

The Farm to the Board Room: An Autoethnography Approach & Interviews with Women in Agriculture

Introduction

- Women have continued to increase a forward-facing dominance in the agricultural industry by pursuing leadership roles, entrepreneurship opportunities, and higher education (Leslie et al., 2019)
- Women in agriculture face many challenges such as small farm size, land access issues, lower farm income, and childcare struggles (Quisumbing et al., 2014)

Research Questions

- How do women in academia describe their support in agriculture?
- What skills have I developed to support women in agriculture?

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

- Critical theory was used to help understand how individuals view themselves in the world where social and historical forces influence one experiences and identities (Kincheloe et al., 2018)

Methodology

- Autoethnography: A branch of qualitative research, combines characteristics of autobiography and ethnography (Ellis et al., 2011)
- The art of storytelling with detailed descriptions is used to create a dynamic story to add value to create personal or social change (Ellis et al., 2011)
- Interviews: The researcher collected personal data of her identity as a woman in agriculture, reflection activities included journaling about how she views her identity in agriculture and answering the interview questionnaire (14 set questions conducted in a semi-structured format)

Conclusion

- Women in agriculture need to feel supported through an increase in resources, advocate for policies to promote gender equality, increase access to work opportunities, and better recognition for the work women are doing in their professions.

Recommendations

- Look into mentoring systems of women in agriculture to find direct examples of the action of the mentor to encourage career development and advancement
- Review academic policies and regulations to find the gaps where women are receiving less opportunities and resources

Results/Findings

Interviews

RQ1: *developing a community and creating a connection* themes

"My professional relationships have led to more personal relationships"

"I am surrounded by people who have my same passion for agriculture so I feel supported"

RQ2: *systemic challenges* theme

"There is a constant struggle in the area of motherhood and being a professional"

"I feel like I have to fight for things and prove myself more than my male colleagues"

Autoethnography

Engagement and outreach are essential to increase awareness of women in agriculture

A strong support group can encourage identity as a women in agriculture

Feeling shocked with lack of support at university level

For more
information, scan
for full abstract and
references



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