

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP APPROACHES, DECISION MAKING  
AND INNOVATION BY WOMEN IN INDIA

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AND INNOVATION BY WOMEN IN INDIA

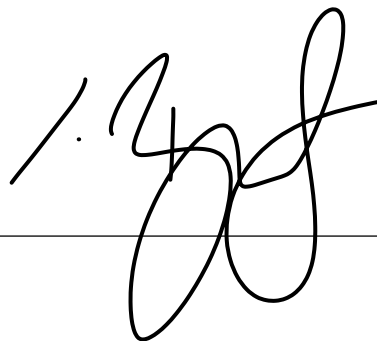
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## **Dedication**

This dissertation is dedicated to all three inspiring women who have shaped my journey in education and beyond. Their dedication, leadership, and resilience have been a constant source of motivation in my pursuit of knowledge and personal growth.

To my parents, my husband and my sweet loving daughter, for their unwavering support, belief in my dreams, and for instilling in me the values of perseverance and determination. Their love has been my greatest strength.

To my mentors and professors at SSBM Switzerland, who have guided me through the complexities of this journey and provided invaluable insights, especially into the field of education management. Their encouragement has been instrumental in shaping the ideas within this dissertation.

Lastly, this work is for all the women striving for excellence in education and management. May this dissertation, on the role of women in education management, contribute in some small way to highlighting the vital role they play in shaping the future of education and society.

## **Acknowledgements**

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Lastly, I am thankful to my peers and colleagues for their constant encouragement and insightful discussions, which have enriched my understanding of this topic.

This dissertation is the culmination of the combined efforts and support of all these individuals, and I am deeply thankful to each one of them.

## ABSTRACT

### A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP APPROACHES, DECISION MAKING AND INNOVATION BY WOMEN IN INDIA

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The proliferation of methodologies run by data has revolutionized the landscape of scholarly inquiry, offering unprecedented opportunities for uncovering insights and advancing knowledge across diverse domains. Within this context, this dissertation explores the intricacies of Women in management and leadership roles: a critical analysis of leadership approaches, decision-making, and innovation by Women, employing a rigorous blend of quantitative analysis, computational techniques, and theoretical frameworks to elucidate key phenomena and address pressing research questions.

Central to this endeavor is data analysis, which serves as the cornerstone of empirical research, enabling the extraction of meaningful patterns, trends, and relationships from complex datasets. Moreover, this dissertation transcends traditional disciplinary boundaries, engaging with interdisciplinary perspectives and leveraging insights from

fields such as women in the management sector and leadership skills, unveiling the multifaceted nature of women in leadership. Aim of the research is to explore two critical dimensions of women in leadership, shedding light on their diverse leadership styles and the challenges of gender bias and stereotypes they encounter along their journey to the top. A woman in leadership often brings unique qualities and approaches to the table, distinct from their male counterparts—for instance, the case of Maya, a seasoned executive leading a technology firm. Maya's leadership style is characterized by empathy, collaboration, and a focus on nurturing talent within her team. She prioritizes building relationships and fostering a supportive work environment, which cultivates loyalty and enhances team cohesion. Contrast to Maya's approach a male counterpart is in a similar position. While Mark may excel in strategic decision-making and assertiveness, Maya's style emphasizes emotional intelligence and inclusivity. Research suggests that such diverse leadership styles contribute to a more inclusive organizational culture and result in better decision-making and improved performance outcomes.

The realm of women in leadership is rich and multifaceted, encompassing a diverse array of leadership styles and confronting a myriad of obstacles along the way. By acknowledging and appreciating the distinct achievements of women in leadership roles and tackling ingrained biases and hurdles, organizations can create a more inclusive and fair setting that enables women to excel and lead with assurance. By persistently advocating, educating, and offering support, we can pave the path towards a future where gender equality in leadership is not merely a goal but a tangible outcome. By adopting a holistic approach to data analysis and interpretation, this study seeks to enrich our understanding of women's role in management and contribute to the broader discourse surrounding it.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### **1.1 Introduction**

This research revolves around women's roles in leadership and management and critically examines leadership methods, decision-making processes, and innovative approaches women in India adopt.

Women's education holds a crucial significance in the country's comprehensive growth. It contributes to harnessing half of the workforce and enhances living standards at home and in broader society (Suguna, 2011). The education system of India encompasses formal and non-formal structures, including online and distance education initiatives to promote women's education. The overarching goal of these programs is to ensure education for every girl child. The low literacy levels among women not only adversely affect their lives but also impact their families and the country's economic development. Elevating the educational status of women is of utmost importance. According to the HRD Survey on Higher Education by the Ministry of All India, higher education courses in India have an enrollment of 33.3 million individuals (Human Resource Department 2015). As of the 2014-2015 timeframe, there were 17.9 million boys and 15.4 million girls, encompassing a combined demographic of children. Women's fundamental rights include equal rights, freedom of faith, rights to education, cultural and academic opportunities, protection against exploitation, and overall freedom. Improving girls' education has been proven to positively impact young women's health and economic future, thereby enhancing the prospects of their entire communities by UNICEF's education staff globally in 2015. Education is more than an end in itself. It is viewed as the basis for continuous learning and personal growth, aligning with the principles outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Ramachandran, 1998).

As per the 1999 International Encyclopedia on Women, numerous authors emphasize the pivotal role of education in empowering women (Sundaram et al., 2014).

Recognizing that employment significantly influences women's status, women's education is crucial in any empowerment initiative (Dominic & Jothi, 2012). The education of Indian women presents a critical opportunity for the social and economic advancement of the country. According to Tilak & Jandhayala (1987), an educated Indian woman's positive influence reaches the country's economy and society. Notably, an educated woman contributes to a lower likelihood of her child succumbing before age five. Ghanaian scholar Dr. James Emmanuel Kwegyir-Aggrey (1875-1927) observed that the prospects for effective population control tend to improve when women receive an education. He noted that educated women are generally more inclined to postpone marriage than their uneducated peers. This shift in marriage timing can lead to various socio-economic benefits, including better health outcomes for mothers and children and enhanced opportunities for women to pursue careers and contribute to their communities. The women's literacy rate is a crucial parameter reflecting a nation's socio-economic and educational development (Singh 2016). Woodhall (1985) and Tilak (1989) state that education significantly reduces absolute poverty.

Likewise, studies such as Birdsall et al. (1992), Pudaisani (1992), and Baro and Sala-i-Martin (1995) discovered that general progress in education results in higher national revenues and economic advancement. In India, the last 50 years have witnessed significant shifts in various domains, and the literacy rate of women is no exception (UNDP, 2008 and World Bank, 2008). The above-mentioned previous research explores the historical trajectory of women's literacy, shedding light on the factors contributing to its rise or fall.

Improving women's education serves multifaceted objectives crucial for societal progress. Firstly, it enables women to enhance their family's health and diet by imparting them with essential knowledge about nutrition, healthcare practices, and sanitation. Additionally, enhancing women's education increases their productivity, subsequently elevating the quality of life for their families (Singh, 2015). Providing women access to appropriate technologies and cooperative management skills empowers them to actively participate in economic activities actively, fostering financial independence. Moreover,

education is pivotal in enhancing women's societal and cultural status, challenging traditional gender norms and promoting gender equality, according to former International Mutual Fund (IMF) Economic Counsellor Maurice Obstfeld (IMF, 2017).

Furthermore, it is important to educate women and equip them with the expertise and abilities needed to fulfil their responsibilities within the family efficiently and the broader community (Chandra, 2019). Education also combats internalized feelings of inadequacy or inferiority among women, fostering self-confidence and empowerment. Ultimately, comprehensive education for women encompasses mental, social, physical, psychological, religious, and economic development, contributing to their holistic growth and societal advancement (IMF, 2017).

Women leaders excel as mentors. It can offer women the chance to acquire knowledge, expertise, and chances for both individual and career-related advancement (Lagarde, 2013). Nonetheless, the connection between education and gender parity is intricate and multi-dimensional. While education can drive positive transformation, it can also unintentionally sustain gender disparity. The importance of role models cannot be overstated. Regardless of gender, individuals benefit greatly from mentors who can guide their growth. Studies by Eagly et al. (1992) indicate that female managers excel in training and mentoring new employees compared to their male counterparts, as per the landmark 1992 meta-analysis of 61 studies. However, women continue to face discrimination both within their families and society at large. Gender inequality persists in leadership roles despite advancements in social and economic development, hindering women's progress (Thelma & Ngulube, 2024). Workplace discrimination, including pay disparities and biased treatment, further impedes women's advancement in male-dominated fields (Hing et al., 2023).

Including women in management teams is associated with a more participative leadership style and higher social commitment (Ababneh & Athamneh, 2018). Research shows that women's influence in organizations, particularly cooperatives, improves performance and motivation (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Female entrepreneurship and women's

participation in management teams contribute positively to organizational success and social impact. Additionally, female leaders are more likely to prioritize work-life balance, essential for national development and family well-being (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Women-led companies tend to adopt family-friendly policies, which align better with the evolving entrepreneurial landscape (Rizvi, 2024). Businesses with female leadership more frequently adopt family-friendly policies and are better suited to the changing entrepreneurial landscape (Feeney & Stritch, 2019).

Including women in teams enhances processes and promotes teamwork, as women are more effective in negotiation and deal-making, even in high-stakes situations (John, 1999; Vaughan, 2013). For women to effectively utilize their negotiation skills, they must be given leadership positions and decision-making authority (Galsanjigmed and Sekiguchi, 2023). Community-based businesses are crucial in empowering women and promoting collective capacity building rather than solely focusing on individual entrepreneurs (Khan, 2015). Female business executives in participative environments exert more significant influence over organizational activities than traditional corporate structures (John, 1999; Vaughan, 2013). Collaboration among women is essential for navigating gender dynamics in management teams and achieving collective goals. Instead of emphasizing individual entrepreneurship, fostering collaboration among women can lead to more tremendous collective success. Recent studies demonstrate that women entrepreneurs can exert significant influence over organizational operations through collaboration (John, 1999; Vaughan, 2013). Today's female leaders must navigate gender dynamics on management boards by working collaboratively with their peers.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Despite their increasing presence in the workforce, the lack of representation of women in leadership and management roles in India is a persistent issue. This impedes gender diversity and hinders the full utilization of potential talents. This discrepancy suggests a systemic problem that requires investigation and understanding. Despite a significant number of 60% of working women in the education, banking and management sectors, their presence in leadership positions remains disproportionately low (Wearne, 2007).

In several sectors, women encounter barriers that impede their career advancement, resulting in an imbalance where men predominantly occupy top-tier roles (Shellock et al., 2022). Our calculations show that women hold less than one-third of all leadership positions globally, highlighting their underrepresentation in leadership roles. This trend continues in the United States and Canada, where only 37% and 35% of leadership positions are occupied by women, despite women making up 47% and 46% of the workforce in these regions, respectively (Thelma 2024). Additionally, a Statistical Compilation of Gender-Related Indicators in India, prepared by the Central Statistics Office, indicates similar patterns and presents key findings according to the 2011 Census (Thelma 2024). In the 2011 Census, the literacy rate for females was 64.63%, contrasting with over 80% for males. According to the NSS 71st Round, rural female literacy stood at 56.8% in contrast to 72.3% for males, while in urban areas, it was 74.8% for females and 83.7% for males. Adult literacy rates above 15 years were highest for males at 78.8% and lowest for females at 59.3%. As per the last census, the female enrolment ratio was only 44%, including lack of interest, financial constraints, and stereotypical beliefs. Primary, middle, and secondary school levels saw 93, 95, and 91 girls, respectively, for every 100 boys. The literacy rates between genders decreased from 21.6% in 2001 to 16.3% in 2011 (Dinesha, 2017).



Our research highlights a consistent gender disparity across various industries, wherein a lower percentage of women hold leadership positions compared to their overall representation in the workforce. Women's perspectives and experiences are crucial in decision-making and innovation within organizations, yet they often face barriers to reaching leadership positions. This research examines the reasons behind this lack of representation, which include societal norms, institutional biases, and organizational structures. By examining these factors, the research aims to provide insights into how women's leadership potential can be fully realized and how organizational practices can be improved to promote gender equality in leadership roles.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The main aim of this study is to investigate women's engagement in leadership and managerial capacities. It aims to evaluate the influence of women's decision-making abilities and innovative approaches in different management roles. Moreover, the research will explore the specific impact of women in leadership roles and management, particularly in the context of India. The specific goals of this research are as follows:

- 1) To analyse the role of women in the management sector in India and evaluate the extent to which they hold leadership roles.

- 2) To examine the key factors that shape women's decision-making, innovative strategies, and leadership skills and understand how these aspects enhance their effectiveness in leadership positions in India.

- 3) To conduct a comprehensive analysis of the dynamic relationship between women and the education management in India, including identifying areas for improvement and potential strategies for promoting gender equality in leadership roles.

### **1.4 Research Framework**

The research framework for this dissertation delves into the critical issue of the lack of representation of women in leadership roles within India's education sector. Aim is to uncover the multifaceted factors contributing to this disparity and propose strategies

for addressing and rectifying it. This research seeks to understand why there is a gap in gender representation at leadership levels in Indian organizations and corporations and the specific obstacles that hinder the progress of women in these positions. By exploring and analyzing these factors, this study aims to provide insight into how the extraordinary skills of women can enhance female participation and impact management in decision-making, innovation, and leadership. The goal is to create more inclusive and equitable leadership structures within the Indian corporate and management system.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study aims to explore fundamental inquiries and to furnish analyses and insights within its defined parameters. These inquiries include:

- How do women currently participate in leadership and managerial capacities within India's education sector, and what is the extent of their leadership roles?
- What factors influence the decision-making processes and innovative strategies of women in leadership roles within the Indian education sector? How do these factors affect their effectiveness as leaders?
- What is the specific impact of women's leadership and management in India's education sector, and what are the implications for promoting gender parity in leadership positions?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of women occupying international strategic positions?
- What challenges do women encounter in the managerial work environment?

- What roles have women played historically and presently in strategic management, and what are the reasons behind these roles?
- What are the prospects for women's roles in international strategic management?
- Is there any relation between the number of women in leadership positions and an organization's success? What are the implications of their presence or absence?
- What initiatives do organizations currently undertake to involve women in innovation?
- What further steps could organizations take to involve women in managerial positions?

## **1.6 Limitations**

When researching women's engagement in leadership and management roles, several limitations may arise that need to be acknowledged. A key limitation is the possibility of sampling bias, particularly if the study focuses on a specific group of women in leadership positions that might not accurately reflect the wider population. Furthermore, the research could encounter challenges related to data availability and credibility, especially when investigating the decision-making processes and innovative strategies employed by women in leadership and management roles. The lack of access to thorough and precise data on women's leadership in India may hinder the analysis's comprehensiveness. The scenario where crises are associated with females and managers are associated with males can impact how women in leadership are perceived and experienced, making it difficult to fully understand the complex dynamics involved. Moreover, the study's concentration on the Indian context may restrict the applicability of its findings in relation to other cultural or geographical contexts. Finally, the research may encounter limitations related to the scope and depth of analysis, as it seeks to explore multiple facets of women's engagement in leadership within a specific context.

In spite of these constraints, the research intends to offer important insights into the

positions of women in leadership and management in India, as well as contribute to the ongoing conversation about advancing gender equality in leadership roles. Examining the involvement of women in leadership and management in India involves overcoming several obstacles, such as sampling biases and a lack of accessible data. Implementing strategies such as diversifying sampling methods, collaborating with diverse organizations, incorporating intersectional analysis, utilizing multiple data sources, employing mixed-methods research, and conducting longitudinal studies can overcome these limitations and contribute to a more profound insight into women's experiences in leadership and management roles. This holistic approach is essential for advancing gender equality and fostering inclusive workplaces in India and beyond.

## CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### **2.1 Introduction**

Throughout decades, men have predominantly held leadership roles, with traits associated with leadership often viewed as inherently masculine. Women encounter significant issues when striving for leadership positions, as their subordinates usually express hesitancy in accepting female leaders or managers, doubting their abilities and qualifications for such roles (Eágly et al., 1995). In recent decades, the increasing presence of women in the labour force and their rise to top management and corporate positions have garnered significant research attention in women's leadership (Ván & Willemsen, 2004). Including women in non-traditional sectors adds value through diversity, and there is a positive correlation between the presence of women and organizational performance (Desvaux et al., 2008).

This section conducts a thorough literature review on the intricacies of women in leadership and management roles: a critical analysis of leadership approaches, decision-making, and innovation by women, employing a rigorous blend of quantitative analysis, computational techniques, and theoretical frameworks to elucidate key phenomena and address pressing research questions, examining the gender dynamics within organizations. There are differences in leadership styles between men and women, as well as various factors influencing these distinctions. This discussion concludes with suggestions for future research, mainly focusing on the cultural trends in India.

In most companies, there is a shortage of women in senior positions. The literature extensively examines various facets of women in leadership roles and their underrepresentation. This research aims to scrutinize and integrate the understandings concerning these facets of women's leadership, which afford them a steady and stable standing within the organization, transcending the invisible barriers of gender bias. These facets encompass the obstacles, facilitators, capabilities, and limitations of women in

leadership roles (Van and Willemsen, 2004).

## **2.2 Evolution of Women's Leadership and Related Theories**

The concept of the "glass ceiling," first introduced by Hymowitz and Schellhardt in 1986, represents the unseen obstacles hindering women's progress into high-level leadership roles, even within industries where women make up most of the workforce, in stark contrast to the seemingly effortless upward mobility experienced by white men in many organizational contexts. This phenomenon has been conceptualized as the "Leadership Labyrinth" (O'Leary, 1974; Terborg, 1977; Riger & Galligan, 1980), illustrating the numerous challenges women face throughout their career paths, a struggle not limited to women but affecting other marginalized groups such as women from ethnic and racial minorities.

Research indicates that most studies focusing on women in leadership roles are conducted in developed countries, where there is a more significant percentage of female leaders compared to other sectors (The C. S. Gender 3000 in 2019: The changing face of companies, published by Credit Suisse Research Institute (CSRI) in 2019). However, regardless of whether in developed or developing nations, women leaders face comparable challenges in their professional journeys. Women in organizations encounter difficulties, such as the gender gap and breaking the glass ceiling. Organizational bias, lack of assertiveness, and limited networking impede women's leadership. However, certain factors support women's leadership, including mentorship, effective training programs, and workplace culture (Stanford et al., 1995).

However, striking a balance between work and personal life, managing work-related stress, and reducing informal communication are viewed as challenges to women's leadership. Attributes like strong emotional intelligence, empathy, a collaborative leadership approach, integrity, and the capability to make crucial decisions under pressure are advantageous for organizations (Eagly, 1991; Karau, 2002; Player et al., 2019). This study aims to provide a thorough and cohesive theoretical overview of different facets of women's leadership within organizations. Additionally, it can support the development of various organizational policies aimed at enhancing the representation of women in

leadership positions (Hoobler et al., 2014).

The topic of women's representation in high-level organizational roles has been a significant point of conversation, primarily due to their ongoing underrepresentation (Soklaridis and López, 2014). Nevertheless, women contribute distinctive value to the workplace through their unique qualities, often linked to traditional feminine traits, such as excellent communication skills, superior mediation abilities, and empathy (Stanford et al., 1995). It remains clear that no country has achieved gender equality at the organizational level (Soklaridis and López, 2014), revealing a pronounced gender bias in the recruitment and advancement of leaders (Eagly, 1991; Karau, 2002; Hoobler et al., 2014; Player et al., 2019). Previous research suggests that there may be a lack of women prepared to take on senior leadership roles on boards (Eagly and Carli, 2007; Gipson et al., 2017). According to a 2019 report from the Credit Suisse Research Institute (CSRI), women's representation on corporate boards worldwide is approximately 20.6% (Gowthaman, 2019). Despite their valuable attributes, the presence of women in leadership roles remains limited (Eagly et al., 2003; Weyer, 2007). Investigations into women's leadership have typically focused on specific industries or countries. This study aims to thoroughly examine the existing literature on women's leadership, explore various viewpoints, and compile everyday observations regarding the different facets of women's leadership within organizations and their effects on these organizations.

Women leaders possess distinct qualities that contribute to their success in organizations, including determination, sincerity, hard work, commitment, and the ability to set future goals. However, they may face obstacles like the glass ceiling and organizational biases. These characteristics include being people-centered, value-driven, inclusive, empathetic, having high emotional intelligence, being able to multitask, flexible, and having a cooperative mindset (Hennig and Jardim, 1977).

The journey toward women's leadership often starts with their academic successes and leadership roles acquired during their education (Veihmeyer and Doughtie, 2019). Turock (2001) explored the evolution of the concept of women's leadership within feminist studies (Stanley and Wise, 1990; Fine and Gordon, 1992). Feminist research theory is

based on three key tenets: driving social progress, promoting feminist principles and values, and acknowledging the interdisciplinary aspects of gender diversity (Oliver, 2000). Davidson and Burke (1994) argue that organizations that adopt practices and policies to support the career growth and aspirations of their female leaders create a positive workplace culture. In such settings, female managers are assessed on their qualifications and performance. These initiatives also help companies gain a competitive advantage, retain investments, enhance potential and productivity, improve quality management, and maintain client relationships. Feminist research theory is utilized in literature to champion women in leadership and their managerial roles (Bhatti and Ali, 2021). Centered leadership theory posits that finding appropriate job opportunities, understanding the importance of work, and showing a genuine passion for it can help talented women thrive in their careers (Dai et al., 2011).

Eagly and Karau (1991) developed the Role Congruity Theory, which addresses the challenges women face in leadership due to societal stereotypes regarding gender. This theory suggests that women leaders often display greater empathy, favour collaborative and participative leadership styles, and are assertive and goal-oriented. It emphasizes that breaking down traditional gender stereotypes in leadership can reduce bias against women and create more opportunities for them in leadership positions. Furthermore, it argues that enhancing women's leadership roles requires confronting biases embedded in the conventional understanding of leadership and gender (Griffiths et al., 2019). The effectiveness of women leaders and societal perceptions of practical leadership qualities can be evaluated through this lens (Griffiths et al., 2019). Davidson and Burke (1994) highlighted the importance of creating a supportive organizational environment that aligns with women's abilities and talents to promote their development as leaders. Organizations can also benefit competitively from attracting skilled individuals, improving operational efficiency, retaining customers, and advancing equality. Research indicates that support from colleagues, especially male coworkers, is crucial in empowering female organizational leaders (Lämä & Savela, 2019). Additionally, the concept of the "glass ceiling," introduced by Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986) in *The Wall Street Journal*,



describes an invisible barrier that prevents women from advancing to higher corporate roles (Morisson et al., 1987). Later, Ryan and Haslam (2005) presented the idea of the "glass cliff," which refers to the tendency to place women in unstable positions that make their success difficult, potentially leading to failure (Kagan, 2019). In some cases, women may be more likely to be assigned high-risk leadership roles, which can have negative implications (Sabharwal, 2013). Table 1 outlines definitions of various theories related to women's leadership, reflecting broader studies in social sciences and psychological theories.

**Table 1: Theories and Definitions Related to Women Leadership**

| <b>Theory</b>                        | <b>Author</b>  | <b>Explanation</b>   |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|--|
| <b>Feminist Research theory</b>      | Oliver, (2000) | Three principles define feminist research theory.<br>First, feminist research includes both constructions of new knowledge. And the production of social change. Second, feminist research is grounded in feminist values and beliefs. Moreover, third, Feminist research is interdisciplinary and. Trans-disciplinary and characterized by its diversity. |
| <b>Theory of Motivated Reasoning</b> | Kunda, (1990)  | People who are motivated to arrive at a particular attempt to be rational and construct a justification for their required conclusion would persuade A dispassionate observer.   |
| <b>Theory of Centred Leadership</b>  | Adair, (1973)  | There are three principals involved in centered Leadership: achieving the task is managing the team or group and managing individuals.   |

|                              |                         |  |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
|                              |                         | These three overlapping symbolic circles make the structure of Centered Leadership.  |
| <b>Role congruity theory</b> | Eagly and Karau, (2000) | Role congruity theory proposes that the perceived incongruity between Female gender roles and leadership roles tend to be two forms of prejudice. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(α) Women are less favorably perceived than men as Potential occupants of leadership roles.</li> <li>(β) Assessing how behaviors that align with leadership qualities are perceived less positively when exhibited by women.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Glass ceiling theory</b>  | Morison et.al., (1973)  | A transparent barrier that kept women from rising above Certain positions in corporations. It is described as an invisible barrier or The wall that blocks women's access to the top where they want to go.  |
| <b>Glass cliff theory</b>    | Ryan and Haslam, (2005) | The glass cliff theory demonstrates that women and individuals. Minority groups tend to rise more in the professional arena. Hierarchy is a complex, risky, and precarious situation.  |

### **2.2.1 Gendered Nature of Organization**

In terms of work culture, no organization provides a significant advantage for women, as the social environment within any organization tends to be more masculine, stemming from its traditional male-dominated occupancy. The historical discourse on gendered management styles suggested that traits like assertiveness, decisiveness, and competitiveness, traditionally associated with successful management, were considered inherently male (Schein, 1975; Schein et al., 1989; Tomkiewicz & Schein, 1989).

As more women take on managerial roles, they adopt traits and behaviours typically associated with male managers to succeed in a predominantly masculine work environment (Powell & Butterfield, 1979). This adaptation presents a significant challenge for women when entering leadership positions within organizations (Eagly et al., 1994) as they strive to fit into a workplace culture defined by male standards and expectations (Oakley, 2000).

There exists a notable advantage for men in fields such as the military and police, where traditionally male-dominated roles contribute to the particularly masculine nature of these organizations (Arkin & Dobrofsky, 1978). Conversely, women hold a significant advantage in sectors like education and social services (Eagly et al., 1995), where roles are perceived to align with familial responsibilities. However, disparities persist in academic settings, with women academicians traditionally publishing less compared to their male counterparts, mainly due to societal expectations regarding childcare responsibilities (Priola, 2007).

In male-dominated organizational settings, female leaders often feel compelled to downplay traits typically associated with femininity in order to combat gender stereotypes (Eagly & Johnson, 1990) and to reduce role conflicts (Eagly et al., 1992). If they fail to make these adjustments, they may face biased performance evaluations and negative preconceived notions that can undermine their success (Geis, 1993; Miller & Turnbull, 1986; Eagly & Karau, 2002). As a result, male leaders often receive preferential treatment compared to their female counterparts (Eagly, 1987). This adjustment process can impact women's health, with those conforming to traditional styles experiencing fewer mental health issues compared to those forced to alter their leadership approaches (Gardiner & Tiggemann, 1999), particularly in male-dominated industries like the military.

Organizations like the military and police often embrace masculinity by promoting male leaders and emphasizing traditionally masculine roles. These positions frequently conflict with qualities like empathy, sensitivity, and nurturing, typically linked to feminine gender traits, requiring women to demonstrate assertiveness and independence to thrive (Ebbert & Hall, 1993; Francke, 1997). Women in other male-dominated industries, such as automotive and timber, tend to adopt task-oriented approaches, while those in female-

dominated sectors, like beauty parlours, education, and nursing, lean towards interpersonal orientations (Engen et al., 2001).

Typically, women who pursue military careers assimilate into the institution's prevailing masculine culture, adjusting their leadership approach to align with this environment to thrive. Those who struggle to adapt often opt to leave the organization, resulting in a more homogeneous organizational culture and decreased diversity (Kelley, 1997). Herbert (1998) describes how women in the military often adopt an intermediary role or blending strategy, aiming to strike a balance between feminine and masculine attributes. They conform to gender expectations regarding appearance and self-presentation while demonstrating competence, rationality, and impersonality in their professional duties, thus striving to excel without compromising their gender identity.

Similar findings were observed in Israel's women's police force, where individuals faced a role conflict termed as "feminine and inappropriate (for organizational role)" or "unfeminine and atypical (of gender)." Instead of rejecting their gender identity, these women adjusted by incorporating selected masculine traits (e.g., assertiveness, independence, dominance) that complement traditional feminine attributes while reducing certain feminine traits (e.g., shyness, soft-outspokenness, warmth, gullibility) perceived as hindrances to fulfilling their organizational roles (Moore, 1993; Moore & Gobi, 1995). Consequently, although often transformational, women leaders adapt their behaviour to encompass masculine characteristics when necessary, as evidenced by Eagly and Carli's (2003) meta-analysis.

They argue that contemporary leadership requires a blend of both masculine and feminine traits (e.g., mentoring, collaboration, cooperation), a concept referred to as "Androgynous identity" (Bem, 1977). Individuals embodying this identity are characterized by independence, nurturing qualities, high self-esteem, successful social skills, and active participation in academic competitions (Spence et al., 1975; Berzing et al., 1978; Kleinke & Hinrichs, 1983). This adaptability allows individuals to express either instrumental or expressive behaviour per situational demands, potentially helping women overcome gender stereotypes hindering their leadership aspirations (Korabik, 1990).

Furthermore, unlike men, women view their leadership roles as androgynous, combining agentic and communal traits (Schein, 2001). This adaptability reflects human beings' ability to survive and thrive in diverse environments as gender roles evolve based on environmental demands (Fincher, 1993). Thus, women can navigate various work environments without compromising their gender roles, showcasing how organizational gender dynamics influence and shape their leadership styles. This particularly emphasizes the unique challenges and adaptations required by women in leadership roles.

Leadership effectiveness depends on the suitability of the leadership style used by each gender. Although women encounter obstacles in advancing through the organizational ranks, they show comparable effectiveness to their male peers (Eagly et al., 1992). Including women in non-traditional fields contributes positively by increasing diversity (Desvaux et al., 2008) and is linked to improved organizational performance (Desvaux et al., 2008). Research across various sectors reveals that women perform well in traditionally female-dominated fields, such as services, while men excel in male-dominated settings, such as technical and manufacturing (Eagly et al., 1995; Lowe et al., 1996).

Studies indicate that the distinct qualities of women, including greater emotional intelligence and empathy, play a role in their success as leaders (Caruso et al., 1999; Mayer and Geher, 1996; Perrault, 1996). The effectiveness of women leaders is enhanced when their gender-related traits match their leadership approach, and the gender dynamics present within their organizations.

### **2.2.2 Feminist theory and its waves**

Feminism encompasses women's active engagement in speaking, acting, and writing about rights, protection, and social justice issues. "It involves identifying and challenging social injustices within the status quo and presenting unique perspectives based on women's social experiences (Khan, 2014 & Tandon, 2008).

Singh (1997) indicates that feminism derives from the Latin word "Femina," which translates to woman and signifies having feminine traits. In addition to various qualities such as a focus on people, a values-based approach, inclusive leadership, empathy, high emotional intelligence, the ability to juggle multiple tasks, adaptability, and a collaborative

mindset, female leaders also exhibit distinct traits like determination, sincerity, a strong work ethic, commitment to their responsibilities, and the establishment of future goals that help them achieve their desired roles within organizations. However, obstacles such as the glass ceiling and organizational prejudices prevent them from attaining these positions (Hennig & Jardim, 1977).

The journey of women's leadership begins early with academic success and various leadership opportunities encountered during their education (Veihmeyer & Doughtie, 2019). Turock (2001) noted that understanding women's leadership has progressed alongside feminist research (Fine & Gordon, 1992; Stanley & Wise, 1990). According to feminist research theory, which is grounded in three key principles—social change, feminist values and beliefs, and the interdisciplinary aspects of gender diversity—important insights can be gained (Oliver, 2000). Davidson and Burke (1994) contended that organizations that implement practices and policies that promote their female managers' professional growth and ambitions foster a positive work environment. Feminism emerged as a systematic ideology and self-conscious movement, according to some feminists, as early as the late 18th century (Singh, 1997; Tandon, 2008).

The term "feminism" and the history of feminist movements gained prominence in the late 19th century. These movements began in France during the 1880s, followed by Great Britain in the 1890s and the United States in the early 1900s (Singh, 1997; Tandon, 2008). Although the term "feminist" came into use in the 1940s, the foundation for feminist activism was established earlier; it only gained widespread recognition in the 1970s (Jones & Budig, 2007)."

First-Wave Feminism, coined retrospectively, began in the 19th and early 20th centuries, primarily focusing on political inequalities and later expanding to address cultural and social injustices (Harrison & Boyd 2018). Initially aimed at promoting property and contract rights for women, the movement transitioned to advocating for women's suffrage, symbolized by the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 (Khan, 2014)

Activists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucy Stone, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony were instrumental in the fight for women's suffrage. Their efforts culminated in

the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920, which granted women the right to vote (Lorber, 2005; Tong, 1998). Despite its achievements, first-wave feminism predominantly focused on the rights of middle or upper-class White women, lacking inclusivity for African American women like Sojourner Truth (Lumen, 2020).

Continued advocacy by activists like Margaret Sanger and Voltairine de Cleyre extended beyond suffrage to encompass women's sexual, economic, and reproductive rights during the first wave (Gordon, 2019; Tong, 1998). Notable achievements include Florence Nightingale's establishment of female nurses as military aides in 1854 (Gordon, 2019; Lorber, 2005).

The second wave of feminism took place from the 1960s to the 1980s, marked by the rise of the women's liberation movement that fought for women's social and legal rights (Harrison & Boyd, 2018; Jones & Budig, 2007). Besides advocating for equal rights and the Equal Rights Amendment, this wave prioritized inclusivity, welcoming women of various races and economic backgrounds (Gordon, 2019; Lumen, 2020). Influenced by the Civil Rights Movement, this wave tackled issues such as sexuality and reproductive rights, highlighting the connections between race, class, and gender oppression (Gordon, 2019).

Prominent figures like Dorothy Smith, Betty Friedan, Alice Walker, and Andrea Dworkin contributed to shaping second-wave feminism, which differentiated between sex as biological and gender as a social construct (Khan, 2014; Lumen, 2020). Imelda Whelehan highlighted the continuation of first-wave campaigns, including suffrage, within the second wave (Jones & Budig 2007).

The slogan "the personal is political" epitomized second-wave feminism's recognition of the political and cultural dimensions of women's lives (Lorber, 2005; Tong, 1998). Notably, Gloria Jean Watkins, known as bell hooks, criticized the second wave for overlooking issues of class and race, stressing the need for inclusivity and addressing divisions among women (Gordon, 2019; Jones & Budig, 2007).

The third wave of feminism began in the 1990s and continues today. It responds to the perceived shortcomings of the second wave while building on its achievements (Gordon, 2019; Harrison & Boyd, 2018). This wave challenges essentialist perspectives of

femininity and emphasizes individual agency in defining femininity (Khan, 2014; Jones & Budig, 2007).

Diverse and inclusive, third-wave feminism explores concepts such as globalization, poststructuralism, post-colonialism, and postmodernism, emphasizing diversity and change (Khan, 2014). Micro-politics and the importance of unity among individuals of different backgrounds are central to this wave, exemplified by figures like Patricia Hill Collins, Audre Lourde, and Rebecca Walker (Chafetz, 1997; Khan, 2014).

Feminist theory consists of three main components: class, gender, and race (Chafetz, 1997; Tong, 1998). Class refers to social and economic oppression that arises from inequality (Gordon, 2019 et al .), while race indicates the social classification of individuals based on common attributes recognized by society (Gordon, 2019; Tong, 1998). Gender pertains to the social traits that differentiate individuals as feminine or masculine and includes subcategories such as gender inequality, gender oppression, gender roles, gender objectification, and the division of labour by gender (Chafetz, 1997 et al.,). The third wave of feminism emerged in the 1990s and is ongoing.

Gender inequality underscores the differences in women's experiences and their social status about men (Crossman, 2018 et al.), while gender oppression describes how women experience subjugation, oppression, and violence from men (Crossman, 2018; Gordon, 2019). Gender roles involve the societal norms concerning the behaviours and qualities linked to femininity and masculinity (Gordon, 2019; Tong, 1998), whereas gender objectification refers to how individuals are treated based on their sexual traits (Crossman, 2018; Tong, 1998). The gender division of labour clarifies how tasks are assigned according to gender roles (Crossman, 2018 et al.,).

In academic discussions, many researchers highlight the importance of feminist theory in the social and political dialogue about gender relations (Begum & Sarmin, 2016; Rosser, 1998; Sharma, 2019). For example, Sharma (2019) supported integrating feminist theory into medical education to tackle gender-specific issues such as wage disparities and inequalities in leadership, promoting the shift from theoretical understanding to practical application. Likewise, Begum and Sarmin (2016) utilized feminist theory to empower



women working in Bangladesh's garment sector, observing positive impacts on women's empowerment, including enhanced social status and performance parity with male counterparts. Through participation in social experiences and pursuing their interests, female garment workers benefited from improved childcare, healthcare, voting rights, reduced harassment, equal pay, education, and decreased domestic violence (Begum & Sarmin, 2016).

The feminist movements established the foundation for feminist theory, which can be understood as a philosophical or theoretical evolution of feminism (Crossman, 2018; Gordon, 2019; Khan, 2014). Feminist theory draws from a variety of fields, including sociology, anthropology, women's studies, economics, philosophy, art history, and literary criticism, integrating a wide range of viewpoints (Khan, 2014 et al.). Regardless of the disciplinary lens, feminist theory centres on addressing issues pertinent to women, including their oppression in patriarchal societies, marginalization due to sexual politics, identity loss, freedom, and the suppression of their voices (Gordon, 2019 et al.).

From a sociological perspective, feminist theory highlights the social dynamics, issues, and relationships that contribute to injustice, inequality, and oppression, advocating for fairness and justice (Crossman, 2018 et al.). Although it is widely accepted for providing insights related to gender across various fields (Begum, 2016 et al.), some academics criticize the insufficient focus on improving feminist theory (Lay, 2007 et al.).

Feminist theory is a suitable theoretical lens for exploring the experiences of women in leadership roles, as it promotes equal rights and opportunities for all genders.

### **2.3 Theories of Leadership**

The vast body of literature on Women in Leadership and management roles explores various models and styles of leading teams, organizations, and individuals, including self-leadership (Carter & Greer, 2013 et al.). Leadership is a relational dynamic involving mutual commitment between a leader and a group of followers striving toward a shared goal (Gupta et al., 2004). Researchers have primarily studied leadership in organizational settings, concentrating on the dynamics between leaders and their followers (Carter 2013 et al.).

Historically, methods for achieving leadership success have been divided into two primary categories: transactional, which regards leadership as a process of exchange, and transformational, which views leadership as a way to promote personal and professional development (Kotlyar 2007 et al.,). Transformational leadership, introduced in the 1970s (Burns, 1978), gained popularity towards the end of the 20th century, highlighting a leader's capability to communicate a vision and motivate followers to embrace it (Rafferty 2004 et al.,).

Under the framework of transformational leadership, two distinct typologies have emerged: servant leadership and entrepreneurial leadership. Both focus on fostering change within teams and organizations, respectively. Servant leadership emphasizes motivating and guiding followers, offering hope, and nurturing quality relationships (Sendjaya et al., 2008). In contrast, entrepreneurial leadership, also known as corporate entrepreneurship or intrapreneurship, highlights integrating innovation and entrepreneurial thinking into large bureaucratic organizations. (Kuratko 1999 et al.,).

Moreover, the concept of self-leadership has gained prominence, particularly in response to recent organizational scandals involving unethical leadership behaviours and the quest for authenticity in leadership (D'Intino et al., 2007). Genuine leaders are defined by their capacity to harmonize their core beliefs and individual values with their leadership actions (Turner & Mavin, 2008).

In contemporary organizational settings, leaders often exhibit a blend of these leadership styles, adapting their approach based on the context and their developmental journey. Additionally, transformational leadership, particularly emphasizing emotional and spiritual awareness, is often linked with gender issues, shedding light on how women navigate their leadership roles (Andersen & Hasson, 2011). This intersection has fueled scholarly interest in examining the relationship between gender and leadership literature (Brandt, 2013 et al.,).

The leadership styles of both genders are inherently shaped by their gender identity (Greer 2003 et al.,), as gender plays a crucial role in human social interactions, and leadership is rooted in relational dynamics (Arar, 2012 et al.,). Although studies on women

in leadership do not always conform to a particular feminist framework (Kark, 2004), viewing leadership literature from a female standpoint can provide an alternative perspective. Feminist approaches often explore gender differences or similarities and societal views on feminine traits (Calàs & Smircich, 1996). These approaches can be categorized into three main groups: liberal theory, radical theory, and social constructionist/poststructuralist feminist theory (Harding, 1987).

Liberal theory, which is connected to gender reform feminism, perceives men and women as fundamentally similar. It advocates for equal opportunities for women to excel in fields that have traditionally been dominated by men (Calás et al., 2013). In contrast, radical theory, associated with gender resistance feminism, recognizes the inherent differences between men and women and emphasizes the importance of feminine traits in leadership roles (Ahl, 2006). This perspective celebrates gender differences and their potential positive impact on leadership styles. Social constructionist/poststructuralist feminist theory focuses on how masculinity and femininity are socially constructed and affect social structures (Ahl, 2006).

Early works connecting feminist theory with leadership emerged from liberal ideology, aiming to advance gender equality and challenge patriarchal structures (Batliwala, 2011). Societal expectations based on gender roles influence women's leadership styles, with women often expected to be more nurturing and relationship-oriented (Werhane & Painter, 2011). Despite these expectations, women leaders bring valuable relational skills to leadership roles, contributing to team cohesion and emotional intelligence (Arar, 2012; Sandberg, 2013).

Recent research on women's leadership often aligns with radical feminist theory, suggesting that certain leadership styles may be more accessible or advantageous for women (Greer, 2003 et al.). Women may exhibit slightly more transformational and authentic leadership qualities than men, leveraging their relational skills and emotional intelligence for effective Leadership (Mensi-Klarbach, 2014 et al.).

Transformational leaders exhibit similar characteristics during the initial phases of their organizations, which is an intriguing observation. Both leaders set out on their journeys with a strong sense of purpose or, in entrepreneurial terms, a clear vision for their organizations' objectives (Chakraborty, 2004 et al.). Her dissatisfaction inspired Mary Kay's vision with her previous career. Although she had achieved significant success, she felt constrained by her gender (Ash & Pendleton, 2008). Determined to address this disparity, she set a distinct goal: "establishing a company that would provide unlimited opportunities for women" (Ash & Pendleton, 2008). Similarly, Mother Teresa's sense of mission was deeply rooted in her faith, as she claimed to have heard God's call directly (Kolodiejchuk, 2007).

Secondly, both leaders possessed a blend of technical expertise and relational skills. They were competent in navigating new and challenging situations and could inspire others to embrace their visions (Rafferty, 2004 et al.). This ability to instil confidence in their teams aligns with the characteristics of servant leaders. As described by Schneider and George (2011), servant leaders prioritize their followers' growth and well-being. Mary Kay exemplified this leadership style throughout her life, often emphasizing her "Golden Rule" as a critical factor in her success (Ash & Pendleton, 2008). Her compassionate approach to employees reflected her belief in the potential of every individual (Ash & Pendleton, 2008). Similarly, Mother Teresa nurtured deep and enduring relationships with her followers through compassion and faith, encouraging them to devote themselves entirely to their mission (Kolodiejchuk, 2007 et al.).

Previous research suggests that understanding individual leaders' journeys is crucial to comprehending their leadership styles (Turner & Mavin, 2008). Mary Kay and Mother Teresa's leadership evolved from their personal convictions and life experiences rather than

conforming to a predetermined leadership style (Turner & Mavin, 2008). Their authentic leadership emerged from their commitment to their core beliefs, reflecting their genuine selves rather than adopting a theoretical leadership style.

Radical feminism emphasizes the equality of men and women as human beings and the value of feminine qualities (Ahl, 2006 et al.). Mary Kay's organization embodied radical feminist ideals, explicitly recognizing women's unique perspectives and abilities (Ash & Pendleton, 2008). Similarly, Mother Teresa's views on women, though less overt, align with the radical feminist approach, emphasizing the distinct contributions of women to society (Desmond, 1989).

Besides authentic and radical leadership, the challenges within the Indian workforce are distinct. The study on Women in Leadership and Management examined the motivations and obstacles women face in the workforce, particularly in India. It revealed that women at various employment levels pursued economic independence and personal fulfilment. Women in lower and middle-level positions primarily aimed to satisfy personal and financial needs, while those in higher-level roles were motivated by career ambitions and a desire to progress within their organizations. However, they encountered challenges such as differential treatment and stereotypical perceptions from male colleagues. Indian organizations increasingly acknowledge the importance of gender diversity and are actively working to overcome these barriers (Qadir, 2019).

The 2010 Catalyst India Benchmarking report states that Catalyst, founded in 1962, is the leading nonprofit organization focused on enhancing opportunities for women in the business sector. With locations in the United States, Canada, and Europe, and a membership of over 400 top corporations, Catalyst provides valuable research, information, and guidance on issues affecting women in the workplace. Each year, the organization honors exceptional initiatives that promote women's advancement with the renowned Catalyst Award. In India, some companies have implemented leadership development programs for women, yet there are still fewer women in senior roles compared to their male counterparts. While some Indian firms report a low percentage of women in top positions, multinational companies generally have a greater representation of women. Research indicates that businesses led by a higher number of women tend to achieve better financial performance.

Despite progress, many Indian organizations still lack sensitivity to women's issues and fail to recognize women's capabilities. Stereotypes persist, with men often perceived as more decisive while women are valued for traits like compassion, empathy, and creativity. A report released in 2017 by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) reveals notable gender imbalances within the scientific field. Among 16 NIH directors, there was only one woman. In the leading research institutions in the United States, women occupied no more than 26% of tenured faculty positions, with several institutions reporting figures under 20% (Winkler, 2000 et al .). In the NIH's own research program, 37% of tenure-track researchers were women, yet only 21% attained tenured status, with women of color making up just 5% of those roles, emphasizing ongoing gender inequality within the program. Similar patterns are evident in U.S. PhD programs. According to the Society for Neuroscience, the percentage of women applying to PhD programs increased from 38% in 2000-2001 to 57% in 2016-2017, and women represented 48% of graduates in 2016-2017 (Llorens, 2021 et al .). However, they only accounted for 30% of faculty members in these programs. Notably, women tend to receive better evaluations than men in aspects such as advocating for principles and finding compromises (Eagly and Chaiken, 1998).

The deficiency of gender diversity in leadership roles is attributed to various factors, including societal attitudes, family pressures, and work-life balance challenges (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). Women in India often face discrimination and limited opportunities, particularly in male-dominated sectors and the informal economy. However, there has been improvement in recent years, with more women entering the workforce and pursuing entrepreneurship.

Women possess qualities essential for effective Leadership, such as networking, crisis management, and dedication. Nevertheless, they encounter obstacles like gender stereotypes and biases in the hiring and promotion procedures. Efforts to promote gender diversity include implementing transparent recruitment strategies, providing support for work-life balance, and offering training and mentorship programs for women (Llorens, 2021 et al .,).

Despite facing challenges, women in India are defying stereotypes and making significant strides in fields such as business, finance, and government. Demonstrating ambition, dedication, and leadership, they are playing pivotal roles in the success of their organizations. HR professionals acknowledge women's unique strengths in relationship-building and teamwork, highlighting the crucial role of diversity in reaching organizational objectives. To provide a comprehensive view of women's participation in various industries (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995) also incorporated non-research articles from online sources in addition to research articles, covering areas like engineering and psychology.

Table 2: shows key extractions from the literature related to Women in Leadership and management roles. These analyses highlight the different approaches taken in the literature to study Women's Leadership and its various facets.

**Table 2: Critical Extractions from the Literature**

| Sr. No. | Aspects of Women <u>Leadership</u> | Critical Extractions from the Study   | Authors   |
|---------|------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1.      | Barriers                           | Breaking the glass ceiling<br><br>Prominent walls for the glass ceiling, human capital barriers— differences in communication skills, lack of education, experience, finance, gender-based stereotypes, lack of mentors, occupational segregation, and organizational biases<br><br>Stereotypical attitudes from colleagues at the workplace, lack of risk-taking ability, family responsibility, lack of supportive organizational culture<br><br>Gender diversity gap | Eagly et al., (1995, 2000) and Eagly and Carli, (2007)<br><br>Lewis (1998), Mani (1997), Dolan, (2004) and Sabharwal, (2013)<br><br>Wentling (2003) and Bhatnagar, (2008)<br><br>Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt, (2001)<br><br>Eagly et al., (2000) |



|           |  |  |
|-----------|--|--|
|           | Emphasizing role congruity theory experiencing gender stereotype threat at the performance level | Cota and Dion (1986) ,Cohen and Swim (1995) , Hoyt et al(2010), Coffman (2014) , Chen and Houser, (2019)   |
| <b>2.</b> | <b>Enablers</b>  |  |
|           | Adaptability, perseverance, risk-taking, agility to learn new things, ambition and empathy       | Wentling (2003), Metz 92004), Cabrera (2009) Ezzedeem and Ritchey (2009) and Bhattacharya et. al., (2018)  |
|           | Mentoring  | Linehan and Walsh, (1999), Ragins and Cotton, (1999), McKeen and Bujaki, (2007), De Vries, (2010), Abalkhail and Allan, (2015) and Mate et.al., (2019) |
|           | Training and career development  | Vinnicombe and Singh, (2002), Eagly and Carli, (2007) and Mate et.al., (2019)  |
| <b>3.</b> | <b>Benefits</b>  |  |
|           | Liability, mutual understanding, and trust positively influence sales performance, market        | Burgess and Borgida, (1999), Rudman and Glick, (2001), Heilman et.al., (2004), Singh (2007) and Hoobler et.al., (2018)                                 |

performance, asset return, and equity return.

Creative Leadership, overcoming barriers and participating in board decisions, chairperson leadership efficacy.

Mayer and Oosthuizen, (2020), Kanadli et.al., (2018) and Kakabadse et al., (2015)

**4. Limitations** Maintaining work-life balance

Keene et al., (20020, Naidoo and Jano, (2003), Lopez-Claros and Zahidi, (2005) and Qadir, (2019)

Working under pressure

OpenGart and Bierema, (2002), Linehan and Scullion, (2005), Laff, (2006) and Qadir, (2008)

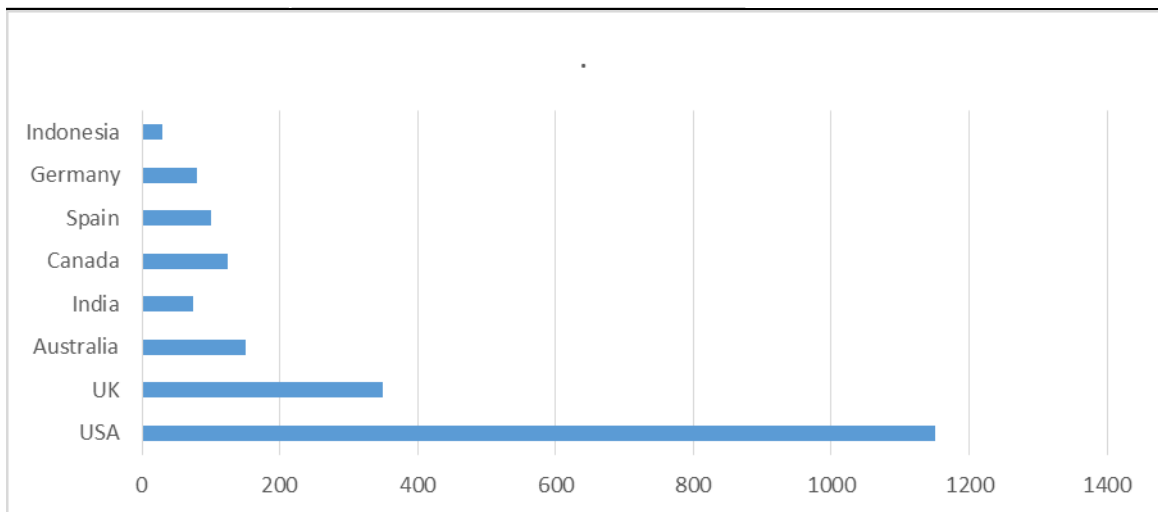


Figure 1: Country-wise distribution of articles

Source: Kulkarni and Mishra, (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1177/23220937211056139>

Country-wise distribution of articles: Most studies on women in leadership and management roles have been conducted in developed countries. The ongoing underrepresentation of women in leadership roles across many countries indicates a significant gender bias in hiring and promotions (Eagly and Karau, 2002; Hoobler et al., 2014; Player et al.,

2019).

Figure 1: The text highlights the distribution of Women's Leadership research across different countries. It notes that over 35% of these studies are carried out in the USA and the UK, whereas only just over 1% occur in India. There is a noticeable scarcity of research from developing and underdeveloped nations on this topic. Consequently, there is a substantial gap in Women's Leadership research in India and other developing countries. This study seeks to address that gap by providing thorough insights into Women's Leadership in those regions.

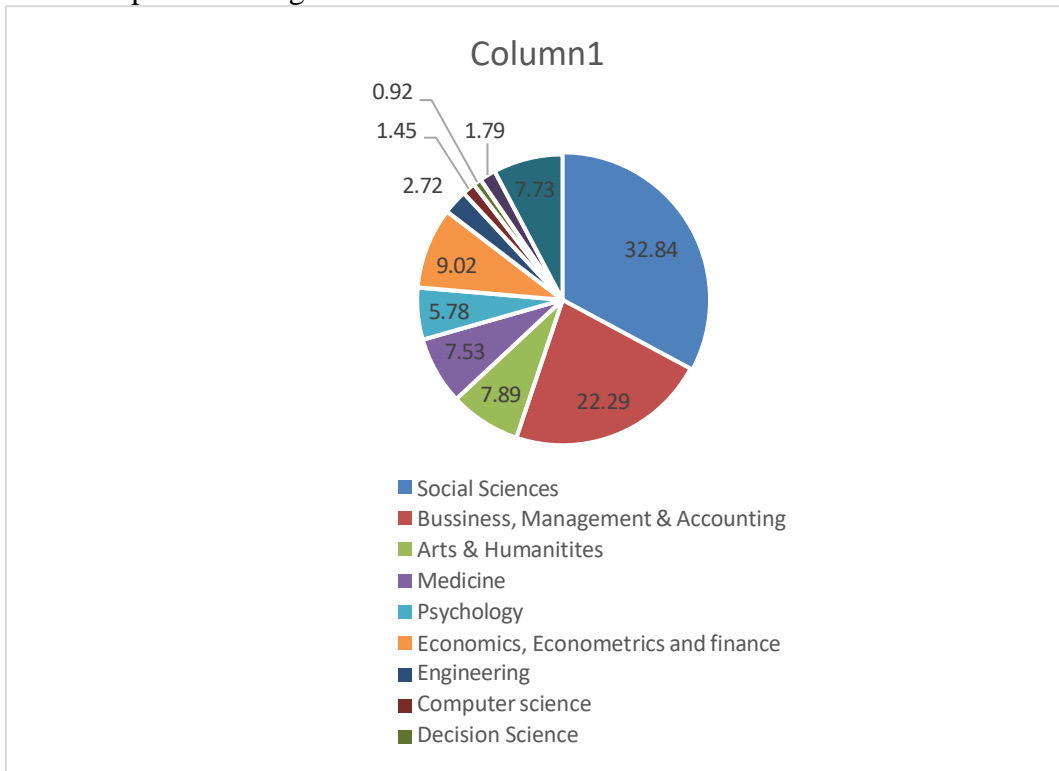


Figure 2: Industry-wise distribution of articles  
Source: Squazzoni et al., (2021)

Figure 2 Industry-wise distribution of articles: most of the articles 32.84 were written in social science stream and least were recorded in computer science only 1.45.

Additionally, a research analysis involving 145 journals across different disciplines found that women tend to submit fewer articles than their male counterparts (Squazzoni et al., 2021). The gap in women's representation becomes more pronounced as the journal's impact factor rises (Bendels et al., 2018). This trend is also evident in neuroscience, where female authors, including those in senior positions, are less inclined to submit their work to prestigious journals.

#### **2.4 Barriers to Women's Leadership**

Women encounter numerous visible and hidden obstacles as they strive for higher positions in their professional careers. The Women's Leadership literature describes these barriers as glass ceilings and glass cliffs. Some significant obstacles that women face include insufficient education, knowledge, or experience; limited access to informal networks; stereotypical beliefs; biases within organizations; segregation in occupations; a shortage of mentorship and training opportunities; a hesitance to take risks in certain situations; and the challenges related to gender diversity (Bhatnagar, 2008 et al .).

The "glass ceiling" refers to the invisible barrier which prevents women from advancing to higher levels of leadership and management within an organization, regardless of their qualifications or achievements. This metaphor highlights the systemic obstacles and discrimination that hinder upward mobility in the workplace.

The "glass cliff" describes a phenomenon where women are more likely to be placed in leadership roles during times of crisis or downturns, when the risk of failure is high. These precarious positions often set them up for greater scrutiny and higher chances of failure, reinforcing negative stereotypes and further entrenching gender biases. Women strive to overcome barriers and achieve their professional goals (Parsons and Reiss, 2004).

- Breaking the Glass Ceiling

Research shows that women in leadership and management positions are generally more aware of the glass ceiling and its accompanying challenges and inequities (Ryan and Haslam, 2007). To meet organizational goals, they must overcome this barrier. Despite having made strides in breaking the glass ceiling, women leaders often encounter subtle discrimination that restricts their access to leadership roles, decision-making opportunities, support, and a healthy work-life balance. The predominance of male leadership in organizations also contributes to the phenomenon known as the glass cliff (Ryan and Haslam, 2007). Nevertheless, the representation of women on corporate boards is gradually increasing, driven by their determination and perseverance. As societal roles for women evolve, they are gaining better access to job opportunities that were once predominantly held by men and are receiving greater respect in the workforce (Duehr and Joyce, 2006).

- Gender Differences in Leadership Styles

According to social role theory, the distinct roles of men and women are increasingly blending, with more women entering the workforce and pursuing leadership positions (Eagly et al., 2000). This shift has brought gender-related issues in the workplace to the forefront, impacting women leaders significantly. Leadership styles are generally categorized as autocratic, which focuses on goals, or democratic, which emphasizes interpersonal relationships. These styles can further be divided into transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire types (Eagly and Johannesen, 2001). However, the performance of women leaders is often assessed based on their leadership styles and the outcomes they produce, whereas male leaders' accomplishments are typically gauged by organizational competitiveness, control, or influence. Interestingly, women tend to receive more support from their organizations, emphasize community involvement, and gain authority in their fields compared to their male counterparts (Offermann and Gowing, 1990).

Role congruity theory highlights the impact of gender stereotyping when individuals are in senior-level positions that align with traditional gender traits (Chen, 2019

et al.,). Hyde (2005) pointed out that women leaders often face organizational biases due to pronounced gender differences. The gender composition of a workplace can influence an individual's gender identity and associated stereotypes (Chen and Houser, 2019; Cohen and Swim, 1995; Cota and Dion, 1986; Hoyt et al., 2010). For instance, in an all-female group led by a woman, gender identity may not be as noticeable since everyone shares the same gender. Conversely, in a mixed-gender group with a female leader, she may encounter gender stereotype biases while making decisions, which could ultimately enhance the overall performance of the group and organization (Chen and Houser, 2019). There are varying perspectives on how men and women differ in task-oriented versus people-oriented behaviors within organizations. Aarum and Hansson (2011) found minimal differences in leadership styles between the genders but asserted that gender does not significantly influence leadership behavior.

- Lack of Assertiveness

Women leaders are often seen as less assertive in the workplace due to their empathetic characteristics. According to a study by Keane et al. (2021), leaders who are less assertive tend to be more submissive, whereas those who exhibit high levels of assertiveness are often viewed as aggressive and commanding in their decision-making. These assertive leaders tend to prioritize task-oriented behavior and are focused on reaching goals, sometimes regardless of the consequences. Generally, men are viewed as more self-assured, dominant, and forceful, while women are perceived as more empathetic, with a stronger focus on interpersonal relationships, which can result in their reduced assertiveness in professional settings (Eagly and Johnson, 1990).

- Organizational Bias

Women leaders often face biases related to their gender in the workplace. Research shows that when women take on more friendly and democratic leadership styles, they are generally accepted better by their teams. However, if they are more assertive or bossy, they encounter negative perceptions because people tend to stereotype them. This is because being assertive is often seen as a masculine trait.

Women who lead in a way that is dominant or overly confident can be viewed as going against traditional views of how women should behave, leading to fewer positive reactions from others in the organization. In summary, women are more positively received when they lead in a way that fits typical feminine traits, rather than taking on a more aggressive style (Eagly and Karau, 2002).

## **2.5 Enablers to Women's Leadership**

Several factors contribute to empowering women in leadership and management positions within organizations. Research shows that mentoring plays a crucial role in enhancing women's leadership capabilities (De-Vries, 2010; Mate et al., 2019; Ragins et al., 2017). Additionally, ongoing training and development programs facilitate the advancement of women in management roles. Beyond these, qualities such as adaptability, perseverance, willingness to take risks, quick learning, ambition, and empathy are recognized as essential enablers of women's leadership (Bhattacharya et al., 2018; Cabrera, 2009; Ezzedeen and Ritchey, 2009; Metz, 2004; Wentling, 2003).

- **Mentoring**

Women strive to achieve their full potential while balancing their professional and personal lives. Nonetheless, they often encounter various obstacles that hinder their advancement to desired positions. In these circumstances, several facilitators can assist them in overcoming these challenges. This suggests that mentoring is a crucial factor in boosting women's leadership capabilities (De-vries, 2010; Mate et al., 2019; Ragins et al., 2017). One significant facilitator is having the right mentor to support their professional journey. An effective mentor is essential in such scenarios. However, identifying a suitable mentor in the workplace presents another hurdle for women leaders. Many are reluctant to seek a mentor within their professional environment due to preconceived notions about the characteristics of mentors.

Many individuals are hesitant to choose a mentor in the workplace due to common stereotypes associated with mentoring. However, having a mentor can significantly enhance career development, skill acquisition, and employee retention (Elias, 2018).

Mentors also assist individuals in recognizing and connecting with their peers and colleagues (Mate et al., 2019). Effective mentoring can help nurture women's leadership capabilities. While mentoring alone cannot transform the existing transactional structures within organizations, it can promote social change and support (De Vries, 2010; Linehan and Walsh, 1999; Ragins et al., 2017). Research indicates that mentoring benefits not only personal career advancement but also overall organizational success (McKeen and Bujaki, 2007; Ragins and Cotton, 1999). Consequently, mentoring for career success has become a prominent area of research interest (Abalkhail and Allan, 2015; Woolnough and Davidson, 2007).

- Training and Career Development Support

Training is a vital managerial approach that helps combat discriminatory behaviors against women leaders and boosts their representation. It guides their career paths towards leadership roles (Eagly and Carli, 2007) by enhancing individual strengths and necessary strategies for success (Vinnicombe and Singh, 2002). Additionally, training supports women in acquiring new skills after career breaks and fosters career development through mentoring and various initiatives (Mainiero and Sullivan, 2005). Building relationships through collaboration, networking, and making informed choices also contributes to the career advancement of women leaders (Mate et al., 2019).

- Benefits to the Organization

The composition of gender groups can significantly impact women's beliefs about their capabilities (Chen and Houser, 2019). Women leaders, due to their empathetic and collaborative nature, are often seen as more socially responsible than men (Burgess and Borgida, 1999). While men typically use a transactional leadership style, grounded in power and authority, women favor a transformational approach based on trust, respect, and nurturing individual talents (Singh, 2007). This focus on fostering creativity results in greater social and cultural acceptance of women leaders compared to their male counterparts (Mayer and Oosthuizen).

- Positive Influence

Research indicates that female directors can significantly impact strategic board



decisions through their values, knowledge, and experience. Although they may encounter social barriers in boardrooms, they can effectively overcome these challenges to make positive contributions (Kanadh et al., 2018). Successful women leaders typically prioritize their growth and consistently exceed performance expectations. They aim to create a leadership style that is comfortable for male colleagues while pursuing high-visibility roles (Catalyst, 2000). Eagly and Carli (2007) noted that women who adopt transformational leadership styles display greater contingent reward behaviors, enhancing subordinate satisfaction and engagement (Chandler, 2011). According to a Pew Research Centre survey, women surpass men in attributes like honesty, intelligence, and creativity (Chandler, 2011). Companies led by female CEOs often see improved ROA, ROE, and market performance (Hoobler et al., 2018). Women's leadership styles are generally more interactive and participatory, which promotes employee engagement and retention (Rosener, 1995). They tend to manage businesses collaboratively and democratically (Dai et al., 2011; Mulawarman et al., 2021). A woman leader as chairperson can enhance decision-making processes and foster greater participation from female leaders (Kakabadse et al., 2015; Kanadli et al., 2018). Women should seek diverse role models rather than relying on traditional single-mentor approaches for their growth (Markel and Crowley, 2016).

- **Effective Leadership**

It has been noted that organizational bias tends to favor male leaders over their female counterparts. Research indicates that leadership roles often overlook female candidates (Player et al., 2019), as studies have shown that men frequently display a competitive and goal-oriented attitude. They tend to be more assertive and demanding in a workplace environment. Women, on the other hand, are commonly associated with collaborative traits and empathy towards others (Griffiths et al., 2019). Behavioral intentions, such as aspirations for leadership, may influence women's engagement with stereotype-breaking (Leicht et al., 2017). Women possess different workplace values compared to men, emphasizing task achievement, high performance standards, a desire for challenges, attention to detail, and a focus on personal growth, while also balancing work

and family responsibilities (Singh, 2007). Eagly and Johannesen (2001) noted that women leaders tend to adopt a democratic approach and include others in the decision-making process.

Conversely, men often take a more autocratic stance, discouraging participation in decision-making. They argued that women represent a significant source of human capital with potential for value creation. Women can demonstrate independence and creativity in introducing new management practices that enable them to be more effective than their male counterparts. Increased representation of women on boards is linked to enhanced board effectiveness; it has been observed that women leaders put in extra effort to motivate their team members, resulting in higher job satisfaction with their leadership styles, and are generally more effective in management (Adams, 2009; Eagly et al., 2003). The research also found that women prioritize the empowerment and welfare of their female employees when assuming high-level positions or leadership roles.

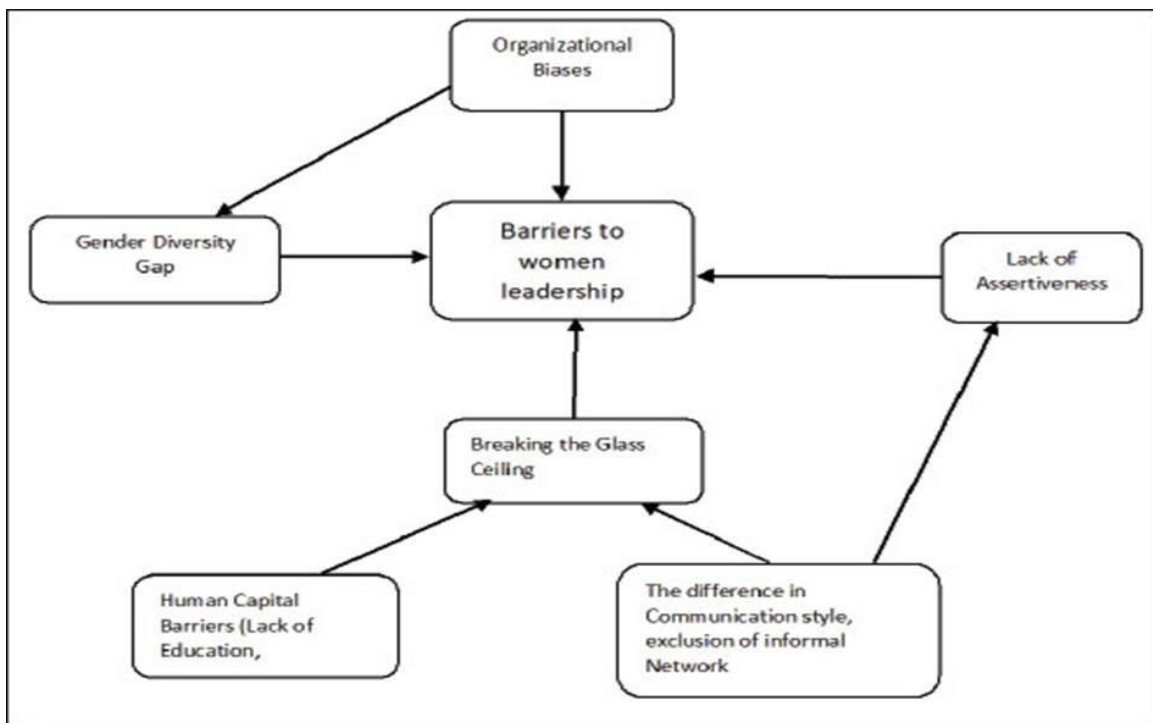
Creativity is another crucial factor to consider when discussing women in leadership and management positions. Hooker and Csikszentmihalyi (2003) highlighted in their study that creativity is essential for both leadership and organizational success. It enables individuals to engage with their environment by utilizing deep knowledge, innovative solutions, and productive behaviors and ideas to address work-related challenges (Mayer and Oosthuizen, 2020).

## **2.6 Theoretical Framework for Women's Leadership**

A theoretical framework related to women's leadership and management roles has been developed based on available studies. Early publications from the 1980s, such as those by Bryant (1984), occasionally reference the concept of the glass ceiling. This framework provides insights into various aspects of women's leadership and their impact on organizational performance.

*Figure 3 Thematic Diagram for Barriers to Women Leadership*

The figure 3 illustrates various barriers to women leadership, emphasizing the interconnected factors that contribute to this challenge. Central to the issue is the "Barriers to women leadership" box, influenced by multiple elements. "Organizational Biases" and "Lack of Assertiveness" directly impact women's progression to leadership roles. The "Gender Diversity Gap" and "Human Capital Barriers," such as lack of education, further exacerbate the problem. Additionally, the "Breaking the Glass Ceiling" concept highlights the need to overcome systemic barriers. The diagram also identifies the "Difference in



Communication Style" and exclusion from informal networks as significant obstacles, illustrating the multifaceted nature of barriers hindering women's leadership advancement.

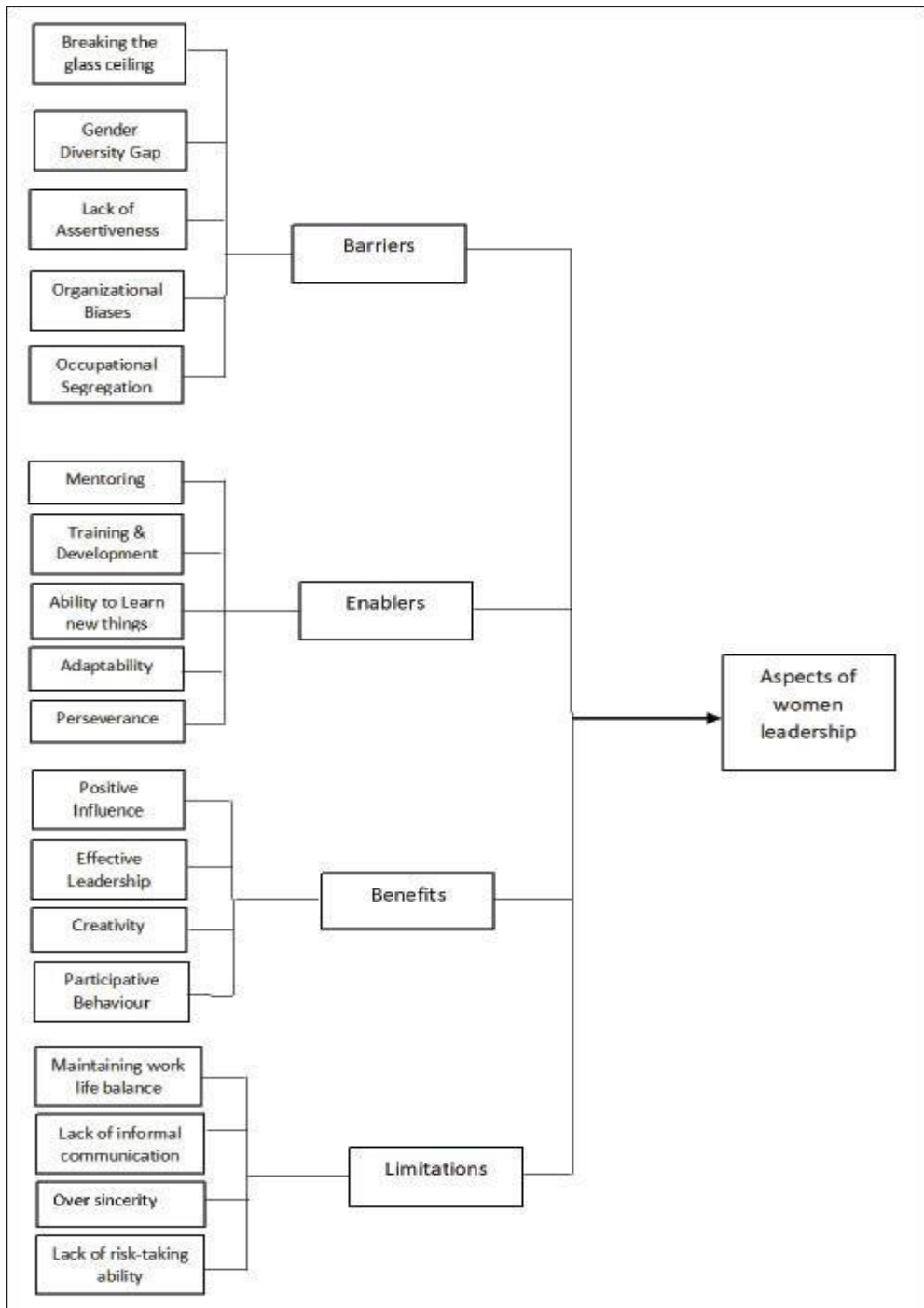


Figure 4: Theoretical Framework for Aspects of Women Leadership

The figure 4 delineates various aspects of women leadership by categorizing them into four main sections: barriers, enablers, benefits, and limitations. The "Barriers" section includes factors such as breaking the glass ceiling, gender diversity gap, lack of assertiveness, organizational biases, and occupational segregation, highlighting obstacles women face in leadership. The "Enablers" section lists mentoring, training and development, ability to learn new things, adaptability, and perseverance as crucial factors that support women's leadership advancement. The "Benefits" section emphasizes positive influence, effective leadership, creativity, and participative behavior as key advantages women bring to leadership roles. Finally, the "Limitations" section identifies challenges like maintaining work-life balance, lack of informal communication, over sincerity, and lack of risk-taking ability, which can hinder women's leadership effectiveness. This comprehensive view underscores the complex interplay of factors influencing women's leadership (Kelley, 1997).

## **2.7 Discussion**

The literature review indicates a significant interest in exploring women's roles in leadership and management across various industries. However, there is a lack of research focused on sectors where women take on prominent leadership positions. Women encounter numerous structural and cultural obstacles when striving for top roles within organizations, including gender bias from male counterparts (Evans and Maley, 2020). The findings also highlight that achieving a work-life balance often hinders women's progress into leadership positions. In South Asian nations, particularly India, women frequently pause their careers due to childcare and other familial obligations, in contrast to their Western counterparts. The research shows that Indian women who receive support from family members and caregivers tend to advance further in their careers, enhancing their personal leadership abilities to achieve a work-life balance (Bhattacharya et al., 2018). Additionally, various social and cultural challenges persist in many South Asian countries (Sabharwal, 2013). Nevertheless, if organizations adopt supportive measures such as policy reforms, quotas, and formal mentoring initiatives, women leaders are likely to attain their

desired roles within the organization (Bhatnagar, 2008). The study also indicates that women leaders must possess self-motivation, even with available support in their professional development (Bhatnagar, 2008). There is a call for establishing effective formal networks, enabling women to express their ideas and viewpoints clearly (Gandhi and Sen, 2020). Women often need to exert more effort than men to attain top management positions (Yagüe et al., 2021). To advance their careers, women should prioritize developing their competencies and seizing training opportunities (Nichols and Kanter, 1994; Wentling, 2003). This research aims to provide a comprehensive overview of various facets related to women in leadership and management roles, assisting future studies in examining each aspect individually. Additionally, organizations can utilize this information to implement policies and regulations that boost the representation of women in leadership positions.

## **2.8 Limitations and Future Scope**

A critical analysis of leadership approaches, decision-making, and innovation by Women, employing a rigorous blend of quantitative analysis, computational techniques, and theoretical frameworks to elucidate key phenomena and develop a framework based on theory, and arrive at generalized findings about Women's Leadership in organizations. There is potential for further exploration into the dynamics of women in leadership and management positions, as there are likely numerous overlooked studies that could be valuable for research in this area. An in-depth exploration of women in leadership roles can yield valuable insights into the challenges and advantages they face within specific industries or organizations. As the representation of women in management and leadership positions continues to increase, the need for further research in this area is ever-present. This ongoing engagement offers opportunities for growth and development in the field.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

### **3.1 Introduction**

Research design refers to the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain evidence to answer research questions (McMillan and Schumacher 1993). The design describes the procedures for conducting the study including when, from whom, and under what conditions data is obtained. The purpose of research design is to provide the most valid, accurate answers possible to research questions. In this chapter it is the aim of the researcher to present the research design and methodology employed in the study. To start with a brief overview of the preceding background chapters.

In this chapter explored the phenomenon of women's under-representation in leadership and management positions in India's different sectors, including academics. Particular reference was made to their statistical representation, including the obstacles to their advancement.

The literature review outlined in the previous chapters revealed the extent to which research on women in management and leadership roles, with various leadership methods and approaches and innovation in working sector that has not been addressed until now. The gaps identified in the existing research served as a springboard for the current investigation. The primary goal of this study is to address these knowledge gaps and gain a deeper understanding of the real-life experiences of women in leadership and management roles.

In the chapter that comes after the literature review, the specifics of the research design and methodology used to examine the experiences of women in leadership and management positions, along with various leadership styles in India, are presented. The discussion starts with the theoretical foundation of quantitative methodology, followed by the chosen data collection method, the structure of the current study, including the sample population, the selection of participants, locating participants, developing instruments, gathering data, and outlining the analysis plan.

### **3.2 Research Design and Methodology – a Theoretical Basis**

There are two primary categories of research design: quantitative and qualitative. These two designs have essential distinctions, which will be outlined briefly in this section. The key difference between them is that quantitative research displays findings using statistics, while qualitative research articulates phenomena in descriptive words (McMillan and Schumacher 1993). This study employs a mix of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Two kinds of quantitative approaches are identified: experimental and non-experimental. For this study, the non-experimental type is chosen. In a non-experimental design, variables are not manipulated. Instead, the researcher observes or collects measurements from subjects to depict something that has already taken place (McMillan and Schumacher 1993). Survey research is a form of non-experimental design and is the approach applied in this study.

- Survey research – general orientation

It is important to underscore that qualitative research is regarded as more flexible than quantitative research because it stresses discovering novel findings that sharply contrast quantitative methodology. Quantitative research focuses on -fixed measurement, hypothesis testing, and a much less protracted form of fieldwork involvement (Ahmad et al., 2019). According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993), researchers select a sample of respondents to gather information through questionnaires or interviews, which helps describe the characteristics of a specific population. Surveys assess attitudes, beliefs, demographics, behaviors, and opinions. Neuman (1997) notes that while researchers often use a small sample, they generalize results to a larger group. Surveys are frequently used in descriptive and explanatory research to analyze the incidence and distribution of characteristics and to explore relationships between variables.

McMillan and Schumacher (1993) outline a sequence of steps for conducting survey research. The initial step is to identify the study's purpose and objectives, which should incorporate both a broad overview and specific goals detailing the information to be gathered. These objectives must be clear and precise. Following this, it's important to choose the necessary resources and the target population. This involves assessing the



available time, budget, and personnel prior to devising a data collection methodology. Financial limitations may influence the decision to use either a locally created tool or an existing one, and the sample size might also depend on the available budget. Consequently, the study's objectives may need to be adjusted.

Following this, a decision must be made on the methods to collect data. The questionnaire and personal interview are commonly utilized techniques of gathering data. In a survey, it is essential to standardize methods so that information from each respondent is collected consistently, ensuring that the administration, format, and sequence of questions and statements remain uniform (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993).

Follow up should occur within a timeframe of two to four weeks. The follow-up correspondence should include another questionnaire, a stamped envelope with the return address, and a cover letter emphasizing the significance of the study and the participant's role. Individuals who have not responded and have not submitted the completed questionnaire should be contacted again, particularly if the findings will impact critical decisions.

### **3.3 Data Collection Techniques**

In addition to the research design, studies can be classified based on the methods used for data collection (McMillan and Schumacher 1993). There are six primary methods for gathering data: questionnaires, interviews, documents, tests, and unobtrusive measures. Research typically employs a combination of these techniques, chosen according to their relevance to the specific study. Similar to research designs, these collection techniques can be categorized as quantitative or qualitative. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993), the main distinction lies in that quantitative methods utilize numerical data to describe phenomena, whereas qualitative techniques rely on narrative descriptions.

While most methods can be applied across various research designs, the research design closely aligns with the chosen method. The quantitative method focuses on predefined categories to gather data in numerical form. Its objective is to gather data for generating statistical summaries, examining relationships, and providing explanations.

Quantitative approaches (McMillan and Schumacher 1993) are implemented with experimental, descriptive, and correlational designs to condense extensive observations and indicate the numerical extent of error in data collection and reporting. Quantitative research employs various data collection techniques, including structured observations, standardized interviews, tests, questionnaires, and unobtrusive measures.

The study in question, which includes the Video Conference Focus Group Interview (VConf-FGI) facilitated by the Zoom application, explores both the questionnaire and interview methods. The primary data collection methods are quantitative and qualitative, functioning as complementary rather than competing approaches within the research. Flick (2002) identifies two distinct ways to integrate the two discussed methods. The first involves concentrating on a single case where the same individuals participate in both interviews and fill out a questionnaire, allowing for a comparative analysis of their responses. Sampling decisions occur in two phases: participants from both parts of the study are the same in the first phase, but in the second phase, it must be determined which survey participants will be selected for the interviews. The second option involves connecting quantitative and qualitative research at the data set level. Here, the responses from questionnaires are examined for their frequency and distribution throughout the sample, while the interview responses are also analyzed, compared, and categorized. Following this, the questionnaire is disseminated, and the responses are linked and compared with the typology.

- The questionnaire

Questionnaires (McMillan and Schumacher 1993) include various tools in which participants answer written inquiries to gather their reactions, beliefs, and attitudes. The researcher selects or creates a suitable set of questions and asks participants to respond, typically in a format that allows them to mark their answers. Most survey research relies on questionnaires due to their benefits compared to other data collection techniques. A questionnaire (McMillan and Schumacher 1993) is cost-effective, features standardized questions, can guarantee anonymity, and can be tailored for particular purposes.

Questionnaires may utilize either statements or questions, but in every case, the participants respond to something that is written.

The initial stage in creating new questionnaires is to consider the justification. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) recommend using or modifying an existing tool instead of developing a new one. This approach saves time and resources and ensures that a tool with proven reliability and validity is utilized. The second step in implementing a questionnaire is to define and specify distinct objectives. The objectives are crafted based on the research issues/questions, illustrating how each piece of data will be applied. These objectives do not have to be rigid behavioral targets, but they must be specific enough to demonstrate how responses to each item will fulfill them. Babbie (1989), as cited in McMillan and Schumacher (1993), offers guidelines for formulating effective questions and statements.

Neuman (1997) lists the benefits of mail and self-administered questionnaires. This type of survey is inexpensive and can be managed by a single researcher. Questionnaires can be dispatched across vast geographical areas, allowing respondents to fill them out at their convenience. Anonymity is ensured with mail questionnaires, and the risk of interviewer bias is minimized. However, drawbacks include often low response rates and a lack of control over the circumstances in which the questionnaire is filled out. Additionally, some participants may provide incomplete responses. It is also impossible to observe the respondents' reactions to the questions, their physical traits, or the environment. Furthermore, the types of questions that a researcher can incorporate are restricted.

### **3.4 Analysis of data**

- Quantitative data analysis

According to Punch (2003), a descriptive analysis of all the main variables involves examining distribution statements. This analysis may include calculating appropriate means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions. It can be conducted for the entire

sample as well as for significant sub-groups within the sample, with results presented in tables. Additionally, bivariate relationships are explored between the variables, taking into account whether the variables are continuous or categorical. Generally, the following is recommended (Punch 200):

- If both variables are continuous, use the product-moment correlation.
- If one variable is continuous and the other is categorical and dichotomous (with only two categories), you can use either point biserial correlation or t-tests to compare the differences between group means.
- If one variable is continuous and the other is categorical with more than two categories, use a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to assess the differences between groups.
- If both variables are categorical, utilize contingency tables.

The examination of interconnected relationships among variables and the methods employed are influenced by the phrasing of the research questions. Generally, Punch (2003) supports the application of multiple linear regressions when analyzing the connections between variables. Quantitative data can be displayed in various formats, including graphs, charts, tables, and diagrams.

Before commencing the analysis of survey data, Punch (2003) advises undertaking several preparatory steps: data preparation, data cleaning, and data entry. Data cleaning pertains to organizing the dataset prior to the analysis phase. The researcher must proofread questionnaire responses and make decisions regarding vague responses, instances where a respondent may have selected more than one option, and any missing data. After this process, the questionnaire responses should be inputted into the computer for electronic data processing. Questions regarding the design, layout, and format must be addressed when getting the data ready for processing.

Statistical tools commonly utilized in survey data analyses fall into specific categories. These tools can be univariate, bivariate, or multivariate. Each survey item yields data known as a variable, as it can differ between respondents (Alreck and Settle 1995).

Univariate statistical tools analyze one variable at a time, while bivariate statistics incorporate two variables and illustrate the relationship between them. Multivariate statistics encompass several variables to reveal patterns of relationships among them. Almost all survey analyses employ univariate statistics, and nearly all also incorporate bivariate statistical methods. Multivariate statistical analysis is typically utilized in more complex survey analyses.

- The Interview

The focus group interview (FGI) is presented as a particular type of interview technique. Following this overview, two primary categories of focus group interviews will be discussed: internet focus groups and net-based focus groups, with special attention given to video conference focus groups.

The FGI is a non-quantitative method for gathering research data. It is termed a focus group interview due to its dual focus. Firstly, the participants share common characteristics, and secondly, the aim is to collect information regarding a specific topic. These discussions are typically steered by open-ended questions crafted by the researcher, prioritizing insights from group perspectives over exact details (Anderson and Kanuka 2003). In this study, it is employed for methodological triangulation, which will be elaborated on later in the chapter. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) describe the FGI as a variation of the ethnographic interview. This approach is used to gain a deeper comprehension of a problem or assess a new product, program, or idea by engaging a targeted group rather than interviewing individuals one at a time. According to Krueger (1994), focus group interviewing involves more than simply posing questions to a group; it requires thoughtful queries in a concentrated setting. It consists of similar individuals interacting in a series of discussions with the goal of collecting qualitative data around a specific topic (Krueger 1994).

A focus group is a unique interview environment (Neuman 1997), where a researcher convenes 6-12 individuals in a space with a moderator to discuss various issues

for one to two hours. The moderator presents topics and ensures that no single participant dominates the conversation. The moderator remains flexible, guides the discussion, and encourages interaction. A secretary assists the moderator by documenting responses in writing. Group members should share enough commonality to minimize conflict, but they should not be friends or relatives.

Focus groups are advantageous in exploratory research or when generating new hypotheses, questionnaire items, and results interpretation. They are effective for gathering insights on attitudes, perceptions, and opinions while also uncovering the intricacies of the issue at hand. Notably, focus groups provide a more thorough understanding of the subject and are capable of collecting valuable and credible qualitative data (Anderson and Kanuka 2003). The FGI approach is distinct from survey questionnaire methods. Alreck and Settle (1995) clarify how the focus group agenda functions. The questions listed on the agenda are broadly and loosely framed, allowing for a more adaptable agenda.

Discussions may lead to new topics for consideration, yielding additional data and ideas that may not have emerged in one-on-one interviews (Anderson and Kanuka 2003; Stewart and Shamdasani, 1998). The subjects and concerns on the focus group agenda do not need to be addressed in the order presented. Unlike survey questionnaires, focus group questions are not crafted for responses consisting of a single word or phrase. They are not rigidly phrased but are instead framed loosely. The moderator may approach the questioning in two methods. One method involves asking in a way that uncovers the participants' conclusions on the issue, followed by probing questions to understand the motivations behind their views. Alternatively, an approach can involve collecting information about the contextual situation first and then soliciting the final opinions that emerge from those circumstances.

The order of questions for the focus group should follow a clear principle to prevent confusion. It is important to have logical transitions from one topic to another. While some structure is necessary, the question schedule should allow for flexibility. It's crucial to be

adaptable to accommodate unexpected ideas or questions that participants may raise. After arranging the schedule of inquiries, it's important to consider how to recruit and select focus group participants. It's advisable to meticulously recruit and select focus group participants. According to Alreck and Settle (1995), focus group participants should be similar in one aspect and different in another. This is necessary to ensure a variety of perspectives, encourage interaction, and establish common ground. As a result, participants must be evaluated to ensure the group is demographically similar but diverse in terms of individual viewpoints (Alreck and Settle 1995).

The FGI technique, with its unique blend of advantages and disadvantages, is an adaptable tool for qualitative research. As Krueger (1994) notes, focus groups create a natural setting for people to interact, fostering dynamic group interactions. This environment helps participants relax and be more spontaneous, fostering an atmosphere of adaptability. The format of focus group discussions also allows moderators to explore unanticipated issues, encouraging a flexible approach to research. Additionally, focus group discussions provide quick outcomes and have high face validity, making the method easily comprehensible with findings presented in simple terms. Furthermore, focus groups allow researchers to increase sample sizes without significantly increasing interviewer time, promoting an open-minded approach to data collection.

Similarly, the FGI technique has its limitations. Krueger (1994) points out that focus groups give researchers less control, unlike individual interviews. Group interactions may lead to participants influencing the direction of the discussion, resulting in irrelevant diversions. Analyzing data becomes more challenging due to the social environment of group interactions. It is crucial to interpret comments within their context and avoid premature conclusions. Moreover, different groups exhibit varying characteristics; some may be lethargic, while others may be energetic. Additionally, assembling focus groups requires time and effort, as participants must coordinate and come to a designated place simultaneously for the discussion to occur in a conducive setting. Logistical difficulties might require offering incentives for individuals to participate.

The IFG Zoom interview is an alternative to traditional focus group interviews. The Internet Focus Group (IFG) is a chat-based interview where a moderator asks questions and participants respond via keyboard from remote locations. More advanced versions may involve voice or video communication. The main advantage of IFG is its cost-effectiveness and ability to connect people in different areas of India. However, a significant drawback is the reliance on keyboard input, which can disadvantage those with limited typing and written communication skills.

Internet focus groups (IFGs) have notable disadvantages compared to traditional focus groups. Greenbaum (2008) explains in his article that the group dynamics in IFGs are altered. Unlike traditional focus groups, where participant interaction fosters genuine dynamics, creating such an environment online is quite challenging. Additionally, it is impossible to replicate non-verbal cues in an online environment, and there is no way to ensure that the person at the computer is selected participant, or if they are fully engaged in the session. However, the online environment limits the moderator's influence due to the lack of face-to-face interaction, which could reduce potential biases. Despite these drawbacks, internet focus groups provide participants with a strong level of anonymity, creating a sense of comfort and relaxation as they operate from familiar surroundings. Net-based focus groups

The current study utilized synchronous audio and video-based focus groups as its qualitative data-gathering method. Specifically, the Video Conference Focus Group (VConf-FGI) was selected for collecting interview data. The sections on methodology and data collection provide a comprehensive description of this method, highlighting its advantages and limitations.

- Qualitative data analysis

In qualitative research, the analysis process starts with the collection of the first data set and continues alongside data gathering (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). Krueger and Casey (2000) describe focus group analysis as systematic, sequential, verifiable, and ongoing. A systematic analysis is intentional and methodical, rather than random, arbitrary, or impulsive. The strategy for analysis is documented, well understood,



and can be clearly communicated by every team member involved in the research. Since the analysis is sequential, it ensures that the outcomes accurately reflect what was shared in the focus groups. The investigation is deemed verifiable if another researcher can reach similar conclusions using the available documents and data. There must be sufficient data to constitute a trail of evidence:

1. Field notes
2. Recordings
3. Oral summary

In focus group research, the moderator team plays a crucial role in discussing key points during each group session debriefing, often immediately following the session. If transcripts are used, they can also be reviewed at this stage. Unlike quantitative research, where data analysis begins only after all the required information has been collected, focus group analysis is to be done concurrently with data collection. The analysis begins with the first focus group, and each next group is investigated and compared to earlier ones as the study progresses (Krueger and Casey 2000). There are several foundations for data collection as well as analysis. These are transcripts, tapes, notes and memories, depending on the purpose of the study. If the analysis is based on the transcript (Krueger and Casey 2000), the procedure is as follows:

The investigator reviews the transcript, which is an unedited typed version of the tape recording, and then makes notes, codes, and divides the content into sections or develops categories. A complete verbatim transcription is standard for focus groups (Lee and Fielding, 2004; Potter, 2004; Pidgeon and Henwood, 2004). This process is labor-intensive, with an estimated time requirement of around 8-10 hours for each hour of tape. It may take even more time if paralinguistic features are also included (Pidgeon and Henwood, 2004). Potter (2004) suggests that a ratio of 1 hour of tape to 20 hours spent on transcription is not unusual. Once the transcription is finished, the transcripts are usually printed with wide margins to allow for additional notes and comments during the review stage. Colored pens or scissors might be employed to cut out and highlight sections

pertinent to the research (Krueger and Casey, 2000). After collecting insights from different audience groups in the study, a report is generated. This report can be organized thematically or structured according to the focus group questions. When analyzing the recordings, the researcher listens to each focus group tape and creates a summarized account that captures the most significant parts of the discussions. The analysis also depends on field notes, which may be supplemented by audio or video recordings. The audio and video recordings serve as a backup for clarification of the notes. The last resource for analysis is memory, which necessitates significant skill and experience. As noted by Krueger and Casey (2000), there is a considerable risk of error when the individual is not a trained moderator.

Two primary data analysis methods that are suggested for focus group examination include the long table method and the computer approach. The long-table method involves the basic elements of cutting, sorting, and arranging by comparing and contrasting. The computer approach employs three specific techniques: cut and paste; computer sorting, coding, and macros; and qualitative data analysis software programs like Ethnography (Rabiee, 2004). Both the long-table and computer methods are thoroughly detailed in Krueger and Casey (2000). Presenting qualitative data may utilize taxonomies, maps, lists, flowcharts, organizational charts, causal diagrams, and various lists and grids (Neuman, 2000).

### **3.5 Choice of Methodology**

This part outlines the reasoning behind adopting a mixed-methods approach that incorporates both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in this research. Certain important factors were considered here, and these are presented in the following discussion.

- **Triangulation**

Flick (2002) refers to integrating quantitative and qualitative methods in one study as ‘methodological triangulation’. He distinguishes two types: within-method and between-method. The within-method strategy might use different sub-scales to measure an item in a questionnaire, whereas the between-method strategy combines the questionnaire

with a semi-structured interview.

- Personal rationale for choice of methodology

The combined quantitative and qualitative methodology was found to be suitable for this study as it deals with a phenomenon that not only lends itself to quantitative enquiry but also to qualitative exploration. The study describes both personal and shared experiences of women involved in higher education management. To describe these experiences fully and bring out their uniqueness, there needs to be free, open and standardized responses to allow for easy comparison, consequently, the use of both focus groups and the questionnaire.

The significance of studying women in leadership and management role -a critical analysis of leadership Approaches, decision-making and innovation by women. Research on women in leadership and management has mainly focused on women in business, politics and educational management. There is a lack of studies that have examined the complexities of women's higher education management experience in a transforming organization, particularly at an academic, senior managerial level. The usefulness of this study is in the contribution it will make to the understanding of how women experience leading and managing a position in the context of the challenges presented by a transforming working environment. The experiences shared by these women will serve as a frame of reference for other women in leadership and management roles and those aspiring to attain high positions in management. It will also contribute to the reformulation or amelioration of existing organizational policies regarding leadership and management.

### **3.6 Design of the Present Study**

In this portion, we outline the practical techniques that were utilized in this study.

- Introduction

The research was conducted using a cross-sectional survey approach that incorporated both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) data collection methods. We employed a closed-ended questionnaire with open-ended inquiries, as well as a semi-structured focus group interview to collect information from female managers and leaders from large, medium, and small organizations.

- The survey

A total of twenty-seven out of thirty female managers participated in the survey. The study focused on educational institutions that had merged with others, aiming to enhance communication and maintain stability. The research expected that individuals at these locations would not be significantly affected by the changes resulting from the mergers. The selection process took into account the size and type of organization, aiming for large organizations that were representative of the country's demographics. The study targeted female managers who had held leadership roles for over six years in academic departments and possessed five different types of leadership styles, including traditionally male-dominated disciplines.

- Selection of participants and the role of the researcher

Due to the limited pool of participants, purposeful selection was used instead of random sampling. This approach aimed to select small groups or individuals with substantial knowledge about the phenomena of interest. Participants were chosen based on their job roles and tenure, specifically targeting female leaders of various departments who had been in their positions for at least two years. The focus group interview participants were selected from a similar pool to those who completed the questionnaire, with special attention given to including heads of traditionally male-oriented disciplines. The researcher's role in the survey involved distributing questionnaires sent via postal mail, conducting follow-ups, and checking on non-respondents.

- Locating participants

In small and mid-size organizations, the participants were chosen from retained organizations that were not merging with other institutions. The study included three organizations in India, comprising working women with different roles from junior level to senior executive positions. The participant selection process from the large organization was meticulously carried out. It began with a comprehensive search of the selected company's website. The identified individuals were then contacted via email, provided with detailed information about the study, and warmly invited to participate. In some instances, one person was located and then asked to recommend other suitable individuals, ensuring

a diverse and representative participant pool.

This section meticulously details the development of the data collection tool used for the survey in the current study. The process, including its piloting and administration, was carried out with utmost care and attention to detail. Issues of reliability and validity were also thoroughly discussed and addressed, instilling confidence in the study's robustness. A sixteen-page, structured, pre-coded survey comprising twelve sections labeled A-L, with a mix of closed-ended and open-ended questions, was created for the study. Section A of the survey was created to gather participants' demographic information. Section B focused on obtaining information about the relevant department, including the number of students, teaching staff, female leaders, male leaders, full-time and part-time staff, as well as the number of support staff/non-academic staff. Section C gathered information on participants' career preparation and advancement opportunities. Collection of data began in December 2023 and was completed in the first week of February of the year 2024. To reiterate, data were collected using two methods: a pre-coded questionnaire and the VConf-FGI.

The questionnaire was used for quantitative data collection, which included, among others, personal demographic information, career profile/prior experience, skills, tasks, roles and responsibilities, job challenges and strategies for dealing with them, perceptions and role expectations. Questionnaires were posted overland to the participants towards the end of Feb 2023 and responses were received during March 2024. The response rate was 87 percent.

- Data analysis

In this research, we utilized the SAS/STAT statistical package, version 9.1, to examine the data obtained from the questionnaire responses. We received twenty-three completed questionnaires and recorded their responses. We used data analysis and presentation methods for the quantitative data. Each question in the questionnaire represented a personal characteristic or the respondent's perception of a managerial issue and, therefore, was treated as a distinct variable. The analyses conducted on the responses

to these variables included the following:

1. One-way frequencies: exploratory frequency tables on every questionnaire item.
2. Combined frequency tables: combined frequency tables for each section (D-L) ranked according to sum totals, calculated for each item within an aspect.

The total sums were computed by adding up the frequencies in the two neighboring categories that were most preferred in the summary table of sub-items of each section mean: standard deviations, as well as the minimum and maximum values for each of the topics covered in sections D-L of the different managerial issues relationships. This also involved cross-tabulating the subsets of the items within sections D-L of the survey's demographic variables, such as age, years of experience as leaders or managers, and affiliation with their specific institution.

- The purpose of each strategy is discussed below

The survey data was examined using one-way frequency tables for each question. To start, univariate one-way frequency tables were created for each variable, 'categorizing responses based on the specific options for each question, such as 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' or 'single', 'married', and 'divorced'. This initial step aimed to validate the data and identify and correct any incorrect responses. For instance, if a response of 7' was found for any 5-point scale questions in sections D-L, the specific response of the participants was titrated and verified by referring to the participant's questionnaire. A response of '7' falls outside the 'h' 'range of responses, which should only be between '1' and '5' for the five-point rating scale questions.

Additionally, one-way frequency tables were calculated for the demographic variables, questions 1-33, to describe the sample population of women in leadership roles. These tables were created for the entire sample population.

- Reliability and validity

Reliability, as defined by McMillan and Schumacher (1993), pertains to the consistency of measurement, meaning the degree to which the results are consistent across different versions of the same tool or during different data collection instances. An instrument with high reliability (Cates 1985) can be relied upon to yield the same or very

similar results when administered multiple times to the same individual or when given to two individuals with similar skills and experience. In order to ensure consistent measurement in the context of present study, the researcher administered the instruments to individuals with comparable educational and professional backgrounds.

The extent to which scientific explanations of phenomena align with the realities of the world is known as validity (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). A measurement tool (Cates, 1985) is considered valid if it accurately measures or represents what it purports to measure or represent. This study utilized the survey instrument to evaluate the real-life experiences of female organizational managers or leaders. Therefore, all the questions on the survey were linked to this specific area of interest. The questionnaires were sent by mail to all participants.

In quantitative research, reliability pertains to the instrument's consistency and the test's administration in the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993, p. 385). The survey instrument was administered to all participants during the same time frame to enhance reliability.

- The Interview

Sample population and sample size.

As previously stated in the survey, Section (3.4.2), the participant pool for this study was not large enough to use random sampling methods, even though randomization is favored as it reduces selection bias (Krueger and Casey, 2000). Therefore, participants were selected using 'purposeful' sampling, a method for selecting small groups or individuals who are likely to know and know about the phenomena of interest (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993).

The participants were chosen based on their positions and years of service in those roles. All female heads of academic departments had served in that capacity for a minimum of two years. For the focus group interview, participants were chosen from a pool similar to those who had completed the questionnaire. However, efforts were made to ensure that managers of traditionally male-dominated disciplines were included. Nine women took part in the VConf-FGI.

The researcher's role in the interviews was moderator and facilitator. Her responsibilities included coordinating the group, ensuring that participants understood expectations, guiding the discussion, and keeping it focused while allowing participants to discuss the topics thoroughly.

- Instrument development



The VConf-FGI's questioning route (Krueger, 1994) consists of complete sentence questions. This format was chosen to ensure consistent questioning and efficient analysis. The line of questioning was developed based on crucial issues critical to the questionnaire that required further elaboration and in-depth exploration, including career planning, motivation for current job acceptance, job challenges, required job skills and abilities, and perceived barriers to advancement. The questioning route was constructed with the study objectives in mind, and efforts were made to directly relate the questions to these objectives (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). No more than three were created to address each issue, and only one open-ended question was asked where necessary. All questions were semi-structured to accommodate individual responses.

After constructing the questions, experienced individuals reviewed them to identify potential problems and ensure bias-free, such as leading questions, ambiguity, or technique (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993). This study sent the line of questioning which was shared with experts experienced in focus group interviewing for feedback interviewing for feedback, which was incorporated into the final questioning route. This final version was pre-tested on a small group of individuals with similar characteristics to the research participants.

- Data collection

The VConf-FGIs took place in March 2024.

All the individuals participating in the VConf-FGIs were personally invited to take part. The researcher called each selected institution for mid-size organizations to initiate the process. Faculty officers or managers from each department were asked to provide information about female presence within the faculty and the contact details of these positions. Later, the researcher conducted brief interviews with each leader to assess their appropriateness and willingness to take part in the study. Newly appointed executives were omitted as they lacked managerial experience to provide valuable data. Only those with at least two years of experience were ultimately invited by email to participate in the VConf-FGI. A total of nine women took part in the VConf-FGIs.

One participant attended this session because her schedule did not allow her to participate in the other sessions. She was scheduling the date, which involved finding a weekday when the researcher would also be available. Then, permission was requested from each organization's video conference facility manager to use the facilities. Once availability was confirmed, this information was communicated to the participants, and an email reminder was sent two weeks before the session. One week before the session, the interview schedule was emailed to each participant so she could familiarize herself with the topics to be discussed. This ensured that everyone was fully prepared for the interview. A trial call was arranged before each interview to check the link between the centres. This step was crucial because it was when problems could be identified and resolved. The test dates were scheduled and provisionally confirmed about a week before the final confirmation to allow for any necessary changes. All the interview sessions were held in the morning and lasted two hours. Each session started at the same time, so it was necessary to synchronize and communicate the exact time of the link to everyone involved. The original plan was to conduct three VConf-FGI sessions. However, as previously mentioned, it was impossible to accommodate one of the participants from a large organization on any planned dates. A separate session was arranged for her individually. As a result, there were four sessions.

- Semi-Structured Interview

Moustakas (1994) stated that the semi-structured interview is the primary method for collecting data in phenomenological studies. This research posed two general inquiries: "What has been your experience in advancing to partner in a corporate firm?" and "What

circumstances have impacted your journey to partnership?" Further questions would then be asked to understand each participant's experience thoroughly.

A subsequent interview is conducted to gather additional relevant information that participants may not have provided during the initial two interviews. These interviews also aid the researcher in clarifying the information collected. Follow-up interviews are a crucial part of the hermeneutic circle, in which the researcher integrates additional data to reassess assumptions, interpretations, and personal biases to develop a new understanding of meaning (Peoples, 2021).

### **3.7 Procedures**

Participants in the study were first contacted by phone to introduce the researcher and offer an overview of the research study and interview procedure. This initial contact was followed by a formal email. Before gathering data, each participant received an informed consent form, allowing the interview to be recorded electronically. Two weeks before the semi-structured interview, participants were sent pre-interview questions. They were provided one week to complete and submit the questionnaire. The questionnaire results were intended to assist the researcher in formulating prompts for the extended interview. However, these prompts were expected to be adjusted or discarded based on the participants' sharing of experiences, as Moustakas (1994) noted.

After setting up interview appointments, the participants received the pre-interview questions via email. All interviews were conducted over Zoom video conferencing, with each session intended to last 90 minutes and be recorded for subsequent analysis. According to Seidman (2019), interviews shorter than 90 minutes may not allow participants to fully recall their experiences, while interviews longer than two hours may be too taxing for participants. Following the advice of Moustakas (1994), the researcher

aimed to establish a relaxed and trusting atmosphere by starting with casual conversation and then transitioning to semi-structured, open-ended questions.

The researcher took detailed notes during each interview and made reflective notes immediately afterwards, including each interview's date and start/end times. Each participant received separate digital and physical files marked with pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. Digital data was stored on a computer with a password, and notes were kept in a locked file cabinet. The research findings were intended to incorporate data from the re-interview, semi-structured interview, and follow-up interview. The researcher's notes during and after each interview were also part of the data analysis process.

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain that qualitative validity involves the researcher verifying the accuracy of the findings using specific procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach remains consistent across different researchers and projects.

Creswell and Poth (2018) propose eight strategies for ensuring validity in qualitative research. These strategies, ranked from most to least commonly used, are (a) triangulation; (b) member checking; (c) use of detailed descriptions; (d) disclosure of researcher bias; (e) presentation of opposing or conflicting information; (f) prolonged engagement and observation in the field; (g) peer review or debriefing; and (h) external auditor review.

The researcher followed Creswell and Poth's (2018) recommendations and primarily employed two validation strategies to enhance reader confidence in the study's accuracy. First, the researcher crafted detailed descriptions to portray the participants, their surroundings, and the phenomenon under study. Second, member checking was used, wherein each participant was given a transcript of the interview for review, enabling them

to confirm accuracy and suggest any modifications to improve the precision of the transcripts.

### **3.9 Limitations of Research**

This research aims to improve understanding of role of women in leadership and management practices in India and to explore the differences in their approaches to innovation and decision-making compared to men. Acknowledging that both genders have distinct skill sets, and with the advancements in education, women have the potential to become influential leaders and significantly enhance organizations. Due to the lack of representation of women in leadership and management positions, the sample size needs to be limited, making random sampling impractical as it would further reduce the already limited pool of potential participants. As a result, the findings may have limited generalizability. The results should be preliminary and suggestive of potential trends or relationships. Rueger and Casey (2000) propose that the purpose of focus groups is to comprehend broader samples, which are required to validate the trends observed in this constrained dataset. This study utilizes quantitative and qualitative methods and encompasses participants from diverse demographics, which should yield insights that are adequately generalizable to the demographic of women managers.

### **3.10 Summary**

This section outlines the reasoning behind selecting a quantitative approach, along with a combined quantitative and qualitative data collection methodology. We explain the survey method as the chosen non-experimental approach and the creation and preliminary testing of both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools. We describe the recruitment methods used to collect, analyze, and present data. The next chapter will present a discussion of the results.

## CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

### **4.1 Introduction**

Data analysis is crucial in transforming raw data into meaningful insights within the academic and research sphere. This section represents a significant milestone in our quest to unravel the intricacies of our research area. These pages will explore the complex data layers, utilizing statistical methods, computational approaches, and critical thinking to extract valuable insights and reach well-informed conclusions.

Pursuing knowledge and comprehension lies at the core of every scholarly endeavor. This section will carefully examine our data collection to uncover latent patterns, trends, and connections. We aim to reveal the underlying truths hidden within the data through a methodical and thorough approach, shedding light on phenomena that may have previously evaded our understanding.

Data analysis involves many different stages and methods. Every step, including data cleaning and preparation, data exploration, and the use of inferential statistics, is crucial for our understanding of the research area. As we go through these steps, we take a comprehensive approach, recognizing the interaction between theory and empirical evidence and the iterative nature of the analysis process.

Furthermore, this section demonstrates the significant impact of data-driven inquiry. In a time of abundance of information, the ability to use data for scholarly inquiry has become essential. By using advanced analytical methods and tapping into a large amount of available data, we can uncover new insights, question existing paradigms, and contribute to the constantly evolving body of knowledge.

As we begin this intellectual journey, we must acknowledge the data analysis's potential limitations. From data quality and validity issues to the ethical considerations surrounding data collection and analysis, we navigate through various complexities while maintaining a solid commitment to intellectual integrity and scholarly rigor.

This chapter guides us through the complexities of data to obtain a deeper understanding of the research questions. Using data analysis, we aim to clarify the details of our research area and equip future scholars with the necessary tools to navigate the expanding knowledge landscape.

In the preceding chapters, the researcher outlined the background of the study on women in management and leadership roles. This involved an in-depth analysis of women's leadership styles, decision-making, and innovation, utilizing quantitative analysis, computational techniques, and theoretical frameworks. Women are typically underrepresented in management and leadership positions. The study's motivation was discussed, and the literature on leadership and management in the education sector was presented. This included statistical data on women's underrepresentation in professional and non-professional roles, challenges faced by women in educational leadership in higher education, barriers to women's advancement, and the impact of 'new managerialism' on women in management and leadership. This chapter describes the research methodology and design of the current study. The rationale for adopting a mixed-methods research methodology, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, was also explained.

This chapter discusses and analyzes the findings from the survey questionnaires and the video conference focus group interviews. A summary of the main findings from both data collection methods follows.

It is essential to clarify that this study is preliminary and based on a limited dataset. Therefore, any results obtained from the analyses should be considered exploratory and

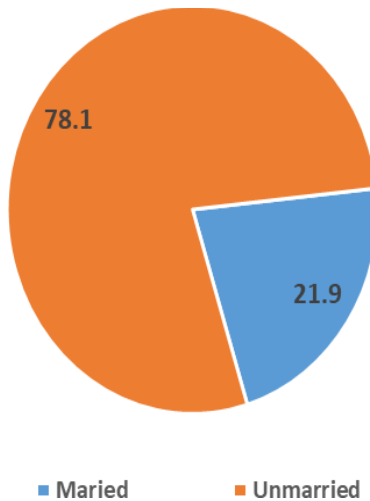
suggestive of potential trends or patterns. Larger samples will be necessary to validate the trends identified in the current dataset. In certain instances within this analysis, comparisons will be made with Seagren et al.'s (1994) research on chairpersons in community colleges. Seagren et al.'s study (2003) explored four aspects of chairpersons' professional lives, including personal traits, responsibilities, challenges, and strategies. The study involved 300 academic leaders, managers, and department heads in India. Some of the issues examined in this study, such as challenges, strategies, role perceptions, and skills usage, are similar to those explored by Rishi, (2016). Therefore, an effort is made to identify consistencies or inconsistencies in the findings of the two studies, regarding the common issues mentioned above. Relevant cross-references are made with findings from other studies and, specifically, with the qualitative component of the study. The findings from the qualitative part of the study are compared to those of the survey and cross-referenced with similar studies in the literature, particularly Gupton's and Slick's (1996) study of 300 randomly selected female administrators in public school education in the United States. These women shared their everyday experiences as women in leadership positions in education (1996).

## **4.2 Presentation of Survey Findings**

- Sample Characteristics and Demographics

This study encompassed a diverse sample of 310 respondents from various sectors in India, with a primary focus on education, business, and public administration. The sample composition reflects a deliberate effort to capture a representative cross-section of the workforce, particularly emphasizing women in leadership and management roles.





*Figure 5: What is the marital status of working women?*

A survey on the marital status of working women revealed that 78.1 % are married, while the remaining is single. This indicates that a significant majority of working women balance both professional and marital responsibilities. Understanding this demographic can help organizations develop better support systems and policies that tackle the specific challenges encountered by married working women, while also considering the needs of their single counterparts.

Age Distribution: The age distribution of respondents spanned several brackets, providing insights across different career stages:

- 20-24 years: 243 respondents (78%)
- 25-30 years: 35 respondents (11%)
- 31-35 years: 11 respondents (4%)
- 36-40 years: 11 respondents (4%)
- Over 40 years: 10 respondents (3%)

This age distribution highlights a significant representation of early-career professionals, with a substantial proportion of respondents in their 20s. This demographic

Skew gives valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of the emerging workforce regarding leadership and gender roles.

**Gender Composition:** The study included both male and female participants to gain a comprehensive perspective:

- Female respondents: 196 (63%)
- Male respondents: 115 (37%)

This gender distribution ensures a strong representation of women's voices while also including male perspectives for comparison and contrast.

**Sectoral Distribution:** Respondents were drawn from three primary sectors:

- Business: 157 respondents (50.5%)
- Education: 134 respondents (43%)
- Public Administration: 20 respondents (6.5%)

This distribution allows for cross-sector comparisons and identification of industry-specific trends in women's leadership.

**Educational Background:** All respondents held at least a bachelor's degree, with a significant proportion pursuing or having completed postgraduate studies. This high level of educational attainment reflects the focus on professional and managerial roles within the sample.

**Leadership Experience:** Among the female respondents in leadership positions:

- 4 out of 6 women had held leadership roles for over 6 years
- 1 had been in a leadership role for less than 3 years
- 1 had less than 1 year of leadership experience

This distribution provides insights from both seasoned and newer female leaders.

**Organizational Context:** The study included respondents from organizations of varying sizes:

- Large enterprises (250+ employees): 1 organization
- Medium-sized enterprises (50-249 employees): 1 organization
- Small enterprises (10-49 employees): 3 organizations

This diverse organizational representation allows for analysis of how company size might influence women's leadership opportunities and experiences.

Marital Status: Of the working women in the sample:

- 78.1% were married
- 21.9% were single

This data point provides context for understanding the challenges of work-life balance experienced by women in leadership roles.

The sample characteristics demonstrate a balanced representation across age groups, sectors, and organizational sizes, with a strong focus on women in professional roles. This diverse sample allows for a comprehensive analysis of experiences of women in leadership and management positions across different contexts in India. The predominance of younger respondents also offers meaningful insights into the changing perceptions and aspirations of the emerging workforce regarding gender roles in leadership.

- Participants' characteristics and background data

In this part, the researcher provides an overview of biographical information about the participants' personal and academic histories, work specifics, department characteristics, and prospects for career preparation and advancement.

**Table 3: Description Age of Respodents**

| <b>Age of Respondent</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <b>20-24</b>             | 243           | 78%               |
| <b>25-30</b>             | 35            | 11%               |

|               |     |      |
|---------------|-----|------|
| <b>31-35</b>  | 11  | 4%   |
| <b>36-40</b>  | 11  | 4%   |
| <b>Over40</b> | 10  | 3%   |
| <b>Total</b>  | 310 | 100% |

- Age and Curriculum of Respondents

The respondents' ages were distributed across various age brackets, with most falling within the 20-24 age group, comprising 78% of the total respondents. Those aged 25-30 accounted for 11% of the respondents, while individuals aged 31-35, 36-40, and over 40 each represented 4% and 3% of the total, respectively. In total, 310 respondents were included in the analysis, reflecting a comprehensive representation of age demographics across the sample.

**Table 4: Description Curriculum of Respondents**

| <b>Curriculum</b>            | <b>Male</b> | <b>Female</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|------------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Business</b>              | 84          | 73            | 157          |
| <b>Education</b>             | 21          | 113           | 134          |
| <b>Public administration</b> | 10          | 10            | 20           |
| <b>Total</b>                 | 115         | 196           | 311          |

- Distribution of Gender and Curriculum Among Respondents

The distribution of gender among respondents varied across different academic curriculum. In the Business curriculum, including 84 male and 73 female respondents, totaling 157. In the Education curriculum, there were 21 male and 113 female respondents, totaling 134. The Public Administration curriculum had 10 male and 10 female respondents, totaling 20. Overall, the total number of male respondents across all curricula

was 115, while the total number of female respondents was 196, resulting in a total of 311 respondents across all academic disciplines.

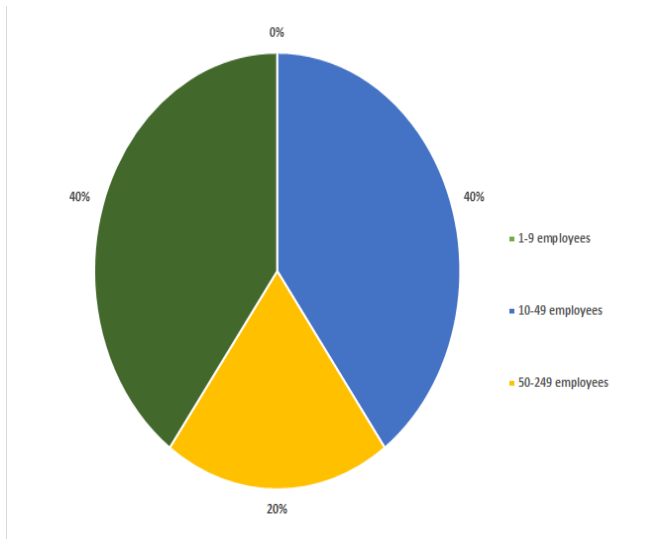
*Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Gender-Role Orientation and Gender*

| <b>Orientation</b>  | <b>Women</b> | <b>Men</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Contemporary</b> | 40           | 68         | 108          |
| <b>Traditional</b>  | 19           | 32         | 31           |
| <b>Total</b>        | 59           | 100        | 159          |

The distribution of respondents by gender-role orientation and gender provide valuable insights into the attitudes and perspectives prevalent among women and men. Among the respondents categorized as having a contemporary gender-role orientation, women accounted for 40 individuals, while men constituted a larger portion with 68 individuals, resulting in a total of 108 respondents. Conversely, in the traditional gender-role orientation category, women comprised 19 individuals, and men represented 32 individuals, totaling 31 respondents. These findings suggest that a larger proportion of both men and women align with contemporary gender-role orientations compared to traditional ones. The difference in numbers between men and women within each category highlights potential differences in societal expectations and individual beliefs regarding gender roles. This data underscores the importance of understanding and addressing gender-role attitudes to promote gender equality and inclusivity in various contexts

It is crucial to analyze the responses to particular questionnaire items to comprehend the students' wide range of attitudes. In the appendices, we offer a breakdown of the data for each variable and the relevant statistics for each item. This data helps to clarify and enhance the results of the hypothesis tests.

Company-Profiles: All the organizations examined operate within the education sector and have been established in the market for more than 21 years. Moreover, the majority of these companies consist of one large firm and one small enterprise, with only one classified as a medium-sized company.



*Figure 6: Company Size*

As depicted in Figure 7, most of the female respondents have held leadership roles for over 6 years (4 out of 6 women), while the remaining two women have been leaders for less than 3 years and 1 year, respectively. Additionally, they acknowledge the existence of other female leaders, although they constitute less than 10% across the companies investigated.

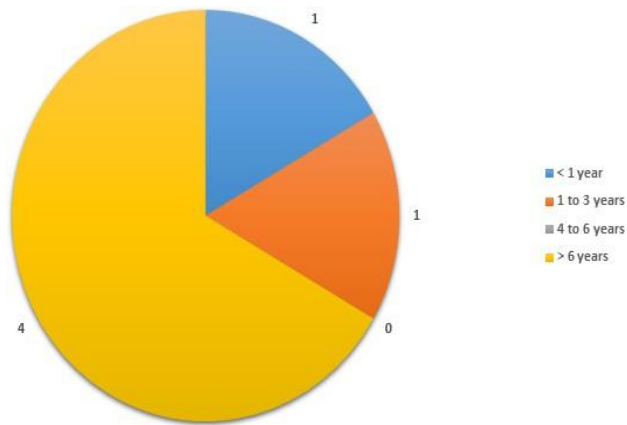


Figure 7: Time in Leadership Position

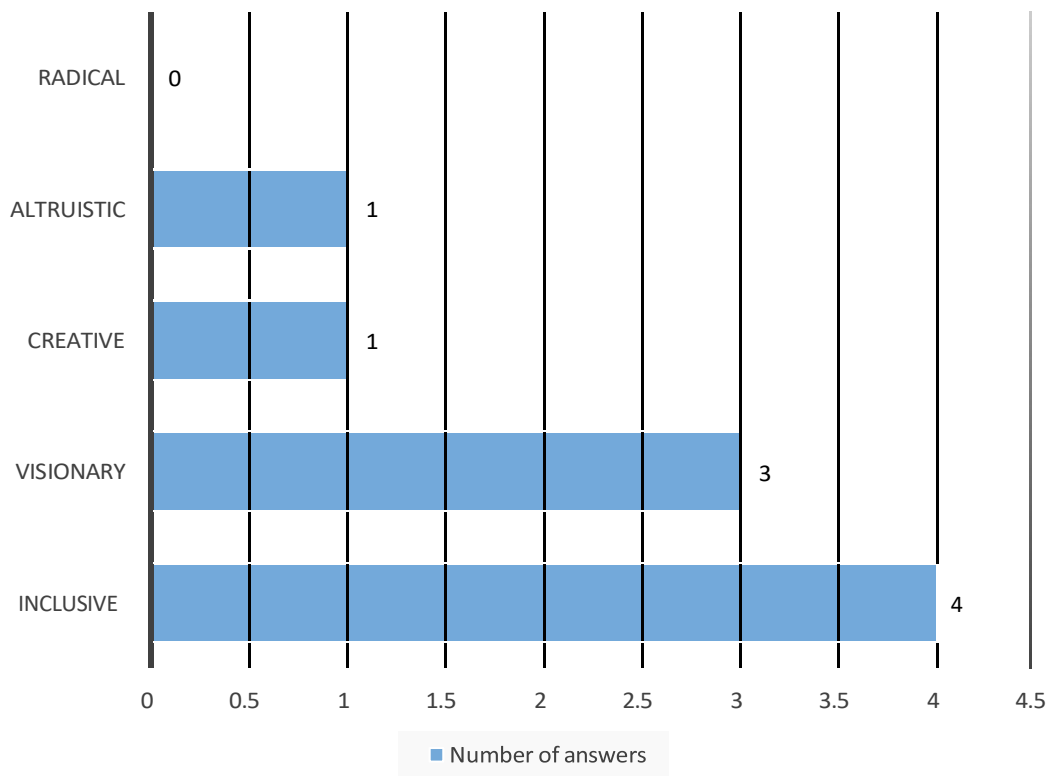
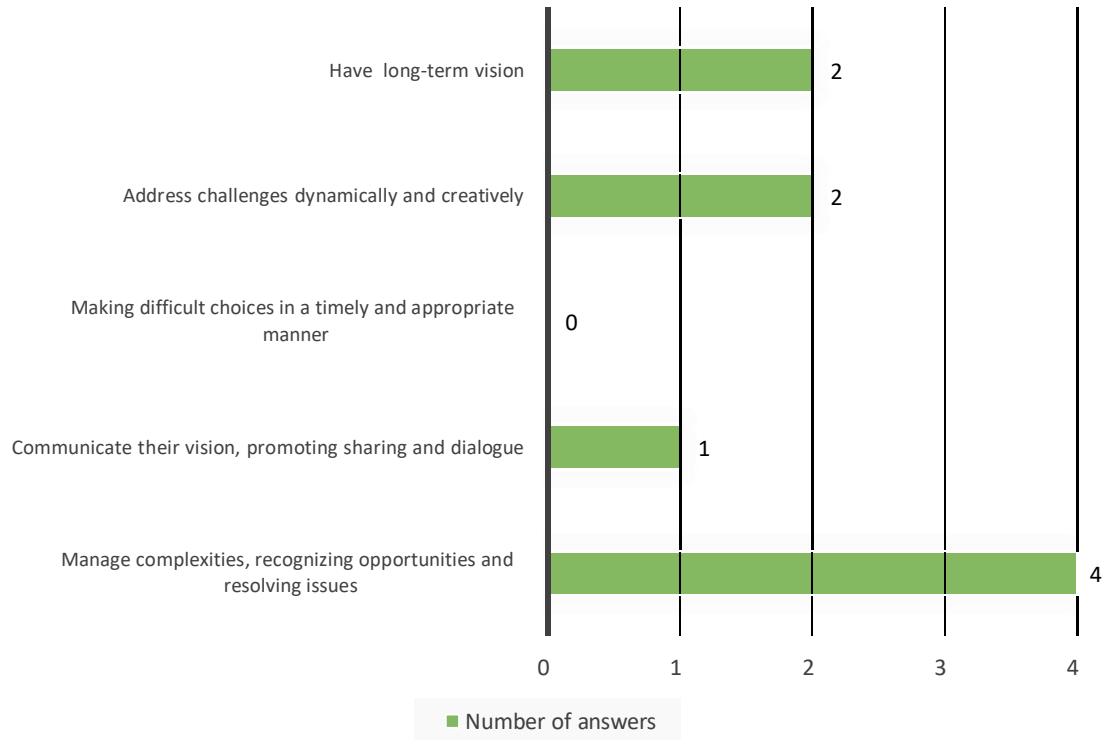


Figure 8: Sustainability Leadership Style

The leadership styles favoured by the female participants in the study who embrace sustainability are inclusive and visionary, each being chosen four and three times,

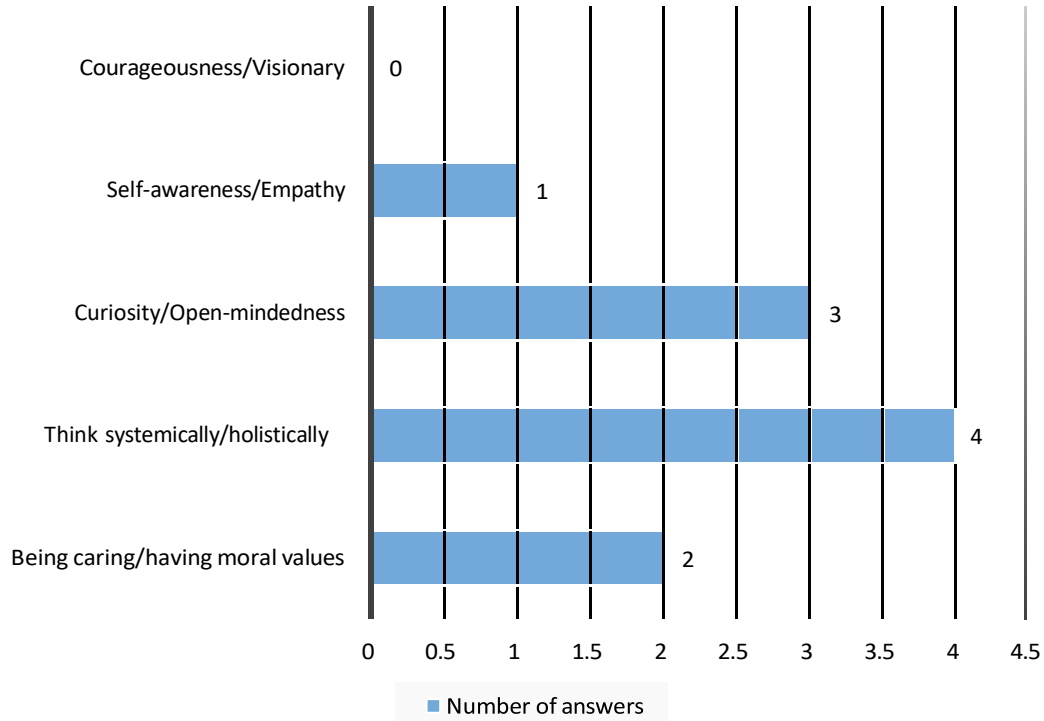
respectively (refer to Figure 8). In contrast, the altruistic and creative options were only chosen once, while the radical style was not chosen at all.



*Figure 9: Sustainability Leader Skills*

Most of the women leaders who were surveyed (4 out of 6) deem the capability to navigate complexities crucial in steering the company towards a sustainability-focused approach (Figure 9). Additionally, having a long-term vision and the ability to dynamically and creatively address challenges are also regarded as significant skills, with these options selected twice each. In contrast, less emphasis is placed on effectively communicating vision and making timely and appropriate difficult choices, chosen only once and not at all, respectively.

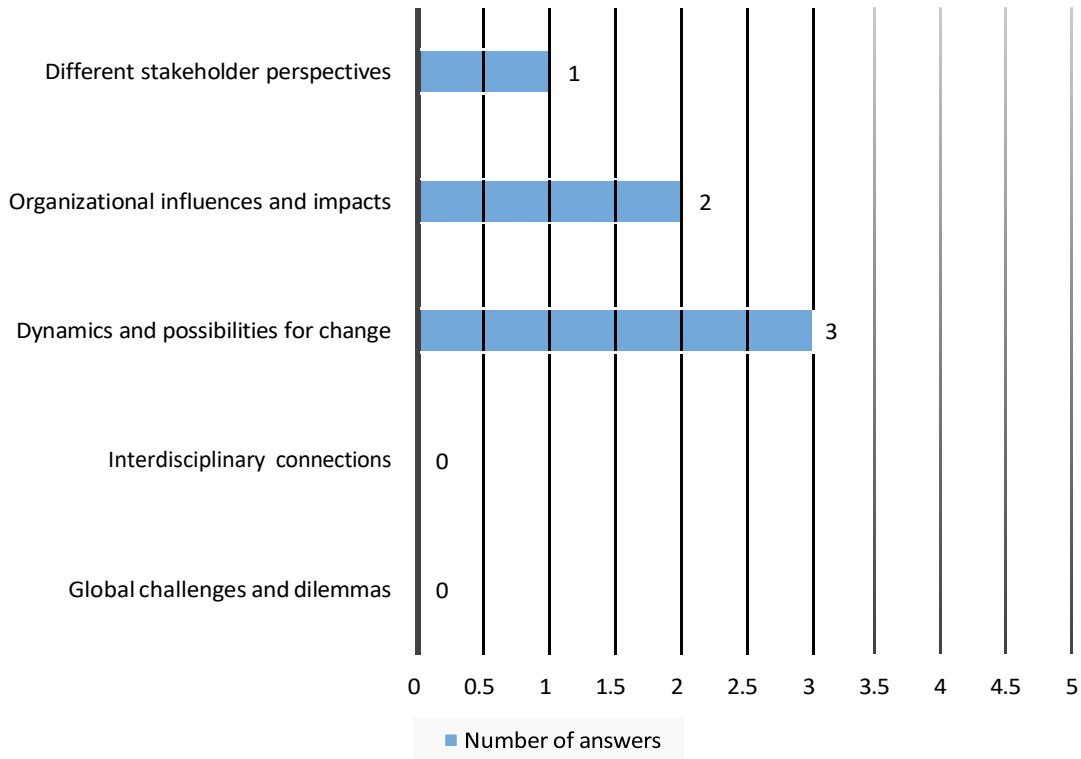




*Figure 10: Sustainability Characteristics*

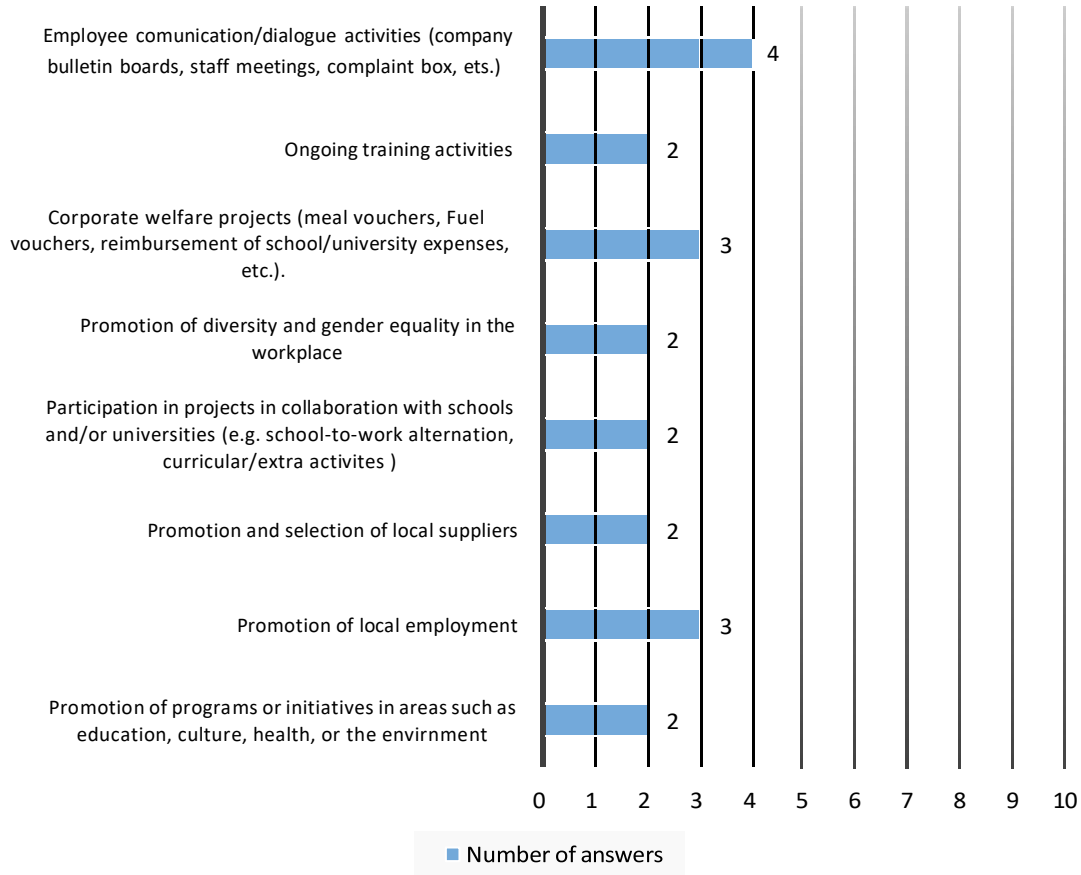
Based on Figure 10, the analysis shows that among the traits that define the sustainability approach adopted by female leaders in the companies surveyed, thinking systematically and holistically, along with curiosity and open-mindedness, are the main most common, selected 4 times and 3 times, respectively. In contrast, being caring/having

moral values and self-awareness/empathy were chosen only 2 and 1 times, respectively, while courageousness/visionary was never selected.



*Figure 11: Knowledge Area*

In conclusion, half of the surveyed female leaders emphasized the significance of understanding the dynamics and opportunities for change as essential for a sustainable leader, whereas two out of six women leaders underscored the importance of comprehending organizational influences and impacts (Figure 11). “Conversely, knowledge of diverse stakeholder perspectives and awareness of global challenges and dilemmas were each cited only once.



*Figure 12: Social Activities*

Figure 12 shows that every female leader from the five companies surveyed participates in minimum one of the social activities described in the questionnaire. Employee communication/dialogue activities are the most commonly implemented initiative, with four out of six women leaders incorporating them. Three women leaders

each engage in corporate welfare projects and promote local employment, while at least two female leaders support the other activities.

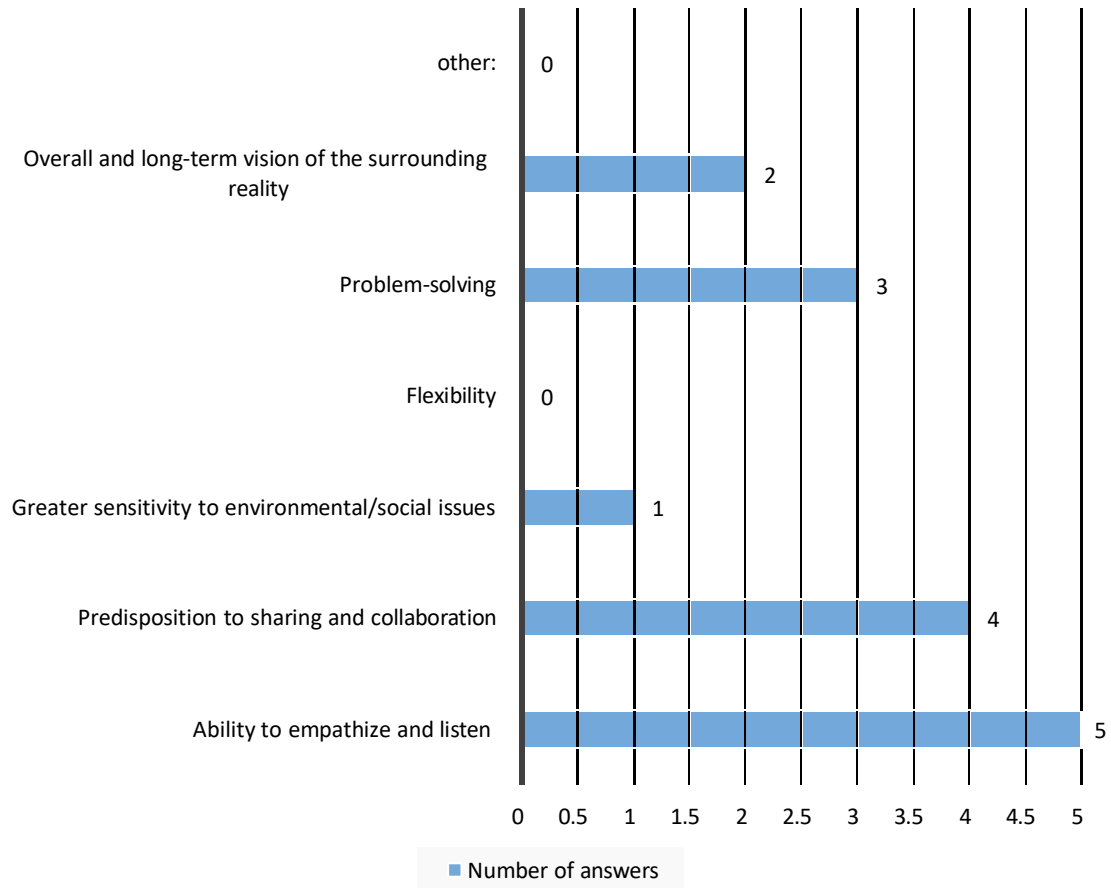
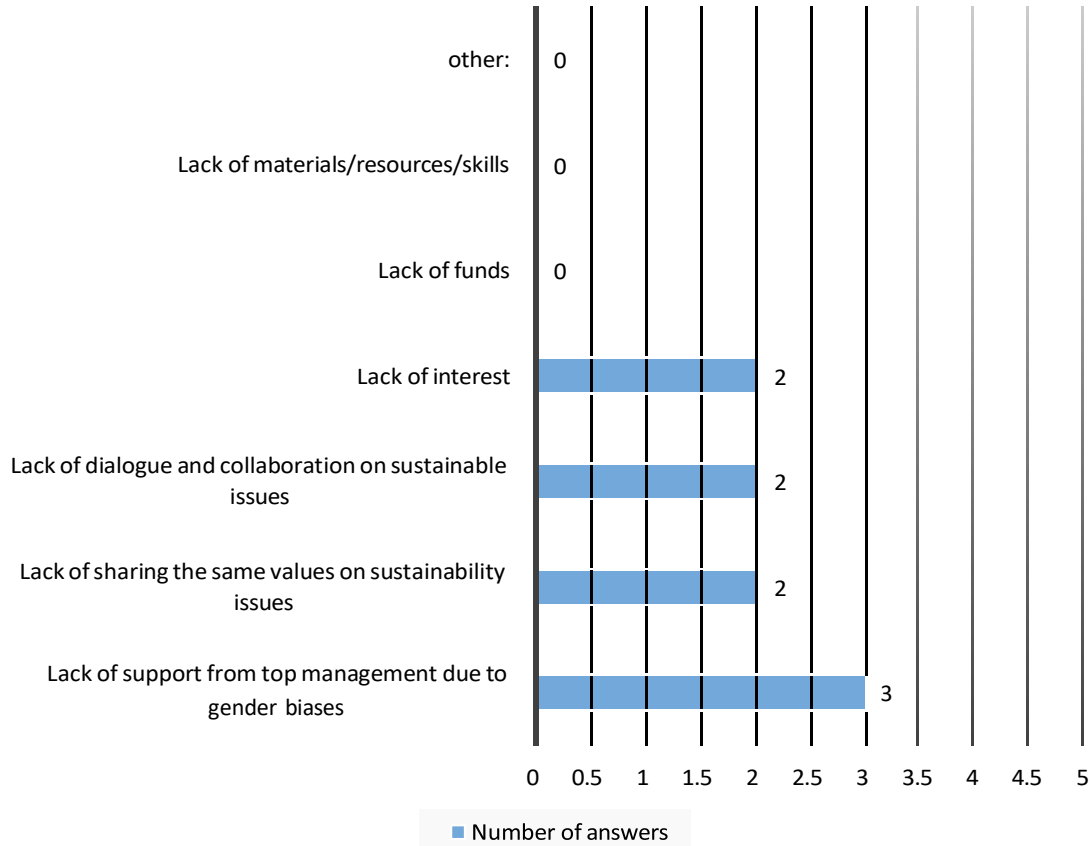


Figure 13: Sustainability Female Leader Attributes

As illustrated in Figure 13, it's clear that female leaders in the five surveyed companies exhibit distinct attributes like problem-solving skills, ability to empathize and listen, and flexibility, as outlined in the questionnaire. Notably, initiatives related to fostering employee empathy emerge as the most implemented, with four out of five women leaders adopting them. Two women leaders each focus on long-term vision of the surrounding reality, while problem-solving is endorsed by at least three female leaders, and predisposition to sharing and collaboration is emphasized by four women.

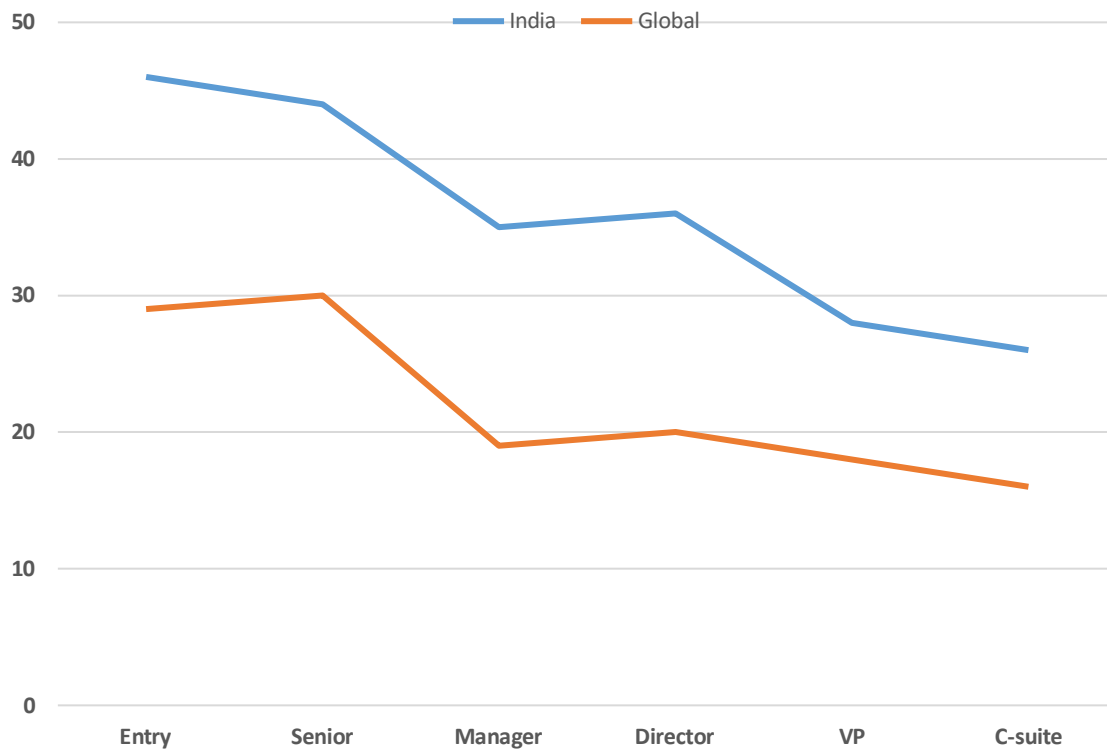


*Figure 14: Sustainability Female Leader Challenges*

As depicted in Figure 14, half of the surveyed women leaders (3 out of 6) identified the primary obstacle for female leadership focused on sustainable development as support from top management is lacking due to gender biases. Additionally, concerns regarding the absence of dialogue, collaboration, interest, and shared values on sustainability were each cited twice out of six responses as hindrances to the success of sustainable female leadership. Notably, the scarcity of financial resources or necessary materials and skills was never mentioned.

At the conclusion of the survey, 4 out of the 6 women in leadership roles emphasized the necessity of implementing training and awareness initiatives regarding

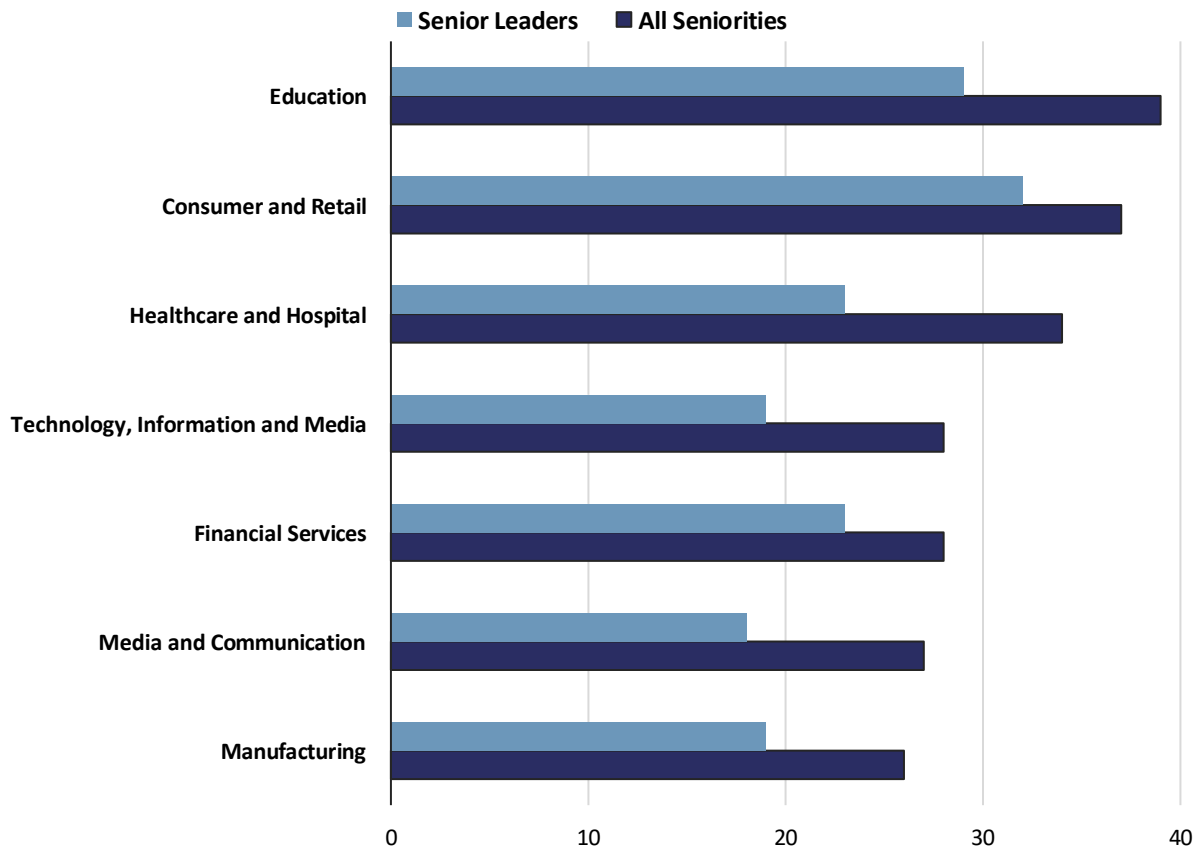
sustainability and the role of women within their respective companies. This, they believe, will equip them to effectively tackle the challenges posed by the ongoing radical changes.



*Figure 15: Women in Different Management Roles in India and Globally*

*Source: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/40498657\\_Women\\_in\\_management](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/40498657_Women_in_management)*

As illustrated in Figure 15, half of the women surveyed across six distinct roles, including entry-level, senior-level, manager, director, VP, and C-suite positions, recognized the importance of female leadership both in the Indian context and on a global scale. The graphs indicate that women's involvement in leadership positions surpasses their representation in the global arena. This suggests that women are actively engaged in leadership roles within various organizational levels, highlighting the increasing recognition and acceptance of female leadership in both domestic and international contexts.



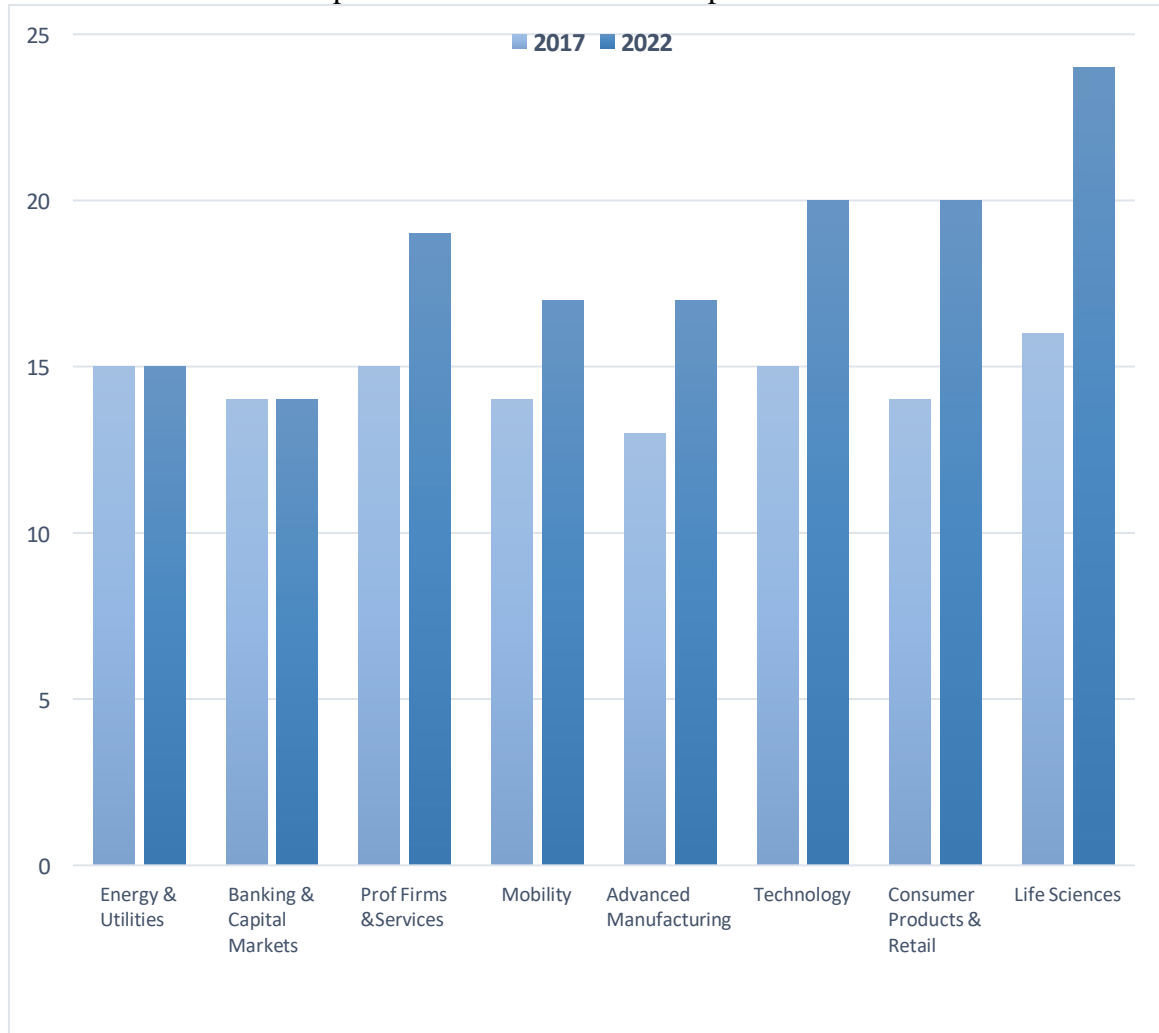
*Figure 16: Women in Different Sectors and Position*

*Source: <https://www.zipppia.com/advice/women-in-leadership-statistics/>*

The data depicted in the figure reveals insights across seven distinct sectors: Education, Consumer and Retail, Healthcare and Hospitals, Financial Services, and Manufacturing. It indicates that women hold more senior positions within the education sector in India, followed by the healthcare and hospital sector, where a considerable number of women are also occupying senior leadership positions.

This information underscores the prominence of women in leadership roles within specific industries, particularly in education and healthcare, suggesting a trend of increasing representation and influence of women in these sectors. Additionally, it

highlights the need for further examination of factors contributing to women's advancement in leadership within these industries compared to others.

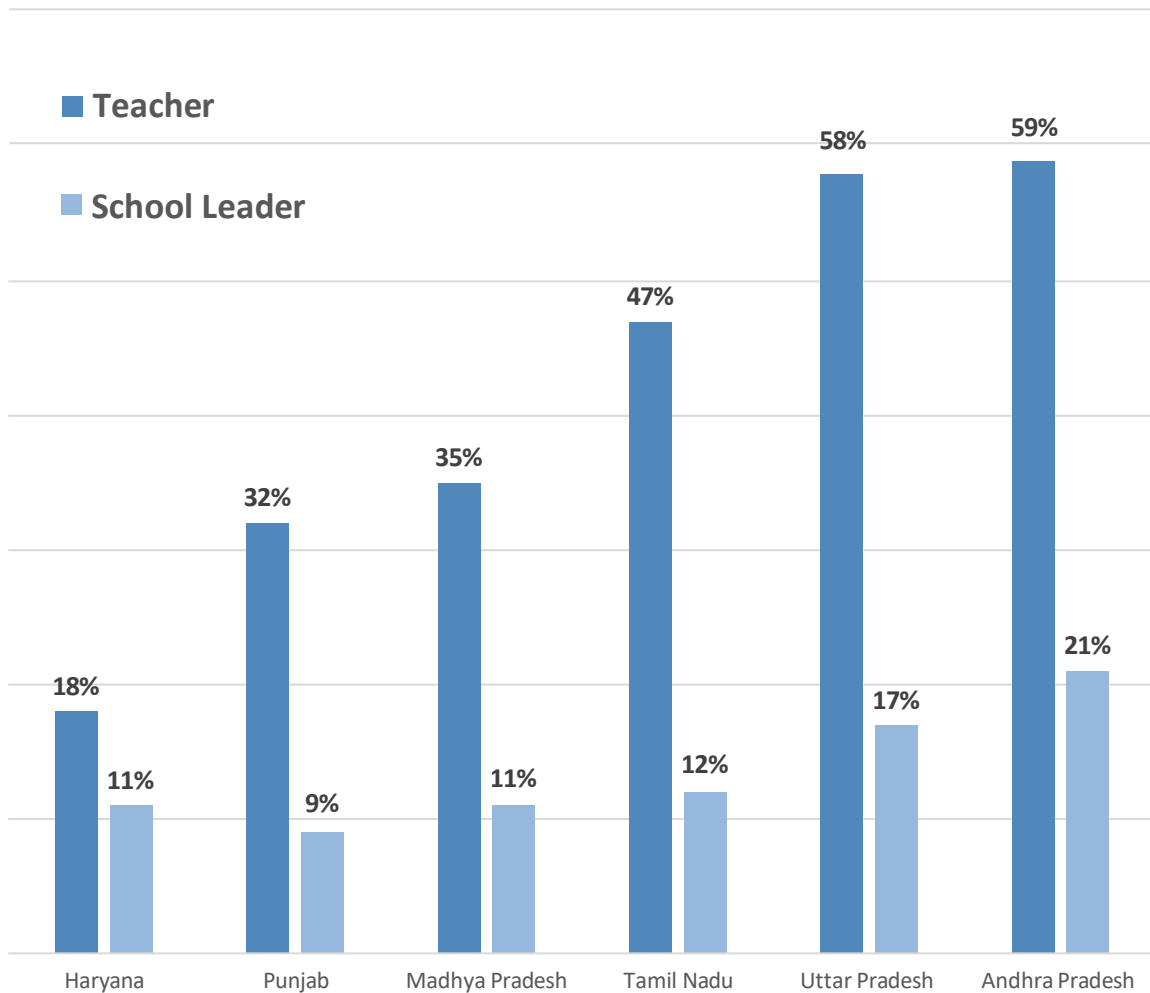


*Figure 17: Female Leadership Comparison in Different Sectors in Two Different Years*  
Source: McCullough, Laura. (2020)

Figure 17 illustrates the widespread involvement of women across various sectors in India. By comparing data from 2017 to 2022, it vividly demonstrates the progressive increase in women's employment opportunities over the years. Sectors such as mobility, life sciences, technology, consumer products, and retail emerged as top preferences for women seeking employment within these industries.



This depiction underscores the expanding presence of women in the workforce across diverse sectors and highlights the shifting trends in employment choices among women in India. It also suggests a growing recognition of women's capabilities and contributions in traditionally male-dominated fields, paving the way for greater gender inclusivity and diversity in the workplace.

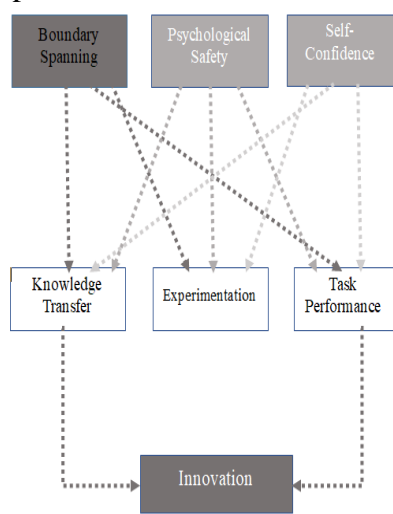


*Figure 18: Participation of Women in Education Sector 6 Indian States*

Figure 18 presents a comparison among several Indian states, including Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, and Andhra Pradesh. It highlights that women predominantly

hold teaching positions within the education sector, with only a few assuming roles in school leadership across all six states. This trend remains consistent across the states, with more women occupying positions as trainers and fewer in leadership roles within schools.

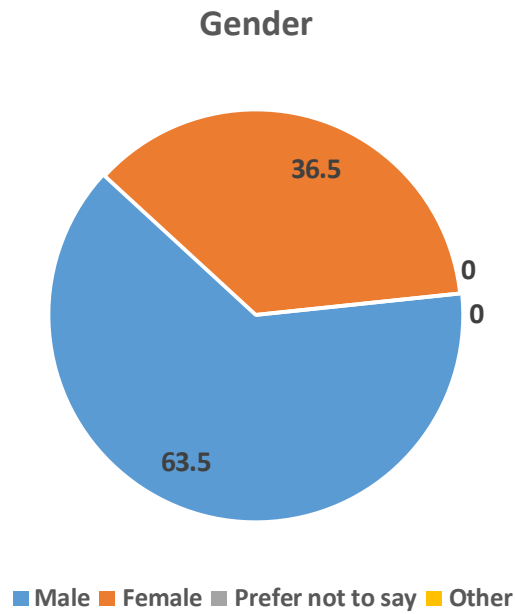
This data suggests a common pattern in the distribution of roles among women within the education sector across different states in India. It indicates a disparity in leadership opportunities for women within schools compared to other roles such as teaching and training. Further analysis could delve into the factors contributing to this trend and explore potential strategies for enhancing gender equality and leadership representation within the education sector.



*Figure 19: Women Decision Making in Innovation*  
 Source: Maheswaranathan, (2010)

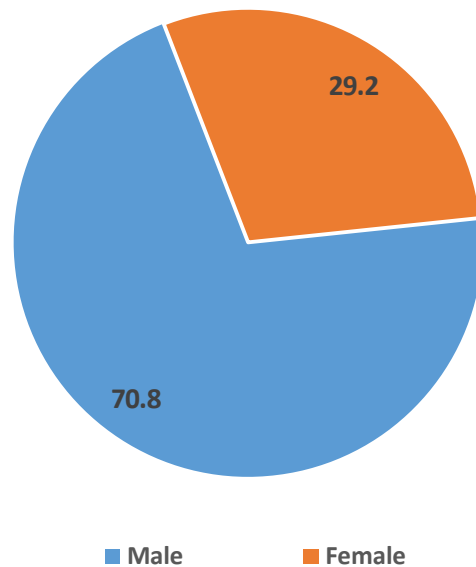
Figure 19, Maheswaranathan, (2010) Impact of Micro Credit Programs on Eliminating Economic Hardship of Women, ICBI 2010 explores the role of women in decision-making processes related to innovation. This figure emphasizes the significance of women's contributions in fostering creativity, driving new ideas, and implementing innovative solutions within organizations. It highlights how women's unique perspectives and diverse approaches can enhance the innovation landscape, leading to more inclusive and effective outcomes. The figure also underscores the challenges women face in these roles, such as overcoming gender biases and breaking through the glass ceiling, while simultaneously showcasing the enablers that support their success, like mentorship and training programs. Ultimately, Figure 19 serves as a testament to the crucial impact of

involvement of women in decision-making within the realm of innovation.



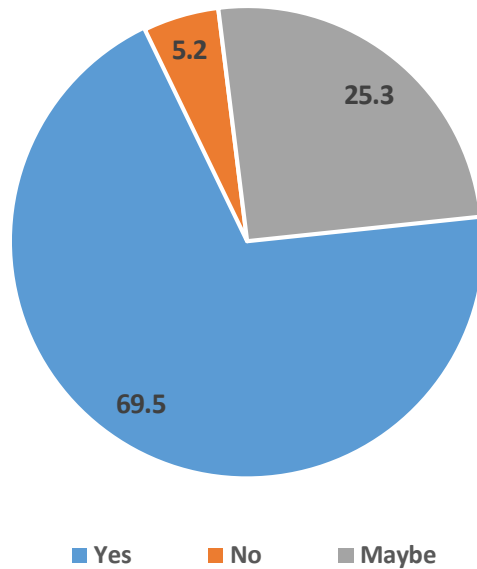
*Figure 20: Which management system do you feel that can better motivate you?*

In a recent survey regarding which management system is more motivating, 63.5 % of respondents indicated a preference for male managers, while the remaining participants favoured female managers. This data suggests that a significant portion of the workforce finds male managers more motivating, yet there is also a substantial segment that believes female managers provide effective leadership. This emphasizes the significance of considering diverse management styles to cater to the motivational needs of a varied workforce.



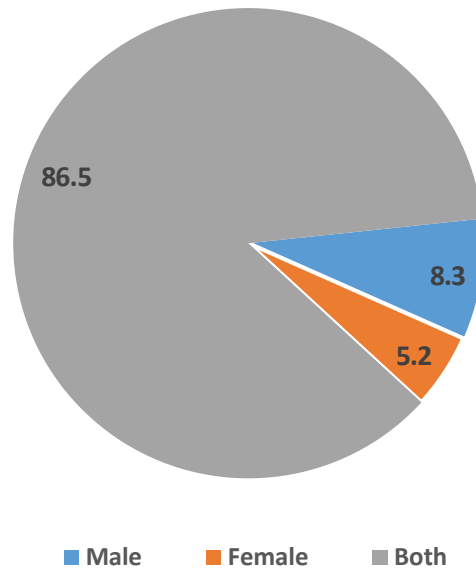
*Figure 21: According to you what kind of management should be there at top management?*

In a survey regarding preferences for top management leadership, 70.8% of respondents expressed a preference for male managers, while the remaining respondents favoured female managers. This suggests that while there is a strong inclination towards male leadership in top management positions, a notable portion of the workforce values the qualities that female leaders bring to the table. This underscores the need for a balanced and inclusive approach to leadership, recognizing the strengths and perspectives both male and female managers contribute to top management.



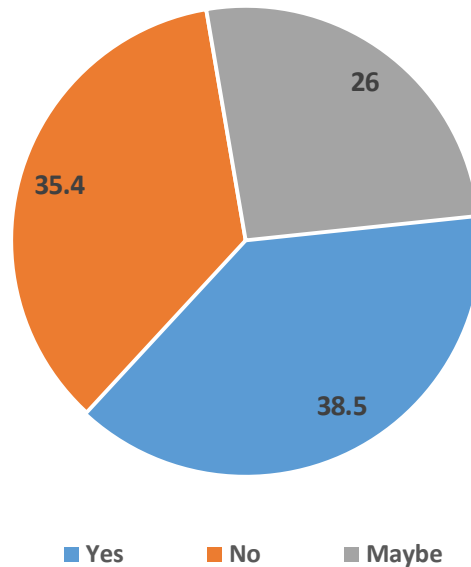
*Figure 22: Do you think that top level women leadership will increase the performance of an organization?*

In a recent survey, 69.5% of respondents believe that having women in top-level leadership positions will enhance an organization's performance. Meanwhile, 5.2% of respondents disagree, and the remaining participants are uncertain, indicating a "maybe" response. This majority view reflects strong confidence in the positive impact of female leaders, likely attributed to their diverse perspectives, collaborative approaches, and innovative problem-solving skills. The data emphasizes the need of promoting gender diversity in leadership roles, while also acknowledging that some scepticism and uncertainty still exist.



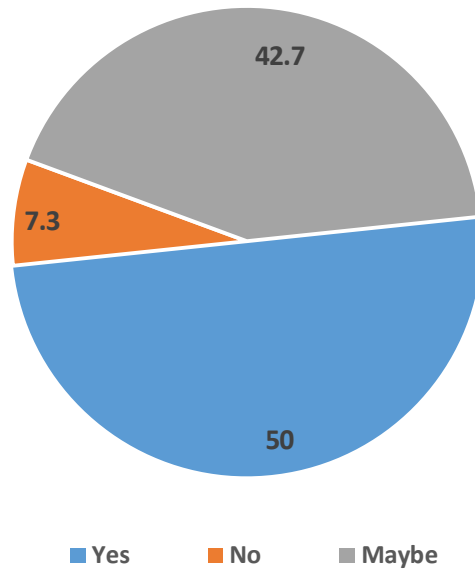
*Figure 23: Which management system is running there in your organization?*

This data suggests a diverse landscape of management styles across organizations, with a significant portion opting for a balanced approach incorporating both male and female leadership. Such diversity in management can contribute to a richer organizational culture and more holistic decision-making processes. The primary management systems within organizations, 86.5% of respondents revealed that their organization uses a mix of both male and female managers. In contrast, 5.2% of respondents stated that their organization has a predominantly female management structure, while the rest reported a predominantly male management system.



*Figure 24: Is your female leader a part of mentoring programs, as both mentor and mentee?*

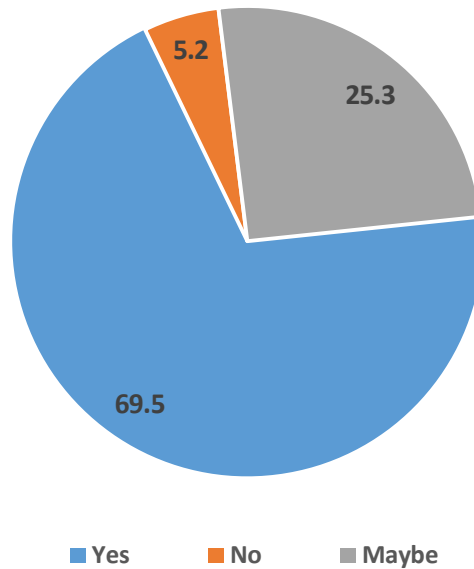
In a recent survey querying participation in mentoring programs among organizational leaders, results showed that 38.5% of respondents affirmed their leader's involvement, serving as both mentors and mentees. Conversely, 35.4% reported that their leader was not part of such programs, while the remaining respondents indicated uncertainty, suggesting a possibility of participation. These findings underscore the varied engagement levels of leaders in mentoring initiatives within organizations. Leaders who actively participate in mentoring programs can foster professional development, knowledge sharing, and skill enhancement among their teams, potentially contributing to organizational growth and employee satisfaction.



*Figure 25: Do you think women in top management can balance her professional and personal life better?*

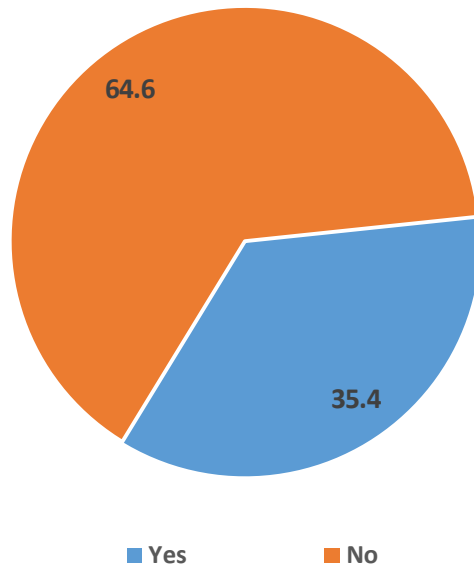
In a recent survey addressing the perceived ability of women in top management to balance their professional and personal lives, results indicated a mixed response. Fifty % of respondents expressed confidence in women's capacity to effectively manage both aspects of their lives, highlighting a belief in their ability to navigate the demands of high-level positions while maintaining personal well-being. Conversely, 7.3% of respondents voiced scepticism, suggesting doubts about women's ability to strike a balance between their professional and personal commitments. These findings underscore ongoing debates surrounding work-life balance challenges faced by women in leadership roles, emphasizing the importance of supportive organizational cultures and policies to facilitate successful integration of professional and personal spheres.





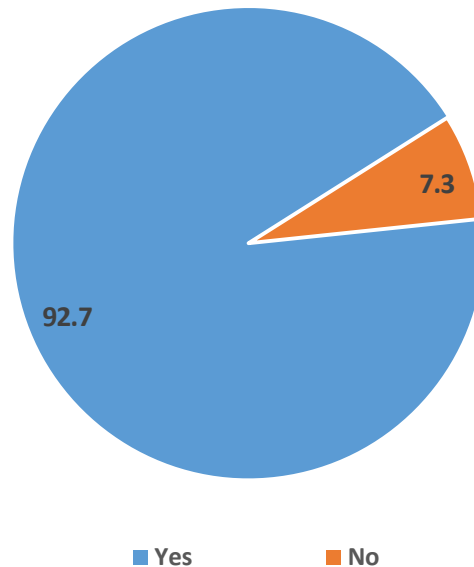
*Figure 26: Is there Gender bias seen in the organization?*

In a recent organizational assessment regarding the presence of gender bias, a significant majority of respondents, comprising 69.5%, acknowledged the existence of such bias within the organization. These findings suggest a widespread recognition of gender-based disparities in various aspects of the workplace, including opportunities for advancement, pay equity, and treatment in day-to-day interactions. Conversely, a smaller percentage, representing 5.2% of respondents, reported no discernible gender bias within the organization. These results underscore the ongoing challenges associated with achieving gender equality in the workplace and highlight the need for concerted efforts to address and mitigate biases to create a more inclusive and fair work environment.



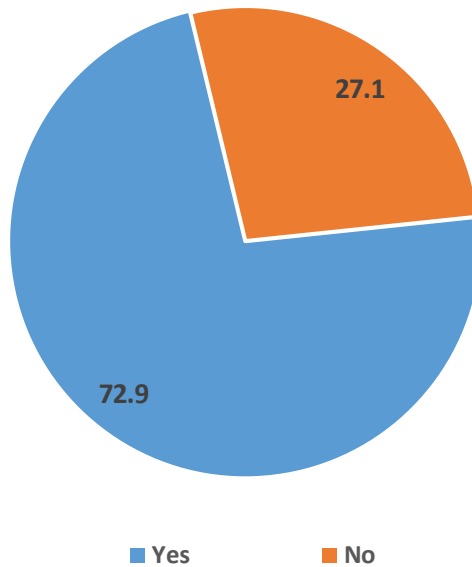
*Figure 27: Does your female leader motivates you for active participation in decision making or communicate with you?*

In a recent survey gauging the level of encouragement from leaders for active participation in decision-making processes and effective communication, a significant majority of respondents, accounting for 64.6%, affirmed that their leaders indeed motivate them in these aspects. These findings suggest that a substantial portion of organizational leaders prioritize promoting an environment where team members feel empowered to contribute ideas, voice concerns, and engage in meaningful dialogue. Such leadership practices not only promote inclusivity and collaboration but also cultivate a sense of ownership and commitment among employees, ultimately fostering a more dynamic and innovative work culture.



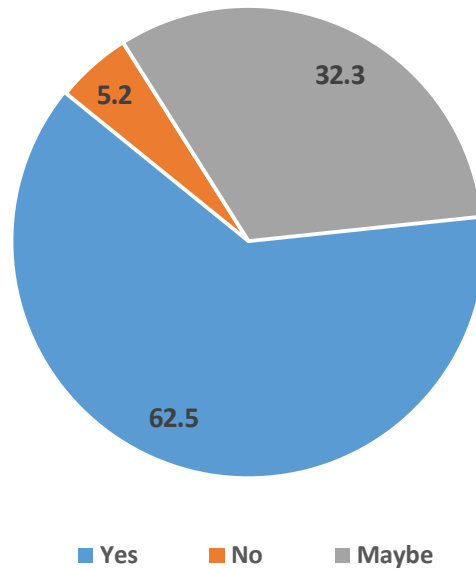
*Figure 28: Had you ever faced any unique transformational ideas brought to the front by a women leader in your organization?*

In a recent inquiry regarding the emergence of unique transformational ideas spearheaded by women leaders within the organization, an overwhelming majority of respondents, comprising 92.7%, affirmed experiencing such instances. These findings underscore the significant contributions of women leaders in driving innovation and transformative change within their respective roles. The high percentage reflects the recognition of women's capability to introduce fresh perspectives, challenge conventional thinking, and champion novel initiatives that propel organizational growth and success. This data highlights the valuable role that women leaders play in fostering creativity, driving change, and inspiring their teams towards new horizons of achievement.



*Figure 29: Do you think Women should take an increasing responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day*

In a recent survey addressing the role of women in assuming greater responsibility for leadership in addressing intellectual and social challenges, an overwhelming majority of respondents, totaling 72.9%, expressed support for this notion. These findings reflect a widespread belief in the abilities of women to contribute significantly to solving complex societal issues and driving positive change. The high percentage underscores the recognition of the distinct perspectives, skills, and empathy that women bring to leadership roles, which are essential for tackling multifaceted problems effectively. This data signals a growing acknowledgment of the importance of gender diversity in leadership and the necessity for greater inclusion of women in decision-making processes to foster innovation, equity, and progress in addressing contemporary global challenges.



*Figure 30: Do you think Men are much better suited to assume leader roles in education than women?*

In a recent survey exploring perceptions regarding gender suitability for leadership roles in education, results showed that 62.5% of respondents believed that men are better suited for these positions. This indicates a prevailing perception favouring male leadership in educational settings. Conversely, a small percentage, accounting for 5.2% of respondents, disagreed with this notion, while the remainder expressed uncertainty. These findings highlight existing biases and stereotypes surrounding gender roles in education leadership, reflecting a need for continued efforts to challenge such perceptions and promote gender equality in educational leadership. Acknowledging and addressing these biases is essential for creating inclusive environments where individuals of all genders have equal opportunities to lead and contribute to the advancement of education.

#### **4.2.1 Leadership Aspiration**

The following three items focus on career goals and ambitions. The measurement of leadership aspiration comprises three components: (1) respondents' ambitions and career goals, (2) leadership experiences, and (3) attributes possessed.

Each component will be described separately, by first mentioning the questions asked in the survey and then the answers with the results will be represented.

Question: "Which of the following best describes the role you see yourself in, five years from now?" The response categories for this question varied for students in education to account for the different positions in academia.

Table 6 presents the responses used for the business and public administration questionnaires, along with the corresponding responses for the education questionnaire.

Response Categories for Question 1

Here, I would put the Total number of respondents, then in brackets the percentage.

Readers prefer to see the percentage and like this they can compare.

*Table 6: Responses used for the business and public administration questionnaires*

| <b>Business and Public Administration</b>             | <b>Men</b> | <b>Women</b> |
|---|------------|--------------|
| <b>Employed, responsible for- 1-3 persons' work</b>   | 20         | 22           |
| <b>Employed, responsible for- 4-10 persons' work</b>  | 18         | 17           |
| <b>Employed, responsible for- 11-25 persons' work</b> | 20         | 29           |
| <b>Employed, responsible for- 26-50 persons' work</b> | 25         | 15           |

|   |    |    |
|---|----|----|
| <b>Employed, responsible for more than 50 persons</b> | 24 | 12 |
|---|----|----|

*Table 7: Traditional Roles Responsibility*

| <b>Traditional roles</b>             | <b>Men</b> | <b>Women</b> |
|--------------------------------------|------------|--------------|
| <b>Classroom teacher</b>             | 20         | 29           |
| <b>Specialist (art, music, etc.)</b> | 08         | 25           |
| <b>Principal</b>                     | 15         | 24           |
| <b>Administrator</b>                 | 9          | 14           |
| <b>Superintendent</b>                | 18         | 10           |

In Business and Public Administration Education, the distribution of men and women across different levels of responsibility within the workplace varied. Among employed individuals responsible for 1-3 persons' work, there were 20 men and 22 women. For those responsible for 4-10 persons' work, 18 men and 17 women were employed. In roles with responsibility for 11-25 persons' work, 20 men and 29 women were employed, while for those responsible for 26-50 persons' work, there were 25 men and 15 women. In positions with responsibility for more than 50 persons, 24 men and 12 women were employed.

Regarding traditional roles, the distribution of women and men in different positions within the education sector differed. Among classroom teachers, there were 20 men and 29 women. In specialist roles (like art or music teachers), 8 men and 25 women were employed. For principals, there were 15 men and 24 women, while administrators comprised 9 men and 14 women. Lastly, superintendents included 18 men and 10 women.

There is a important disparity in the perceptions of future careers between women and men in the sample. When asked to contemplate their careers in future, only 13.8%

of women (n = 27) envision themselves as principals or in administrative roles responsible for 11 or more individuals, while 35.6% of men (n = 41) foresee similar positions. The significant disparity in perceptions of future careers between women and men within the sample likely stems from a variety of complex factors that affect how individuals perceive their career options and aspirations. Below are several key reasons that could contribute to this observed difference.

1. **Societal Expectations and Gender Norms:** Society often imposes traditional gender roles and expectations, influencing how individuals perceive suitable career paths based on their gender. Men may feel pressured to pursue careers in fields traditionally associated with masculinity, such as engineering or finance, while women may feel steered towards professions perceived as more nurturing or caregiving, such as teaching or nursing.
2. **Representation and Role Models:** The underrepresentation of women in certain industries or leadership positions can impact young women's perceptions of their own career possibilities. When women do not see others who look like them succeeding in certain fields, they may be less likely to consider those fields as viable options for themselves.
3. **Educational Opportunities and Encouragement:** Disparities in access to educational opportunities and encouragement can also influence career perceptions. Women may encounter barriers such as limited access to STEM (Science and Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education or lack of mentorship and encouragement to pursue traditionally male-dominated fields, which can affect their confidence and aspirations.
4. **Work-Life Balance Considerations:** Women may prioritize career paths that offer greater flexibility and balance of work-life due to societal expectations



regarding caregiving responsibilities. Consequently, they may gravitate towards professions seen as more flexible for family responsibilities, which may vary from those typically chosen by men.

5. **Perceived Workplace Culture and Bias:** The perception of workplace culture and potential bias within certain industries or professions may also influence career aspirations. Women may perceive certain industries as having cultures that are less inclusive or welcoming to women, which could deter them from pursuing careers in those fields.
6. **Economic Factors:** Economic considerations, such as salary prospects and job security, may also play a role in shaping career aspirations. Women may prioritize fields that offer stable employment and opportunities for advancement, which could differ from those prioritized by men based on societal expectations or personal interests.
7. **Personal Interests and Passions:** Lastly, individual interests, passions, and aptitudes play a significant role in shaping career aspirations. While societal factors undoubtedly influence perceptions, personal preferences and strengths also contribute to individuals' career decisions.

Overall, the significant disparity in perceptions of future careers between women and men within the sample reflects the multifaceted nature of career decision-making and the requirement for greater efforts to address societal biases, promote gender equality, and offer equitable chances for all individuals to pursue their aspirations without constraints based on gender.

The vast majority of respondents in business (74%) and public administration (80%) anticipate administrative positions, whereas most education respondents expect to remain in the classroom. The specific reasons to support the statement that the majority of respondents in business and public administration anticipate administrative positions, while most education respondents expect to remain in the classroom, could include:

1. **Career Trajectory Expectations:** Respondents in business and public

administration may anticipate administrative positions due to the hierarchical nature of these sectors. These fields often offer clear pathways for career advancement into managerial or administrative roles, which align with respondents' aspirations for upward mobility and leadership positions.

2. **Emphasis on Leadership and Management Skills:** Business and public administration sectors prioritize leadership and management skills, which are perceived as essential for administrative roles. Respondents in these sectors may aspire to leverage their skills and expertise to assume positions of authority and responsibility within organizations, driving strategic decision-making and organizational performance.
3. **Opportunities for Professional Growth and Development:** Administrative positions in business and public administration sectors often offer opportunities for professional growth and development, including access to training programs, mentorship opportunities, and networking events. Respondents may view these positions as stepping stones to enhance their skill sets, expand their professional networks, and advance their careers within their respective fields.
4. **Desire for Influence and Impact:** Administrative roles in business and public administration sectors afford individuals the opportunity to exert influence and make a tangible impact on organizational outcomes and public policy initiatives. Respondents may be drawn to these positions by the prospect of

shaping organizational strategies, driving operational efficiency, and contributing to broader societal goals and initiatives.

5. **Perceived Stability and Security:** Administrative positions in business and public administration sectors are often viewed as offering greater stability and security compared to other roles. Respondents may prioritize the stability of administrative positions, particularly in uncertain economic times, as they provide a steady income, job security, and opportunities for long-term career growth and advancement.

In contrast, respondents in the education sector may anticipate remaining within the classroom for the following reasons:

1. **Passion for Teaching and Learning:** Respondents in the education sector may have a deep-seated passion for teaching and learning, driving their desire to remain in the classroom and directly engage with students. These individuals may derive satisfaction from teaching and motivating the upcoming generation, creating a significant influence on students' lives and academic achievements.
2. **Commitment to Student Success:** Educators often prioritize student success and academic achievement, viewing their role in the classroom as central to fostering a supportive learning environment and facilitating student learning and development. Respondents may choose to remain in the classroom to continue their commitment to nurturing students' intellectual curiosity, critical thinking skills, and overall academic growth.
3. **Connection to School Community:** Teachers often develop strong connections with their students, colleagues, and school communities, fostering a feeling of inclusion and camaraderie. Respondents may value

the sense of community and belonging associated with the classroom environment, choosing to remain in the classroom to maintain these interpersonal relationships and connections.

4. **Work-Life Balance Considerations:** Teaching positions in education sectors may offer greater flexibility and work-life balance compared to administrative roles in other sectors. Respondents may prioritize work-life balance considerations, such as flexible scheduling and school holidays, which are often associated with teaching positions and conducive to maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

Overall, the reasons for the differing career aspirations between respondents in business, public administration, and education sectors underscore the unique characteristics, values, and priorities inherent to each sector. While administrative positions may be preferred by respondents in business and public administration sectors for reasons such as career advancement, professional growth, and influence, educators may, commitment to student success, and connection to school communities.

In study test, 80% of education respondents (n = 107) envisioned themselves as classroom teachers, with only a small number selecting higher administrative roles like principal or administrator. Conversely, business and public administration respondents displayed higher ambitions, with the majority anticipating positions with greater responsibilities. For instance, 37.1% of business (n = 58) and 50% of public administration (n = 10) respondents envisaged roles involving supervising 4-10 individuals.

**PLEASE FIND A WAY TO REPRESENT QUESTIONS, BIT BY BIT.**

Question: "Regarding career advancement (such as receiving promotions), how do you anticipate your progress in five years?" 96% of the respondents expect to be within the middle to upper half of all employees, excluding the top 10%. Approximately 45% of all

participants anticipate being in the top half but not in the top 10% of all employees. The responses between male and female participants are pretty balanced, with men slightly more inclined to select higher categories. Around 69.7% of female respondents (n = 134) and 73% of male respondents (n = 84) foresee themselves in the top half of the top 10% of all employees. Despite modest career ambitions among education respondents, 65.9% (n = 87) envision themselves in the top half of the first 10% of all employees. A comprehensive review of the responses to this question, along with all other aspects related to leadership aspirations categorized by gender and curriculum, is available in Appendix L. Among education respondents, 49% expect to be in the upper half of all employees, although not in the top 10%. This is a larger percentage compared to those in business (47%) and public administration (42%) fields.

Question: "What amount of money do you anticipate earning in five years?" A clear difference exists in responses between male and female participants. Women predominantly chose income levels in the lower five categories, with none opting for a salary exceeding \$70,000. On the other hand, male responses spanned from less than \$10,000/year to over \$100,000/year. Roughly half of the female (n = 109) and male (n = 62) participants expect to earn between \$25,000 and \$39,999 annually in 1997. However, only 19.4% of female participants (n = 38) anticipate earning \$40,000 or more, while over a third of male participants (36.6%) (n = 42) envision salaries exceeding \$40,000 per year in 1997. The private business sector offers more significant earning potential. Ninety-two per cent of education participants (n = 123) and 74% of public administration participants (n = 14) selected annual incomes between \$10,000 and \$39,999. Eighty-one per cent of business participants (n = 128) expect to earn between \$25,000 and \$54,999 annually in five years. The following four items pertain to the experiential aspect of leadership aspiration assessment.

Question: "During my time in high school, I held leadership positions in clubs, student government, or other organizations in which I was involved." Both men and women responded similarly, with men indicating slightly more roles in leadership during high school. More than half of the female respondents (n = 117) and male respondents (n = 73) reported having held leadership roles at times, frequently, or consistently during high school. The responses were consistent across different fields of study, with over fifty percent of the respondents in business (n = 97), education (n = 82), and public administration (n = 11) reporting having held leadership roles at times, frequently, or consistently during high school.

Question: "Kindly provide a brief description of those leadership positions." The researcher categorized responses as either leader roles or non-leader roles. For instance, sports team captains, student council officers, club presidents, or committee chairpersons were considered leadership roles, whereas club memberships, committee activities, or sports team memberships were not. Among female respondents, 62.5% (n = 120) mentioned leadership roles, while 56.5% of male respondents (n = 65) described leadership positions during high school. In terms of disciplines, 64% of education respondents (n = 87) and 55% of both business (n = 87) and public administration respondents (n = 11) described leadership roles during high school. There is a disparity in the responses to the two questions about high school leadership experience. One might anticipate similar results for the frequency of leadership opportunities and the description of leadership activities. However, the data indicates otherwise. While female respondents reported fewer leadership roles than described in the prompt, male respondents reported more.

Similarly, the frequency of leadership activities reported by education respondents was less than their descriptions, while business respondents reported more leadership activities than described. It is crucial to note that 85% of education respondents were

female. Public administration respondents responded consistently to both questions regarding high school leadership activities. Although the data does not reveal a statistical difference, it does suggest that female respondents might underestimate their leadership roles. At the same time, men might overestimate their non-leadership roles or female respondents may embellish their actions when explaining them, while men may downplay their descriptions.

Question: During my college years, I actively pursued leadership roles in various organizations, including clubs, sororities/fraternities, and student government. Research indicates that both male and female students tend to hold fewer leadership positions in college compared to high school, with a notably more significant decline observed among women. Only 36.9% of female participants ( $n = 72$ ) and 50.4% of male participants ( $n = 58$ ) indicated involvement in leadership activities during their college years. Fifty-five per cent of public administration respondents ( $n = 11$ ) reported engaging in leadership activities when in college. In contrast, fewer than half of business ( $n = 72$ ) and education ( $n = 47$ ) respondents selected the same responses. Education respondents reported the lowest level of college activity in leadership roles.

Question: The researcher categorized responses into leader roles and non-leader roles. 41% of female respondents ( $n = 80$ ) described leadership roles, whereas 49.5% of male respondents ( $n = 56$ ) described leadership roles during college. Among the respondents, 46% of business respondents ( $n = 73$ ), 39% of education respondents ( $n = 52$ ), and 55% of public administration respondents ( $n = 11$ ) described leadership activities. The final four items in the leadership aspiration section address specific leadership qualities. Several hypotheses are based on three survey items that assess the anticipated career trajectories of female peers. The answers to these items are categorized by gender and curriculum. "Which role do you envision your female classmates holding five years from now?" addresses different response categories for academic and non-academic positions, similar to the Question in the leadership aspiration section of the survey. There is a significant difference in the career prospects for women versus men in the sample. 61% of

female respondents (n = 118) see their female peers in teaching roles or managing small teams, whereas only 34.8% of male respondents (n = 40) anticipate the same fate for their female classmates. Women in the sample tend to set lower expectations for their female peers than men. Only 30.8% of female respondents (n = 60) anticipate females holding roles with 4-25 persons under their supervision, in contrast to 52.2% of male respondents (n = 60) holding similar expectations for females. There are significant variations in responses across curricula, with most business (90.3%) and public administration (90%) respondents anticipating their female peers to oversee up to 25 persons.

On the other hand, 84% of future educators (n = 112) envision their female peers in teaching roles. 60% of public administration respondents (n = 12 out of 20) and 42.3% of business respondents (n = 66 out of 156) anticipate their female peers managing 4 to 10 people. The detailed breakdown of responses to this item, along with all other items related to female careers by gender and curriculum, is provided in Appendix M.

Question: "What are your expectations for your female peers' career advancement, including promotions, in five years?" The responses to this question show little diversity. In 1997, 54% of the participants predicted that females would be situated in the middle of the organizational hierarchy, with about half of the female (n = 100) and male respondents (n = 57) choosing this option. A similar distribution of answers is seen across different fields of study, with approximately half of the participants from each discipline envisioning their female peers occupying mid-level positions within organizations.

Please remember the following information: QUESTION: "In five years, what salary range do you expect most of your female classmates to earn?" This study found that male participants projected lower salaries for their female peers compared to their male peers. Specifically, 65% of male respondents (75) predicted that their female classmates would earn between \$25,000 and \$39,999, while only 56.1% of female respondents (109) chose this income category. Differences in perceptions of females' earning potential were observed across different fields of study. For instance, almost two-thirds of business respondents (101) expected their female peers to earn \$25,000 to \$39,999.

In contrast, only fifty percent of the education respondents (73) and public



administration respondents (10) made the same choice. As for male career paths, several hypotheses were tested using three survey questions that assessed the expected career paths of male peers. The answers to these questions are presented in detail by gender and field of study below.

Question: "What positions do you see your male classmates holding in five years?" Similar to previous sections, response options differentiate between academic and non-academic roles, following Question 1 in the leadership aspirations section. This survey shows a noticeable contrast between the career paths envisioned for males and those envisioned for women and men. Fifty-one per cent of female respondents (n = 99) envision their male peers as teachers or leading small teams, whereas 41% of male respondents (n = 47) expect their male classmates to take on specialized roles or lead teams of 4-10 people. As anticipated, aspiring educators primarily see their male peers as teachers, with 75.9% of education respondents (n = 101) picturing them in classroom roles. More than fifty percent of public administration respondents (n = 10) and over one-third of business respondents (n = 61) anticipate their male peers leading teams of 4-10 people.

Question: In 1997, responses to the question "How do you anticipate your male classmates progressing in their careers, including promotions, in five years?" varied. One hundred sixty-three women respondents (83.5%) anticipate their male classmates being placed somewhere in the middle or upper half but not the top 10%. Similarly, 109 male respondents (94.7%) hold a similar perspective on their male classmates' career trajectories. 13.8% of women respondents ranked their male classmates in the top 10% of all employees. The response distributions are consistent across various academic disciplines. The distribution of responses to this item and all other items related to male careers by gender and curriculum is available in Appendix N. Among business respondents (n = 143), 91% envision their male peers occupying middle or upper-tier organisational positions. For education respondents (n = 110), 82.6% envision the same, and for public administration respondents (n = 19), 95% share this perspective.

Question: "What salary range do you expect most of your male classmates to earn in five years?" Disparities can be found in the salary expectations of women and men in

this survey for their male peers. 66% of male participants (n = 76) anticipate their male classmates' earnings to fall between \$25,000 and \$39,999, whereas only 53.3% of female participants (n = 103) share the same income projection for their male peers. Differences in the anticipated earning potential of men are evident across fields of study, with 82% of business participants (n = 129) and 80% of public administration participants (n = 16) envisioning their male peers earning between \$25,000 and \$54,999.

#### **4.1.2 Gender-Role Attitudes**

To understand the participants' attitudes toward gender roles, it is helpful to examine the combined answers to specific survey questions designed for this purpose. Question: "Are men better leaders than women?" This question resulted in only slightly different responses between female and male participants. 92% of the total sample believe that men are generally or sometimes better leaders than women, with 89.1% of women (n = 173) and 96.5% of men (n = 110) sharing this perspective. Responses were consistent across different academic fields. Among public administration respondents, 95% (n = 19) believed that men are usually or sometimes superior leaders compared to women. In the business field, this belief was held by 94.9% of respondents (n = 149), while 87.7% of education respondents (n = 115) shared the same view. Three female respondents from the education field expressed the belief that women are never superior leaders to men.

Question: "Is it more important for men to prepare for a career than for women?" This question revealed a notable difference in responses between female and male participants. 68.3% of female respondents (n = 132) believe it is rarely or never more important for men to prepare for careers, while only 45% of male respondents (n = 51) share this belief. What's particularly surprising is that both education and public administration respondents see career preparation as important for both genders, with slightly fewer than fifty percent of education respondents (n = 60) and public administration respondents (n = 9) believing that career preparation is never more important for men. Business respondents provided an even distribution of responses, indicating a range of views on this matter.

Question: "Should women play an active part in tackling societal problems?" The

answers show slight differences in the opinions of female and male participants. 92% of female respondents (n = 178) think that women should typically or always play an active role in addressing intellectual and social issues, compared to 77.3% of male respondents (n = 89) who share the same belief. The discussion about the impact of gender diversity in different sectors continues to attract attention in today's rapidly changing environment.

Although progress has been made towards gender equality, whether women excel in specific sectors remains. Recent research shows that women often demonstrate exceptional leadership skills, particularly in public administration, education, and social welfare, where their natural empathy and collaborative methods are highly valued. Public administration and education, closely associated with social welfare and community advancement, provide ideal platforms for women to exhibit their leadership abilities. In these sectors, women are seen as having a more active role in addressing societal issues, driven by their focus on inclusivity, empathy, and consensus-building. This perspective is supported by feedback from academic fields, with respondents from public administration and education expressing stronger beliefs in women's inherent abilities to bring about positive change.

Effective leadership lies in authority and the capacity to motivate, involve, and empower others towards a common objective. Often known for their nurturing instincts and skill in fostering meaningful relationships, women possess a distinctive leadership style that profoundly impacts them in sectors where human connection is crucial. For example, in public administration, women leaders are skilled at navigating complex social structures, promoting collaboration among diverse stakeholders, and advocating for policies that promote fairness and social justice.

Similarly, in education, women are recognized for their natural ability to develop inclusive learning environments, to address diverse learning needs, and instil values of empathy and tolerance among students. Their leadership plays very essential role in influencing the next generation of empathetic and socially responsible citizens, thus making a significant contribution to society. Furthermore, women's leadership in these sectors often exceeds traditional boundaries, offering innovative solutions to entrenched

societal problems. Their comprehensive approach, informed by a deep understanding of community dynamics and societal complexities, enables them to lead initiatives that address root causes rather than surface symptoms. Whether implementing inclusive policies in public administration or transforming teaching methodologies in education, women leaders bring a fresh perspective and visionary approach.

It is important to note down that the benefits of women's leadership go beyond specific sectors. Studies show that leadership teams with gender diversity demonstrate more significant innovation, resilience, and financial performance across industries. By leveraging women's diverse talents and perspectives, companies can foster a culture of creativity, adaptability, and sustainability, gaining a competitive advantage in today's dynamic business environment. The idea that women excel in public administration and education is firmly based on their innate leadership qualities and unwavering dedication to social progress. As we strive for a more fair and inclusive society, it is crucial to acknowledge and utilize the transformative power of women's leadership across various sectors. By prompting gender diversity and creating opportunities for women to thrive, we can unleash the full potential of our collective talent pool and pave the path for a brighter, more prosperous future for all. Consequently, responses varied slightly across academic disciplines. For instance, public administration and education respondents, focusing on social welfare and community development, expressed stronger beliefs that women consistently play an active role in addressing civil issues than business respondents.

When asked whether working for a woman is challenging, the responses from the sample show virtually no gender difference. 75% of all participants (n = 241) believe that working under a woman would sometimes or seldom be difficult. However, female respondents anticipate more challenges working for a female supervisor than male respondents, with 46.3% of women (n = 91) and 52.2% of men (n = 58) expressing this expectation. Responses showed similarities across academic disciplines, except for three business respondents who believed working under a woman would always be difficult.

In response to the question "Are women too emotional to be effective leaders?" The responses show a noticeable difference in attitudes between female and male respondents. 66% of female respondents (n = 128) believe that Women are rarely, if ever, too emotional to be effective leaders, whereas 69.4% of male respondents (n = 79) believe that women are always, usually, or sometimes too emotional for effective leadership. Twelve male respondents (4% of the sample) believe women are always or usually too emotional to be influential leaders. Attitudes toward this question vary across academic disciplines, with public administration and education students more likely to believe that women are seldom too emotional to lead effectively than business students.

Regarding the question "Is it wrong for women to receive less pay than men for equal work?" the vast majority (88.3%) of respondents (n = 273) believe that it is consistently unfair for women to receive lower pay for equal work. There is only a slight difference between female and male respondents' responses to this question, with 96.3% of female respondents (n = 187) and 74.8% of male respondents (n = 86) believing that gender-based pay discrimination is always wrong. Responses differ slightly across academic disciplines, with education respondents expressing more vigorous opposition to gender-based pay discrimination.

In response to the question, "Are women unsuited for powerful jobs that require a strong personality?" a slight difference is evident in responses between female and male participants. The most common response among 83 female respondents (42.5%) indicates that women are rarely unfit for jobs that require a strong personality. In contrast, the most common response from 53 male respondents (46.1%) suggests that women are sometimes unsuitable for such positions. There are minor differences across academic disciplines, with most respondents from the education field (n = 99) reporting that women are seldom or never unsuited for demanding roles.

When asked, "Is it acceptable for women to be the primary breadwinner in a relationship?" There was a slight difference in responses among participants. The majority (90.2%) of respondents (n = 278) believe that it is sometimes, usually, or always acceptable for women to be the breadwinners in relationships, regardless of gender or academic discipline.

In response to the question "Should husbands and wives be equal partners in marriage?" there is nearly no difference between female and male respondents' attitudes. 84% of respondents (n = 260) believe that husbands and wives should always share an partnership in marriage. However, a few male respondents believe marriage equality should occur infrequently. There is slight variation across academic disciplines, with education respondents expressing more robust support for marriage equality than public administration respondents.

In answer to the question, "Is a woman's fulfillment primarily derived from being a wife and mother?" there is hardly any difference between female and male respondents' answers. Three-quarters of respondents (n = 221) believe that being a wife and mother is often a woman's main source of fulfillment. Public administration students, in particular, tend to hold this belief more strongly than those studying business.

#### **4.2.2 Parental Influence**

The survey consists of 12 questions designed to assess how much support respondents feel they receive from their parents. The responses to these questions are outlined below.

Question: "Did your mother motivate you to pursue a college education?" Most participants (81%) say their mothers encouraged them to go to college, although 23 female respondents did not receive support from their mothers. Male participants feel they received more encouragement from their mothers to attend college (87.7%) compared to female participants (76%). Business participants reported the highest level of maternal encouragement (82.1%), followed by education (78.9%) and public administration (78.9%) participants.

Question: "Does your mother motivate you to complete your bachelor's degree?" Most respondents (88%) report that their mothers encourage them to finish their undergraduate degrees, with male respondents (93.9%) feeling this support to a larger extent than female respondents (84.6%).

Question: "Does your mother motivate you to pursue graduate studies?" There is a slight difference in the perceived support from mothers for postgraduate education, with female respondents (61.9%) feeling slightly more encouragement than male respondents (51.3%). However, a more significant percentage of male respondents (48.6%) report no encouragement from their mothers to pursue postgraduate studies.

Twenty hypotheses were created to explore the research questions about senior university students' desire for leadership roles. Each hypothesis is analyzed alongside the relevant data and methods used to assess its validity.

### **4.3 Organization of Data Analysis**

Gender gaps in employment decrease with higher education levels: In 2022, 67.9% of men aged 25 and above were employed, compared to 55.4% of women. This employment gap between women and men persists across all education levels but diminishes as educational attainment increases. Among individuals with below a high school diploma, the proportion of employed men was notably higher at 54.6%, compared

to 30.6% for women. For high school graduates without college, the employment rate for men was 63.5%, while for women it was 44.4%.

Individuals who had pursued some college education or earned an associate degree had higher chances to be employed than those with a lower level of formal education. Men at this educational level had an employment rate of 67.2%, compared to 55.7% for women. The variation in employment rates between men and women was least pronounced among those who obtained a bachelor's degree or higher. In this category, 75.3% of men were employed, while the percentage for women was slightly lower at 68.0%.

#### **4.4 Findings Regarding Each Research Question**

- Gender Diversity Disparities in Various Employment Sectors

The Indian education sector is one of the largest employers of women, with approximately 24.47 lakh employees, as per data from the updated first round of the Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) (Ministry of Labour & Employment, 2021). The survey covers multiple sectors such as construction, manufacturing, transport, trade, health, education, restaurant and accommodation, and IT & BPO and provides insights into the employment landscape across 18 subsectors. Out of the total workforce of 205.22 lakh individuals, about 5.56 lakh were self-employed, while 199.66 lks were employees, with 162.97 lks regular, 26.60 lks contractual, and 10.13 lakh casual workers. The manufacturing sector had the highest employment at 101.17 lk, followed by the education sector at 49.98 lakh, and the construction sector having only 3.67 lk workers lagging (Ministry of Labour & Employment, 2021).

Further analysis of the employment data shows that the trade sector had a workforce of 14.45 lakh workers, the health sector had 12.05 lakh employees, and the IT/BPO sector had 10.36 lakh workers. The transport sector had slightly higher employment than the accommodation and restaurant sectors, with 5.80 lakh workers compared to 7.74 lk



workers. Regarding female employment, women ranked third in the health sector with 5.81 lk employees. In contrast, male employment was higher in the manufacturing and education sectors, with 25.51 lakh and 82.60 lk workers, respectively. On the other hand, the construction sector had the lowest employment levels for both genders, with 3.11 lk male workers and 0.56 lk female workers.

Part-time workers comprised 4.16% of total employment, totaling 8.54 lk, while full-time workers constituted 95.84%, totaling 196.68 lks. In the manufacturing sector, 2.79 lakh individuals were self-employed, with 76.58 lakh working as regular, 15.56 lk contractual, and 6.23 lk casual workers among the employed workforce.

Globally, research shows that women occupy lesser than one-third of leadership positions, with significant disparities in traditionally male-dominated fields (Catalyst, 2020). This gap of gender in leadership positions emphasizes the necessity for concerted efforts to address biases and create some more equitable opportunities for women's career advancement across industries (McKinsey & Company, 2021; World Economic Forum, 2021; International Labour Organization, 2019).

There is a link between university seniors' desire for leadership roles and their mothers' occupational attainment. A correlation exists between university seniors' aspiration for leadership roles and their mothers' educational achievement. A correlation exists between university seniors' aspiration for leadership roles and the perceived parental support they receive. Gender-role orientation is linked to the aspiration towards leadership roles among university seniors. This theory suggests that the gender-role orientation of the student influences the inclination towards leadership roles. It is hypothesized that modern women have higher leadership aspirations than their traditional counterparts.

Our research has unveiled a significant connection between how individuals perceive traditional gender roles, their own gender, and their future career positions as they

approach the end of their university studies. This discovery implies that students' outlook on future career roles is influenced by their stance on traditional gender roles, a revelation that can greatly inform our understanding of gender dynamics in career development.

It is expected that both modern and traditional attitudes toward gender roles affect how female classmates are seen in future career positions, with fewer responsibility compared to male classmates. The prediction was that (a) the average projection of future career roles for females would be different from the average projection for males for modern students, and (b) the average projection for females would be less than the average projection for males for traditional students. It was predicted that women's perceptions of career roles would be influenced by their beliefs about traditional gender roles, with modern women envisioning higher career roles for females than traditional women. It was predicted that (a) the average projection of future career roles for modern women would be higher than that of traditional women, and (b) the average projection for modern women would differ from that of traditional women.

Our research opens up new avenues for future studies by hypothesizing those traditionally oriented students may have gender-specific perceptions of women in future career positions. This forward-thinking approach can inspire further research to delve deeper into the gender dynamics in career aspirations among university students.

There is a link between the desire for leadership roles and the socioeconomic status of individuals nearing the end of their university studies. This idea suggests a positive relationship between students' ambition for leadership roles and socioeconomic status. The expected result was a favorable correlation between the desire for leadership roles and socioeconomic status. The correlation between socioeconomic status and the desire for leadership roles among women and men was anticipated to differ from zero.

There is a connection between the ambition for leadership roles among university seniors and the occupational attainment of their mothers. This idea suggests that the desire for leadership roles is connected to the occupation of the respondents' mothers. A student's ambition for leadership is expected to be associated with their mothers' occupations, particularly for women.

There is a connection between the ambition for leadership roles among university seniors and the educational attainment of their mothers. This idea suggests a correlation between the ambition for leadership roles and educational level of the respondents' mothers. Students' desire for leadership roles and the educational attainment of their mothers is expected to be positively related, especially for women.

- Parental Influence

There is a link between university seniors' ambition for leadership roles and the perceived support they get from their parents. This concept proposes that students' ambition for leadership is linked to how much support they believe they receive from their parents. The expected result was a positive correlation between the desire for leadership roles and parental support.

- Women in Different Management Roles

In recent time, there has occurred a noticeable rise in the number of women employed in mid to senior management positions in India (Catalyst, 2022). Data from HerKey (formerly Jobs for Her), a platform dedicated to women's career engagement, shows a notable increase in the presence of women in senior and leadership roles (HerKey, 2022).

This trend indicates a growing number of women at corporate India's entry-level and upper-management levels (Deloitte, 2022). Companies are actively advocating for gender diversity in their hiring practices and working to narrow the gender gap through inclusive policies and procedures. By valuing diverse perspectives and backgrounds, they

aim to promote an environment that supports the success and contributions of all individuals (McKinsey & Company, 2021).

Interestingly, 70% of companies have established clear gender diversity targets in their hiring goals, marking a 13% increase from the previous year. Impressively, 91% of large corporations and 90% of start-ups and SMEs have achieved their gender diversity hiring goals over the past year. Additionally, 63% of companies prioritize gender equality and diversity by organizing women-specific hiring campaigns within their organizations (HerKey, 2022).

- The Influence of Women in Senior Management on Leadership

When discussing business management, leadership often takes the spotlight. However, historically, much of this discussion has been dominated by male perspectives, leaving competent female leaders with fewer opportunities to showcase their abilities. Before delving into specifics, it is essential to consider exceptional leaders' sacrifices when guiding their companies.

Key traits commonly linked to leadership include risk-taking, independence, and assertiveness. Individuals who demonstrate these qualities are often seen as "leaders."

According to Bass' (1990) theory of leadership, three approaches are identified to understand how individuals become influential leaders: Some individuals possess inherent personality traits that naturally predispose them to leadership roles. Specific crises or events may prompt individuals to step up and take charge. Effective leadership can be developed by acquiring the necessary skills, a concept known as transformational leadership, widely supported today (Avolio, 2011).

Under Bass's theory's first two concepts, a good leader is someone who facilitates the achievement of collective goals by the team or group, surpassing what each member could accomplish individually. By providing ongoing direction and encouragement, teams

can achieve greater results together than what each individual could achieve alone. From this perspective, effective leadership is not inherently linked to gender but depends on specific qualities that both male and female leaders must possess (Eagly and Carli, 2007).

While women are slowly taking on top management positions within organizations, their representation in such roles is still limited. In Indian companies, for instance, only a small percentage of women hold top executive positions, like Chief Executive Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Information Officer, and Human Resources Director (Catalyst, 2021).

The proportion of women reaching these top positions remains modest, with only 5% achieving such heights. However, there has been a noticeable increase, with 26% of CEOs and MDs being women in 2021 compared to 15% in 2019. In 2021, the Fortune Global 500 saw a record high of 23 women CEOs, indicating a positive trend toward greater gender diversity in leadership roles (Deloitte, 2022).

- **Methods to Enhance Women's Participation**

Recognizing the importance of actively encouraging women to re-enter the corporate workforce, a significant percentage of large enterprises (57%) and start-ups/SMEs (43%) have reported implementing specialized initiatives aimed at facilitating the return of women who have taken career breaks (JobsForHer, 2023). An exciting trend observed is that approximately 33% of returnee programs were launched between 2018 and 2021, with an additional 38% established after 2021, indicating a growing momentum among companies to introduce initiatives supporting women returning to work (JobsForHer, 2023).

#### **4.5 Summary**

We illuminate the obstacles that women face when striving for leadership positions and emphasize the diverse array of factors that impact these aspirations. By addressing gender stereotypes and supporting initiatives that foster gender equality, organizations and policymakers can work towards creating a more inclusive and empowering environment where women can thrive and seek leadership positions.

This chapter presents qualitative and quantitative data from surveys and focus group interviews. We outline and analyze the critical insights from a survey that involved participants of both genders and highlight essential themes identified in interviews with female managers. In the final section (Chapter Five), we summarize the significant findings, offering conclusions and repercussions for policy and research.

## CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this context, the dissertation delves into the complexities of women in leadership and management positions. It conducts a thorough examination of leadership strategies, decision-making, and innovation by women, utilizing a meticulous combination of quantitative analysis, computational methods, and theoretical frameworks to clarify key occurrences and address crucial research inquiries. This understanding will offer a deeper look into the female viewpoint on management and leadership, thereby fostering a deeper acknowledgement of women's contributions to management and leadership in higher education. This section provides a summary of significant discoveries, conclusions, and underscores the implications for policy and research, highlighting the importance and relevance pertaining to the study.

The objective of this research was to explore the complexities of women in leadership and management roles in India, focusing on leadership strategies, decision-making processes, and innovation.

The primary objectives were:

- To analyze the involvement of women in management sectors in India and evaluate the extent of their leadership roles.
- To examine key factors shaping women's decision-making, innovative strategies, and leadership skills in India.
- To analyze the relationship between women and education management in India, identifying areas for improvement and methods for fostering gender equality in leadership roles.

### **5.2 Maintaining Work-Life Balance**

Researchers have discovered that women demonstrate integrity in their work. The implementation of honesty is not flawless, and sometimes, the standard is violated. According to Erat and Gneezy (2012), different situations can be distinguished. They diligently work with commitment. However, they also bear the responsibility of their families. They constantly struggle to maintain the work-life balance in their lives. The "superwoman" concept causes unnecessary stress, leading to various health issues. Juggling these health problems while maintaining a work-life balance makes their lives more stressful. A poor work-life balance impacts everyone, including the company. Overworking can lead to a decline in the quality of work. This issue could affect the entire company if many colleagues are overworked. Reduced income may result from working less efficiently or longer to rectify mistakes. A negative consequence of a poor work-life balance is that employees may take more sick or mental health days. The less employees come to work, the less successful a company can be. This may also lead to more work being delegated to the remaining employees, worsening the original problem of a poor work-life balance. Employees might consider seeking new employment with a poor work-life balance at your company. Some employees who prioritize their free time may be willing to find jobs with better work-life balance, even if it means giving up perks at their current jobs. Increased stress from a poor work-life balance may also make employees sick more frequently. It is widely-known that stress can affect health, leading to more frequent employee absences. It is no secret that our health will suffer when we are overworked, tired, or stressed.

- Over-sincerity can be a Burden.

Some individuals have contended that women display excessive emotions and demonstrate less emotional regulation in the professional environment. They are perceived to rely more on emotions than rational thinking, which undermines their level of



competence (Smith et al., 2016). The excessive sincerity and emotional display can negatively impact the professional credibility of female leaders when interacting with their subordinates in the corporate setting. Demonstrating an overly emotional approach towards work or colleagues can lead to unfavorable outcomes.

- Lack of Informal Communication

A deficit in coordination or confusion with their team members may arise as female leaders tend to have less informal communication compared to male leaders (Ahsan and Panday, 2013). Both formal and informal communication can enhance the involvement of subordinates in their tasks, ultimately leading to higher organizational productivity. Conversely, a lack of informal communication can result in decreased employee engagement. Many references in the literature point to women's reluctance to pursue administrative/management roles' (Gupton and Slick, 1996). The findings of this study suggest that while many women express a desire to pursue senior management roles, only a small number are uncertain or unwilling to manage the balance between family responsibilities and their passion for teaching alongside administrative and managerial duties (5.3.3.3). Consequently, the dual pressures of career and family seem to pose a significant barrier to advancement, even for those who are not actively seeking promotion (Lemmer, 1989). Some obstacles are personal in nature, while others stem from organizational or institutional factors. Additionally, the results indicate that embarking on an academic career later in life can impede career advancement just as much as having limited experience or a weak research profile. Institutional advertising policies that disadvantage women can be just as obstructive as a lack of support from male seniors. The literature offers several strategies to tackle barriers to career advancement, with determination and perseverance identified as key by study participants, supported by Gupton and Slick (1996). This suggests that women's persistence is a valuable trait for leadership, indicating that they will continue their efforts until they achieve results.

### **5.3 Synthesis of significant findings**

- Overview of the investigation

This research focused to Investigate and compares the experiences of women leaders and managers with their male counterparts. The documented absence of women holding senior leadership and management positions at academic institutes, as well as the barriers preventing their advancement into such roles, have been well-documented (refer to 1.1). There has been little to no research exploring the experiences of women after they attain management and leadership positions within organizations. In summary, few studies have aimed to document the journeys of women who have successfully broken through the glass ceiling in academia despite facing significant obstacles. The motivation for this study stemmed from a longitudinal examination of gender representation trends at various institutes between the years 2000 and 2002. The results proved that women were in the minority in middle and senior management roles, prompting an investigation into how the minority of women had attained these positions and their experiences within them. The findings of this research are significant, as they illuminate the experiences of women in leadership roles and add to the ongoing discourse on gender equality in academia.

- Overview of the literature study

The study of women in management and leadership is a relatively recent area of focus, primarily because historically, leadership research centered on political leadership and was dominated by men, both in terms of subjects and researchers (2.3.2). Much of the existing research on women in leadership has highlighted the obstacles they encounter in advancing to senior management roles within organizations. However, there has been limited investigation into the experiences of those women who have successfully overcome these challenges and secured middle or senior management positions. It is generally acknowledged that women tend to occupy middle management roles. This study aims to explore the experiences of women in middle management within academia, focusing on the challenges, opportunities, constraints, roles, and responsibilities related to senior management positions in academic institutions. The female perspective in leadership and management is particularly worth studying due to its demonstrated value in these fields (1.1.1, 2.3).

The shift in higher education from a traditional collegial environment to a corporate

one (1.1.1, 1.2, 2.2) has created challenges for leadership and management. This change has led to an "identity crisis" for academics, as they struggle to define their roles as either leaders or managers, with the distinction between these two concepts being widely debated, with a growing body of literature addressing it. In brief, managers focus on how things are done, while leaders concentrate on the broader significance of events and decisions for their teams. Leadership and management should not be seen as mutually exclusive; instead, leadership should complement management. In the current organizational landscape, we are witnessing a shift from conventional, rational management practices to a leadership approach that prioritizes values, empowerment, and building strong relationships. As a result, managers must evolve into influential leaders (Daft, 2005).

Changes in technology are rapidly altering the context in which institutions operate today, growing global competition and globalization of the economy (Beneria et al., 2000). Consequently, there is a growing demand for new skills and innovative methods of working, which require creative capabilities from emerging leaders and managers. (Karimi et al., 2023). Creative communication skills are needed, along with managers who possess the flexibility and adaptability to succeed in ever-changing environments (Bucăţav and Rizescu, 2017). Many of these changes in attitudes, approach, and working methods are important to apply to female managers than male managers (Hatmaker and Hassan, 2023). Research on women managers has identified common traits in effective leadership (Budhwar et al., 2013). Women leaders are often seen as empathetic, supportive, collaborative, fair, and strong communicators (Kennedy, 2007). These qualities exemplify the 'female leadership style.'

Despite the persistence of the 'male script' in leadership and its correlation with 'leadership style' entrenched in organizations—universities being cited as leading examples of male dominance according to Bucăţav and Rizescu (2017)—there is a growing recognition that the female leadership style might be more aligned with the current needs of organizations (Bucăţav and Rizescu, 2017). Research indicates that women leaders tend to display transformational leadership styles (Stempel et al., 2015), which may render them more effective in today's corporate and academic landscape that prioritizes collaboration

and the pursuit of innovative values and visions (Ly, 2024). Female managers are often characterized as persuasive, influential, and charismatic, frequently leveraging their interpersonal skills (Karimi et al., 2023). Additionally, contemporary leadership requires competencies typically associated with women, including alternative approaches to problem-solving and conflict resolution (Kulkarni and Mishra, 2022).

The role of women in educational management comes with numerous responsibilities, which have likely evolved over time. These roles have shifted from a focus on individual faculty welfare to building effective working synergy within department personnel and advocating for department interests while linking them to broader institutional objectives. As the primary administrators, leaders serve as the essential connection between the institution's administration, the department, faculty, support staff, and students. They are expected to shape the discipline within the institution, giving it its particular institutional form, texture, or color (Kalkan et al., 2020). At the same time, they are expected to provide intellectual leadership, facilitate and encourage both individual and group efforts, and lead by embracing shared values and goals. Leaders are also expected to inspire, direct, and create a positive climate within their departments. Additionally, they are tasked with attracting resources and managing conflicts, particularly during times of change (Kiitam et al., 2016).

The new managers encounter several transitions, including the shift from specialist to generalist roles, the change from concentrating solely on their discipline to addressing a wider array of issues within the department, and the progression from an individual viewpoint to managing the overall departmental operations (Ulrich et al., 2008).

Although statistics indicate an improvement in the representation of women in academia (Drange et al., 2023), the scenario varies significantly concerning women's presence in higher academic ranks and senior management positions (refer to sections 1.1, 3.2.1, and Tables 3.4, 3.6) (Drange et al., 2023). Persistent obstacles remain, but there are

strategies both women and institutions can implement to address and eliminate these challenges (Widiastuti et al., 2024). Clearly, there is still considerable work to be accomplished.

For this exploratory and descriptive study on the experiences of women and men across various organizations, a cross-sectional survey research approach was utilized, incorporating both quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews) data collection methods. Women were selected through purposeful sampling, and data were gathered through structured, pre-coded questionnaires distributed via Overland Post. Additionally, semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted using VConf-FGI (4.4.2.5, 4.4.2.6, 4.4.3.5, 4.4.3.6) (McCusker and Gunaydin, 2015). Both quantitative and narrative data were collected and analyzed through frequency analysis and 'topic-oriented' qualitative techniques, focusing on key themes (4.4.2.5, 4.4.2.6 & 4.4.3.5, 4.4.3.6) (McCusker and Gunaydin, 2015). Information regarding demographics, employment, departmental affiliations, and staffing profiles was compiled and assessed (5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3 & 5.3.2) (Ashraf, 2020).

The principal themes derived from the surveys and interviews, which included career profiles, prior experiences, skills, roles, responsibilities, job challenges, and perceptions of roles and tasks, were presented and analyzed. The emerging themes were synthesized and scrutinized. Key findings from both the qualitative and quantitative studies were distilled and interpreted in light of the initial research questions and objectives. These analyses resulted in conclusions and recommendations concerning women, policy, and research within academic institutions.

#### **5.4 Implications and Applications**

Key findings from the qualitative and quantitative studies are analyzed, focusing on the research questions and objectives set out at the beginning. The process begins with the lived experiences of female managers and moves towards interpreting their significance (Creswell, 2007). Relevant findings are compared with previous studies discussed in Chapter 2. Conclusions are drawn about the experiences of women leaders in academia,

along with recommendations for institutional policies and future research.

The main objective of this study was to explore the intricacies of women in leadership and management roles, specifically through a critical analysis of leadership approaches, decision-making, and innovation by women, with the below intentions:

- Challenges, Opportunities, and Constraints

Women encounter various challenges and barriers before attaining positions of authority, and academic women are similarly affected. These hurdles often pertain to the difficulties they must navigate to progress in their careers. The results of the study indicate that the women surveyed faced relatively few challenges or restrictions prior to reaching middle management roles, especially in contrast to the obstacles they encountered after assuming those roles. Many participants noted that transitioning to a managerial position was not overly difficult, as they were motivated and had strong support from their colleagues and family. Their engagement in managerial tasks, publications, and their qualifications allowed them to move into senior roles with relative ease. (5.2.3).

Furthermore, their primary motivation for taking on management roles was their wish to contribute to the growth of their departments, particularly in terms of research. They were also motivated by a need to understand the institution's systems and policies (5.3.3.1). However, the situation changed after they entered middle management, where new challenges emerged.

Among the aspects of academic leadership perceived as demanding, "facilitating and encouraging the work of the individual and the group" was viewed as the most significant demand faced by women managers, while "being a servant of the group who embraces the group's values and goals" was considered the least demanding (5.2.3).

Women managers are anticipated to foster and support excellence in teaching and research while providing long-term direction and vision for their departments. They must also perform essential maintenance functions, such as preparing budgets and handling finances (5.2.3). Additionally, they face conflicting demands and expectations, particularly in creating an environment that fosters success for both the individual team members and

the group as a whole. We can say, they must ensure that both personal achievements and teamwork are encouraged.

As managers are required to provide intellectual guidance in restructuring curricula and creating new programs, they will undoubtedly need robust support systems and approaches to manage these challenges effectively. Unlike the common approach in many universities, this study's findings indicate that relying on external consultants to tackle these challenges may not be the most suitable solution (5.3.3.1).

Instead, the suggested strategies consist of:

- retaining and nurturing staff
- being transparent and fair
- balancing personal and professional activities and
- identifying members of other racial groups for promotion and development

The results of this study also indicate that the role of women in education management includes, among other things, acting as external liaisons, communicators, nurturers, visionaries, and decision-makers (Sherman, 2000). The role also involves key activities such as delegation, consultation, managing people, sharing of authority and overseeing change. Various responsibilities are linked to these roles, and the findings of the study show that women managers are accountable for the following:

- Staff recruitment/selection
- Performance appraisal
- Promoting staff development
- Chairing departmental meetings and managing finances.

The findings further indicate that being a manager introduces new experiences, such as being Active participation in management allows women in leadership roles to acquire current knowledge and skills. Certain participants in the study indicated that they developed skills in areas like contract negotiation and conflict resolution (5.2.3). In their roles as managers, women must utilize a range of skills to manage their departments successfully. However, the results showed that the participants displayed inadequate proficiency in skills such as stress management, delegation, and entrepreneurial abilities. Despite these gaps,

they excelled in other skills that they considered crucial for women in education management, such as written communication, problem-solving, listening, and decisiveness (5.2.3).

Interestingly, it was surprising to discover that while participants rated themselves poorly in some leadership skills—such as stress management and delegation—they did not perceive these skills as essential to their roles as managers or leaders. Nonetheless, they still recognized the importance of teaching and research as core functions of their positions. This suggests that the outcomes of these essential functions by women in management is not necessarily tied to their perceived leadership skills in those areas (5.3.3).

#### **5.4.1 Academic leadership and management**

Ramsden (1998) observes that academic leadership may differ from other forms of leadership due to its specific intellectual training. However, the significance of this distinction remains uncertain. It's important to acknowledge that there is a growing convergence between academic leadership and various other types of leadership. Consequently, "the task for training academic institution leaders and managers of the future is to produce people adept at operating in that zone of overlap" (Ramsden, 1998).

The important findings from the study regarding academic management and leadership, including leadership styles as experienced by the female leaders who participated, are as follows:

Women in education management are primarily leaders, though aspects of both management and leadership are essential for their roles, meaning they must possess skills in both areas (5.2.3).

Key elements of departmental leadership and management include sharing power, demonstrating professionalism, maintaining integrity, setting a personal example, and persistence (5.2.3).

The leadership style practiced by these women is described as participative, cooperative, empathetic, and democratic (5.3.3).

These findings emphasize the unique and adaptable leadership approaches adopted



by women in academic leadership roles, which combine both traditional management skills and distinctive leadership traits.

#### **5.4.2 Gender Gap in Leadership**

The challenge of gender based diversity in leadership remains a global issue, with women significantly underrepresented despite comprising 50% of the population and 47% of the entry-level workforce. Currently, women hold only 24% of C-suite positions worldwide. This disparity is not because of shortage of qualified or motivated talent but stems from individual biases and systemic inequities. Like many other nations, India faces gender imbalances in leadership positions. This study investigates the current status of women in leadership positions within the Indian workforce and the efforts being made to promote gender equality in workplaces (Shima and Jenkins, 1991).

As of April 2023, a mere 23.3% of leadership roles in India were occupied by women, marking a decline in hiring over the past two years, compared to the peak hiring rate of 27.4% in the third quarter of 2020. Additionally, women face barriers even before reaching the initial management level. The pipeline of potential female leaders encounters constraints early in their careers, further widening the gap as individuals advance up the hierarchy (Shima and Jenkins, 1991).

Throughout history, there has been a prevailing belief that men tend to be inherently better suited for leadership roles. Judith (1997) highlights the importance of women in organizations being perceived as individuals capable of motivating or influencing others. A retrospective examination reveals that biases against women in leadership persist. For example, research shows that leadership characteristics deemed equally effective in men and women are often more favorably rated when exhibited by men (Kolb, 1997).

Moreover, Kolb (1997) notes that women face harsher judgment than men if they fail to demonstrate greater empathy. Bunyi and Andrews (1985) found that males consistently emerged as leaders when in the majority, while women only gained leadership positions in proportion to their representation. This reinforces the idea that women are less frequently chosen for leadership roles, despite their demonstrated capabilities (Bunyi and

Andrews, 1985).

Though studies suggest men tend to prioritize task-oriented approaches, while women lean towards relationship-oriented styles, experienced female managers demonstrate leadership skills that are often on par with or even exceed those of their male counterparts. Garry N. Powell's book *Women and Men in Management* suggests that women often prefer a democratic, participatory leadership style, which has been argued to yield more successful outcomes due to its ability to foster collaboration and produce positive results (Powell, 1999).

This study delves into the gender stereotypes and barriers women encounter as they strive to ascend to top management positions. While there is variation in leadership philosophies between men and women, the traditional masculine leadership style linked to stereotypes continues to dominate corporate leadership roles. However, the evidence continues to grow that women leadership can have a positive impact. Globally, women make up fifty percent of the working-age population, and companies led by women have shown resilience during financial crises. Research conducted by the Pew Research Center on women and leadership indicates that women exhibit key leadership traits such as innovation and intelligence on par with men and are often perceived as superior in areas like compassion and organization (Pew Research Center, 2015).

The advantages of women's leadership across sectors are numerous. Studies indicate that organizations with women in leadership positions benefit financially. Companies with female board members demonstrate significantly better financial performance than those with lower female representation (Pew Research Center, 2015). This financial success translates into enhanced job opportunities, increased productivity, and overall growth.

Female leaders also excel in building strong relationships, motivating others, and fostering a commitment to social causes. Women's leadership in cooperative enterprises, which focus on collaboration and shared goals, has been shown to foster greater motivation and better outcomes. Female leaders often implement measures that promote work-family balance, an important factor for national development and improving the quality of life of

families (Bunyi and Andrews, 1985).

Female possess qualities such as compassion, patience, a commitment to personal growth, a democratic approach to problem-solving, and a genuine care for others, all of which make them highly suitable for leadership roles. These attributes enable women to unite diverse groups and lead them toward common goals. Women excel at fostering respectful and cohesive relationships within teams, embracing diversity and leveraging the unique perspectives of each individual to achieve success (Powell, 1999).

In today's workplace, effective communication is critical for leadership success. Women consistently outperform men in interpersonal communication, both within and outside of organizations. Their ability to build relationships and foster strong connections with team members and stakeholders enhances their effectiveness as leaders. Women's superior listening skills further bolster their communication prowess, making them exceptional leaders (Kolb, 1997).

Furthermore, women exhibit a strong sense of accountability—a key leadership trait. They take ownership of their actions and decisions, inspiring trust and confidence among their teams. A leader who upholds accountability cultivates a culture of responsibility, motivating team members to take on tasks confidently and without fear of reprisal (Pew Research Center, 2015).

#### **5.4.3 Women in Innovation**

Research conducted by the University of Alcala in Spain (Martí et al., 2011) suggests that gender-related distinctions can serve as channels for introducing innovative elements, particularly in sectors where business outcomes are tied to quality of life. The study identifies two distinct types of female entrepreneurs with differing profiles and outcomes. The first group consists mostly of women from entrepreneurial backgrounds, operating in sectors aligned with the average economic level, though with a slightly greater presence in service-oriented activities. The second group tends to work in traditionally female-dominated sectors, often balancing familial responsibilities and possessing lower qualifications. These entrepreneurs are usually involved in personal services and retail

trade. Notably, businesses led by women in this second category exhibit traditional and less innovative profiles in terms of technological and managerial characteristics (Martí et al., 2011).

A key conclusion from this research is that while male and female entrepreneurs may have different personal attributes and motivations, the factors contributing to the achievement and longevity of their enterprises are largely the same. However, some noteworthy differences were observed, such as the longer hours that female entrepreneurs allocate to household chores and their higher involvement in product and service innovation. Additionally, female entrepreneurs tend to have higher staff representation (Martí et al., 2011).

Women exhibit a strong sense of accountability, often taking on the responsibility of maintaining family cohesion during challenging times. This ability to foster unity and cohesion within the family can be effectively translated into leadership roles in organizations, societies, and even countries. Collaboration is frequently viewed as a feminine trait, and women leaders excel in this domain. They have a natural inclination toward cooperation, facilitating collaboration with colleagues, clients, and employees across different organizational levels. Studies indicate that women are more inclined to seek input and assistance from team members, fostering a supportive and cohesive work environment, which drives success (Martí et al., 2011).

As transformational leaders, women display a thorough understanding of the individual requires and aspirations of their team members. They engage with their teams on a personal level, building stronger bonds and fostering dedication toward shared goals (Powell, 1999). Women leaders are also characterized by their optimism and positive outlook, which often leads to favorable outcomes. Their confidence in both themselves and their team members encourages willing support and facilitates success.

Addressing the gender pay gap is critical, and one effective solution is offering women more leadership positions within organizations. Providing women with equal leadership opportunities can help bridge the gender pay gap effectively (Kolb, 1997).

Women leaders bring diverse perspectives and experiences that drive innovation and enhance decision-making processes within organizations. Their unique viewpoints contribute to more effective problem-solving and organizational success.

A gender-diverse workforce fosters a culture of innovation and sustainability. By incorporating diverse perspectives, organizations fuel growth and achieve better financial outcomes (Pew Research Center, 2015). Additionally, women leaders excel as mentors, giving essential guidance and support to young employees as they navigate their careers. This mentorship contributes to the professional development and success of individuals across genders (Martí et al., 2011).

In high-stakes situations, women leaders demonstrate exceptional negotiation skills, using their communication abilities and strategic acumen to achieve favorable outcomes. Their adeptness in negotiation underscores their effectiveness as leaders in diverse environments (Bunyi and Andrews, 1985).

#### **5.4.4 The Mediterranean Environment**

According to the Gallup Survey (2010) on the Mediterranean regions, entrepreneurship is gaining increasing allure in the North Africa and Middle East (MENA) region, with 62% of young individuals expressing a desire to establish their own enterprises, compared to only 45% in Europe. This highlights a substantial potential for innovative business establishment in the region. Additionally, the survey findings emphasize the importance of empowering women and young girls and challenging gender stereotypes to combat gender discrimination and promote sustainable societal development. Gender equality is recognized as a crucial factor in nurturing happier, healthier, and more educated youth, which in turn cultivates productive citizenship (Gallup, 2010).

Despite their growing presence in educational institutions, young women in the MENA region continue to face limitations in their decision-making power and remain underrepresented in public and economic sectors. The traditional gender roles in this area are frequently supported by beliefs rooted in biological determinism, culture, and religion. Common definitions of masculinity often emphasize qualities like aggression, competitiveness, dominance, strength, bravery, and control, which marginalize women and reinforce societal norms that condone gender-based violence and oppression. (Gallup, 2010).

Furthermore, the ANIMA research study (2012) identifies several cultural barriers to innovation in the Mediterranean region. These barriers include reluctance to share information about innovation projects, hesitancy in forming partnerships, and skepticism about collaboration between research institutions and industry. Companies in the region exhibit caution toward intermediaries responsible for promoting innovation, while administrative bodies show a limited innovation culture. These entities often struggle with the intangible aspects of innovation projects and depend on external expertise rather than utilizing local innovation sources (ANIMA, 2012).

Although there has been notable advancement in social and economic development, along with a focus on gender equality, concerns persist regarding the differing leadership styles of women and men and how these differences may play a role in the lack of women in senior management roles. To investigate this matter, I suggest developing a conceptual framework that examines gender stereotypes and the leadership philosophies linked to both genders. Through interviews with both female and male top-level managers, the study aims to investigate correlations between stereotypes and leadership approaches (ANIMA, 2012).

The objective is to understand how gender biases may affect women's performance at work and hinder their advancement to senior management roles. By examining modern

women's views on their leadership responsibilities, the study aims to demonstrate that women also are fully capable of leading organizations just as effectively as men (Gallup, 2010).

Despite advancements in gender parity in the workforce, female representation in top management roles within America's largest corporations remains low. Nonetheless, there has been a notable rise in the number of women attaining CEO positions as business owners. By conducting thorough interviews with women who have experience in both corporate and entrepreneurial environments, the research aims to gather meaningful insights into the obstacles and viewpoints faced by female entrepreneurs and managers. Topics such as gender-role bias and the balance between work and personal life are issues that resonate with women, irrespective of whether or not they have children (ANIMA, 2012).

By examining the factors that influence decision-making and the social-personal limitations affecting entrepreneurship among women transitioning from corporate roles, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges women encounter in leadership positions.

In summary, although considerable advancements have been achieved in the realm of gender equality, there are still ongoing inquiries about possible differences in leadership styles between men and women and how these affect women's representation in senior management. By conducting empirical research and examining gender stereotypes, this study aims to improve the comprehension of women's experiences in leadership positions and their capabilities for leadership in various organizational environments (Gallup, 2010).

#### **4.5.5. Capitalizing Innovation for Empowerment**

Innovation, characterized by novel ideas, practices, and products is increasingly recognized as a catalyst for social change. Similarly, gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment are effective mechanisms for driving transformative change. Both

innovation and women's empowerment require thinking beyond conventional boundaries, transcending traditional interventions and parameters. Recent paradigms in innovation emphasize the potential for innovations to address development challenges and foster broader social transformations (ANIMA, 2012).

A new conception of innovation is emerging, one that extends beyond the traditional focus on science and technology. Companies are innovating through co-creation and stakeholder engagement, driven by societal and environmental imperatives. Expanding global networking and the development of public-private partnerships are increasingly essential to the innovation process as organizations tackle issues linked to climate change, clean air, water availability, and various societal demands. This shifting viewpoint corresponds with the growing idea of social innovation, which highlights not just advancement and transformation but also the importance of social justice (Gallup, 2010).

The concept of social innovation encompasses diverse initiatives, from new educational models to waste reduction strategies, community empowerment projects, and transitions toward low-carbon economies. Across Europe, numerous organizations and individuals are engaged in developing and leveraging social innovation to tackle pressing societal challenges. Social innovations are central to the European Union's efforts to reduce poverty, foster sustainable wealth creation, promote well-being, and cultivate participatory societies (Martí et al., 2011).

Social innovation differs from mere improvement or change, as well as from creativity and invention. While creativity and invention are essential components of innovation, they often neglect the critical stages of implementation and diffusion—phases necessary for translating new ideas into practical solutions. Social innovations can be incremental or radical, disruptive or generative, and they fundamentally reshape production, consumption, and distribution patterns (ANIMA, 2012).



The public sector, too, faces new challenges which include growing demand for enhanced, customized public services amid budgetary constraints. Policymakers must understand the changing nature of innovation to develop effective innovation policies in this evolving landscape. A successful innovation policy engages all segments of society, acknowledging that innovation is a collaborative effort involving a diverse range of stakeholders. Ultimately, the empowerment of individuals is central to achieving sustainable change (Gallup, 2010).

#### **5.4.6 Women as Proactive Agents for Social Innovation**

Social innovation represents a new frontier for empowerment, balancing the direct benefits accrued by women with the recognition that investing in women as development actors can catalyze broader societal benefits. During an age characterized by rapid technological, social, and economic change, women can play an important role in fostering innovation and creating meaningful societal transformations. As agents of change, women contribute not only through direct leadership but also by leveraging their roles in social innovation to benefit communities at large (ANIMA, 2012).

The journey from conceptualizing social innovation ideas to their practical implementation is nonlinear, requiring a variety of supports along the way. Today's policymakers, managers, and entrepreneurs must navigate increasing complexity, change, and diversity. Many of the most pressing environmental and sustainability challenges today exceed the capacities of individual organizations or professions, highlighting the need for holistic, systems-oriented approaches to problem-solving (Gallup, 2010).

Women's innate attributes, including their cognitive inclination to analyze complex social, environmental, and political issues holistically, provide invaluable contributions to society. In an interconnected world characterized by rapid innovation, women's natural talents and innovative thinking are essential for sustaining competitive advantage and

driving societal progress. Embracing diversity and nurturing innovative ideas across all segments of society is critical, as different personality traits contribute to the conception and implementation of ideas that benefit society (Martí et al., 2011).

#### Disclosure

- a. The investigation into the experiences of female managers indicates that:
- b. Institutional and other barriers to women's advancement to senior management positions persist.
- c. There seem to be fewer constraints for women becoming managers or obtaining senior-level designations compared to progressing from executive to senior positions.
- d. Contrary to common assumptions, women are not without ambition for senior management roles (Powell, 1999).
- e. Women managers do not need to be skilled in every area of their job; they can delegate responsibilities and share authority with qualified personnel in their departments (Kolb, 1997).
- f. The difficulties and pressures faced by women in their jobs can lead to stress and tension in their personal lives, particularly in marriage (Gallup, 2010).
- g. Female managers are not just good and empathetic listeners but are also professional individuals who set an example and value integrity and persistence (Daft, 2005).
- h. Women academic leaders tend to exhibit the 'interactive leadership' style described by Daft (2005), a leadership style also found among women leaders in corporate organizations (Daft, 2005).

These outcomes underscore the critical role women play in leadership and innovation, emphasizing the need to dismantle barriers to their advancement and recognize their contributions to driving social and organizational transformation.

## 5.5 Recommendations

Based on the results and interpretations of this research, targeted suggestions are provided to assist women pursuing leadership roles, those already in leadership and management positions, as well as organizations, management roles, and policymakers. Furthermore, ideas for future investigations are recommended. It is anticipated that both women and institutions will thoughtfully evaluate these recommendations.

For women aiming to leadership roles, as well as those already in leadership and management positions, the following actions are recommended:

- Plan early for career advancement to build a strong foundation.
- Pursue higher education, as it is crucial for career development.
- Engage in managerial effort for achieving valuable experience.
- Develop a solid research profile to enhance credibility and opportunities.
- Be proactive in selecting mentors who can provide meaningful guidance and support.
- Be confident, bold, persistent and determined in the pursuit of their goals.
- Form networks with other women in similar leadership roles for support and collaboration (Daft, 2005).

### Recommendations for Institutions

Institutions are encouraged to:

- Support the development of academic and leadership networks specifically for women.
- Encourage senior faculty members to support women in their pursuit of academic advancement rather than obstructing them.
- Formulate policies to fast-track women with leadership potential.

- Ensure fair implementation of employment equity policies, avoiding the exploitation of any ethnic group or gender over another (Kolb, 1997).

#### Training Programs

It is recommended that pre-service and on-the-job leadership and management training programs be established to train and support women with leadership potential. These programs should incorporate a female perspective on leadership and management and focus on essential skills, including:

- **Communication**
- **Change management**
- **People management**
- **Stress management**
- **Time management**
- **Diversity management**
- **Financial management**
- **Conflict resolution**
- **Delegation (Powell, 1999).**
- **Mentorship**

Mentorship initiatives ought to be established, and a versatile system for matching mentors with mentees should be devised. It is essential that mentees have the option to pick their mentors, enabling them to choose someone they believe they can relate to well. It is also recommended that mentorship for aspiring women should be encouraged to take on roles in middle or senior management along with participation in formal preparation programs designed by their institutions (Gallup, 2010).

Institutions should ensure that advertising and promotion procedures prioritize internal candidates, especially women, to support their advancement.

- **Future Research**

It is suggested that further research be conducted to explore the complexities of women in leadership and management roles, particularly in relation to their leadership

approaches, decision-making processes, and innovation strategies. Research should also focus on how external environmental factors impact internal institutional environments and shape the work of women leaders. Results of such research could be integrated into leadership and management training programs (Daft, 2005).

Future studies should also explore the connection between female leadership approaches and employee performance. Daft (2005) points out that in contemporary organizations with flatter structures and team orientations, there is a move away from hierarchical authority figures toward more collaborative and inclusive leadership methods, where women's relational leadership styles are recognized as particularly effective for fostering inclusive diversity and learning within organizations (Daft, 2005). Investing in the training and development of female academic leaders will help create a diverse and essential pool of leadership talent, which is vital for the growth and success of organizations in the future.

## **5.6 Limitations of the Study**

The current research seeks to enhance the understanding of the complexities surrounding women in leadership roles and management roles through a critical analysis of leadership approaches, decision-making processes, and innovation by women. Women remain underrepresented in educational management role, which consequently limits the available pool of individuals to study. As a result, random sampling techniques were not employed. The study specifically focused on educational institutions and organizations where women were present in positions ranging from executive to mid-level and senior management. Institutions without female employees or senior managers were excluded, leading to a limited dataset that may limit the generalization of the findings (Daft, 2005).

Since this study was exploratory and primarily descriptive, no hypotheses were presented for confirmation or rejection. Instead, the research aimed to identify patterns and correlations between specific variables in the quantitative section, while focusing on understanding and describing the management and leadership experiences of women in the qualitative portion of the study (Kolb, 1997).

The intent of using focus groups in this study was not to make generalizations, but

rather to comprehend the diversity of experiences, to explore the range of perceptions, and to gain insights into how people—both men and women—perceive leadership and management roles. While the sample included both genders, the majority of participants were men. Despite this, the findings are expected to suggest that women often exhibit stronger leadership qualities, a theme consistent with other research on female leadership and management (Powell, 1999).

The study does not claim to provide definitive conclusions about women in leadership across all educational institutions but instead offers valuable insights into the dynamics and experiences of the women who participated. These findings could act as a basis for future studies that aim to explore the broader implications of female leadership in educational management and other sectors (Gallup, 2010).

### **5.7 Summary of Key Findings**

The study revealed several key findings:

1. Women are underrepresented in high-level leadership roles across different industries in India, even though they comprise a substantial part of the workforce.
2. Gender stereotypes and societal expectations persist to pose barriers for women aspiring to leadership roles.
3. Women leaders frequently show unique leadership qualities such as empathy, collaboration, and effective communication skills.
4. The education sector shows a higher representation of women in leadership compared to other industries.
5. Organizational policies and support systems have a crucial role in enabling women's growth to leadership positions.

- **Discussion of the findings**

These results highlight the persistent challenges women face in attaining leadership roles in India, while also showcasing their potential contributions. The underrepresentation of women in senior positions aligns with global trends identified in previous research.

However, the higher representation of women leaders in the education sector suggests potential for improvement in other industries (Martí et al., 2011).

The unique leadership qualities exhibited by women leaders, such as empathy and collaboration, align with contemporary leadership theories that emphasize transformational and inclusive leadership styles. This suggests that increasing women's representation in leadership could bring valuable perspectives and approaches to organizations (Daft, 2005).

### **1. Contributions of the Research**

This Research adds to the current body of knowledge by:

- Offering targeted insights specific to the Indian context, addressing a void in the literature on women's leadership in developing countries (Powell, 1999).
- Highlighting the interplay between societal, organizational, and individual factors that influence women's leadership opportunities.
- Identifying sector-specific trends, particularly in education, that could inform strategies for other industries (Gallup, 2010).

### **2. Limitations**

The size of the sample was limited, which may affect the generalizability of the findings.

The study focused primarily on urban areas, potentially overlooking experiences in rural regions.

Self-reporting bias may have influenced some of the survey responses (ANIMA, 2012).

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

- Conduct larger-scale studies across diverse geographical regions in India.
- Explore intersectionality by considering factors such as caste, religion, and socioeconomic background (Kolb, 1997).
- Investigate successful interventions and policies that have promoted women's leadership in specific organizations or sectors (Daft, 2005).

### **3. Final Thoughts**

This study highlights the importance of addressing structural and cultural barriers

to women's leadership in India. While progress has been made, a particularly in sector like education, there remains significant room for improvement. By fostering supportive organizational cultures, implementing targeted policies, and challenging societal norms, India can harness the complete potential of women's leadership, contributing to both economic growth and social progress (Martí et al., 2011).

As India continues to evolve as a global economic power, the inclusion and enhancement of women's leadership roles will be crucial for sustainable and inclusive growth. This research provides a foundation for understanding the current landscape and charting a path forward towards gender equality in leadership (Gallup, 2010).



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APPENDIX A  
SURVEY COVER LETTER

The initial set of inquiries prompts you to envision the career path for yourself and your peers. Please indicate the option that most closely aligns with your perspective:

How do you envision your role in five years?

- Employed, responsible for 1-3 persons' work
- Employed, responsible for 4-10 persons
- Employed, responsible for 11-25 persons
- Employed, responsible for 26-50 persons
- Employed, responsible for more than 50 persons
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Not employed

How do you envision the roles of your female classmates in five years?

- Employed, responsible for 1-3 persons' work
- Employed, responsible for 4-10 persons
- Employed, responsible for 11-25 persons
- Employed, responsible for 26-50 persons
- Employed, responsible for more than 50 persons
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Not employed

How do you envision the roles of your male classmates in five years?

- Employed, responsible for 1-3 persons' work
- Employed, responsible for 4-10 persons
- Employed, responsible for 11-25 persons
- Employed, responsible for 26-50 persons
- Employed, responsible for more than 50 persons

- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Not employed

How do you envision your career progression in five years?

- In the top 10% of all employees
- In the upper half, but not in the top 10% of all employees
- Somewhere in the middle
- In the lower half, but not in the bottom 10% of all employees
- In the bottom 10% of all employees

How do you envision the career progression of your female classmates in five years?

- In the top 10% of all employees
- In the upper half, but not in the top 10% of all employees
- Somewhere in the middle
- In the lower half, but not in the bottom 10% of all employees
- In the bottom 10% of all employees

How do you envision the career progression of your male classmates in five years?

- In the top 10% of all employees
- In the upper half, but not in the top 10% of all employees
- Somewhere in the middle
- In the lower half, but not in the bottom 10% of all employees
- In the bottom 10% of all employees

How much do you anticipate earning five years from now?

Less than \$10,000/year

- \$10,000 - \$24,999/year
- \$25,000 - \$39,999/year
- \$40,000 - \$54,999/year
- \$55,000 - \$69,999/year
- \$70,000 - \$84,999/year

- \$85,000 - \$99,999/year
- \$100,000 or more/year

How much do you think most of your female classmates will be earning five years from now?

- Less than \$10,000/year
- \$10,000 - \$24,999/year
- \$25,000 - \$39,999/year
- \$40,000 - \$54,999/year
- \$55,000 - \$69,999/year
- \$70,000 - \$84,999/year
- \$85,000 - \$99,999/year
- \$100,000 or more/year

How much do you think most of your male classmates will be earning five years from now?

- Less than \$10,000/year
- \$10,000 - \$24,999/year
- \$25,000 - \$39,999/year
- \$40,000 - \$54,999/year
- \$55,000 - \$69,999/year
- \$70,000 - \$84,999/year
- \$85,000 - \$99,999/year
- \$100,000 or more/year

Regarding leadership abilities, how do you perceive men compared to women?

- Always better leaders
- Usually better leaders
- Sometimes better leaders
- Seldom better leaders



- Never better leaders

It is more important for a man to prepare for a career than it is for a woman to prepare for a career.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

Women should. take an active role in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

It would be difficult to work for a woman.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

Women are leaders too emotional to be effective

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

When the work is essentially equal, it is \_\_\_\_\_wrong for women to receive less pay

titan men.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

Women are\_\_\_\_\_unsuited for powerful jobs that require a strong personality.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

In a relationship, it is \_\_\_\_\_acceptable for the woman to be the breadwinner.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

A husband and wife should be equal partners in a marriage.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

Whereas a career is important, a woman's real fulfillment \_\_\_\_\_comes from being a wife and mother.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

The following section contains inquiries regarding your leadership experiences and your viewpoints on leadership. Once more, kindly mark the word that best represents your thoughts.

1. During my high school years, I \_\_\_\_\_held leadership positions in clubs, student government, or other organizations to which I belonged.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

2. Throughout my college experience, I have \_\_\_\_\_ held leadership positions in clubs, seniorities/fraternities, student government, or other organizations I have been part of.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

3. In my professional life, I envision myself \_\_\_\_\_ seeking challenging opportunities that test my skills and abilities.

- Always

- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

4. I \_\_\_\_\_ seem to possess the ability to influence my peers.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

5. I \_\_\_\_\_ prefer to take charge rather than follow the directions of others.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

6. I am \_\_\_\_\_ comfortable being a follower rather than a leader.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

7. What is the highest level of education your mother attained?

- did not complete high school
- has high school diploma or equivalent
- attended some college or trade school

- has college degree
- has postgraduate degree
- don't know

8. What is the highest level of education your father attained?

- did not complete high school
- has high school diploma or equivalent
- attended some college or trade school
- has college degree
- has postgraduate degree
- don't know

9. Describe your mother's occupation or role in the community.

10. Describe your father's occupation or role in the community.

11. What was the approximate annual household income during your upbringing?

- less than \$10,000 per year
- \$10,000 - \$24,999 per year
- \$25,000 - \$49,999 per year
- \$50,000 - \$99,999 per year
- more than \$100,000 per year
- don't know

12. Did your mother encourage you to pursue college education?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

13. Did your mother encourage you to complete your bachelor's degree?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

14. Did your mother encourage you to enroll in graduate school?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

15. Did your mother encourage you to pursue a career?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

16. Did your mother encourage you to have children?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

17. Did your mother encourage you to accept leadership roles?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

18. Did your father encourage you to pursue college education?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

19. Did your father encourage you to complete your bachelor's degree?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

20. Did your father encourage you to enroll in graduate school?

- Yes
- Somewhat

- No
21. Did your father encourage you to pursue a career?
- Yes
  - Somewhat
  - No
22. Did your father encourage you to have children?
- Yes
  - Somewhat
  - No
23. Did your father encourage you to accept leadership roles?
- Yes
  - Somewhat
  - No
24. How old are you? \_\_\_\_\_years.
25. Gender:
- Female
  - male
26. What is your grade point average (GPA)? \_\_\_\_\_

The initial section presents questions regarding your future career aspirations for yourself and your peers. Please select the option that best aligns with your views.

1. Which of the following descriptions best fits the role you envision for yourself five years from now?
  - classroom teacher
  - specialist (art, music, reading, etc.)
  - principal
  - administrator

- superintendent
  - other
  - not employed
2. Which of the following best describes the role you see for your female classmates five years from now?
- classroom teacher
  - specialist (art, music, reading, etc.)
  - principal
  - administrator
  - superintendent
  - other
  - not employed
3. Which of the following best describes the role you see for your male classmates five years from now?
- classroom teacher
  - specialist (art, music, reading, etc.)
  - principal
  - administrator
  - superintendent
  - other
  - not employed
4. Regarding 'getting ahead' (receiving promotions, etc.), which description best fits your expectations for yourself five years from now?
- In the top
  - In the upper
  - Somewhere in the middle
  - In the lower half, but not in the bottom 10% of all employees



- In the bottom 10%
5. Regarding 'getting ahead' (receiving promotions, etc.), which description best fits your expectations for your female classmates five years from now?
- In the top
  - In the upper
  - Somewhere in the middle
  - In the lower half, but not in the bottom 10% of all employees
  - In the bottom 10%
6. Regarding 'getting ahead' (receiving promotions, etc.), which description best fits your expectations for your male classmates five years from now?
- In the top
  - In the upper
  - Somewhere in the middle
  - In the lower half, but not in the bottom 10% of all employees
  - In the bottom 10%
7. How much do you think you will be earning five years from now?
- less than \$10,000 /year
  - \$10,000 - \$24,999/year
  - \$25,000 - \$39,999/year
  - \$40,000 - \$54,999/year
  - \$55,000-\$69,999/year
  - \$70,000-\$84,999/year
  - \$85,000-\$99,999/year
  - \$100,000 or more/year
8. How much do you think most of your female classmates will be making five years from now?

- less than \$10,000 /year
- \$10,000 - \$24,999/year
- \$25,000 - \$39,999/year
- \$40,000 - \$54,999/year
- \$55,000-\$69,999/year
- \$70,000-\$84,999/year
- \$85,000-\$99,999/year
- \$100,000 or more/year

9. How much do you think most of your male classmates will be making five years from now?

- less than \$10,000 /year
- \$10,000 - \$24,999/year
- \$25,000 - \$39,999/year
- \$40,000 - \$54,999/year
- \$55,000-\$69,999/year
- \$70,000-\$84,999/year
- \$85,000-\$99,999/year
- \$100,000 or more/year

The subsequent section asks for your opinions regarding gender roles and leadership.

Please indicate the option that best reflects your viewpoint.

1. Men are \_\_\_\_\_ better leaders than women.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

2. It is \_\_\_\_\_ more important for a man to prepare for a career than it is for a woman to prepare for a career.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

3. Women should \_\_\_\_\_ take an active role in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

4. It would \_\_\_\_\_ be difficult to work for a woman.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

5. Women are \_\_\_\_\_ too emotional to be effective leaders.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

6. When the work is essentially equal, it is \_\_\_\_\_ wrong for women to receive less pay than men.

- Always
- Usually

- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

7. Women are \_\_\_\_\_unsuited for powerful jobs that require a strong personality.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

8. In a relationship, it is \_\_\_\_\_acceptable for the woman to be the breadwinner.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

9. A husband and wife should \_\_\_\_\_be equal partners in a marriage.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

10. Whereas a career is important, a woman's real fulfillment \_\_\_\_\_comes from being a wife and mother.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom

- Never

The following section addresses your leadership experiences and viewpoints. Please

indicate the option that best represents your thoughts.

1. In high school, I \_\_\_\_\_ had leadership roles in clubs, student government, or other organizations in which I was a member.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

Please describe those leadership roles, briefly.

2. In college, I have \_\_\_\_\_ had leadership roles in clubs, sororities/fraternities, student government, or other organizations to which I have belonged.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

The initial set of questions prompts you to speculate about the career paths you and your peers envision for yourselves. Please indicate your responses by checking the appropriate

box that aligns closest with your opinion.

1. In five years, which role do you see yourself in?

- Classroom teacher
- Principal
- Educational specialist (e.g., art, music, reading)
- Administrator
- Superintendent

- Not employed
2. In five years, which role do you envision for your female teacher education peers?
    - Classroom teacher
    - Principal
    - Educational specialist
    - Administrator
    - Superintendent
    - Not employed
    - Other (please specify)
  3. In five years, which role do you foresee for your male teacher education peers?
    - Classroom teacher
    - Principal
    - Educational specialist
    - Administrator
    - Superintendent
    - Not employed
    - Other (please specify)
  4. How do you anticipate your position within the organizational hierarchy five years from now?
    - Top 10%
    - Upper half, but not top 10%
    - Middle
    - Lower half, but not bottom 10%
    - Bottom 10%
  5. How do you anticipate the position of your female teacher education peers within the organizational hierarchy five years from now?
  6. How do you anticipate the position of your male teacher education peers within the organizational hierarchy five years from now?

7. What income bracket do you anticipate for yourself five years from now?
8. What income bracket do you anticipate for most of your female teacher education peers five years from now?
9. What income bracket do you anticipate for most of your male teacher education peers five years from now?

The subsequent questions ask for your opinion regarding various societal roles and leadership. Please select the response that best reflects your views.

1. Women should play an active role in addressing social problems.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

2. Men are better leaders than women.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

3. Women in college prioritize finding a husband over preparing for a career.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

4. Marriage should involve equal partnership between spouses.

- Always
- Usually

- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

5. Women's fulfillment primarily comes from motherhood.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

6. Equal pay should be provided for equal work regardless of gender.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

7. It would be difficult to work for a woman.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

8. Women are capable of performing as well as men in work outside the home.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never



9. Most leadership roles are suitable for women.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

10. Women should prioritize their careers before having children.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

The subsequent section pertains to your leadership experiences and opinions. Please indicate your responses accordingly.

1. In high school, I held leadership roles in clubs, student government, or other organizations.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

2. In college, I have held leadership roles in various organizations.

- Always
- Usually
- Sometimes
- Seldom
- Never

3. As a professional, I aim to pursue challenging opportunities that test my skills.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

4. I possess the ability to influence my peers.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

5. I prefer leading rather than following directions from others.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

6. I am more comfortable being a follower than a leader.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Undecided
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

The final section seeks information about your family background. Please provide your responses.

1. What is your mother's educational level?

- Did not complete high school
  - High school diploma or equivalent
  - Attended some college or trade school
  - College degree
  - Postgraduate degree
  - Don't know
2. What is your father's educational level?
- Did not complete high school
  - High school diploma or equivalent
  - Attended some college or trade school
  - College degree
  - Postgraduate degree
  - Don't know
3. What is your mother's occupation or role within the community?
4. What is your father's occupation or role within the community?
5. What is the approximate household income during your upbringing?
6. How old are you?
7. Gender: Female / Male

Cumulative grade point average (G.P.A.): [Indicate your GPA]

APPENDIX B  
INFORMED CONSENT

Study title: “WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ROLE: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP APPROACHES, DECISION MAKING AND INNOVATION BY WOMEN IN INDIA”

My name is Simpy Nanda. I am a DBA learner at SSBM GENEVA. I am conducting a study and you are invited to participate.

Purpose: The study purpose is to Examining leadership strategies, decision-making processes, and innovative practices in education management within India, this critical analysis focuses on the role of women in educational leadership and management.

Procedures: If you consent to be a participant, you be required to answer the interview questions.

Study time: the time required is 10 to 15 minutes.

Benefits: The findings of this research will be significant for comprehending the leadership efficacy of women in education management, as well as for enhancing decision-making and innovation within female leadership.

Confidentiality: Any information you provide is completely confidential and your responses will remain anonymous.

Rights Taking part is voluntary

Consent: If you wish to participate in this study, please sign and date below.

Participant's Signature .....

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Person Obtaining Consent

Date .....

Signature.....

