



Head Over Heels: Women in Supply Chain Management

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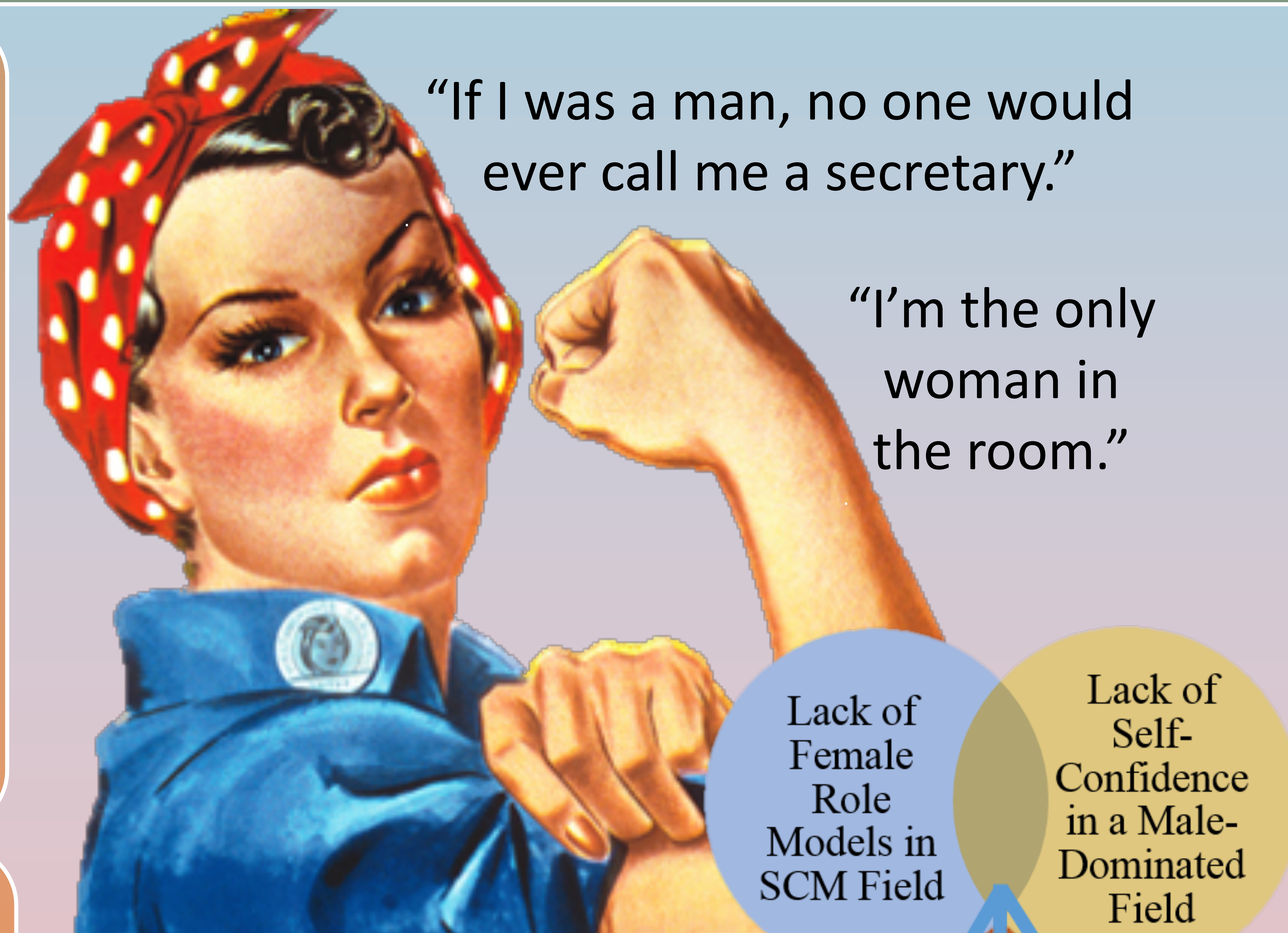


Abstract

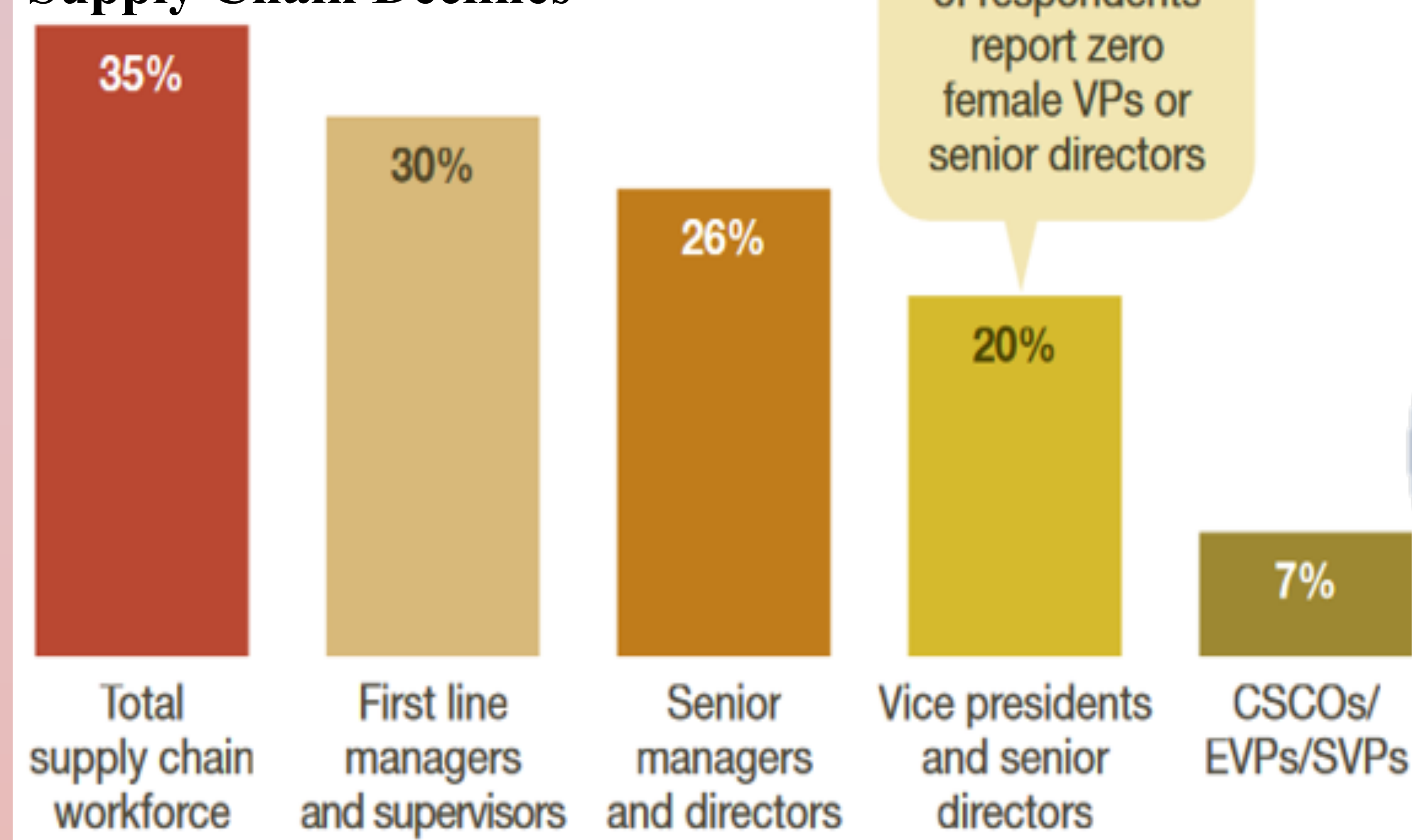
Being a woman in the Supply Chain Management major, I have seen the challenges females face in a male-dominated field. Just why is it that we see so few women in executive roles in the Supply Chain field? Is it because of the gender challenges, or is there another underlying issue that is causing the lack of women in upper-level Supply Chain roles? Through this research study, twelve female participants will tell about their experiences being an entry-level woman in Supply Chain field. These challenges will help to determine if these entry-level challenges are the reason why women are either not continuing to pursue a career in the Supply Chain field, or are not prepared for executive level Supply Chain roles. Through this research, five prominent themes arose from the experiences the participants had faced during their entry-level career. By having these findings, corporations and The University of Tennessee's nationally ranked Supply Chain program, can better recruit and prepare women for the issues they will face in a male-dominated Supply Chain career.

Introduction

Current research reveals that only 37% of students enrolled in Supply Chain courses are females, foreshadowing that only 5% of Supply Chain executives are women. While current research shows the lack of women in Supply Chain, it does not tell us how to increase the female proportion in this statistic, or how to better prepare and empower women in male-dominated roles. Studies show that when women thrive in their careers, the businesses they work for thrive as well. This research study will continue the study on women in business, focusing on the Supply Chain field, to better understand the gender gap and how to connect women in Supply Chain and help them thrive.



Proportion of Women Leaders in Supply Chain Declines



Methods

To collect the data, twelve entry-level women in Supply Chain Management were interviewed. Participants included female alumnae from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville who majored in Logistics/Supply Chain Management and have been working in the field 1-7 years. They were asked about their unique experiences working in the male-dominated Supply Chain field. The interviews were transcribed and qualitatively analyzed.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the two main themes that dictate the challenges women face being in a male-dominated supply chain field are having a lack of female role models to look up to and not having their self-confidence knocked down within their first few years of their career. With the lack of a mentor and confidence, on top of not feeling a purpose or impact and being young and isolated in a field location, women may choose to move to a different field, or move away from work entirely. With universities following the guidelines presented, more women can be aware of the supply chain field and university supply chain programs and career opportunities. If companies follow the guideline to help recruit and retain women in supply chain, the field as a whole can see better gender diversity and the empowerment of women in the supply chain field. "There's so many different things in industry you can do. I want more women in this with me."

References

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