate all employees' morale, leading to reduced turnover and a more stable workforce (Hawkins-Saleemi, 2023; Vohra et al., 2015).

Employee morale is also closely linked to the organization's perceptions of fairness and equity. Gender-inclusive leaders are more likely to implement policies and practices that promote fairness, such as transparent pay structures, equal opportunities for advancement, and bias-free performance evaluations. These practices enhance employee satisfaction and contribute to a culture of trust and mutual respect. When employees believe that they are being treated fairly and that their leaders are committed to equity, they are more likely to remain loyal to the organization and contribute positively to its culture (from Shortlist & Leader; Vargas-Solar et al., 2022).

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## **5 Discussion and Implications**

### **5.1 Key Findings**

This paper highlights several critical insights into the relationship between gender and leadership and its influence on organizational culture. The findings emphasize that gender-inclusive leadership is reshaping traditional leadership paradigms, moving from hierarchical and male-dominated models to more inclusive and collaborative approaches. It has been shown that organizations with gender-diverse leadership are better equipped to foster innovation and creativity, as diverse perspectives contribute to more comprehensive decision-making and problem-solving. Furthermore, gender-inclusive leadership significantly enhances employee engagement and morale, creating a more equitable and supportive work environment. Despite these positive outcomes, challenges such as unconscious biases, the glass ceiling, and difficulties in achieving work-life balance persist, hindering the progress of gender diversity in leadership roles.

### **5.2 Implications for Practice**

To effectively foster gender-inclusive leadership, organizations must implement targeted strategies that address existing challenges and promote Diversity at all levels. First, organizations should invest in comprehensive bias training programs for employees and leadership teams. These programs can help raise awareness of unconscious biases that often limit the opportunities available to women and gender-diverse individuals. Additionally, organizations should review and revise their policies to support work-life balance, such as offering flexible working hours and equitable parental leave. These policies benefit employees and contribute to a more inclusive and supportive organizational culture.

Mentorship and sponsorship programs are crucial for developing future leaders from diverse backgrounds. Organizations should actively promote these initiatives, ensuring that underrepresented groups have access to the guidance and support needed to advance in their careers. Moreover, organizations must regularly assess and update their performance evaluation and promotion criteria to eliminate gender biases and ensure that all employees have equal opportunities for advancement.

Building an inclusive culture that values Diversity at all levels is essential for the success of gender-inclusive leadership. This involves recruiting diverse talent and creating an environment where different leadership styles are recognized and celebrated. By committing to these practices, organizations can harness the benefits of gender-inclusive leadership, including enhanced innovation, employee satisfaction, and overall organizational effectiveness.

### 5.3 Future Directions

Future research should continue to explore the complex relationship between gender and leadership, particularly the intersectionality of gender with other factors such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. This research could provide deeper insights into different groups' unique challenges and inform more targeted strategies for promoting Diversity in leadership. Additionally, longitudinal studies could examine the long-term impact of gender-inclusive leadership on organizational performance and culture, providing valuable data on the effectiveness of various diversity initiatives.

Another area for future research is the role of gender-inclusive leadership in different cultural contexts. Understanding how cultural norms and values influence the effectiveness of gender diversity in leadership can help organizations tailor their strategies to different regions and markets, enhancing their global competitiveness.

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## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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