An enquiry into dynamics influencing successful women in managerial leadership positions in manufacturing organizations: A competency development model to account for challenges in achieving workplace accession.

By

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Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the award of the
Degree of Doctor of Business Administration

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ABSTRACT

The inclusion of women in managerial leadership positions in the manufacturing industry has great potential to stimulate growth and enhance competitiveness in the face of global difficulties. Manufacturing plays a crucial role in numerous economies, employing a significant section of the labor force and making a major contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Harnessing the skills and viewpoints of women in positions of power is crucial for long-term success and adaptability in response to changing market conditions. Despite the growing emphasis on developing women for managerial and higher leadership positions, there is a significant lack of female participation in these jobs. This scarcity frequently arises from a perceived deficiency in women's preparedness to advance in the hierarchy of leadership, in contrast to their male colleagues. Organizations today are primarily focused on obtaining the appropriate personnel for critical positions. This problem is exacerbated when confronted with limited alternatives, resulting in decisions that prioritize the recruitment and advancement of males over females.

Nevertheless, there is an increasing acknowledgment of the significance of achieving gender parity inside enterprises, particularly in traditionally male-dominated sectors such as heavy manufacturing. Attaining gender balance is not just an issue of fairness, but it is also essential for the efficiency and creativity of a company. This study examines the factors that influence the achievement of women in managerial leadership positions in the manufacturing industry. As a result, this research examines the competences necessary for women to succeed in managing positions by doing a thorough analysis of industry-specific characteristics and identifying hurdles that need to be overcome.

Utilizing the quantitative methodology, such as surveys and case studies, this study investigates the complex terrain of dynamics such as work-life balance, motivation, career progression and economic advancement that impact on the leadership accession of women in managerial leadership roles. Moreover, this study presents a specialized competency development model designed to tackle the obstacles encountered by women in manufacturing organizations in Sri Lanka. The concept incorporates approaches to improve skills, mentorship programs, support systems inside organizations, and activities to promote leadership cultures that are inclusive of all genders. This study enhances gender diversity and empowers women in managerial roles in the manufacturing

sector of Sri Lanka. It provides practical solutions based on empirical evidence, promoting inclusive and sustainable organizational growth.

The statistical analysis was conducted utilizing the SPSS 26 program. The analysis employed descriptive statistics, regression analysis, individual T test, and the Hayes Process Macro in SPSS. The SmartPLS software was employed to examine common criteria for assessing outcomes, including reflective and formative measurement models, the structural model, and the goodness of fit. The analysis focuses on examining a theoretical framework in terms of its predictive ability, even when the structural model is intricate and encompasses numerous components, indicators, and model linkages.

The study emphasizes the significance of its findings, demonstrating the critical impact that variables like motivation, work-life balance, career development, and economic empowerment have in enabling women to rise to management leadership roles inside manufacturing sector businesses. It also clarifies how top-level leadership support acts as a mediating factor, strengthening the connection between these crucial factors and women's performance in managing positions. A competency development model is also suggested by the study in an effort to remove the obstacles that prevent women from advancing in the workforce. This approach seeks to empower firms to create an atmosphere that supports women's advancement into leadership roles and professional development in the manufacturing industry by providing practical tactics and insights.

Keyword: *Leadership Styles, Leadership Theories, Strategy, Management, Women Management Styles, Change Management, Motivation.*

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

The demand for gender diversity and inclusivity in leadership positions has garnered considerable attention across several sectors, including the manufacturing industry, in recent times. The significance of comprehending and resolving gender discrepancies in corporate leadership has been emphasized by the acknowledgment of the distinct viewpoints, skills, and contributions that women offer in managing roles. In the manufacturing industry, where there has historically been a prevalence of male-dominated leadership hierarchies, the progression of women into managerial positions is a crucial area for promoting workplace fairness and maximizing the utilization of human resources. How many women actually reach the highest positions in any organization worldwide? Even though we've seen a lot of women, this is a challenging subject to pose.

The present study aims to examine the factors that contribute to the achievement of women in managerial leadership positions within hard manufacturing organizations. The notion of manufacturing as the hardest place on earth to work has resulted in a dearth of women in managerial leadership roles inside these organizations. Previous studies have contended that there is a dearth of women in leadership roles. These studies have also identified the barriers that women face when trying to advance into management leadership roles within organizations, given that historically, men have dominated these positions. (Blackmore,2002; Foster, 2001; Fine, 2003). However, there is not much of research work done to investigate the dynamics influencing successful women in managerial leadership positions and how these set of women "crushed the glass ceiling" in so called hard manufacturing world. Today's ever-changing modern business is visibly carried out in uncertain environments. Further, today's global corporations are faced with ever increasing competition from international pressures, unsteady impulsive markets, emerging new and complex technological advancements, and moreover the massive change in the societies in general with new generations, to name few such changes (Harteis, 2012; Caligiuri & Tarque, 2012). For businesses to grow and stay profitable in this complex global context the organizations need steady diverse talent pools and moreover the right managerial leadership who can effectively sail through these storms. However, diversification in the workplace has become one of the most challenging human resource management issues. An increasing number of women are entering the

workforce, a trend that is being encouraged by businesses. This is because successful companies often highlight the benefits that women can offer to their operations. However, men generally occupy the majority of senior management jobs in almost every country, while female managers are typically relegated to lower management roles with less authority than male managers (Catalyst, 1991; U.S. Department of Labour, 1991). Although women as a whole have less emphasis on career attainment in their career life than men, there are a substantial number of women who strive for top management positions and are unable to attain them.

In recent years, there has been a significant amount of scholarly attention devoted to the subject of gender and leadership style by various social scientists, management consultants, and other writers. Certain authors who possess significant expertise in organizational settings and specialize in writing nontechnical publications targeted towards management audiences and the general public have put forth arguments supporting the existence of gender disparities in leadership styles. Loden (1985) argued that a distinct management style can be identified as masculine, which is characterized by attributes such as competitiveness, hierarchical authority, a high level of control for the leader, and a rational and analytical approach to problem-solving. According to Loden, women exhibit a preference for and approach leadership in accordance with an alternative feminine paradigm. This model is characterized by cooperativeness, collaboration between managers and subordinates, reduced control for the leader, and problem-solving that relies on intuition, empathy, and rationality.

A vast amount of research and literature has been produced during centuries of studying leadership; according to Burns (1978), "leadership is one of the most observed and least understood phenomena on earth." Women have just recently started to emerge as leaders in businesses and politics globally during the 1990s (Adler, 1999). The number of women seeking management and professional positions in the US has increased over the past 20 years, which is encouraging. In many instances, women have shown to be more educated, competent, and trained than their male counterparts. Comprehending the position, obstacles, and achievements of women in leadership positions is crucial for the efficiency of organizations and the progression of society. The diversity of viewpoints at the decision-making tables in organizations is directly impacted by the number of women in managerial roles, and this in turn affects the organization's capacity for innovation, problem-solving, and strategic direction. Organizations may guarantee that their leadership teams

represent the varied talent pool available by identifying areas of improvement and representation gaps by taking a thorough approach to understanding the state of women in leadership. In addition, tackling the obstacles that women encounter in managerial positions—such as gender prejudices, barriers to advancement, and restricted mentorship opportunities—is crucial to creating inclusive workplaces and realizing each worker's potential. Furthermore, by questioning established gender conventions, advancing equality, and motivating upcoming generations of women to pursue leadership goals, developments in the promotion of women's leadership contribute to societal improvement. Therefore, by exploring the nuances of women's managerial experiences, organizations advance greater societal goals of equity, diversity, and inclusion in addition to improving their own effectiveness.

Despite the extensive research on women in leadership, there is a noticeable lack of focus on women in managerial leadership positions within the manufacturing sector. This gap in research highlights the need for studies that address the unique challenges faced by women in this industry. Previous research has thoroughly examined various aspects of women's leadership. These studies provide a comprehensive understanding of the systemic barriers and biases that women face. There are numerous studies that show that diverse teams, particularly in leadership, significantly contribute to better decision-making, creativity and financial outcomes. As per McKinsey (2018), companies in the top quartile for gender diversity are 21% more likely to experience above-average profitability. Diversity is linked to innovation, and different perspectives lead to better problem-solving. Ely and Thomas (2001) emphasize that gender diversity needs to be coupled with an inclusive culture to have the real impact. Simply increasing the women representation is not sufficient, companies should create an enabling environment where women's voices are valued. Examining the impact of conscious and unconscious biases that hinder women's progression, it is critical in understanding Crenshaw's (1989) theory of intersectionality, how gender diversity initiatives can fail when they fail to address the overlapping identities of women, such as race, class, sexual orientation. Women of colour face compounded barriers due to both gender and racial discrimination. While progression has been made, persistent barriers such as conscious and unconscious bias, and lack of inclusive cultures continue to limit women's advancement. Eagly and Karau's (2002) role congruity theory explains that societal expectations about gender roles can conflict with perceptions of leadership disadvantaging women into managerial leadership positions. Heilman (2012) shows that women are evaluated differently than men particularly in

male-dominated fields. Leadership traits like decisiveness and assertiveness are typically associated with men, while women are seen as less competent or less suited for the roles despite having equivalent qualifications. Nadler and Stockdale (2012) further explained that during recruitment processes, women are often judged based on their past performance, while men are hired for leadership positions based on perceived potential. This gender bias creates a double standard, making it more difficult for women to be considered for senior management leadership roles.

An Overview of Statistics on Women in Leadership

In 2021, women occupied only 40% of management posts in the United States. This statistical data serves as a poignant reminder of the persistent gender disparity that persists inside the professional sphere. This observation underscores the persistent underrepresentation of women in positions of leadership, notwithstanding the advancements achieved in recent times. This statement serves as an appeal to organizations to proactively implement measures aimed at promoting gender equality, thereby facilitating career progression for women and fostering a more just and fair work environment. Also, in 2020, the representation of women on board seats at S&P 500 businesses was a mere 25%. This statement urges companies to aggressively adopt strategies to advance gender equality in leadership roles and cultivate a more equitable and impartial work atmosphere. Women accounted for 46% of boardroom appointments in the UK FTSE 100 in 2021, however their representation is limited to 36.2% of the total board members. This observation suggests that there remains a considerable distance to be covered in attaining genuine gender equality within corporate boardrooms. By December 2021, a total of 25 nations have appointed a female individual as their head of state or government.

This statistical data serves as a compelling testament to the advancements achieved in the pursuit of gender parity within positions of leadership. This data demonstrates that, notwithstanding the historical obstacles encountered by women, there currently exist 25 nations whereby a female individual holds a leadership position inside the government or state. This achievement represents a noteworthy milestone and serves as evidence of the diligent efforts and unwavering commitment of individuals who have advocated for gender parity in positions of authority. Furthermore, this serves as a poignant reminder that there remains a substantial amount of work that must be undertaken to guarantee the equitable representation of women in leadership positions on a global

scale. As of October 2021, the representation of women in national parliaments stands at 24.9%. This figure serves as a potent reminder of the advancements achieved in terms of women occupying leadership positions, while also highlighting the remaining tasks that require attention. This statement underscores the significance of persistently pursuing gender equality across several domains of society, encompassing the realm of politics. This is a plea for collective action to guarantee equal chances and assistance for women, enabling them to achieve their maximum capabilities. The proportion of women in the US Congress reached a historic high of 23.7% in 2020. The data indicates a growing trend of women being elected to positions of authority and influence, as well as an upward trend in the representation of women in leadership positions. This is a promising indication for the future of women in positions of leadership, and it serves as a reminder that we must persistently pursue enhanced gender parity in every facet of society. In the meantime, the representation of women in senior leadership positions within the IT industry is estimated to be around 27% in the world. This emphasizes the necessity for more female representation in high-level leadership positions and acts as a plea for corporations to establish fairer chances for female professionals. By highlighting this data, it may contribute to the establishment of a workplace that is more inclusive and diverse for everyone. Finaly it can be said that the companies which had a female executive representation over 30% were found to have a higher likelihood of outperforming companies with lower gender diversity in their executive teams. The aforementioned data serves as a compelling reminder of the significance of gender diversity within the executive team. It underscores the correlation between higher levels of female representation in senior positions and greater likelihood of success for organizations, as opposed to those with lower gender diversity. It is crucial to emphasize this point in a blog post regarding Women in Leadership Statistics, as it showcases the concrete advantages of having a greater number of women in positions of leadership. Furthermore, it acts as a catalyst for organizations to actively pursue increased gender diversity within their executive teams, with the aim of optimizing their chances of achieving success.

Below is the Global Share of Women in Senior Leadership Roles across Public and Private Sector Organizations in 2022, reported in Global Gender Gap Report as per study by World Economic Forum.

Women in leadership

GLOBAL SHARE OF WOMEN IN SENIOR LEADERSHIP
ACROSS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS IN 2022:

33%

The industries with the highest percentage women leadership are:

47%	46%	45%	42%
NGO	Education	Personnal Services	Healthcare

The industry with the lowest percentage women leadership are:

21%	20%	19%	16%
Supply Chain and Transportation	Energy	Manufacturing	Infrastructure

Source: Global Gender Gap Report 2022, World Economic Forum

PROACTION INTERNATIONAL

1.2 Industry Overview

The significance of Manufacturing and Production (M&P) in Sri Lanka's economic production has been crucial for both domestic and international markets. The manufacturing sector's average contribution to Sri Lanka's GDP, as estimated by the World Bank, is approximately 18%. The 2021 report from the Central Bank of Sri Lanka expects the rate will be 16.1%. The industry encompasses various sectors, including clothes and textiles, rubber, plastic, fabricated metal, food and beverage, and chemical products.

The manufacturing sector in Sri Lanka encompasses a diverse range of industries, including textiles and apparel, food and beverages, rubber and plastics, machinery and equipment, electronics, and chemicals. Textiles and apparel have historically been the largest segment of the manufacturing industry, accounting for a significant portion of export earnings. The manufacturing sector is a key driver of economic growth in Sri Lanka, contributing a substantial share to the country's GDP. While the exact contribution may vary from year to year, manufacturing consistently plays a crucial role in supporting overall economic development and industrialization efforts. Further this sector plays a crucial role in generating employment opportunities, hence supporting a substantial segment of the labor force. A wide array of employment prospects can be found within several sub-sectors, encompassing roles such as factory workers, technicians, engineers, managers, and other professionals. A significant number of manufacturing sectors in Sri Lanka exhibit an export-oriented orientation, prioritizing the production of items intended for global markets. Textiles and apparel, specifically, serve as significant contributors to the country's export revenue, with Sri Lanka renowned for its superior garments and textiles that are shipped to global markets. Similar to several developing nations, the manufacturing sector in Sri Lanka encounters various obstacles including limitations in infrastructure, shortages in skilled labor, limited access to financial resources, and intense rivalry in the global market. Nevertheless, the industry also offers prospects for expansion and advancement, namely in the realm of high-value-added production, the integration of technology, and the exploration of novel markets. The government of Sri Lanka has enacted a range of policies and initiatives aimed at fostering the expansion and enhancing the competitiveness of the manufacturing industry. Some of the measures implemented to enhance the business environment for manufacturers encompass various strategies such as investment incentives, export promotion schemes, infrastructure development projects, skills training programs, and regulatory reforms. Notwithstanding the obstacles encountered, the manufacturing sector in Sri Lanka exhibits potential for sustained expansion and progress, propelled by many causes including escalating domestic and global demand, technical progress, strategic investments, and persistent endeavors to augment competitiveness and sustainability.

It's obvious that women are notably underrepresented in the sector currently given the state of the world. Generally speaking, women make up about 30% of the workforce in industry. The World Economic Forum reports that, across all industries, women make up 33% of junior level employees, 24% of mid-level employees, 15% of senior level employees, and 9% of CEOs. In the

Sri Lankan context, there appears to be a growing trend of increased female labor force participation. Based on the most recent data from the Department of Census and Statistics of Sri Lanka, there has been a consistent upward trend in women's involvement in the workforce over time. The female labor force participation rate experienced an increase from 32.1% in 2013 to 36.5% in 2023. The increasing representation of women in several sectors of the economy, including as industry, services, and agriculture, is seen in this trend. Women in Sri Lanka have made notable advancements in the field of entrepreneurship, as seen by the increasing presence of women-owned enterprises that have made substantial contributions to the country's economic progress. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) study indicates that the proportion of women engaged in entrepreneurial activities in Sri Lanka rose from 9.8% in 2013 to 12.4% in 2023. This underscores the enterprising nature and ingenuity exhibited by female entrepreneurs in the nation.

Notwithstanding the obstacles encountered, women in Sri Lanka have achieved significant advancements in attaining leadership roles throughout many sectors. Catalyst, a global nonprofit organization, reported that the representation of women on board seats in listed firms in Sri Lanka increased from 15.7% in 2013 to 18.5% in 2023. This observation suggests a favorable trend towards more gender diversity within the realm of corporate leadership.

1.3 Research Problem and Justification

1.3.1 Research Gap

The main concept of the present study focuses on the women participation in managerial leadership positions specifically looking to the manufacturing sector Sri Lanka. Considering the prevailing literature published so far, it is clearly noted that, there has been a notable surge in scholarly focus on the topic of gender and leadership style, as seen by the contributions of numerous social scientists, management consultants, and other authors. Several authors with extensive knowledge in organizational contexts and a focus on publishing non-technical books for management audiences and the general public have presented reasons in favor of the presence of gender differences in leadership styles. Other than that, different authors have examined the gender disparities and barriers exists in women leadership and entrepreneurship in different regions in the world. The results are conflicting when it comes to the disparities in leadership styles between genders. Certain studies do provide evidence of gender variations in leadership style. Eagly and

Johnson (1990) emphasize that female leaders in organizational contexts tend to be more democratic and participative than men, who tend to lean more toward autocratic conduct, notwithstanding their finding that there are only minor differences in leadership styles. The leadership gap between men and women has been explained by a wide range of theories in recent decades. Particularly, previous studies have highlighted discrimination against women, gender bias, and stereotyping as the primary causes of the gender gap at the highest levels (e.g., Heilman, 2001; Garcia-Retamero & Lopez-Zafra, 2006; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Studies have also looked into the notion that there is a shortage of qualified women in senior leadership roles due to a pipeline issue (e.g., Eagly & Carli, 2007; Ibarra, Ely, & Kolb, 2013). And also, there are further studies which catered in examining the challenges faced by those particular companies. Other than that, extensive research has been conducted on the topics of women's leadership and work-life balance, which reflects the changing dynamics of the workplace and cultural expectations. Prior studies have explored different aspects of women's leadership, such as the obstacles and enablers to their progress, the influence of organizational culture and biases on leadership prospects, and approaches to encourage their growth and advance gender diversity in leadership positions. Simultaneously, research has examined the complex obstacles that women confront in attaining a harmonious equilibrium between their professional and personal lives, taking into account variables such as familial obligations, caregiving tasks, and societal norms. These inquiries have thoroughly examined the policies, procedures, and workplace cultures of organizations, identifying both variables that facilitate progress and those that impede it. Furthermore, researchers have analyzed the interconnectedness of gender with other aspects of variety, such as race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class, in order to comprehend the distinct encounters of several cohorts of women. The development of strategies and interventions aimed at empowering women leaders and enhancing their work-life balance has been informed by insights derived from previous research. These strategies and interventions encompass various measures such as flexible work arrangements, parental leave policies, leadership development programs, and initiatives designed to foster inclusive workplaces. In the future, it will be imperative to expand upon this existing knowledge foundation in order to further the cause of gender equality, foster the development of different leadership capabilities, and establish conducive circumstances that enable women to flourish in both personal and professional spheres. Considering all these factors it seems that most of the previously conducted studies have examined the gender differences, challenges and

leadership styles and it is rare in the case of studies conducted indicating the factors influencing women in managerial leadership positions.

1.3.2 Theoretical gap

The progression of leadership theories includes Thomas Carlyle's claim in 1847 that leaders possess innate qualities, to contemporary viewpoints that prioritize the cultivation of leadership through instruction and practical knowledge. Carlyle posited the idea that leadership could only be attained by persons who possessed an innate inclination towards daring. This concept was further elaborated upon by Sidney Hook, who made a distinction between the 'eventful man' and the 'event-making man'. Nevertheless, in present-day circumstances, there has been a notable departure from this perspective, as evidenced by a multitude of instances that illustrate the cultivation of leaders through organized initiatives. The concept of trait theory presented a counterargument to Carlyle's idea by proposing that certain features, such as height and intelligence, may be inherited (referred to as emergent traits), while others, like charisma, can be cultivated through experience (known as effectiveness attributes). Max Weber's portrayal of charisma as a transformative power that may motivate individual loyalty was subsequently refined, highlighting subtle differences between leaders and followers and the development of specific characteristics at various periods of life. The significance of changing leadership style to internal and external conditions, as well as the maturity levels of subordinates, is further emphasized by situational leadership theory. Likewise, style theory emphasized the importance of leadership abilities that enable subordinates to achieve optimal performance. Nevertheless, despite the valuable insights provided by these theories regarding leadership dynamics, they fail to provide a comprehensive theoretical framework for comprehending the reasons behind the tendency of individuals, particularly women, to advance to high-level managerial roles within companies. Consequently, there remains a need for additional research and comprehension of this phenomena.

1.3.3 Practice Gap

A concerted effort from multiple stakeholders is needed to achieve the complex goal of increasing the proportion of women in managerial leadership roles. There is a noticeable practice gap in the hard manufacturing industries in developing women into leadership roles. The practice gap in supporting women's development in hard manufacturing industries can be attributed to several interrelated factors: Traditional gender roles and stereotypes often portray manufacturing as a

male-dominated field, which can discourage women from pursuing careers in this area and lead to biases in hiring and promotion. There is often limited awareness about the opportunities available for women in manufacturing. This can result in fewer women considering careers in the sector and a lack of targeted recruitment efforts. Women in manufacturing may lack access to mentors or networks that can provide guidance and support, making it harder for them to navigate their careers and develop leadership skills. Many manufacturing companies may not offer specific training programs aimed at developing women's leadership skills or technical expertise, leading to a slower career progression for women. A predominantly male workplace culture can be unwelcoming to women, which may discourage them from entering or remaining in the field. Issues such as harassment or exclusion can create significant barriers. Rigid work schedules and lack of family-friendly policies can make it challenging for women to balance work and personal responsibilities, deterring them from pursuing careers in manufacturing. Implicit biases in hiring and promotion practices can lead to fewer women being selected for leadership roles, perpetuating the cycle of underrepresentation. Some companies may not prioritize diversity and inclusion initiatives, resulting in missed opportunities to create programs specifically aimed at supporting women. Smaller manufacturing firms, in particular, may lack the resources to develop and implement effective programs for women's professional development. Addressing these issues requires a concerted effort from both organizations and industry stakeholders to create a more inclusive environment that actively supports women's development in hard manufacturing industries

This is Establishing mentorship programs to assist aspiring female leaders and setting goals for the percentage of women on leadership teams are two proactive measures that organizations may take to boost gender diversity. Creating more equal possibilities for women to develop into leadership jobs requires addressing unconscious prejudice through awareness campaigns and training programs. Work-life balance can be supported and women's participation in leadership roles can be facilitated by flexible work policies such as parental leave and remote work possibilities. To further advance gender equality in the workplace, funds for leadership development programs designed especially for women as well as equal pay and promotion policies are essential. Educational institutions and legislators can also contribute to the advancement of gender equality by making career coaching and educational programs accessible to women and by putting in place laws that encourage women to hold leadership positions. Organizations and society may assist boost the number of women in executive leadership positions and fully utilize varied talent to drive

innovation and organizational success by putting these tactics into practice and cultivating an inclusive and equitable culture.

A concerted effort from multiple stakeholders is needed to achieve the complex goal of increasing the proportion of women in managerial leadership roles. Establishing mentorship programs to assist aspiring female leaders and setting goals for the percentage of women on leadership teams are two proactive measures that organizations may take to boost gender diversity. Creating more equal possibilities for women to develop into leadership jobs requires addressing unconscious prejudice through awareness campaigns and training programs. Work-life balance can be supported and women's participation in leadership roles can be facilitated by flexible work policies such as parental leave and remote work possibilities. To further advance gender equality in the workplace, funds for leadership development programs designed especially for women as well as equal pay and promotion policies are essential. Educational institutions and legislators can also contribute to the advancement of gender equality by making career coaching and educational programs accessible to women and by putting in place laws that encourage women to hold leadership positions. Organizations and society may assist boost the number of women in executive leadership positions and fully utilize varied talent to drive innovation and organizational success by putting these tactics into practice and cultivating an inclusive and equitable culture.

Women are making continuous efforts in developing the required leadership skills to obtain the highest leadership positions. However, evidence shows that most of those women who have been successful in becoming leaders are in the service sector organizations and there are only very low number of women leaders in manufacturing organizations. According to Laff (2006), women leadership in the banking industry have increased from 19% to 31%. Research shows similar growth of women leaders in other service industries such as tourism and education.

Companies with women in leadership positions are more profitable than those without

Median annual net profit margins for firms, 1997–2017

Directors

With female directors

Without female directors

Executive officers

With female executives

Without female executives
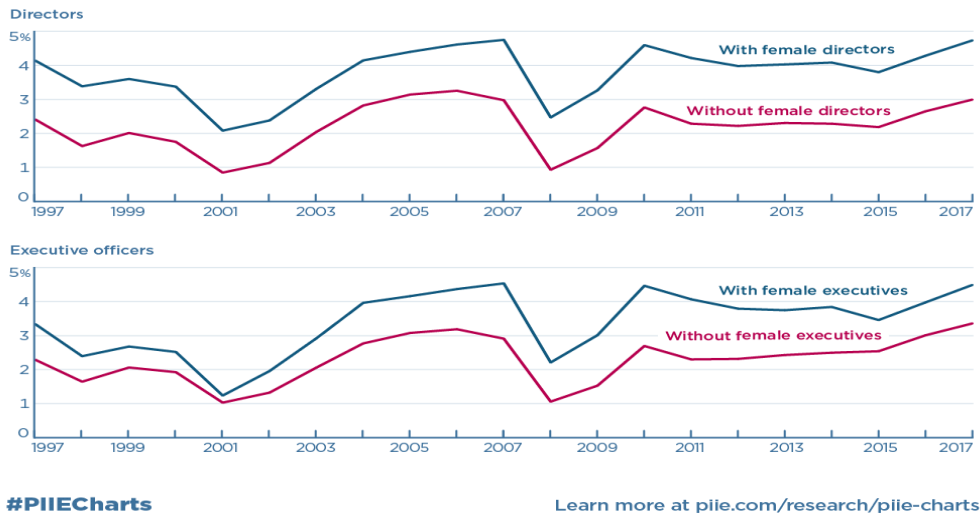
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Sources: Refinitiv and authors' calculations.

Figure 1: Annual net profit margins in companies with women in leadership positions.

According to Figure I, it showcases the significance of having positions with women leadership drives companies more profitable. Thus, it is evident that this creates a prominent factor that women managerial positions do have a greater impact. Alongside, it is true that gradually the percentage of women representation in managerial roles is gradually increasing. Thus it is clear that, analyzing the dynamic impact on women in managerial leadership positions is timely needed for gaining fruitful results utilizing resources in a country via employability and decision making.

1.3.4 Problem Statement

Women in general are not greatly seen holding managerial leadership positions in organizations and this is even wider in the manufacturing organizations. When look in to the previous researches, there is an enriched library full of studies on women in leadership and some have furthered those studies to discuss various different aspects such as gender diversity and inclusion issues, recruiting women into managerial leadership positions, biasness, discrimination, men's rivalry, personal preferences of male leaders selecting male managers and the list can go on. Those study extracts have been proven resourceful to produce comprehension for initiation of ethical reconstruction of

culture in the organizations, whether it is a private or government that helps for women empowerment. However, there is very little previous research done on women in managerial leadership positions in hard manufacturing industries. . In the context of Sri Lanka, manufacturing industry plays a major role in providing employment to large workforce. Latex manufacturing industry in Sri Lanka is known to be an high quality produced manufacturing hub due to the natural rubber growing industry. Sri Lanka's latex has been identified as the highest quality rubber to produce medical rubber gloves. It is important to protect this industry and the manufacturing of this product through direct foreign investments. Having the required talent and the leadership to manage the manufacturing operations is prime to be able to retain the business. However, there is scarcity in the market. Further, foreign direct invested company's vision has changed in last few years. These organizations are adopting policies and practices linking to their commitment to the ESG strategies under the OECD Corporate Governance Structures in which diversity and inclusion is one of the important topics. This is why this study is aimed at understanding and identifying the gaps.

Therefore, this study is grounded upon "identifying dynamics influencing successful women in managerial leadership positions in manufacturing organizations: A competency development model to account for challenges in achieving workplace accession."

1.4 Research Objectives

The main objective of the research is to understand dynamics influencing successful women and develop a competency development model ensuring that the model will be of immense help to the organizations as well as women.

And further.

- To understand different leadership theories and styles through various previous research work available.
- To investigate various factors influencing the successful women leaders, and further study their experiences, motivations, maturity and psychological strengths against the demonstrated leadership styles.
- To do an in-depth analysis to understand which factors strongly influence and raise the bar for their career development.

- To analyze the different leadership styles of those women and identify their competencies in order to create the competency development model.

1.5 Research Questions

Latex dipping manufacturing organizations face scarcity in the market for talent. This industry needs the best-in-class talent to design, develop and distribute safety solutions to the world. Currently the company is undergoing a major transformation, and it is imperative that there are enough teams to manage the operations. Even though company wants to develop its own women employees, situation arise where the women's readiness for such leadership position is not there. Organization has publicly committed to becoming an equal opportunity organization however, it has become challenging to get the right talent.

And apart from that the following expected address.

- What are the dynamics influencing successful women in managerial positions in manufacturing organizations?
- What are barriers those successful women challenged with? And what coping mechanisms are being followed to overcome those challenges.
- What are the most influential factors that contributes to the successful development of women managers?
- Are their similarities of those dynamics of successful women in the managerial positions to the men in the same organizations?

1.6 Significance of the study

The purpose of the research is to explore the factors influencing successful women in managerial leadership positions in latex dipping manufacturing organizations to understand the challenges they face and identify the different tactics they use to stay on top of their positions. Through the findings this study will be led to developing a Competency Development Model that will be useful to employers who are concentrating in diversity and inclusions and also for the women who are striving to become affective leaders in manufacturing organizations.

This research has enormous potential to address urgent issues that sectors with a shortage of talent are facing. The goal of this study is to create a competency development model that is especially

suited for organizational women leadership development through a comprehensive inquiry and analysis. This model will provide an organized framework to assist organizations in managing talent and developing a pool of competent female leaders. The competency development model is a strategic instrument that organizations may use to find, nurture, and advance women leaders because it recognizes the critical role that hiring and promoting the proper people play in organizational success. Organizations may improve their ability to draw in, hold on to, and nurture exceptional female talent by utilizing the insights obtained from this research. This will foster innovation, competitiveness, and long-term growth. In the end, using this strategy may help firms not only overcome the obstacles associated with a lack of talent but also cultivate an inclusive, diverse, and excellence-focused culture.

A considerable amount of study has been conducted on leadership, but studies that concentrate on the leadership styles of women are conspicuously lacking. Furthermore, it is imperative to recognize that a substantial proportion of the literature now in existence—roughly 70% of the studies—has been carried out by male researchers. There are worries regarding potential biases in the data and conclusions made from these studies due to the lack of diversity in research representation. New theories and competency development models that explicitly address the subtleties of women's leadership experiences and styles are therefore desperately needed. The proposed research aims to make a substantial contribution to the field of leadership studies, specifically in the area of understanding and fostering women's leadership, by addressing this gap in the literature. The creation of a novel theory and competency development framework has potential benefits for organizations in Sri Lanka as well as other industries worldwide. This research attempts to provide a more thorough and nuanced understanding of women's leadership by combining a variety of viewpoints and ideas, enabling organizations to utilize the skills and potential of female leaders more effectively. Beyond just addressing the gender gap in leadership studies, this research is significant because it has practical implications for organizational practices and policy. Organizations may build supportive cultures that encourage the growth and promotion of women leaders, implement gender-sensitive talent management practices, and design more inclusive leadership development programs by utilizing the insights acquired from this research. In the end, by advancing gender equality, diversity, and inclusive leadership practices, the adoption of these new ideas and models has the ability to spur beneficial change both within specific organizations and in the larger society environment.

1.7   Methodology Overview

With a focus on sectors like the latex dipping industry, this study uses an exploratory research approach to investigate the factors influencing women in managerial leadership roles within the hard manufacturing sector. The study aims to identify the fundamental variables that contribute to the success of women leaders in this setting by thoroughly examining the special challenges and opportunities that they confront. The final objective is to condense these findings into an all-inclusive competency development model that will be an invaluable tool for organizations dedicated to boosting gender diversity in their leadership ranks as well as aspirational female leaders.

Using a deductive methodology, the study will start by looking at the ideas and empirical data that have already been written about leadership styles, especially as they relate to women in executive positions in the manufacturing industry. Using this basis as a starting point, the research will create a conceptual model to evaluate a theoretical framework and investigate the connections between different dependent and independent factors. The study aims to identify trends, connections, and causal links that provide insight into the factors impacting women's leadership paths in hard manufacturing companies through the collection and analysis of research data.

The competency development model that results from this study will be created with women seeking leadership positions in the manufacturing industry in mind, taking into account their unique demands and obstacles. It will offer useful advice and resources for enhancing one's abilities, advancing one's career, and exercising effective leadership in the particular environment of hard manufacturing sectors. Additionally, the model will provide organizations with the knowledge and tools necessary to assist and promote women leaders inside their ranks, giving them invaluable insights and tactics for cultivating a more inclusive and gender-diverse leadership culture. This research has the capacity to significantly alter the hard manufacturing industry and beyond by bridging the theory-practice divide. It will also open up new avenues for women to pursue leadership roles and further the more general objectives of diversity and gender equality in organizational leadership.

Research will be carried out using both qualitative and quantitative data methods. Research survey questionnaires will be developed to gather data as well as one-to-one interviews will be held to gather qualitative data. Research will be carried out by gathering both primary and secondary data.

Once the primary data is gathered statistical analytical tools will be used to understand and determine the correlations between the independent and dependent variables.

1.7.1 Methodological Steps

Main focus of the research will be to derive at the variables through the research questions and hypothesis. Conceptual framework will be used to analyze the correlations among the variables and to find answers to the research questions.

1.7.1.1 First step:

Data will be collected from leaders in the Hand Protective Solutions industry. Data collection will be through One-to-One Interviews, Research Survey Questionnaires. Data will be collected from women leaders where women leadership questionnaires will be aimed at collecting data to identify their own experiences, challenges they face, and identify tactics they use to survive one to one with their male counterparts.

1.7.1.2 Second step:

The data will be analyzed in a conceptual model to understand the two different types of data as to what and how women in leadership positions experience and to understand the experience, perceptions and honest feedback.

1.7.2 Data Collection

This research study will involve the direct gathering of data from women who hold managerial leadership roles in certain organizations, to which the author has obtained direct access. This method guarantees direct and personal understanding of the experiences, viewpoints, and difficulties encountered by female leaders in the selected setting. The process of gathering data will be conducted using a blend of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, encompassing interviews and survey questionnaires. These methodologies provide a thorough investigation of the complex factors that influence the paths women choose in leadership.

Rigorous protocols will be enforced to guarantee the confidentiality and security of participants' information, with meticulous attention given to safeguarding their privacy during the entirety of the data gathering procedure. One approach to ensure the protection of participant identities involves the use of secure data storage techniques and the anonymization of participant responses. The total data collection phase is expected to be finished within a 90-day period, guaranteeing effectiveness and punctuality in acquiring essential insights. The main method of collecting

primary data will involve using survey questionnaires and doing one-to-one interviews. This approach will yield valuable qualitative and quantitative data, which can be analyzed to identify patterns, themes, and linkages. In addition, teleconferencing can be used to conduct interviews with participants who are located far away, thereby ensuring that data collection initiatives are inclusive and accessible.

Simultaneously, supplementary data will be obtained from industry-specific sources, including annual reports, industry news and publications, and public documents. The inclusion of extra data will provide significant contextual and foundational information to enhance the primary data obtained from female leaders, hence augmenting the comprehensiveness and scope of the research outcomes. The research seeks to provide a thorough and strong examination of the factors that influence women's leadership in managerial roles inside the chosen organizations and the wider industrial context by combining primary and secondary data sources.

1.7.3 Data Processing Analysis.

According to James David and Tom Smith (1992:60), at this stage there is a greater chance of a really terrible error being made, and they describe that to avoid such errors many checks and protections must be built into the system. They advise four essential steps to constitute the process of checking the data and making them serviceable for analysis: that is editing, coding, data entry, and cleaning. Marshal and Rossman (1999:150) defines data analysis as the method of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. It is described as messy, ambiguous and time-consuming, but also as a creative and fascinating process.

This research is qualitative research and exploratory. Findings of the research will not be conclusive. Hence the research data will be transformed into a quantitative research analysis for the final course of action.

Therefore, following the data collection below sequence will be followed.

a) Start data processing with checking for errors, abnormalities and missing responses and finally summarizing the responses. At this time the error checking and cleaning data will be done, and data will be ready. Ready means that the data are as complete, error-free and readable as possible (Sonquist and Dunkelberg, 1977). Cleaned responses will be coded and relevant data will be input into a computer in a table.

b) Computerized data sets will be inspected and will transform the data for the intended statistical analysis. SPSS Statistical Analysis tool will be used to analyze the data.

c) Through the statistical analysis the data will be used for preliminary hypothesis testing to test anticipated relationships among the set of variables to compare the empirical evidence with theoretical expectations.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This research specifically examines the hard manufacturing industry, with a particular emphasis on the latex dipping sector. The operations of this industry are continuous, spanning 24 hours a day, resulting in a work environment that is distinguished by elevated levels of noise and temperature. It is imperative to acknowledge that the participants in this research originate from a multitude of nations characterized by various cultural contexts. As a result, individuals' views of the work environment can exhibit substantial variation. While certain individuals may consider the situations as unfavorable for women, others may interpret them as presenting prospects for professional development and progression.

The cultural disparities among participants present a possible obstacle to comprehending the situational leadership skills necessary for achieving success in this professional environment. The perspectives on leadership styles, communication tactics, and decision-making processes of individuals can be influenced by various cultural norms, beliefs, and expectations. Therefore, it is crucial that the design of the questionnaire considers these cultural nuances in order to guarantee the pertinence, sensitivity, and equity in the process of data collecting.

It is imperative to exercise meticulousness in the design of the questionnaire in order to effectively address the varied cultural and religious backgrounds of the participants, while also upholding ethical and legal limitations. It is imperative to formulate inquiries in a manner that demonstrates consideration for cultural sensitivities, mitigates the risk of prejudices or stereotypes, and encourages participants to provide candid and transparent responses. Furthermore, it is imperative for researchers to possess a comprehensive understanding of the ethical implications associated with privacy, confidentiality, and informed permission, especially when investigating sensitive subjects pertaining to gender, workplace circumstances, and leadership encounters.

When considering these elements during the process of designing the questionnaire, the research has the potential to generate insights that are more complete, nuanced, and culturally sensitive. This methodology guarantees that the results precisely represent the varied viewpoints and encounters of women in managerial leadership roles within the demanding work setting of the latex dipping sector. In the end, it allows academics to create significant suggestions and actions to promote the growth and progress of women's leadership in this distinct industry setting.

1.9   Chapterization

This research consists of five chapters, (1) Introduction, (2) Literature Review, (3) Methodology,

(4) Data Analysis and (5) Conclusion and Recommendation.

Chapter One – Introduction. This chapter provides a background of the research topic. It

outlines the depth analysis of the current Sri Lankan manufacturing sector along with the tendency of women for bearing managerial leadership positions in the world and in local context. Moreover, it contains the justification for the research problem with research gap under the identification of theoretical gap, literature gap and practice gap and further outlines the statement of the problem. Henceforward, it summarizes research objectives and research questions. The next section briefly covered the importance of the study and finally the methodology overview, limitations of the study and chaptalization are covered in the last section.

Chapter Two – Literature Review. This chapter provides the literature review relate to the present research study. It outlines literature review on the theories which are related to the concepts of research. Moreover, it includes the literature review about the present research. Dynamics like work life balance, motivation, career progression, economic advancement towards career accession and the impact of mediating role of top-level leadership support. Henceforward, it emphasizes the conceptual framework for the study.

Chapter Three – Methodology. This chapter provides the justification of the main methodology adopted in the study. It mainly explains, substantiate and discuss the questionnaire development, data collection and the method of survey administration.

Chapter Four - Data Analysis. This chapter includes the findings from the research study. It contains the deep analysis of the hypothesis test.

Chapter Five – Conclusion and Recommendation. This chapter provides the evaluation of the research findings. It outlines the conclusion of the research based on the findings with relation to theoretical and practical contribution. Moreover, it provides the opportunities for the future research.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter primarily discusses an array of research on the theories that are combined with the notions of women leadership and related areas identifying the dynamics influencing them to reach out. Additionally, the earlier research on this phenomenon and its conclusions are discussed in this part. Additionally, it presents persuasive reasons in support of the research problem that was mentioned in the preceding chapter.

2.2 Theoretical Background of the research

The study's primary theoretical focus will be on leadership. Research on leadership theories dates back hundreds of years, and these views have changed over time. The early theories concentrated on the traits, dispositions, and dispositions of exceptional or prosperous leaders. The newest theories, however, concentrate on the actions and behaviors of leaders.

According to the Great Man theory, leadership qualities are intrinsic attributes exhibited by specific individuals, underscoring the concept that exceptional leaders are innate rather than acquired. This theoretical framework emphasizes the significance of inherent attributes, such as intelligence, charm, and courage, in delineating the aptitude for leadership. In contrast, contingency theories propose that the effectiveness of leadership is dependent on a range of situational elements, including the surrounding context, the preparedness of followers, and the demands of the work at hand. These theories emphasize the capacity of leadership styles to be adjusted in accordance with varying circumstances, promoting a versatile approach to leadership. The theory of characteristics places emphasis on the identification of distinct qualities and attributes that are linked to good leaders, with the objective of predicting and cultivating leadership potential in individuals. In the realm of social psychology, style and behavior theories center their attention on the behavioral patterns and leadership styles demonstrated by individuals. These theories aim to analyze the effects of various leadership approaches on organizational outcomes. In the context of the research pertaining to accomplished women in management leadership roles within manufacturing firms in Sri Lanka, it is imperative to comprehend these theories in order to construct a competency model that is specifically designed to tackle the distinct obstacles encountered by women leaders in this particular industry sector.

2.2.1 Great man theory

The Great Man theory of leadership postulates that, as opposed to being a talent that can be acquired or learnt, leadership is essentially the product of innate qualities held by specific people. In other words, the Great Man theory posits that leaders possess exceptional intellectual abilities, enabling them to develop comprehensive strategies that anticipate all potential outcomes and effectively manage highly intricate coordinated endeavors. Tolstoy presents an alternative narrative that depicts leaders as ineffectual ignoramuses, their authority as illusory, their strategies as inconsequential, and their directives as ineffective. According to the belief, exceptional leaders are not created; rather, they are born with special traits that make them stand out from the crowd. These leaders are thought to have extraordinary knowledge, charm, bravery, and other natural qualities that allow them to influence and lead people. The Great Man theory holds that personal qualities, as opposed to external circumstances or circumstances, are what determine a leader. It suggests that charm, intelligence, decisiveness, honesty, and other traits that enable them to lead others come naturally to successful leaders. Furthermore, theorists of this kind usually concentrate on particular qualities or attributes that they consider to be innate in effective leaders. These could include brilliance, self-assurance, tenacity, vision, communication abilities, and the capacity to uplift and encourage others. The notion contends that an individual's characteristics and attributes have a major role in determining their leadership potential. It minimizes the influence of contextual or situational elements on the efficacy of leadership. It's crucial to remember that the theory has drawn criticism for oversimplifying the nuances of leadership and ignoring the impact of elements like followership, context, and culture. The Great Man idea has been used historically to explain the rise of extraordinary leaders in a variety of situations, such as business, politics, the military, and sports. It has been applied to evaluate and comprehend the leadership philosophies of historical leaders including Winston Churchill, Abraham Lincoln, and Napoleon Bonaparte. The Great Man theory has drawn criticism for a number of reasons, despite the fact that it provides insights into the significance of individual attributes in leadership. Opponents contend that it ignores the significance of situational elements, organizational culture, and followers' contributions in determining the efficacy of leadership. Furthermore, the theory has come under fire for allegedly promoting misconceptions about natural leadership skills and downplaying the possibility of developing leadership via experience, education, and training.

2.2.2 Trait Theory

Trait theory emerged ignoring the conventions that were made in the great-man theory that leaders were born and not made. A person by the name of Jenkins identified two traits; one is emergent trait those which are heavily dependent upon heredity as height, intelligence, attractiveness and self-confidence. The other is the effectiveness traits which comes based on the experience or learning, including charisma, as fundamental component of leadership (Ekvall & Arvonen, 1991). The objective is to integrate the merits of both viewpoints while acknowledging their own limitations. The trait theory combines the trait approach, which is effective in identifying stable personality traits but may fail to consider situational influences, and the social-cognitive approach, which focuses on cognition and context but may lack a clear framework for understanding trait stability. Max Weber characterized charisma as the ultimate revolutionary force capable of creating a totally new orientation through followers and complete personal devotion to leaders they perceived as endowed with charmed superhuman power. However, it was later argued that only minor variances exist between followers and leader (Burns, 2003) and also there are certain traits developing at certain times of a life. The examination of leadership characteristics experienced notable progress in the early 1900s, when scholars began ascribing distinct personality attributes to the efficacy of leadership. The research conducted by Stogdill and Bass (1981) shed light on the endeavors of early theorists who aimed to ascertain the ideal characteristics linked to leadership. According to Jennings (1960), a comprehensive compilation of 79 leadership attributes had been derived from approximately 20 distinct studies on leadership traits by the year 1940. During the first half of the 20th century, a significant number of social scientists devoted substantial endeavors to elucidating associations between the individual attributes of influential leaders and the defining features that differentiate leaders from followers. Nevertheless, further scholarly investigations conducted by Adler and Rodman (1991), Mullins (1999), Daft and Marcic (1995), and Bryce, Gehring, and Jex (2002) have brought to light notable deficiencies in the aforementioned investigations. The initial observation revealed that none of the conducted studies were able to effectively ascertain shared personality traits or physical and mental features among various or accomplished leaders. Furthermore, these investigations were unable to consistently differentiate between individuals who are leaders and those who are not. The traits theory of leadership was identified by Mullins (1999) as having two primary weaknesses. Initially, he acknowledged the inherent subjectivity involved in identifying the criteria for classification as a "good" or

"successful" leader. Furthermore, he emphasized the difficulty of comprehensive lists of attributes that lack agreement on the most crucial traits for effective leadership. The aforementioned observations highlight the intricate nature of comprehending and delineating leadership characteristics, leading to a transition towards more refined methodologies in the field of leadership studies. It recognizes that the limitations of one technique frequently coincide with the advantages of the other and views them as logically interconnected. The incorporation of this integration facilitates a more holistic comprehension of personality, since it encompasses both the enduring variations among individuals and the dynamic interaction among characteristics, cognition, and environmental influences. Furthermore, the theory gains advantages by working together with other theories that are involved in similar activities, so improving its ability to explain and its practicality in the field of personality psychology.

2.2.3 Contingency theories – situational leadership

The Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) shares similarities with other contingency theories in its underlying concept that effective leadership is contingent upon the leader's capacity to appropriately assess situational circumstances and respond with suitable combinations of actions. The distinguishing characteristics of the Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) in comparison to other contingency theories lie in its incorporation of a singular situational aspect and its explicit suggestions pertaining to suitable leadership-situation alignments. The adoption of Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) as a model for leadership conduct and training has been extensive. The theory's acceptance seems to be predicated upon its superficial validity. The research on SLT has primarily concentrated on three key aspects: the theoretical soundness of the theory, the reliability of the accompanying tool, the Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability (LEAD) survey, and the impact on subordinates' performance when the theory is effectively implemented by the leader or manager. Hersey and Blanchard (1969) derived the "life-cycle theory" of leadership from the works of Stogdill and Coons (1957) and Reddin (1967). This theory later evolved into their situational leadership theory. There are four dimensions in Hersey and Blanchad's approach, namely task behavior, relationship behavior, follower (or subordinate) maturity, and effectiveness. The matrix proposed by Hersey and Blanchard (1982) categorizes task and relationship behaviors into four fundamental leadership styles: high task/low-relationship (Sl), high-task/high-relationship (SZ), low-task/high-relationship (S3), and low-task/low-relationship (S4). These behaviors span a spectrum from low to high. Task behavior refers to the degree to which leaders

are inclined to arrange and elucidate the specific activities that each individual is expected to undertake, as well as the specific timing, location, and manner in which these tasks are to be completed. Relational behaviors encompass the degree to which leaders are inclined to uphold personal connections with group members and offer socio-emotional support, psychological interventions, and facilitating actions. The third feature of the model, maturity, is characterized as the inclination and capacity of individuals to assume accountability for guiding their own conduct, a concept that has traditionally been examined solely in the context of a particular task. Maturity can be categorized into two distinct components: job maturity, which pertains to the individual's capacity to perform a certain task, and psychological maturity, which pertains to the individual's inclination or drive to engage in said task (Hersey and Blanchard, 1982). Effective leadership behavior is characterized by its alignment with the specific circumstances at hand. Inadequate conduct is unsuitable for the given circumstances. The concept of effectiveness can be understood as a continuum, wherein the effectiveness of leadership actions varies based on the specific situation (Hersey and Blanchard, 1982).

Given the existing body of literature, it is evident that numerous scholars have undertaken empirical investigations pertaining to the situational leadership theory. Previous research has emphasized the reciprocal influence between leadership style and follower preparation on employee perceptions and attitudes. Furthermore, this research primarily focused on role ambiguity, satisfaction with supervision, satisfaction with communication, general job satisfaction, and organizational commitment as criterion variables for constructing the framework. The findings indicate that follower readiness emerged as a significant determinant in impacting outcomes such as satisfaction with supervision, communication, overall job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. The distinct contributions of leadership styles, thoughtfulness, and structuring to satisfaction with supervision and communication were observed. The impact of consideration on organizational commitment and overall job satisfaction was shown to be significant, but the influence of beginning structure on role ambiguity was found to be significant. Furthermore, several research have investigated the extent to which this theory offers partial support for its proposed recommendations. The findings suggest that the theory may exhibit greater accuracy in its suggestions for employees with lower levels of maturity in comparison to those with moderate and high levels of maturity. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the significance of taking into

account the distinct attributes of followers while implementing Situational Leadership Theory in real-world scenarios.

The Situational Leadership Theory places significant emphasis on the dynamic character of effective leadership, underscoring the imperative for leaders to modify their approach in accordance with the distinct conditions and readiness levels exhibited by their followers. This highlights the significance of adaptability, as leaders must possess the ability to utilize several leadership styles - ranging from authoritative to empowering - based on the particular requirements of their team members. The Situational Leadership Theory acknowledges the absence of a universally applicable leadership method and advocates for leaders to actively evaluate and adapt their leadership style in accordance with the changing talents and motivations of their followers. The adoption of Situational Leadership concepts by leaders enhances their ability to cultivate a culture characterized by trust, collaboration, and success within their teams, hence resulting in enhanced performance and the attainment of corporate objectives.

2.2.4 Style and Behavior theory

The style theory recognizes the importance of specific essential leadership skills that facilitate a leader's performance of an action, while also drawing a connection to the leader's previous capacity prior to that specific action. It also suggests that each individual possesses a unique leadership style that brings them the greatest satisfaction. Just like a head does not fit all individuals, a single style cannot be universally effective in all circumstances. In 1989, Yukl presented three distinct leadership styles. The employees under the supervision of democratic leaders exhibited a notable level of satisfaction, creativity, and motivation. They demonstrated a strong sense of enthusiasm and energy, regardless of the leader's presence or absence. Furthermore, they maintained stronger connections with the leader, resulting in increased productivity. In contrast, autocratic leaders primarily prioritized achieving higher levels of output. In the past, laissez-faire leadership was deemed applicable solely in the context of leading a team including individuals who possessed exceptional skills, motivation, and a commendable track record. In 1994, Feidler and House identified two supplementary leadership styles that specifically emphasize the effectiveness of leadership. The researchers expressed the view that consideration, which pertains to the behaviors related to people and relationships, and beginning structure, which pertains to the behaviors related to production and tasks, were highly significant characteristics. Consideration pertains to the level

of trust and connection that a leader fosters in their subordinates. In contrast, the concept of initiating structure pertains to the degree to which a leader organizes, guides, and establishes their own and their subordinates' responsibilities, with the aim of fostering organizational success, profitability, and the achievement of the purpose. Various scholars have posited three distinct categories of leadership: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire. The authoritarian leader unilaterally makes judgments without including subordinates, whereas the laissez-faire leader allows subordinates to make decisions and assumes a minimal leadership role. On the other hand, the democratic leader consults with subordinates before making decisions. Additionally, he made the assumption that all leaders might be classified into one of these three entities.

Extensive research has been conducted on the correlation between leadership style and subordinate work satisfaction in various businesses. In a study conducted by Vries et al. (1998), it was observed that the adoption of a human-oriented leadership style is associated with an increase in job satisfaction. Additionally, several other studies (Spector, 1986; Miller and Monge, 1986; Fisher, 1989) have provided evidence supporting the notion that participative decision making can have positive effects on workers' mental health and job satisfaction. Furthermore, Packard and Kauppi (1999) found that various leadership styles are linked to varying levels of job satisfaction. Specifically, when leaders exhibit high levels of consideration and supportive behavior, their subordinates tend to experience higher levels of job satisfaction. Numerous studies have demonstrated a favorable correlation between leadership styles characterized by relationship-oriented behavior and both satisfaction and performance (Wilkinson & Wagner, 1993). The organizational climate resulting from the leadership style of supervisors has been identified as a significant factor contributing to occupational stress (Parker and DeCotiis, 1983). Several scholars have suggested that the examination of work-related stress should incorporate variables that represent the organizational norms and expectations prevalent in the workforce, such as leadership style (Ryska, 2002). Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) conducted a study which revealed that when employees perceive a deficiency in their job performance or perceive excessively high-performance standards, irrespective of the amount of time available, qualitative overload, which is a stressor at the individual level, emerges.

2.3 History of Women in Leadership

Throughout history, the initial type of leadership, known as out-in-front, forceful leadership, has predominantly been demonstrated by males. Certain individuals at positions of significant influence, such as Nelson Mandela, have opted for a leadership approach known as "leading from behind." Conversely, it is more common for prominent leaders to openly demonstrate their exercise of power. Women, along with certain males, have offered informal and inconspicuous leadership in the background. However, there has been a shift in this trend, with an increasing number of women assuming positions of visible and authoritative leadership. Throughout the entirety of documented history, women have predominantly been underrepresented in positions of formal power. Typically, men occupied such roles, with only a few exceptions. Consequently, women have been deprived of opportunity to assume leadership roles in prominent public arenas. The association between leadership and masculinity has been thoroughly observed, serving as both a cause and a result of this reality. This idea is prevalent in many regions of the world, including even the most developed nations, where there are individuals who hold the belief that men possess inherent leadership qualities and women are destined to be subordinate to them. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the persistent association between leadership and masculinity, certain women throughout various societies have demonstrated their ability to offer robust and conspicuous leadership. The exercise of formal public authority by women occurred during a time when dynasty or marriage-lines took precedence over gender, allowing individuals such as Elizabeth I of England or Catherine the Great of Russia to assume monarchical positions. Talking about Queen Elizabeth who possessed an interesting mix of transactional and transformational styles depicts the mix of feminine and masculine leadership deals. According to Axelrod (2000), Elizabeth delivered a lecture at a predominantly male institution, whereby she demonstrated deference towards her subordinates by employing Latin, the prevailing academic language of her era. She also recognized the commendable efforts of the academicians and asked what she, as queen, could do to provide support to the university. These actions can be defined as communal as she focused on recognizing and incentivizing teamwork. (According to Axelrod, effective leaders in the corporate realm should recognize the abilities of their employees, engage in open communication with them, and demonstrate encouragement.) One notable characteristic of Queen Elizabeth I's leadership was her persistent dependence on various individuals, including the privy, her advisors, her friends, and her family, who collectively influenced her decision-making process. She held the belief that the

crucial factor for achieving success was progression, rather than revolution. Consequently, she designated fresh advisors to facilitate the nation's progress, while preserving long-standing and reliable advisors to uphold a historical perspective and avert revolution. Elizabeth fostered her followers' allegiance by demonstrating her allegiance to her nation. Additionally, she showed a willingness to critique the behaviours of others, yet without engaging in personal or private criticism. The combination of communal and agentic leadership skills exhibited by her is characterized by a measured approach to issuing reprimands.

Some civilizations routinely seek the advice of wise women, either as individuals or as members of the tribe's council. Women in leadership positions inside all-female institutions, such as convents, girls' schools, and women's universities, have historically occupied authoritative roles. Women have assumed leadership roles in circumstances where men are temporarily gone, such as during times of war when men are engaged in combat, or in communities like Nantucket during the eighteenth or nineteenth century, where the majority of men were engaged in long-term whaling expeditions in faraway oceans. Females have demonstrated prominent leadership roles in several social improvement initiatives, such as the prohibition and settlement house campaigns throughout the latter part of the 19th century, as well as the struggle for women's suffrage. First ladies have utilized their authority to advocate for significant issues. Jane Addams and Eleanor Roosevelt's remarkable achievements serve as exemplary illustrations of female leadership. Women have held leadership positions in many family enterprises across diverse contexts. Throughout history, numerous women have demonstrated leadership in various domains such as education, religious endeavors, healthcare, cultural matters, and philanthropy for the impoverished.

Considering the African American context aligning the women and leadership; it depicts the historical scenario where women did not privilege to take part in the leadership roles in the society and the culture. According to Ryan and Haslam (2005) and Weyer (2007), there exists a historical pattern wherein White men have predominantly occupied and held leadership positions in various domains such as business, management, and politics. This pattern serves as evidence of a longstanding tradition that restricts the advancement of African American women to senior leadership and management roles, thereby perpetuating a barrier known as the glass ceiling. Moreover, it has been shown that African American women face a lower likelihood of receiving

guided training on prospects for career advancement in such contexts (Guadagno, 2010). Hence, it is imperative for individuals to possess the capacity to cultivate personal agency, exert influence over others, and collaborate effectively. To effectively demonstrate interpersonal power, it is crucial to initially comprehend the historical context of the challenges and oppressive systems that have historically impacted women leaders (Gutiérrez, 1990).

Walking through the Asia Pacific American women leadership the following has been examined by the previous authors. Eagly and Carli (2007:2-6) argue that women's access to leadership can be categorised into three stages in their research. The initial wall is made of concrete. During this particular phase, women encountered significant and overt barriers that impeded their advancement towards leadership positions and complete engagement in both organizational and societal spheres. The challenges encompassed the deprivation of legal entitlements, educational prospects, and professional progression. The second stage, known as the glass ceiling, pertains to the capacity of women to envision the potential for attaining executive-level jobs, despite encountering obstacles that hindered their progress in this regard. In essence, despite the significant influx of women into the labour sector and their notable accomplishments in certain domains, the presence of prejudiced practices and various other reasons hindered their advancement to higher-level managerial roles. As the number of women in high-ranking jobs increases, the concept of the glass ceiling is no longer valid. According to Eagly and Carli (2007), the labyrinth stage provides a more precise representation of women's experiences. Certain organizations have created avenues for women to assume leadership positions at the most elevated echelons. Furthermore, emerging sectors like as technology and entrepreneurial ventures have created opportunities for women to advance in their careers within the corporate hierarchy. This labyrinth symbolizes the concealed, convoluted, and complex routes that enable women who can successfully traverse through the maze to flourish, while impeding those women who are unable to find them. In both scenarios, the presence of challenges and organizational structures poses significant obstacles in identifying the diverse pathways to achieving success.

However, the historical narrative of women's leadership is a multifaceted tale characterized by notable achievements and enduring obstacles. Throughout a significant portion of documented history, women have been excluded from official positions of authority as a result of deeply ingrained societal conventions and gender prejudices. Nevertheless, there have been noteworthy

instances and instances of advancement. During ancient civilizations like Egypt, Mesopotamia, and China, women sporadically occupied positions of authority and impact, but infrequently rather than as the standard. The advent of the women's suffrage movement during the 19th and early 20th centuries signified a pivotal moment, whereby women commenced aggressively championing their entitlement to engage in political deliberations. Prominent individuals such as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Emmeline Pankhurst were pivotal in the promotion of women's rights and the facilitation of increased female participation in positions of leadership. Notwithstanding these achievements, women persistently encountered systemic obstacles to attaining leadership positions, encompassing prejudiced legislation and prevailing cultural norms. Significant progress towards achieving gender equality in leadership was only achieved during the latter half of the 20th century. This was mostly attributed to the emergence of feminism and the implementation of legislative changes, which resulted in enhanced prospects for women in various domains such as politics, business, academia, and other sectors. Currently, despite certain advancements, women continue to face challenges such as the disparity in wages between genders, underrepresentation in positions of authority, and deeply ingrained stereotypes. The historical trajectory of women's leadership serves as a witness to their unwavering determination, tenacity, and continuous endeavors to confront and destroy gender-related obstacles that impede the attainment of equality and inclusivity.

2.4 Women in Political Arena

What is the global count of women who have attained the highest positions of political authority? Jalalzai's (2004) analysis identified a total of 44 women who had held the offices of prime minister or president in various countries. Sirimavo Bandaranaike of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) became the first female prime minister in 1960, while Isabel Peron of Argentina became the first female president in 1975. This sample excludes 16 additional women: Out of the total sample, 9 individuals were given temporary appointments lasting fewer than nine months. Additionally, 6 individuals held positions that were not equivalent to the executive roles of the remainder of the sample. Lastly, Aung Suu Kyi of Myanmar, despite winning the election, was denied recognition. 2 Among the remaining 44 cases in the sample, 27 women (61%) have served as prime ministers, while 17 women (39%) have held the position of president. Sri Lanka is unique in that it is the only country to have had a female prime minister and a female president at the same time, serving from 1994 to 2000. Janet Jagan of Guyana is the sole woman to have held the positions of both

president and prime minister. While there have been 44 reported instances, it is important to note that this does not necessarily indicate that 44 different countries have had female executives. However, just 36 countries have at least one female executive, although a few countries have had many women in executive positions. The countries that have had two distinct female leaders are Bangladesh, Bermuda, Haiti, Ireland, Netherlands Antilles, New Zealand, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. There is a possibility that if a country has a female CEO, it is more probable for it to have another female executive in the future. Once the barrier to women is broken, it paves the way for a more enduring road to power for them in the future.

The numbers of women executives exhibit significant geographical variety. Due to their generally egalitarian culture and open political systems for women, European countries have emerged as leaders in the number of women executives. Nevertheless, numerous women have held the positions of presidents or prime ministers in communities and political systems that are not characterized by equal rights and opportunities. South Asia has the biggest concentration of women executives in Asia, followed by the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa. Asia overall ranks second in terms of the number of women executives. The significance of the fact that Latin American and African countries have collectively had 10 women executives lies in the similarity they share with Asia in terms of conventional gender roles and the comparatively low status of women. On the other hand, despite the comparatively equal society and overall better chances for women in the United States and Canada, it is unexpected to see that North America only has three instances of women executives. Given the limited number of countries in Oceania, the fact that there have been two woman CEOs in the region is rather noteworthy. This is especially impressive considering that New Zealand has had two successive female prime ministers. Lastly, it is not unexpected that the Middle East has only had one female executive, Golda Meir from Israel.

According to the World Bank (2019), around 49.6 % of the global population consists of females. Despite the equal number of men and women in the population, women are still not adequately represented in leadership positions in several fields such as industry, business, education, and politics (International Labour Office, 2022; McKinsey & Company, 2019; UN Women, 2023). In the March 2022 session report of the Commission on the Status of Women, the United Nations Secretary-General emphasized that gender disparity deprives half of humanity of their complete human rights (Commission on the Status of Women, 2022). Nevertheless, worldwide progress

towards achieving gender equality, as outlined by initiatives such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (United Nations, 1995), and further supported by the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals, has encountered setbacks, as highlighted by the World Economic Forum (WEF). Based on the WEF Global Gender Gap Report 2022, the advancement in narrowing the gender gap has been insignificant. Out of 87 nations, only 1 % or less have shown development, while 58 countries have actually regressed. Based on the current rate of progress, it is projected that it will take 132 years to reach gender parity. This estimate is longer than the previous projection of 99.5 years in the WEF Global Gender Gap Report 2020 (WEF, 2019, 2022). The gender gap is particularly evident in four main subindexes: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. Among these factors, political empowerment regularly demonstrates the most significant disparity on a global scale, with a projected average gap of 22 % in 2022. This projection indicates that it will require approximately 155 years to close this imbalance. According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) in 2022, only 12 nations globally have reached parity in this specific subindex. Iceland is leading with a rate of 87 %, while Vanuatu is trailing behind with a rate of 0 %.

The level of women's involvement in politics in Sri Lanka has always been substantially lower than that of men, which is a result of wider societal expectations and structural obstacles. Nevertheless, significant progress and modifications have occurred over the course of time. Firstly, Sri Lanka has a significant historical tradition of women's political engagement, which can be traced back to the period before the country gained independence. Individuals such as Sirimavo Bandaranaike, who assumed the position of the world's inaugural female prime minister in 1960, played a trailblazing role in shattering gender barriers in the realm of politics. Bandaranaike's leadership represented a noteworthy achievement for women's participation in politics, however her rise to power was mostly shaped by her family's political heritage. Notwithstanding this significant milestone, the level of women's participation in Sri Lankan politics has remained very low. The country continually falls below the global norm in terms of female political engagement, with women comprising a minority in parliament and other decision-making bodies. Women's political progress has been impeded by structural obstacles such as patriarchal ideologies, cultural conventions, and restricted resource availability. Furthermore, the election system in Sri Lanka, which mainly depends on patronage networks and party ties, frequently marginalizes independent female candidates. There have been continuous efforts to tackle gender inequalities in politics,

with advocacy groups, civil society organizations, and international agencies seeking to advance women's political empowerment. Quota systems, such as the obligatory stipulation for a specific proportion of female candidates in local government elections, have been put into effect to enhance the representation of women. Nevertheless, the efficacy of these initiatives has been constrained by obstacles such as tokenism, inadequate implementation, and opposition from male-dominated political institutions.

The progress made in women's political empowerment is seen in the significant rise in the number of nations where women hold the position of head of state. This number has increased from 21 in 2021 to 31 in 2023, according to UN Women. Out of these, more than twelve countries have experienced significant events, with women being elected as leaders in countries including the Slovak Republic, Thailand, Denmark, and Brazil. In the past five years, notable achievements include Hillary Clinton being the first female candidate from a major political party in a US presidential election, Jacinda Ardern becoming the youngest female head of government as New Zealand's prime minister in 2017, the election of the first female prime ministers in Belgium in 2019, Togo in 2020, and Sweden in 2021, and the appointment of the first female presiding officers in countries like the United States, Zambia, and South Sudan in 2021. In addition, notable accomplishments in recent years include the establishment of a female-majority parliament in New Zealand in 2022 and the election of Giorgia Meloni as Italy's first female prime minister in the same year (Camera, 2021; Di Donato et al., 2022; Griffiths, 2017; Picheta et al., 2021; Rankin, 2019; Sunday, 2020). Nevertheless, notwithstanding the accomplishments of certain individuals, the goal of achieving female equality in political leadership still seems far off (Adler, 2015; UN Women, 2023). Based on the World Economic Forum (WEF), an organization that tracks gender disparities in politics, the global gender gap was only reduced by 22 % in 2022, marking a 3 % decline from 2020 (WEF, 2019, 2022). Iceland ranks first among the 146 nations surveyed, with a gender gap closure rate of 87 %. Finland follows closely behind with a rate of 68 %. On the other hand, Kuwait and Vanuatu have the lowest rates, with 2.3 % and 0 % respectively. Europe and North America are the top-ranking regions, followed by Latin America and the Caribbean, South Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, and Central Asia, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2022).

There has been an increasing acknowledgment in recent years of the significance of women's leadership in politics for promoting inclusive government and tackling urgent social problems. Female legislators and advocates have been leading the charge in promoting policy changes pertaining to gender equality, women's rights, and social justice. Moreover, there has been an increase in the influence and support for grassroots initiatives spearheaded by women, which have brought attention to the perspectives and issues faced by underprivileged communities. In general, although there has been some improvement, the advancement of women's leadership in politics in Sri Lanka is still hindered by substantial challenges. To tackle these issues, it is necessary to implement extensive reforms that aim to achieve gender equality, destroy patriarchal systems, and establish a supportive atmosphere for women's involvement and leadership in politics. Sri Lanka can fully utilize the potential of women as political leaders and achieve genuine democratic representation only by making coordinated efforts at the cultural, institutional, and policy levels.

2.5 Underrepresentation and Association with Masculinity

Throughout the history, women have been largely excluded from the formal leadership roles which were typically occupied by men. Women have remained stagnant in lower level to middle management toles, very rarely exceeding to senior level positions. Female underrepresentation is deeply linked with the reinforcement of masculinity in several professional and institutional settings. Research highlights how societal structures perpetuate biases that associate leadership, success and authority with traditionally masculine traits, disadvantaging women in these spaces. The association between leadership and masculinity has been both a cause and effect for women's underrepresentation in managerial leadership roles. The association of leadership with masculinity play a central role in reinforcing barriers to women's advancement. Schein's (1973) "Think Manager, Think Male" demonstrates that leadership traits have long been associated with masculinity. These traits include assertiveness, decisiveness, and competitiveness, and competitiveness, such qualities that are traditionally viewed as "male" characteristics. Some organizational hierarchies often reflect and reinforce hegemonic masculinity, where leadership is associated with dominance, control, and authority. This discourages the inclusion of women, who may exhibit different leadership styles that prioritize collaboration and inclusivity, Collison and Hearn (1994). The literature on the underrepresentation of women in leadership and its association

with masculinity reveals deep-rooted cultural, structural, and organizational biases. These biases are created purposefully by societal norms that privilege masculine leadership traits and exclude women from key leadership traits that exclude women from managerial leadership positions or key leadership roles.

The association between leadership and masculinity has been both a cause and an effect of women's underrepresentation in leadership roles. This relationship is sustained through social norms, institutional biases, and individual perceptions that reinforce male dominance in leadership. The association between leadership and masculinity is both a structural cause of gender disparities in leadership and an outcome that perpetuates those disparities. This feedback loop highlights the need for organizational changes, such as promoting diverse leadership models, creating mentorship. Over the time across different countries, several studies showed that characteristics of successful leaders resemble stereotypical masculine characteristics, but not feminine characteristics, explaining the difficulties of women in reaching leadership positions, (Schein 1973, 2001; Brenner et al., 1989; Deal and Stevenson, 1998; Gmur, 2004; Castano et al, 2019). Leaders are mainly seen to have masculine traits and characteristics like men and not to women, (Koenig et al., 2011). Thus it is easier for men to move up companies' hierarchies to leadership positions (Eagly and Karau, 1991; Badura et al., 2018), whereas women face a glass ceiling that is hard to break through (Cotter et al., 2001).

The notion that persists in many countries including developed nations that the masculinity is the main contributor to the desired leadership role; where some still believe that men possess inherent leadership qualities and women are destine for subordinate roles. The preference for male leaders over female leaders manifests itself in different occupational situations. In hiring processes, leadership potential is overlooked when ranking female applicants (Player et al., 2019); in the absence of leadership experience, men prefer male applicants (Bosak and Sczensny, 2011), and men with low power rate female applicants worse and suggest a lower income (Hoover et al., 2019).

2.6 Increasing Visibility of Women in Leadership

There has been a notable shift with more women assuming positions of visible and authoritative leadership. This change marks a significant departure from the historical trend of women being

underrepresented in positions of formal power. Since the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles has been a key focus of gender studies, there had been significant research examining strategies to overcome the challenges and increase the visibility of women in leadership roles. Ibarra et al. (2010) highlight that men are more likely to be part of normal network that provide access to leadership opportunities, while women are often excluded from these networks. There had been numerous efforts to combat the underrepresentation of women in managerial leadership positions and the association of leadership with masculinity, gender diversity initiatives and quotas have been implemented in some organizations and countries to increase female representation. Gender quotas specially in European countries have effectively increased the numbers of women in managerial leadership positions, Terjesen et. Al (2015). The manufacturing industry must foster a culture where all employees work towards recognizing and minimizing gender biases, ensuring equal opportunities, and prioritizing work-life balance to lead the process of reducing the gender gap. The labour market needs a complete redesign to be able to attract female talent, promoting supportive environments where women feel safe, valued, respected, and comfortable. Women role models are important to equalize opportunity. Women leaders should be highlighted and celebrated as much as their male counterparts. The rates of women occupying leadership roles is increasing, so it is the perfect time to highlight accomplishments

2.7 Women in Business Leadership

The International Labour Office (ILO) has recognized a slow and gradual increase in the proportion of women holding leadership positions, with the %age rising from 30 % in 2010 to 32.4 % in 2019. The 2020 ILO study on women in managerial and leadership positions among G20 economies revealed significant discrepancies. In 2019, the Russian Federation had the largest proportion of women in senior and managerial roles at 42%, followed closely by the United States at 40.9 % and Brazil at 38.6 %. On the other hand, India reported the lowest ratio with only 12 % of women in such positions. The United Arab Emirates, Spain, and Australia showed notable progress over time, with their shares growing by 29%, 24%, and 19%, respectively. On the other hand, France and Rwanda had reductions of -11 % and -8 %, respectively (ILO, 2020). The Global Gender Gap Report 2022 by the World Economic Forum (WEF) reveals that in 2022, women held leadership positions in various economic sectors at an average rate of 36.9 %. This is a modest improvement of 3.6% compared to 2016. Nevertheless, the presence of female leaders differs greatly among different industries. Sectors that have historically been linked to greater levels of

female employment, such as non-governmental and membership organizations (47 %), education (46 %), and personal services and well-being (46%), had a smaller gender gap and were closer to achieving gender parity. In contrast, sectors that are commonly perceived as being predominantly male, such as energy (20%), manufacturing (19%), and infrastructure (16%), had a smaller proportion of women in leadership roles. Moreover, according to the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2022), the public sector seems to provide greater prospects for women to assume leadership positions in comparison to the private sector.

An essential aspect of assessing the advancement of women's empowerment is the careful analysis of the existing statistics on the participation of women leaders in business settings, including their representation on corporate boards, as CEOs, and in senior management roles. The importance of gender diversity in boardrooms goes beyond simply mirroring the gender composition of firm employees. Several studies have demonstrated the beneficial effect of having gender-diverse boards on company performance. These studies include research conducted by Catalyst in 2004 and 2013, Dawson et al. in 2014, Ernst & Young in 2016, Galbreath in 2011, Kramer et al. in 2006, and the World Bank in 2015. A study conducted by Grene and Newlands (2015) suggests that the presence of a female board member improves the quality of governance and decreases the probability of corporate fraud. Madsen (2015) presents additional proof of the advantages that organizations gain from having women in board and top leadership positions. These benefits include better financial performance, a more positive organizational atmosphere, increased corporate social responsibility and reputation, improved utilization of talent, and greater innovation and collective intelligence. Global officials, such as the UN, WEF, and World Bank, frequently use this data to support their efforts in promoting increased female representation on business and government boards. The Deloitte's (2022) seventh edition of Women in the Boardroom: A Global Perspective report, titled Progress at a Snail's Pace, emphasizes that despite attempts to achieve gender equality on boards, advancements are still happening at a sluggish rate. According to a survey conducted in 2021, which included 10,493 companies from 72 countries, the worldwide average percentage of women serving on boards was 19.7%. This is a minor increase of 2.8% compared to the data from 2019. According to Deloitte's 2022 study, France had the highest proportion of women on boards at 43.2%, followed closely by Norway at 42.4%. On the other hand, Thailand and the Philippines had the lowest representation of women on boards, with shares of 17.8% and 17.7% respectively.

The representation of women on boards exhibits substantial variation across different countries and economic sectors (ibid.). Consumer business businesses in North America have the highest representation of women on boards, accounting for 27.2% of the total. They are followed by technology, media, and telecommunications companies at 25%, and financial services organizations at 23.8%. In the Caribbean, financial services account for 21.7% of the rankings, while energy accounts for 14.8%. The Latin and South American regions have the largest percentages in the financial services sector, with a rate of 11.3%, and in the consumer business sector, with a rate of 11.1%. Meanwhile, in Africa, the leading positions are held by enterprises in the consumer business sector, accounting for 33.9%, followed by manufacturing at 30.9% and financial services at 28.1%. Consumer business is the leading sector in Europe, accounting for 33.4% of the market. Financial services follow closely behind with 32.4%, while manufacturing holds a share of 30.4%. The Middle East & North Africa region has the greatest ranking in technology, media, and telecommunications, standing at 12.6%. Consumer business closely follows behind.

MSCI, originally known as Morgan Stanley Capital International, is another important monitor of gender parity. It has access to data from its global constituency in both developed and emerging financial markets. MSCI reported that in 2020, the representation of women on board seats in both commercial and public sector organizations was only 20.6 %. The analysis emphasizes a deceleration in the advancement of gender equality on corporate boards within the MSCI ACWI Index (developed markets) in 2020. Only 0.8 % of boards have a majority of female members, while 17 % consist solely of male members. Surprisingly, 31 % of the companies included in the MSCI EM Index, which represents developing economies, did not have any women serving on their boards. Nevertheless, the MSCI World Index surpassed both developed and emerging markets in terms of performance. It had 57.6 % of its members with three or more female directors on their boards. Europe took the lead with 81.8 % (Milhomem, 2020). Although progress in achieving gender diversity on corporate boards has been slow, MSCI data indicates a consistent increase in the representation of women on boards and in positions of decision-making authority, especially in companies that have strong female leadership. According to a study conducted in 2015, 57.9 % of companies with female CEOs reported having three or more female board members, while only 30.3 % of companies with male CEOs claimed the same (Lee et al., 2015). In addition, Kramer and colleagues (2006) asserted that having three or more women in the boardroom, referred to as

a "critical mass," has a substantial impact on board dynamics. This increases the chances of women's opinions being acknowledged and improves corporate governance by promoting collaborative leadership, considering multiple stakeholders, and enhancing decision-making procedures.

Although there has been advancement for women in leadership positions across several fields, they still remain a minority in top-level corporate leadership positions globally. Deloitte (2022) reported that the worldwide average of women holding the position of board chair in 2021 was just 6.7%, which represents a little rise from 5.3% in 2019. In a similar vein, the percentage of women occupying CEO roles was only 5% (compared to 4.4% in 2019), while 15.7% worked as CFOs. Moreover, statistics from the interactive database of United Nations Women in Managerial Positions reveal that in 2020, the worldwide average percentage of companies with a female top manager was 18.7%. However, among Fortune 500 companies, only 7.4% of CEOs were women (37 out of 500). It is worth noting that this number was even lower, at just one, in 1998. Furthermore, despite the growing number of female employees in the corporate sector, the percentage of women in high-ranking leadership positions remains significantly inadequate. Specific geographic areas and sectors exhibit a greater probability of women occupying CEO roles. According to the Global Gender Gap Report 2022 by the World Economic Forum, non-governmental and membership organizations have the highest representation of women in leadership posts, with 47%. This is followed by the education sector with 46%, personal services and well-being with 45%, and healthcare with 42%. On the other hand, sectors such as supply chain/transportation (21%), energy (20%), manufacturing (19%), and infrastructure (16%) have lower levels of female representation in leadership positions. Surprisingly, industries including technology, energy, and supply chain/transportation, which have the least number of women in leadership positions, had greater rates of employing women in 2021 compared to hiring men (WEF, 2022).

Furthermore, women have a tendency to hold prominent executive positions at the senior level, particularly in C-suite or directorial jobs. According to Grant Thornton (2022), the global distribution of women in leadership positions in 2021 was as follows: 38% in human resources director jobs, 36% in chief finance officer positions, 23% in chief marketing officer positions, 22% in chief operating officer positions, and 21% in chief information officer positions. Proponents of

gender equality in top-level management expect that when women achieve more positions in the C-suite, their chances of progressing to CEO jobs will increase.

Moreover, the routes that women choose to attain high-level leadership roles differ, with a significant number achieving the post of chief executive by creating and managing their own enterprises. According to Adler (2015), the atmosphere of a woman entrepreneur's native country can have a substantial impact on her success, whether she is starting her own business or working in an established company. The Women's Entrepreneurship 2020/21 study by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor highlights the growing population of female entrepreneurs and their ability to overcome the difficulties brought about by the COVID-19 epidemic. The research for the year 2020 reveals that there were 274 million women who initiated their own enterprises, together with an additional 139 million women who owned well-established businesses, and 144 million women who acted as informal investors. The region of Latin America and the Caribbean demonstrated the most elevated levels of female entrepreneurship within its geographical area.

2.8 Competency Framework in the leadership context

Competency frameworks are crucial instruments for defining the actions required of members of a team or organization in order for them to work together to achieve a common objective (Vazirani, 2010). These frameworks, which are in line with the mission of an organization, play a crucial role in clearly outlining the necessary leadership qualities and setting expectations for the conduct of individuals in leadership positions (Hollenbeck et al., 2006). The value of competency frameworks in promoting open hiring practices and assessing overall leadership efficacy is emphasized by human resource researchers (Torrington et al., 2014; Kim and McLean, 2015). However, competency frameworks need to adjust to modern developments and changing ideas of effective leadership in the dynamic and quickly changing business scene (Quintana et al., 2014). It's critical to understand that competency frameworks should not be strict standards, but rather should be contextualized within the particular corporate environment (Hollenbeck et al., 2006). The present study considers and recognizes both viewpoints about the utilization of competency frameworks. Furthermore, feminine leadership competencies, such as empathy, caring, communal behavior (Brescoll, 2016; Sandberg and Scovell, 2015), emotional sensitivity (Glass and Cook, 2016), and the capacity to listen and assist younger colleagues (Frankel, 2014), are commonly associated with effective female leaders (Bailey, 2014; Pfeffer, 2015). According to Bennis (2009), when

considering a leadership definition that focuses on people, women tend to exhibit more qualities of a leader compared to males. Women's potential leadership advantage is reinforced by their aptitude for effectively collaborating with others, particularly in the context of the growing trend towards flatter and more collaborative work environments (Kaiser and Wallace, 2016). The research on leadership styles confirms the perceived differences between masculine and feminine leadership competencies. Masculinity is associated with task-oriented, autocratic, and directive leadership styles, while femininity is associated with relationship-oriented, democratic, and participative leadership styles (Glass and Cook, 2016; Trinidad and Normore, 2005; Oshagbemi and Gill, 2003; Rigg and Sparrow, 1994). This study implies that gender disparities exist and that female executives in male-dominated industries face additional hurdles, despite the potential advantage of leadership.

The research on women's leadership frequently aims to identify unique characteristics that distinguish between the leadership styles of men and women (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003). A commonly held viewpoint posits that leadership styles that are influenced by gender reflect the power dynamics that are widespread in society (Fine, 2007). Within US and European cultural contexts, leadership is often associated with attributes traditionally linked to masculinity, such as task orientation, assertiveness, authoritarianism, and emotional detachment (Izraeli & Adler, 1994; Schein, 2001; Fine & Buzzanell, 2000). However, feminist researchers argue that transformative leadership, which possesses both masculine and feminine aspects, may provide specific benefits to women. Research comparing the leadership styles of women and men has produced interesting results. One notable finding is that women are less likely to engage in self-promotion because of structural and stereotyped obstacles (Bowles & McGinn, 2005; Eagly & Carli, 2007).

The argument that men and women are naturally and socially unique suggests that there are inherent differences in their dispositions and personalities based on gender (Semykina & Linz, 2007). According to Judge, Higgins, Thoresen, and Barrick (1999), female managers generally see themselves as more agreeable, while male managers describe themselves as amiable in specific circumstances and assertive in others. Studies on perceptions of effective leadership skills show that women are perceived as being more attentive to detail, emotionally sensitive, and more likely to seek input from others. On the other hand, men are perceived as being more inclined to delegate

specific tasks (Irby, Brown, Duffy, & Trautman, 2002). Women consistently achieve significantly higher scores than males on the attribute of conscientiousness, which is commonly linked to femininity in cultural contexts. In Russia, men typically demonstrate an internal locus of control, whereas women are more inclined towards an outward locus of control (Semykina & Linz, 2007). In relation to Prediger's (1982) "people-things" and "ideas-data" dimensions, both genders generally exhibit a greater affinity towards the people-things dimension. However, women tend to display a stronger predisposition towards the people-oriented element, while males lean more towards the task-oriented aspect (Lippa, 1998). However, some alternative viewpoints suggest that relational leadership is associated with agreeableness, while task leadership is associated with assertiveness and conscientiousness (Won, 2006). Nevertheless, there is not enough evidence to support the existence of gender differences in relationship-oriented versus task-oriented leadership (Toren, Konrad, Yoshioka, & Kashlak, 1997; Won, 2006).

The Competing Values Framework (CVF) provides a comprehensive perspective for comprehending the intricacies of women's leadership in organizational settings. Female leaders frequently demonstrate a combination of leadership styles that correspond to different quadrants of the CVF. They demonstrate exceptional skills in collaborative leadership, creating inclusive and supportive workplaces that closely resemble the clan culture quadrant, characterized by a strong internal focus and adaptability. In addition, women exhibit transformational leadership traits that inspire innovation and change, aligning with the adhocracy cultural quadrant, which prioritizes external attention and adaptability. Furthermore, female leaders frequently exemplify servant leadership, placing a high importance on meeting the needs of their teams and stakeholders, reflecting the ideals of the clan culture. Nevertheless, women in positions of leadership encounter distinct obstacles, including the need to navigate societal norms and manage conflicting demands. The CVF offers a structure for female leaders to effectively handle these difficulties by providing knowledge about various leadership methods and empowering them to adjust their techniques according to the aims and circumstances of their organization. Women leaders may ultimately drive corporate performance and promote inclusive leadership practices that benefit all stakeholders by utilizing their various skill sets and leadership styles.

2.9 Factors affecting the women leadership success.

Researchers explore the complexities of defining leadership and determining the aspects that contribute to a leader's position. Showunmi (2016) conducted a survey in which women were requested to express their comprehension of leadership. The study discovered that women's perceptions of leadership exhibited similar characteristics, such as a strong focus on others, empathy, networking abilities, forward-thinking, and commitment to personal beliefs (Showunmi et al., 2016). Historically, the research of leadership attributes predominantly centered around male leadership models, often excluding women from early leadership studies to ensure data accuracy (Powell, 2011). While there has been progress in include women in contemporary research techniques, many leadership theories still primarily rely on the analysis of traits associated with male leadership. Typically, scholars categorize leadership orientations into two distinct types: results-oriented and relationship-oriented. Leaders who are result-oriented prioritize the completion of tasks within specified timeframes, while those who prioritize relationships aim to involve all team members and encourage motivation (Powell, 2011). Moreover, the choice of decision-making methods is frequently dependent on the style of leadership, as democratic leaders engage employees in the decision-making process, while authoritarian leaders typically make decisions on their own.

Life span developmental theories suggest that during the early adult years, individuals prioritize accomplishing their career and family goals by utilizing their intelligence (Schaie, 1977; Schaie & Willis, 2000). In her 2013 book Lean In, Sheryl Sandberg argues that a gender-based double standard leads to the perception of ambition as a bad trait in women. This, in turn, hinders women's ability to attain high-level leadership roles due to lower levels of ambition and aspiration among women. Validating or disproving this widely accepted, albeit unverified, claim necessitates comprehending an individual's initial level of success drive and objectives, as well as their eventual outcome. To better understand the factors that hinder women's career advancement into leadership roles, it is crucial to study women who actively seek out leadership positions, in addition to studying a general sample of working women. This will allow for a more comprehensive analysis of the influence of personal, organizational, and societal factors on occupational progression.

In her model of connective leadership, Jean Lipman-Blumen (2000; 1992) and her colleagues (Lipman-Blumen, Handley-Isaksen, & Leavitt, 1983; Lipman-Blumen & Leavitt, 1976) broadened

existing perspectives on achievement motivation by identifying nine distinct types that represent various approaches to achievement and the resulting gratification individuals derive from them. She contends that these styles may be connected to the process of acquiring gender-specific social roles and making career choices and ambitions based on gender. The nine categories can be categorized into three groups based on their styles: direct, instrumental, and relational achievement. Direct styles involve tackling achievement tasks independently, while instrumental styles involve utilizing connections and seeking assistance from others. Relational styles, on the other hand, indicate a preference for group achievement and viewing the success of others as one's own.

Aside from analyzing matters of identity and accomplishment orientations, other human circumstances can also impact the probability of attaining leadership achievement and success. Therefore, it is crucial to analyze women's initial career ambitions in correlation with their eventual levels of professional success, especially among women who were already displaying leadership capabilities. Regarding leadership, a recent study conducted by Li, Arvey, and Song (2011) found that self-esteem has a substantial influence on the likelihood of individuals, both male and female, assuming leadership positions. The study revealed that individuals with higher levels of self-esteem have greater chances of becoming leaders. Therefore, we also investigate the correlation between levels of self-esteem during college and subsequent occupational success and pleasure in later life. Regardless of a woman's inherent inclination towards leadership and her own goals and characteristics, once she is engaged, organizational elements come into effect that establish a work environment that can either facilitate or hinder her career advancement.

Cultural and societal variables have a significant impact on women's ability to attain leadership roles, as they are influenced by deeply rooted norms and expectations that can either support or hinder their progress in different fields. Traditional gender roles and prejudices persist in numerous countries, exerting a significant impact on how leadership is seen. This often results in women being assigned subordinate positions or facing constraints on their professional advancement. Cultural norms often dictate certain qualities and behaviors that are considered suitable for leaders, typically favoring masculine features. This might provide obstacles for women who do not comply to these expectations (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Moreover, the way society perceives women in

positions of leadership can be shaped by wider cultural norms on gender roles, familial obligations, and the perceived suitability of women for leadership jobs.

Furthermore, the cultural and societal norms surrounding women's responsibilities inside the family can cross with their professional ambitions, affecting their capacity to pursue and maintain jobs in leadership positions. Across all societies, women continue to be predominantly perceived as the main caretakers and managers of household affairs. This perception often results in preconceptions about their dedication to their professional responsibilities and their eligibility for leadership positions that demand significant time and travel obligations. Women face difficulties in attaining leadership roles, especially in businesses dominated by men, where demanding work hours and frequent travel are the norm (Blau & Kahn, 2000). Moreover, the absence of favorable laws and infrastructure for employed parents, such as reasonably priced childcare and parental leave, might intensify these difficulties, rendering it arduous for women to manage their job and personal obligations.

Moreover, the societal perspectives towards women's educational pursuits and professional ambitions can greatly influence their opportunities to hold positions of authority. Women in communities with limited educational access or hurdles to higher education and professional development opportunities frequently have restricted potential for leadership positions. Cultural perceptions regarding women's cognitive capacities and their perceived appropriateness for leadership positions in specific domains can impact the way organizations hire and promote individuals, therefore perpetuating gender imbalances in leadership roles (World Economic Forum, 2020). Additionally, the absence of female role models and mentors in positions of leadership might reinforce prejudices and impede women's ambitions for professional progress.

Ultimately, cultural and sociological variables significantly impact women's ability to attain leadership roles. These factors shape how women's leadership skills are seen, determine their roles in both the home and society, and affect their access to education and career progression. To overcome these cultural and societal obstacles, it is necessary to adopt a comprehensive strategy that questions traditional gender roles and prejudices, advocates for gender equality in both education and employment, and enforces policies and programs that empower women to succeed in leadership positions (World Bank, 2019). To foster more gender equality in leadership roles, organizations and politicians should focus on tackling the fundamental cultural and socioeconomic

issues that hinder women's full participation and success. This approach will help establish inclusive and fair environments that empower women.

Work-Life Balance

The literature on Work-life balance has diverse outcomes that have been studied and existed in recent years worldwide. There has been an upswing of concern in work and family margin in the human resource management, specifically regarding the sources and out-comes of conflict between these two scopes. An employee of any firm is an integral part of the family and the general public. It has now gone far to prioritize the work role and one's personal life. Khairunneezam, Siti, Nurul (2017) describes Work life balance as a functioning idea that chains the energies of workers to divide their locus of attention, time and dynamism between work and the other important aspects of their lives. Organizations are striving to remain top and fostering to monitor and improve employee performance (Ngozi, 2015). According to Isa et al, (2015) Work-life balance is not merely time divided between work-life and nonwork-life that needs to be realized by reducing the clash between these two territories and balancing the numerous roles and tasks. Osei-Tutu et al. (2018) affirms that employers have regularly recognized that, to improve work-life balance, they must frequently mend the value of life of employees with their families' and higher performance. Goni-Legaz (2016) asserts that work life balance is comprised of three mechanisms, time balance, involvement balance and satisfaction balance.

Motivation

A motive is what prompts a person to act in a certain way or at least develop an inclination for specific behavior (Kast and Rosenzweig, 1985), "Motivation" can be defined as those forces within an individual that push or propel him or her to satisfy basic needs or wants (Yorks, 1976). The level of needs will determine what rewards will satisfy an employee. According to Dessler, most psychologists believe that all motivation is ultimately derived from a tension that results when one or more of our important needs are unsatisfied (Dessler, 1986). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is the earliest and most widely known theory of motivation, developed by Abraham Maslow (1943) in the 1940s and 1950s. Abraham Maslow believed that man is inherently good and argued that individuals possess a constantly growing inner drive that has great potential. The needs hierarchy system, devised by Maslow (1954), is a commonly used scheme for classifying human motives. It

involves five categories of motives arranged with lower-level needs on the bottom which must be satisfied first, before the higher-level needs come into play (Wallace, Goldstein and Nathan, 1987).

Alderfer (Furnham, 2008) distinguished three classes of needs: existence, relatedness and growth. This theory is very flexible since it explains needs as a range rather than as a hierarchy. These classes of needs have been explained below.

Herzberg's motivation hygiene theory is often called the two-factor theory and focuses on those sources of motivation which are pertinent to the accomplishment of work (Hall and Williams, 1986). This theory says that there are some factors known as motivating factors that cause job satisfaction, and some other separated factors called hygiene factors which cause dissatisfaction.

Career Progression

There is a need by every organization to invest in comprehensive career-development process which helps attract and retain high-performing employees (Garavan, Morley, Gunnigle, & Collins, 2001; Lesabe & Nkosi, 2007). It is indeed vital to instill a mindset of continuous improvement through learning and enhancement leading to employee satisfaction with optimum opportunities for career growth (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Unfortunately, diminutive attention has been paid to the definite ways in which employees might indicate their chances for advancement and development (Jans, 1989). Furthermore, employees consider organizational career growth as career-advantageous knowledge for their unrelenting service with their employer (Inkson & King, 2011). This elucidates that they have confidence in continuous development to help them build their careers within the organization (McDonald & Hite, 2015). Employee-driven career growth is beneficial to workforces (Yang et al., 2015). Personnel tend to stay longer as long as their career aspirations are in line with their management endeavors. Career growth is an influencer for employees to pursue to the next level of career. Companies adopting strategies supporting the career growth are identified to be best in terms of productivity, employee satisfaction.

Economic Growth

Employee economic growth refers to the increase in employees' financial well-being, job satisfaction, and career advancement opportunities. It encompasses aspects such as wages,

benefits, job security, and professional development. Several theoretical frameworks underpin the concept of employee economic growth. Human Capital theory posits that investments in employee training and education enhance productivity and economic outcomes. Becker (1964) emphasizes that companies that invest in their employees see higher returns through increased efficiency and innovation. Social Exchange theory suggests that positive employer-employee relationships foster loyalty and commitment, leading to better performance outcomes. Employees who perceive their economic growth as linked to the organization's success are more likely to engage actively. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs model implies that financial security and career growth are fundamental to achieving higher levels of job satisfaction and motivation (Maslow, 1943). When basic economic needs are met, employees can pursue self-actualization and higher productivity.

Top-level sponsorship is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in enabling managers to ascend to leadership positions within organizations. Sponsorship differs from mentorship in that it involves active advocacy from senior leaders who leverage their influence to promote and support the career advancement of their protégés. Social networks and relationships play a vital role in individual success. As per the Social Capital theory sponsorship can enhance a manager's social capital increasing access to opportunities (Bourdieu, 1986). Career advancement is influenced by external factors, including organizational support. Sponsorship acts as a catalyst, providing the necessary support for managers to navigate their career paths (Super, 1990). Sponsors can elevate the visibility if their subordinates within the organization, advocating for them linking to promotions and career advancements (Ibarra, 2010).

Top Level Leadership Sponsorship

Top-level sponsorship is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in enabling managers to ascend to leadership positions within organizations. Sponsorship differs from mentorship in that it involves active advocacy from senior leaders who leverage their influence to promote and support the career advancement of their protégés. Social networks and relationships play a vital role in individual success. As per the Social Capital theory sponsorship can enhance a manager's social capital increasing access to opportunities (Bourdieu, 1986). Career advancement is influenced by external factors, including organizational support. Sponsorship acts as a catalyst, providing the necessary support for managers to navigate their career paths (Super, 1990). Sponsors can elevate

the visibility if their subordinates within the organization, advocating for them linking to promotions and career advancements (Ibarra, 2010).

Leadership Accession

Leadership accession refers to the processes and factors that facilitate an individual's rise to leadership positions within organizations. This topic encompasses various elements, including individual traits, organizational culture, career development, and external influences. Understanding the dynamics of leadership accession is crucial for both aspiring leaders and organizations aiming to cultivate effective leadership. Research consistently shows that higher education and ongoing professional development enhance the likelihood of leadership accession. Leaders with advanced degrees or specialized training are often viewed as more qualified (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Building relationships within and outside the organization is crucial for career advancement. Sponsorship and mentorship play pivotal roles in providing guidance and facilitating access to leadership opportunities (Hewlett et al., 2010). The culture of an organization significantly influences leadership accession. A culture that promotes diversity and inclusion tends to provide greater opportunities for a wider range of individuals to ascend to leadership roles (Roberson, 2006). Diverse leadership teams have been shown to enhance decision-making and organizational performance (McKinsey & Company, 2020). Organizations that prioritize diversity are more likely to foster an environment conducive to leadership accession for all employees.

2.8 Barriers and Challenges faced by women in leadership.

Female individuals seeking to pursue careers in Science, Engineering, Management, Manufacturing and Technology (SET) encounter a multitude of obstacles and difficulties that impede their progress and achievement in these domains. Women face substantial barriers that hinder their advancement, starting from the early phases of recruiting and selection and extending to the larger cultural and structural biases present in STEM fields. An area where these issues are particularly evident is in the recruitment process. Research has revealed widespread gender disparities in candidate selection, highlighting the absence of openness and responsibility in institutional procedures (Grove, 2013; Settles et al., 2006; van den Brink, Benschop, & Jansen, 2010). Although there have been attempts to establish official rules that support gender equality, there are also informal practices that continue to reinforce gender bias (Bailyn, 2003; Kjeldal,

Rindfleish, & Sheridan, 2005). The presence of these hurdles at the beginning of one's career establishes the foundation for the various difficulties that women face throughout their professional journeys in science, engineering, and technology (SET) fields. Two notable problems that deserve attention are the discrimination faced by pregnant or parenting women and the biassed judgements of female candidates' ability by assessors (Mason, 2008; Moss-Racusin et al., 2012). This article delves deeper into the obstacles and difficulties encountered by women in science, engineering, and technology (SET) sectors, analyzing how these issues affect the advancement of women's careers and providing valuable perspectives on approaches to tackle these systemic disparities.

Despite substantial legislative and societal improvements aimed at fostering gender equity in Australia, women have not attained considerable participation in leadership roles, as observed by Still (2006). However, study by Rohmann and Rowold (2009) underlines the positive perception of female leaders, revealing that they are often perceived as having more transformational leadership characteristics and are evaluated as more effective and gratifying leaders compared to their male counterparts. Despite these positive attitudes, top women leaders nonetheless often feel like outsiders within their organizations, as noted by Cormier (2007). Cormier identifies many hurdles experienced by women executives, including issues fitting in as equals within leadership ranks, a lack of supportive networks, and low social capital. Similarly, Sikdar and Mitra (2012) analyze women's leadership in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) within the context of gender-role stereotypes widespread in the Arab world. Their findings imply that leadership responsibilities in UAE firms are characterized more by gender-role stereotypes rather than individual biological sex or traditional family and societal duties. This shows the intricate interplay between cultural expectations, workplace culture, and individual experiences defining women's leadership potential and challenges.

Studies continually highlight that society tends to associate leadership qualities with those often associated with men (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009; Stelter, 2002). This divide frequently comes down to the delineation between "communal" and "agentic" characteristics. Communal qualities, commonly attributed to women, consist of characteristics such as affection, helpfulness, and kindness, whereas agentic traits, linked to men, involve assertion and control. The deeply ingrained societal norms create a foundation for extensive categorization based on preconceived notions in both cultural and professional environments (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009). According to societal

standards, professional women are typically expected to prioritise warmth above competence, which reinforces the belief that women cannot possess both warmth and competence at the same time (Cikara & Fiske, 2009). The continued promotion of leadership qualities that resemble the agentic style as being desired has resulted in the phenomenon referred to as the "think manager-think male effect" (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009). Nevertheless, when women take on leadership positions, they encounter an intricate network of anticipated behaviours and outcomes. They are supposed to display community characteristics associated with their gender while also displaying agentic qualities that are typically associated with leaders, which creates a difficult balancing act. Women in this vulnerable situation frequently face criticism for either displaying excessive masculinity or excessive femininity (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009). As a result, women in leadership positions may face stress and frustration due to the challenges they encounter in meeting these expectations. This often leads to negative attitudes from colleagues and subordinates, such as receiving low ratings, criticism, and being socially rejected. In addition, due to the prevalent use of agentic language to describe leadership positions, men are sometimes considered more appropriate for these jobs, regardless of whether the area is usually associated with males or females. This phenomenon, known as the glass escalator, is characterised by men advancing quickly in their careers while women face external biases and make slower advancement (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009).

Women in prominent positions frequently encounter "role traps," which limit them to specific stereotypes such as the nurturing mother, the seductive temptress, the submissive pet, or the intimidating and strict leader, particularly when their management approach is more authoritative than collaborative (Simpson, 1997). In addition, the lack of female colleagues in management results in women in leadership positions feeling isolated and being seen by others as mere symbolic gestures of the company's attempts to promote equality (Schmitt, Spoor, Danaher, & Branscombe, 2009). The practice of selectively promoting a small number of women to positions of power has resulted in the idea of "tokenism," where the existence of a few women in influential roles is wrongly seen as equal opportunity, despite the actual situation being significantly distinct (Schmitt et al., 2009). The erroneous conviction in gender equality might impede development by promoting unfounded hope and reducing the perceived necessity to tackle underlying disparities. As a result, women who believe that there is widespread gender discrimination are more inclined to have a strong connection to their gender group and actively provide support to one another. Women who

are tokenized often face isolation and increased stress related to their performance, in comparison to women who are more equitably represented (Schmitt et al., 2009). Studies suggest that women who are in the minority in their workplace are more susceptible to gender bias, receive poorer ratings from male employees in lower positions, and generally achieve less success in their careers (Schmitt et al., 2009). An often-observed coping strategy in such situations is the "Queen Bee Syndrome," in which accomplished women are hesitant to share information or assist other women in progressing, in order to preserve their place within male-dominated circles (Hamel, 2009). This method seeks to conform to male perspectives and interests, frequently at the cost of promoting unity among women in leadership roles.

Ultimately, the obstacles and difficulties encountered by women in positions of authority are complex and firmly rooted in societal frameworks and corporate environments. Although there has been notable advancement in promoting gender equality, women still face challenges including gender stereotypes, limited access to mentorship and networking opportunities, and structural biases in recruiting and promotion procedures. The occurrence of tokenism intensifies these difficulties, prolonging the false perception of gender equality while impeding actual advancement. Furthermore, women in positions of leadership frequently struggle with feelings of isolation, being trapped in certain roles, and the burden of conforming to conventional gender norms. These challenges result in increased levels of stress and strain in their work lives. To overcome these obstacles, it is necessary for both organizational leaders and society as a whole to work together in order to demolish systemic inequities, promote inclusive settings, and actively encourage the progress of women in leadership positions. By engaging in collective action and demonstrating unshakable commitment to gender equity, we can establish inclusive and empowering environments that foster the success of women as leaders.

To summarize, this literature review has thoroughly examined the theoretical foundation of leadership, specifically highlighting the historical development of leadership theories and the distinct obstacles encountered by women in leadership roles. The review started with classical theories like the Great Man theory and Trait theory, which focus on inherent traits and qualities of effective leaders. It then moved on to more modern perspectives, such as Contingency theories like situational leadership and Style and Behavior theory. These theories acknowledge the significance of situational factors and leadership behaviors in determining effectiveness. In

addition, the assessment examined the historical aspect of women in positions of authority, emphasizing the ongoing gender inequalities in political and corporate leadership positions, despite progress in achieving gender parity. In addition, the conversation on competence frameworks has highlighted the significance of clearly identifying and evaluating leadership competencies in order to promote effective leadership development. The review comprehensively analyzed the elements that impact the achievement of women in leadership roles, as well as the obstacles and difficulties they face. These include gender stereotypes, restricted opportunities for mentorship and networking, and systemic biases in recruiting and promotion procedures. This literature review combines various viewpoints to prepare for the following empirical investigation, providing valuable insights into the theoretical foundations and practical aspects of leadership, specifically in relation to women's leadership experiences and paths.

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the author thoroughly examined the theoretical and conceptual foundations of the concepts explored in the current research study. This was achieved by conducting a comprehensive analysis of previous literature on topics such as leadership theories, the history of women in leadership, women in politics, women in business leadership, leadership competency frameworks, success factors for women in leadership, and the barriers and challenges faced by women in leadership. This study aims to find the characteristics that influence successful women in managerial leadership roles in manufacturing businesses. It has examined many aspects within the defined scope to identify these dynamics. This chapter begins by presenting the conceptual model and explaining the rationale for the selection of the specific variables. In the second step, hypotheses are formulated based on the variables identified in the conceptual framework. The operational definitions are included in the third section to prevent any deviation of the research study from its primary objective. In order to create the questionnaire for the current study, the fourth section of this chapter provides an illustration of the operationalization table. The next three sections will provide a detailed examination of the research design, main data collection, and sample technique for the current study. The final section presents data analysis approaches that can be further examined in the following chapter.

3.2 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework visually represents the organized structure of the variables that researchers utilize to accurately tackle a specific research problem, in accordance with the explicitly established goals and objectives of the investigation (Jabareen, 2009). The author constructs the theoretical framework by taking into account the review of existing literature, in order to illustrate the connection between the main factors in the current research study.

When considering to the extensive literature review related to the factors influencing women in managerial leadership positions in chapter two, the previous researchers have explored this phenomenon using different dynamics / factors in different industries. Moreover, these elements which are used by the previous researchers differ according to the selected context, country and the working environment. However, when referring to the any context, some factors leading

women to be successful in leadership are commonly identified by the researchers. The below table illustrates the different elements which are used by the researchers relating to the women leadership in different contexts.

Table 1: Different Elements used by Researchers relating to Women Leadership

Authors	Study	Context	Country	Dynamics for successful women leadership
(Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey, 2006)	Dynamics and Dilemmas of Women Leading Women	General (Lit rev)	Overall	Work life balance Motivation Organizational culture Mentorship
(Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017)	Women in leadership and the bewildering glass ceiling	General (Parliament, Public & Private sector)	US	Work life balance Career progression Equal opportunity policies Economic Advancement
(Taylor et al., 2016)	Underestimating one's leadership impact: Are women leaders more susceptible?	Corporate sector		Confidence Career Progression Motivation
Scheepers, C. B., Douman, A., & Moodley, P. (2018).	Sponsorship and social identity in advancement of women leaders in South Africa	Corporate sector	South Africa	Leadership Economic Advancement Career progression Sponsorship and Mentorship

According to the study conducted by Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey (2006), it reveals that the key elements that significantly influence the achievement of women in leadership positions across various industries and locations. The concept of work-life balance has been identified as a crucial element, emphasizing the significance of efficiently juggling work obligations and personal life in order to manage both professional and personal commitments. Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of motivation, organizational culture, and mentorship in promoting the success of women in leadership positions. Furthermore, Chisholm-Burns et al. (2017) did a study that reinforced the important elements that contribute to the success of women in leadership positions, building upon the previous findings of Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey (2006). The study emphasized that achieving work-life balance, advancing in one's career, and implementing equal opportunity legislation are crucial factors in promoting women's success in leadership positions. Ensuring a proper equilibrium between work and personal life enables female leaders to efficiently handle their professional and personal obligations, hence improving their overall job contentment and

productivity. Furthermore, the presence of professional advancement prospects and the implementation of equal opportunity policies are essential in offering women the vital assistance and resources needed to excel in their professions and surmount obstacles connected to gender. The study conducted by Taylor et al. (2016) titled "Underestimating one's leadership impact: Are women leaders more susceptible?" The study revealed that confidence, professional growth, and motivation have a substantial impact on women's inclination to seek leadership positions in managerial roles. According to the study, women tend to underestimate the influence they have as leaders. However, if they get greater confidence and motivation, they are more inclined to desire and achieve leadership positions. Furthermore, the availability of career advancement prospects plays a vital part in motivating women to seek leadership positions and add to their overall achievements in managerial roles. In a study done by Scheepers, Douman, and Moodley (2018), it was highlighted that leadership, economic growth, career development, and sponsorship and mentorship programs have a crucial role in promoting women's success in leadership positions. These characteristics are essential in enabling women to gain power and offering them the required assistance and opportunity to excel in leadership roles. An atmosphere that fosters women's leadership growth and success is created through a combination of leadership traits, economic advancement, career progression chances, effective sponsorship, and mentorship.

According to the main studies considered here, it is evident that work life balance, motivation, career progression and economic advancement have a major impact on the women leadership empowerment in the corporate sector organizations. Therefore, these four factors were considered for the current study treating them as dynamics of women leadership in managerial positions. Considering the mediating effect of top-level leadership support / sponsorship, it has been investigated in different sectors considering the

managerial competencies and employee empowerment. The support of high-level leadership is essential in inspiring women to attain leadership positions within an organization. Eagly and Carli's (2007) research emphasizes the significance of multiple factors, such as high-level leadership endorsement, in promoting women's progression into leadership positions. The research report by Catalyst (2013) highlights the importance of mentorship and sponsorship from high-level leaders in promoting the progress of women's careers. Moreover, research conducted by Kark, Waismel-Manor, and Shamir (2012) as well as Ibarra and Obodaru (2009) reveals that businesses that highly

value feminine leadership qualities and offer women the chance to cultivate strategic vision are more inclined to support women in leadership positions. Moreover, a study conducted by Lyness and Thompson (2000) indicates that organizational support, particularly support from top-level leaders, plays a crucial role in facilitating the career progression of women. This support enables women to access the essential chances and resources required for progressing into leadership roles.
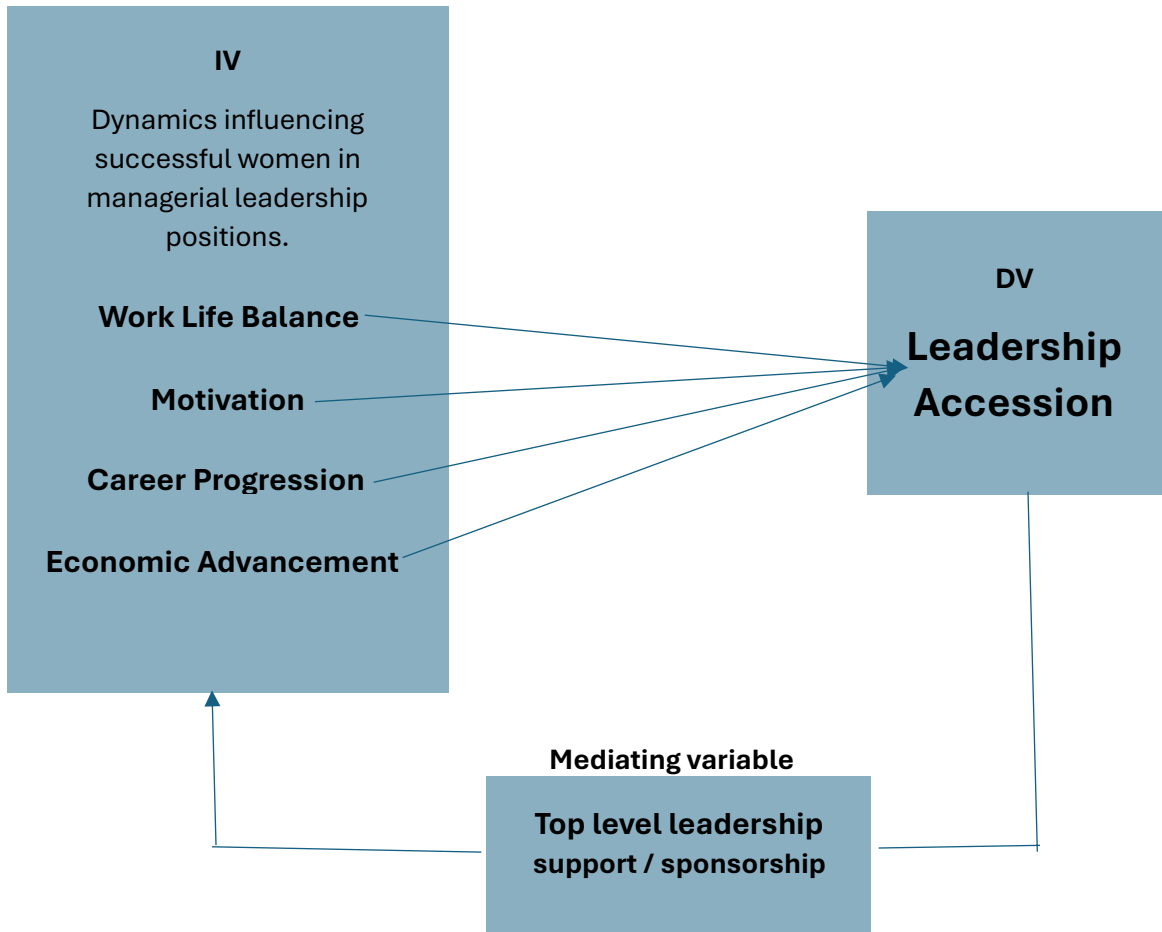
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

3.3 Hypothesis

Prior scholars have examined numerous characteristics that propel accomplished women in managing roles towards attaining leadership positions (Eagly and Carli, 2007). Moreover, research conducted by Kark, Waismel-Manor, and Shamir (2012) as well as Ibarra and Obodaru (2009) has

shown that businesses that prioritize feminine leadership qualities and offer women the chance to cultivate strategic foresight are more encouraging of female leaders. Moreover, a study conducted by Lyness and Thompson (2000) indicated that organizational support, particularly assistance from top-level leaders, plays a crucial role in facilitating the career progression of women. Hence, the author has developed the several hypotheses for the present research according to the relationship among certain variables illustrated in the above conceptual framework.

Work life balance of women employees has become a critical subject of discussion as we see women working in different areas of profession and sharing responsibilities equally with men both at work and at home for the betterment of their family life. Various studies over the past three decades have stated that work life balance has gained attention from organizations, employees and researchers (Taylor, 2001; Felstead et al., 2002). According to Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey (2006) The maintenance of a healthy work-life balance is of utmost importance in influencing the development of women's leadership within the sector. Research regularly shows that providing support for women to achieve a harmonious balance between their career and family lives increases their likelihood of progressing into leadership roles. Implementing flexible work arrangements, such as the provision of remote work choices, flexible hours, and family-friendly rules, not only serves as a means to recruit a greater number of women to the workforce, but also empowers them to achieve leadership positions without compromising their personal lives. Moreover, a conducive work atmosphere that prioritizes the equilibrium between work and personal life can mitigate the difficulties that women frequently have when trying to juggle career progression and family obligations. Statistically, women exhibit a higher probability than males to assume caregiving duties. However, due to the absence of adaptability in balancing these responsibilities with their professional pursuits, numerous highly skilled women are compelled to scale back their aspirations in the workforce (Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017). Therefore, author has developed the first hypotheses seek to determine the relationship between work life balance and leadership accession considering the dynamics influencing women leadership.

H1: Work life balance positively impacts on leadership accession.

Motivation is a crucial factor in shaping women's leadership within the sector. Various variables contribute to the progress of women in leadership roles, but intrinsic motivation, which includes a strong desire to make a significant difference, pursue personal and professional growth, and

contribute to good change, typically serves as a driving force for women to actively seek and flourish in leadership positions (Cox & Salsberry, 2012). Moreover, external influences like mentorship, conducive work settings, and chances for skill enhancement and progression can greatly influence women's drive to seek leadership positions. Companies that place a high priority on fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace culture, ensuring equal opportunities for professional growth, and providing mentorship and networking opportunities are more likely to inspire and empower women to assume leadership positions and succeed within their organizations (Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey, 2006). Companies may enhance the strength and diversity of their leadership teams and create an environment that promotes creativity and success by identifying and addressing the motivational variables that influence women's desire to become leaders (Taylor et al., 2016). Considering these factors, the author has developed the second hypotheses seek to determine the relationship between motivation and leadership accession considering the dynamics influencing women leadership.

H2: Intrinsic Motivation positively impacts on leadership accession.

The advancement of one's career has a pivotal role in determining the level of women's leadership within the business (Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017). Although more women are joining the workforce, there remains a substantial disparity in the representation of genders in leadership roles. Facilitating transparent avenues for professional growth and offering prospects for enhancing skills and receiving training is crucial in promoting greater participation of women in leadership positions. Organizations that place a high value on having a balanced representation of genders in their leadership positions and actively employ tactics to facilitate the advancement of women's careers are more inclined to both attract and retain highly skilled female professionals (Taylor et al., 2016). Women can enhance their professional progression through mentorship programs, leadership training initiatives, and sponsorship possibilities, which offer them the necessary support and advice (Scheepers, Douman & Moodley, 2018). In addition, establishing a transparent and meritocratic promotion procedure will effectively eradicate biases and guarantee equal opportunities for women to attain leadership roles. Companies may enhance their leadership teams and cultivate a more inclusive and inventive workplace culture by investing in the advancement of women's careers. Following the stated conceptions taken from previous studies the author has

developed the third hypotheses seek to determine the relationship between career progression and leadership accession considering the dynamics influencing women leadership.

H3: Career progression positively impacts on leadership accession.

The prospect of advancement in the economy and the potential for substantial income significantly impact women's motivation to seek leadership roles in the sector. As the number of women striving to progress in their professions and attain financial autonomy increases, the prospect of better income and economic progression becomes a compelling incentive. Research has indicated that organizations with a higher representation of women in positions of authority generally exhibit superior financial performance (Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017; Scheepers, Douman, & Moodley, 2018). Hence, ensuring equitable access for women to leadership positions not only fosters gender parity but also yields enhanced commercial results. Moreover, the potential for increased remuneration and enhanced economic security serves as a driving force for women to aspire to positions of leadership, compelling them to obtain the requisite expertise and credentials to excel in their professional endeavors. Companies may cultivate a more varied and successful workforce by implementing policies that guarantee equal pay and establish opportunities for economic growth. This will enable them to attract, retain, and empower brilliant women, thereby encouraging their progression into leadership positions. Therefore, the author has developed the forth hypotheses seek to determine the relationship between economic advancement and leadership accession considering the dynamics influencing women leadership.

H4: Economic advancement positively impacts on leadership accession.

The factors that affect the success of women in managerial leadership roles have a substantial influence on obtaining high-level support from firm executives. Previous studies have proved that women who exhibit robust leadership abilities, attain noteworthy accomplishments, and make substantial contributions to the company's objectives, inherently earn acknowledgment and backing from high-ranking executives (Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey, 2006). This support is essential for their advancement into high-level leadership roles. Women who are successful in managerial positions serve as role models for effective leadership and help create a company culture that is more diverse and inclusive. Their achievements not only contribute to the company's success but also serve as a source of inspiration for other women inside the firm to strive for leadership positions. When the highest level of leadership acknowledges and endorses these

accomplishments, it conveys a strong statement regarding the company's dedication to gender diversity and inclusion. On the other hand, strong support from top-level leaders is crucial in enabling women to take on leadership positions in the sector. When senior leadership actively endorses gender diversity programs, enforces policies to tackle gender prejudices, and fosters an inclusive work environment, it facilitates the advancement of women into leadership roles. Top-tier assistance can manifest in diverse ways, such as guidance from experienced mentors, endorsement from influential sponsors, facilitating connections to valuable networks, and actively promoting legislation that promotes gender inclusivity (Eagly and Carli's, 2007). Women are more inclined to seek leadership positions and invest in their professional growth when they observe that the highest-ranking executives in their organization are dedicated to supporting their progress and promotion (Kark, Waismel-Manor, and Shamir, 2012; Ibarra and Obodaru, 2009). This establishes a beneficial loop in which accomplished women in managerial leadership positions receive endorsement from high-level leadership, and as a result, the support from high-level leadership facilitates the advancement of women into leadership positions within the business. Therefore, nurturing this process of assistance and progress benefits not only individual females but also the entire firm, resulting in a more varied, inventive, and prosperous corporation. With this evidence the has developed the hypotheses seek to determine the mediating effect of top level leadership support towards the relationship between dynamics influencing women leadership in managerial positions and leadership accession.

H5: Dynamics influencing women leadership in managerial positions positively impacts on gaining top level leadership support in the organization.

The dynamics influencing women's leadership in managerial positions play a crucial role in securing top-level leadership support within organizations. As more women ascend to managerial roles, they serve as role models for aspiring female leaders. This visibility encourages a culture of support and mentorship, where top-level leaders recognize the value of fostering female talent. Women in managerial positions bring diverse perspectives and approaches to problem-solving, which enriches decision-making processes. When top leadership sees the positive outcomes of diverse viewpoints, they are more likely to support initiatives aimed at increasing women's representation at all levels. Research shows that organizations with diverse leadership teams often outperform their peers. As women demonstrate effective leadership and contribute to improved

performance metrics, top-level leaders are incentivized to support further diversity initiatives to maintain and enhance these results. The presence of women in managerial roles can drive cultural shifts within organizations. As they advocate for inclusive practices, they help create a work environment where top leadership recognizes the importance of supporting women in leadership. Women in management can leverage their positions to build networks that promote advocacy for gender diversity. By establishing connections with top leaders, they can effectively communicate the benefits of supporting women's leadership, leading to a more unified organizational commitment. When women succeed in managerial roles, it highlights the effectiveness of talent development programs. This success encourages top leadership to invest further in such programs, ensuring that women have the resources and support needed to ascend to higher leadership positions. In summary, the dynamics of women in managerial roles not only enhance organizational effectiveness but also create a ripple effect that strengthens top-level leadership support for diversity initiatives. This mutual reinforcement is essential for cultivating a truly inclusive leadership landscape.

H6: Top level leadership support positively impacts on leadership accession.

Top-level leadership support plays a vital role in facilitating leadership accession within organizations. When senior leaders actively support and advocate for emerging leaders, it increases their visibility within the organization. This recognition can lead to more opportunities for promotions and high-profile projects. Top leaders often provide mentorship, sharing valuable insights and experiences. This guidance helps aspiring leaders develop the skills and confidence needed to advance in their careers. Support from senior leadership can open doors to critical networking opportunities. Leaders who advocate for their teams can introduce emerging leaders to influential contacts, broadening their professional networks. Top-level support fosters a culture of inclusion and diversity. When senior leaders prioritize these values, it encourages a broader organizational commitment to nurturing talent from diverse backgrounds, paving the way for more individuals to access leadership roles. When top leaders actively support diversity and inclusion initiatives, they help counteract biases that may hinder the advancement of underrepresented groups. Their commitment sends a strong message that diverse leadership is a priority.

H7: Top level leadership support positively mediated the relationship between the dynamics influencing women leadership in managerial positions and leadership accession.

Top-level leadership support plays a critical mediating role in the relationship between the dynamics influencing women's leadership in managerial positions and their accession to higher leadership roles. When top leaders actively support women in managerial roles, it validates their contributions and potential. This recognition can enhance women's confidence and ambition, encouraging them to pursue further leadership opportunities. Senior leaders who provide mentorship and sponsorship can help women navigate organizational challenges and identify pathways to advancement. This guidance is essential for translating the dynamics of their current roles into opportunities for higher leadership positions. Leadership support fosters an inclusive culture that encourages collaboration and diversity. This cultural environment helps women feel more empowered and supported in their roles, increasing their likelihood of pursuing top leadership positions. When top leaders' express confidence in women leaders, it encourages them to take risks, seek challenges, and pursue opportunities that they might otherwise shy away from. This willingness to take initiative can accelerate their leadership journey. In essence, top-level leadership support acts as a crucial bridge that transforms the dynamics influencing women's leadership in managerial positions into tangible opportunities for higher leadership accession. By fostering an environment of encouragement and resource allocation, senior leaders empower women to reach their full potential in leadership.

3.4 Operationalization Table

The author has created an operationalization table by identifying the measuring indicators from previous literature for the variable stated in the conceptual framework. The operationalization table is depicted in the table below.

Table 2: Operationalization Table

Concept	Variable	Measurement Indicator	Source
Dynamics influencing women leadership	Work Life Balance	Flexible work arrangements	(Taylor, 2001; Felstead et al., 2002; Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey, 2006;
		Leave Policy	
		Work hours and over time	

in managerial positions		Workload distribution	Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017)
		Employee satisfaction	
		Employee Performance	
	Motivation	Interest toward working	(Cox & Salsberry, 2012; Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey, 2006; Taylor et al., 2016)
		Working environment	
		Recognition and appreciation	
		Working conditions	
	Career Progression	Opportunities available within the organization	(Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017; Taylor et al., 2016; Scheepers, Douman & Moodley, 2018)
		Encouragement from the management	
		Benefits & rewards	
		Job performance	
	Economic Advancement	Good pay	(Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017; Scheepers, Douman, & Moodley, 2018)
		Economic security	
		Quality of Life	
Leadership Accession	Leadership Accession	Feedback and coaching	(Peus, Braun & Knipfer, 2015)
		Availability of leadership development programs	
		Succession planning	
		Performance reviews	
		Assessing leadership competencies	
Top level leadership support	Top level leadership support	Mentoring	Kark, Waismel-Manor, and Shamir, 2012; Ibarra and Obodaru, 2009
		Coaching	
		Training and Development	
		Networking	
		Promotions	

3.5 Research Design

The conceptual framework facilitates researchers in quantifying data in order to establish a correlation between the primary variables in the study (Malhotra et al., 1996). The author has constructed the theoretical framework by thoroughly examining the relevant literature pertaining to the practical circumstances of the current research area. Hence, the author opts for the positivist quantitative approach.

Research can be undertaken using either an inductive or deductive technique, as stated by Creswell (1994). In addition, Sekara & Bougie (2011) assert that inductive research is employed to build hypotheses based on specific phenomena, while the deductive technique starts with a theory and applies it to a particular scenario. This research study primarily investigates the factors that influence women's leadership in general, with a specific focus on its impact on leadership opportunities in the manufacturing industry of Sri Lanka. The author employed a deductive technique in the current research investigation.

According to Malhotra et al. (1996), any research can be categorized as either exploratory and descriptive or as casual. Additionally, they proposed that comprehensive business research can be undertaken across all dimensions. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research setting, it is necessary to do exploratory research at the beginning of the study, as suggested by Sekaran & Bougie (2011). Subsequently, the features of the variables can be determined using descriptive research. Lastly, the relationship between the variables can be analyzed by doing hypothesis testing. The current research study is grounded in empirical data, hence both exploratory and descriptive research methods were employed to evaluate the hypothesis. The researcher has employed a survey to conduct descriptive study.

Additionally, as stated by Malhotra & Grover (1998), empirical research can be carried out using either cross-sectional or longitudinal methods. In longitudinal research, surveys are conducted repeatedly over an extended period of time with the same respondents. In cross-sectional research, specific respondents are surveyed only once at a particular moment. Thus, the current study was carried out using the cross-sectional research approach.

A survey was done using this method among a group of selected respondents over a three-month period. Sekara (2009) asserts that a research design should clearly specify the unit of analysis. Furthermore, Malhotra & Grover (1998) assert that researchers must clearly specify if the data gathering is carried out at the individual, group, department, organization, or industry level. Therefore, in the current research study, the concept of unit analysis was defined as an individual entity.

3.6 Primary data collection

The conceptual framework facilitates researchers in quantifying data in order to establish correlations between the primary variables in the study (Malhotra et al., 1996). The author has constructed the theoretical framework by conducting a thorough analysis of the literature pertaining to the practical circumstances of the current study area. Hence, the author opts for the positivist quantitative approach. Research can be undertaken using either an inductive or deductive technique, as stated by Creswell (1994). In addition, Sekara & Bougie (2011) assert that inductive research is used to build hypotheses based on specific phenomena, while the deductive technique starts with a theory and applies it to a specific scenario. This research study primarily examines the factors that influence women's leadership in general, with a specific focus on how it affects leadership opportunities in the manufacturing business in Sri Lanka. The author employed a deductive technique in this research investigation. According to Malhotra et al. (1996), any research can be categorized as either exploratory and descriptive or as casual. Additionally, they proposed that comprehensive business research can be carried out across all dimensions. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the research setting, it is necessary to conduct exploratory research at the beginning of the study. Subsequently, descriptive research is employed to define the features of the variables. Lastly, the relationship between the variables can be analyzed by doing hypothesis testing. The current research study is grounded in empirical data, hence both exploratory and descriptive research methods were employed to evaluate the hypothesis. The researcher has employed a survey to conduct descriptive study. Additionally, as stated by Malhotra & Grover (1998), empirical research can be carried out using either cross-sectional or longitudinal methods. In longitudinal research, the same respondent is surveyed multiple times over an extended period of time. In contrast, cross-sectional research involves surveying unique respondents only once at a certain moment. Thus, the current study was carried out using the cross-sectional research approach. A survey was done using this method among a group of selected respondents over a three-month period. Sekara (2009) asserts that a research design should clearly specify the unit of analysis. Furthermore, Malhotra & Grover (1998) assert that researchers must clearly determine if data collecting is carried out at the individual, group, department, organization, or industry level. Therefore, in the current research investigation, the unit analysis was specifically specified as an individual unit. Due to the descriptive character of this research study, the author concluded that a survey would be the most suitable approach for

gathering data. Pride and Ferrell (1985) state that the survey method is a frequently employed technique in consumer research to gather primary data. In addition, Tull and Hawkins (1988) have asserted that the survey approach is especially appropriate for collecting data from customers.

Moreover, as stated by Zikmund (2003) and Hawkins (2005), a self-administered questionnaire is regarded as the most efficient and economical approach of collecting data, especially when aiming to reach a substantial number of participants. Additionally, it aids in mitigating biases that may arise during the process of gathering data. Given these variables, the survey for this investigation was carried out via a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed after doing a thorough review of prior studies. Its purpose is to collect data on dynamic influencing women leadership in managerial positions, leadership accession and top-level management support for reaching greater heights in leadership positions.

3.6.1 Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire for the present research was developed based on the selected measurement indicators which are exemplified in the operationalization table. Accordingly, questionnaire contained four sections including the general information of the respondent, questions to measure each concept (dynamic influencing women leadership in managerial positions, leadership accession and top-level management support) of the present research separately and the demographic factors of the respondent.

The main variable which is independent variable known to be as dynamic influencing women leadership in managerial positions were structured to measure with 4 measurement variables including Work Life Balance, Motivation, Career Progression and Economic Advancement. The work life balance has been planned to measure with six measurement indicators including Flexible work arrangements, Leave Policy, Work hours and over time, Workload distribution, Employee satisfaction and Employee Performance to figure out how far it is being supportive for women in reaching the leadership positions. Next one is motivation, and it is being measured via Interest toward working, working environment, Recognition and appreciation and Working conditions. Career progression will be measured with four measurement indicators and economic advancement will be measured with 3 measurement indicators. All the variables will be measured by using a 5-point Likert scale. Considering the dependent variable, which is leadership accession, planned to measure by using another 5 measurement indicators including Feedback and coaching,

Availability of leadership development programs, Succession planning, Performance reviews and Assessing leadership competencies. The mediating effect of the top management leadership support will be measured by 5 indicators including Mentoring, Coaching, Training and Development, Networking and Promotions.

Further, the author was signed the covering letter which attached in the questionnaire to explain the purpose of getting maximum support from the respondents and guaranteeing the privacy and anonymity of the information.

3.7 Sample procedure

Bryman (2006) states that in both qualitative and quantitative research projects selecting the sampling is an important step. As explained in the industry overview, the manufacturing and production sector plays a substantial role in Sri Lanka's economy, representing around 16% of the nation's GDP and providing employment for over one million individuals. The textiles and apparel sector is the dominant division of the industry, comprising approximately 40% of overall exports and yielding an annual revenue of more than $5 billion. Sri Lanka is renowned for its superior garment items, which are primarily exported to the United States, Europe, and Asia. The food and drinks business is a significant sector that includes products like tea, spices, processed fruits, and seafood, which contribute significantly to export earnings. The rubber and plastics industries, bolstered by the abundance of natural rubber, also makes a substantial contribution to the economy. Furthermore, the machinery and equipment industry cater to both local and international markets, manufacturing a diverse array of industrial machinery, agricultural equipment, and electrical goods. Considering the entire industry, it can be seen that the women leading managerial role in board of directors and senior management specifically in Hand Protective Solutions companies referring to manufacturing industry are very few. According to the report published by International Finance Corporation in 2019 depicts that female participation is around 8.2% of more than 1500 companies registered in Colombo Stock Exchange. Considering the Hand Protective Solutions companies the women participation in managerial positions is around not more than 450 females. Therefore, treating this as the sample frame the sample will be accounted.

3.7.1 Sample Size

When selecting the sample size for the current study, the author took into account the variables outlined by the International Funds for Agricultural Development (IFAD) for estimating the

sample size of a large population-based survey. Regarding IFAD, there are primarily three factors to consider, include the prevalence of specific variables, the required level of confidence, and the accepted margin of error. It is often suggested in market research to aim for a confidence level of 95%. Additionally, when the target population is unknown or exceeds one million, the accepted prevalence level of variables in the research might be quantified as 50%. Krejcie & Morgan (1970) established that the acceptable margin of error for continuous data is 3%, whereas for categorical data it is 5%. In this investigation, the allowed amount of margin for error is set as ±5%.

Sample Size Calculator
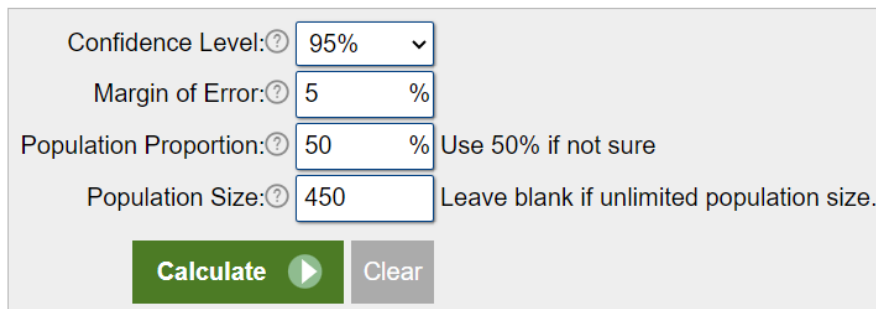
Find Out The Sample Size

This calculator computes the minimum number of necessary samples to meet the desired statistical constraints.

Result

Sample size: 208

This means 208 or more measurements/surveys are needed to have a confidence level of 95% that the real value is within ±5% of the measured/surveyed value.

Confidence Level:	95%
Margin of Error:	5 %
Population Proportion:	50 % Use 50% if not sure
Population Size:	450 Leave blank if unlimited population size.

Calculate ▶ Clear

Figure 3: Sample Size Calculator

According to the online sample calculator the sample size has been calculated as 208 considering the population as 450 as stated in the above section. The sampling method selected was multi staged mixed sampling with reference to the easy access to the companies selected.

3.8 Data Analysis Techniques

The reliability and validity of the study play a key role in assuring the accuracy of measures (Zikmund, 2003). Many academics think that reliability and validity are very effective and efficient

measuring procedures, as they deliver the most accurate and dependable analytical results. In this study, the researcher picked the reliability test utilizing Cronbach's alpha value to confirm the accuracy of the judgement of the most appropriate indicators to include. Additionally, validity analysis is widely regarded among researchers as a crucial data analysis technique. Therefore, the investigator used validity analysis to analyze the dynamics of women leadership in managerial positions on leadership accession, since it measures the correctness of the instrument measurements through variance analysis. Furthermore, the researcher applied expressive techniques such as mean value and standard deviation to examine independent, dependent, and moderation variables effectively.

3.8.1 Reliability Analysis

The reliability of a research instrument, as stated by Sekaran & Bougie (2011), ensures consistent and accurate measurement over time and across different items. Therefore, it signifies the durability and uniformity of the measurement indicators. Furthermore, Canava et al., (1998) highlighted that reliability refers to the level of consistency observed among the indicators of measurement variables. The majority of researchers in the marketing field have utilized Cronbach's alpha, a measure of reliability for multi-point scale items, which was introduced by Cronbach in 1994 (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011). Furthermore, certain researchers have suggested the utilization of the Kuder-Richardson formula, which was originally introduced by Kuder and Richardson in 1937, as a widely recognized analytical tool for assessing the reliability of items on a multi-point scale. Cronbach's alpha is a statistical measure that quantifies the internal consistency and reliability of a set of items within a specific group (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011). According to Hair et al. (1998), a low Cronbach's alpha value indicates a low average inter-item correlation, while a high Cronbach's alpha value indicates a high average inter-item correlation. In addition, Sekaran (2009) highlighted that the desired level of reliability should fall within the range of 0.6 to 0.8 for Cronbach's alpha. If the Cronbach's alpha is below 0.6, it indicates a low level of data reliability. In addition, George & Mallery (2003) introduced the concept of value range Cronbach's alpha to assess the reliability of the data. These values ranges are defined as follows.

The author employed Cronbach's alpha to assess the reliability of the measurements in the current study, which utilized a multi-point scale. The next chapter (chapter 4) provides a detailed

examination of the reliability test, specifically focusing on the analysis conducted using the Cronbach alpha test.

3.8.2 Validity of measurements

Multiple researchers have demonstrated that validity is a crucial method that assesses "the extent to which an instrument accurately measures what it is intended to measure." Moreover, this method is widely recognized among researchers as a crucial measurement technique that enables the acquisition of precise information regarding the dimensions utilized in the research, thereby ensuring the maintenance of a high level of accuracy. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the ultimate outcome of the validity is a highly significant factor (Sekaran and Bougie, 2011). Furthermore, numerous researchers concur with the assertion made by Sekaran and Bougie (2011) that there are multiple approaches to validate the measurements of validity. These approaches encompass various perspectives, including content validity, criteria-related validity, and congruent or construct validity.

According to Rungtusanatham (1998), content validity refers to the extent to which a measure covers all aspects of a construct's theoretical definition. Furthermore, numerous researchers have indicated that content validity can be established by assessing the face validity of each dimension through the input of expert panel members. In addition, the researcher obtained an evaluation for the current study from relevant individuals, such as the supervisor, based on which the researcher created the questionnaire. Therefore, the current research instrument has been verified for content validity.

Range	Internal Consistency
>.0.9	Excellent
>.0.8	Good
>.0.7	Acceptable
>.0.6	Questionable
>.0.5	Poor
<0.5	Unacceptable

Figure 4: Validity of Measurements

Many researchers have different interpretations of construct validity, but Sekaran and Bougie (2011) provide the most effective explanation: it refers to how well the results obtained from using a measurement instrument align with the theories that the instrument is designed to measure. Additionally, according to Zikmund (2003), construct validity relies on both convergent and discriminant validity. Furthermore, he elucidated that it consistently yields highly correlated outcomes when comparing two distinct objects on the scale of conceptual significance. The previously stated information.

3.8.3 Other Statistical Analysis

Furthermore, researchers further investigate the assumptions of normalcy, multicollinearity, linearity, and homoscedasticity, which greatly aids in the analysis process. In addition, path coefficient analysis is conducted to evaluate the importance of correlations between constructs. This study involves employing standardized path coefficients and bootstrapping. Additionally, model fit assessment is performed by examining goodness of fit indices such as R^2, Q^2, and Average Path Coefficient (APC). In addition, PLS-SEM enables mediation analysis through the utilization of tests such as the Sobel Test and bootstrapping, which estimate standard errors and confidence ranges for indirect effects.

CHAPTER 4 – DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

In the preceding sections of this study, the researcher has made a significant effort to provide detailed explanations of the theoretical and conceptual foundations of brand association and conspicuous consumption. Additionally, the researcher has discussed the mediating and moderating variables that are relevant to this study. This chapter primarily centers on the analysis and presentation of data in order to test the hypotheses derived from the obtained data pertaining to the primary research problem. The chapter is composed of seven subsections. The initial discussion will focus on survey data and the process of screening the data, with particular emphasis on addressing missing data, outliers, normality tests, and methods for purifying the data. The second portion will focus on analyzing the sample characteristics using demographic data. Following that, section three will present descriptive statistics for each dimension of the study. Next, we will evaluate the measurement model and structural model through the use of Structural Equation Model (SEM). The fifth section will present the outcomes of hypothesis testing. In section seven, the study will provide the mediating and moderating impacts of the respective factors on the primary structural model.

4.2 Preparation of Database

The database preparation for this study includes a methodical and focused strategy, specifically targeting women in high-level management and top board positions within the Hand Protective Solutions industry. Building on prior research that emphasized the lack of female representation in leadership positions in the manufacturing sector, especially in industries such as hand protective solutions, this study sought to fill this gap by specifically focusing on women in managerial leadership roles. According to Goodman and Dion (2001) when conducting a survey study, the researcher should administer some questionnaires randomly by themselves with the purpose of improving the reliability of the data collection process. Along the way, data collection was carried out by the researcher herself with easy access to the sample selected distributing surveys in the form of questionnaires to 300 participants. The study, led by the primary investigator, entailed the dissemination of 300 surveys (online 188 questionnaires and physically 20 questionnaires), strategically targeting the western province to correspond with the geographic presence of

enterprises engaged in the production of hand protection products. Evaluating the online responses rate it is 62.67% which is a high response rate as per Patton (2002) pertaining to the given benchmarks in data collection.

A total of 287 questionnaires were gathered from the scattered samples. After an initial screening process, a total of 79 questionnaires were eliminated from the study due to causes such as incomplete or biased responses. In the final analysis, a total of 208 questionnaires were included, which accounted for a 73% acceptance rate. This ensured that the database used for this study was reliable and trustworthy. The rigorous method of preparing the data was essential to ensure the study's findings were strong and the conclusions drawn were reliable.

4.2.1 Data Entry and Handling Missing Values

The data analysis began with data entry and particular emphasis was placed on addressing missing values. This is important because missing data can lead to three primary concerns. Firstly, missing data can introduce a significant level of bias. Secondly, it can make the processing and analysis of the data more arduous. Furthermore, the absence of data might lead to decreased efficiency. In addition, Hair et al. (2010) asserted that the presence of missing data is an inevitable occurrence while conducting multivariate analysis. Nevertheless, this could have a significant influence on the outcomes of the data analysis. To mitigate any data entry errors and the subsequent presence of missing values, the researcher meticulously examined the data set before inputting it into the analysis application. While performing the data entry process, the researcher discovered certain missing data that were initially misinterpreted as empty spaces on the data sheet. The researcher re-entered the data while double-checking the raw data. Furthermore, a total of 10 missing pieces of data were detected. Imputation is a technique used to handle missing data by replacing the missing values with alternative approaches, such as single imputation and multiple imputation. The researcher chose to use single imputation as it is a commonly used and intuitively appealing method. Single imputation involves using many approaches to calculate missing values. In this case, the researcher chose hot deck imputation, which is a commonly used method. This method involves imputing a missing value by selecting a similar record at random (Mislevy, Little and Rubin, 1991). According to this methodology, the value is derived from another observation in the sample that is deemed analogous. Consequently, each instance with missing data is matched with another instance that shares similarities in a variable designated by the researcher. Subsequently,

the absent data are substituted with legitimate values obtained from comparable observations. Essentially, the researcher replaced the values of another observation in the sample that had produced similar reactions. Therefore, each analysis of missing data was matched with another instance that shares similar variables as described by the researcher Hair et al., (2010).

4.3 Checking for Multivariate Assumptions and Bias of the Survey Data

The preceding sections on missing data analysis and outlier detection aimed to preprocess the data into a format that is optimal for multivariate analysis. In statistics, a data set must satisfy specific characteristics or assumptions in order to do multivariate analysis and obtain correct results in a research study. Deviation from these assumptions alters the research's conclusion and the interpretation of the findings. Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) indicate that multivariate analysis can only be conducted if specific assumptions are satisfied. They further note that if these assumptions are violated, the results of the data analysis may be misleading. Furthermore, Hair et.al. 2010 stated that the lack of normality, homoscedasticity, linearity, and multicollinearity can weaken the correlation between variables. According to Hair et al. (2017), assumptions can be checked by utilizing summarized variables. Consequently, each variable was transformed into a composite measure by loading them into a single factor using SPSS 26. Afterwards, the study examined four key assumptions: normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoscedasticity. These assumptions were tested independently before conducting both univariate and multivariate analysis. Below are the specifics on the testing of assumptions.

4.3.1 Test of Normality

The assumption of normality is a fundamental concept in multivariate analysis (Hair et.al. 2010; Sekaran & Bougie, 2011). Normality refers to a distribution of a test that follows a bell-shaped curve with a mean of 0, a standard deviation of 1, and a symmetrical shape. There are limited methods available to assess the assumption of normalcy. This study utilizes the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, sometimes known as the K-S test, and the Shapiro-Wilk test due to the huge sample size. Additional Z values for skewness and kurtosis were utilized to assess the normalcy. Skewness and kurtosis measures in SPSS should ideally approach zero. However, in practice, data typically exhibit skewness and kurtosis. Therefore, a slight deviation from zero is permissible as long as the measurements are not much larger than the standard error.

Table 3: Normality Test

Variable	Skewness			Kurtosis			Kolmogorov Smirnov		Shapiro Wilk	
	Statistic	Std. Error	Z Value	Statistic	Std. Error	Z Value	Stat	Sig	Stat	Sig
WLB	-.457	.122	-3.719	1.619	.244	7.251	.244	.000	.792	.001
Mot	-.813	.122	-7.561	2.442	.244	6.115	.263	.000	.687	.000
CPr	-.817	.122	-6.749	3.219	.244	13.144	.284	.000	.764	.000
EAd	-1.704	.122	-12.568	3.075	.244	12.116	.236	.000	.682	.000
LA	-.427	.122	-2.495	2.193	.244	10.132	.236	.000	.779	.000
TLS	-.957	.122	-8.824	.078	.244	.336	.436	.000	.651	.000
Valid N (listwise)										

Therefore, the standard error is computed manually and provided in the table above. The acceptable range for the Z value is -1.96 to +1.96. However, according to the summary table above, the z values of all variables do not fall within the range of -1.96 and +1.96. Thus, it is inferred that the data does not follow a normal distribution. Additionally, when doing the Shapiro-Wilk test and Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the null hypothesis for the test of normality states that the data follows a normal distribution. The null hypothesis is deemed invalid if the P value is less than 0.05. The P value in SPSS is denoted as "Sig". According to the above table, the P values of all variables are below 0.05. Thus, if the null hypotheses are rejected, it indicates that the data does not follow a normal distribution. Additionally, the histogram should closely resemble the shape of a normal distribution curve. According to the SPSS report, the distribution is diverging from the normal curve. Moreover, in Normal Q-Q plots, the data points do not align with the reference line. Additionally, in boxplots, if the data follows a normal distribution, it should exhibit a high degree of symmetry. However, according to the results, the box plots do not exhibit symmetry. Hence, the findings suggest that the data do not follow a normal distribution (Doane & Seward, 2011; Cramer & Howitt, 2014; Makarov & Simonova, 2017).

4.3.2 Test of Linearity

Testing the linearity of the data set is necessary to perform multivariate procedures that involve correlation estimates. According to Hair et al. (2014), it is important to ensure linearity while conducting multiple regression, factor analysis, and structural equation modelling (SEM). A common method for evaluating linearity involves analyzing scatterplots of the variable and identifying any non-linear patterns in the data. The presence of non-linear features might lead to a misinterpretation of the strength of the correlations between the variables in the study (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1996; Hair et.al. 2010). According to Hair et al. (2014), the presence of a linear relationship between variables can be determined by conducting a thorough examination of scatter plots that depict the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The researcher utilized the SPSS statistical tool to generate scatter plots and residual plots of the variables.

Table 4:: Test of Linearity – F Statistics for Work life Balance

ANOVAᵃ

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	20.705	4	20.705	12.075	.000ᵇ
Residual	266.198	204	1.626		
Total	286.903	208			

a. Dependent Variable: WLB
b. Predictors: (Constant), DAWLMP
Source: Survey Data /SPSS output 2024

Table 5: Test of Linearity – F Statistics for Motivation

ANOVAᵃ

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	35.114	4	35.114	22.513	.000ᵇ
Residual	251.789	204	1.351		
Total	286.903	208			

a. Dependent Variable: Mot
b. Predictors: (Constant), DAWLMP
Source: Survey Data /SPSS output 2024

Table 6: *Test of Linearity – F Statistics for Career Progression*

ANOVAᵃ

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	15.018	4	15.114	9.147	.006[b]
Residual	271.885	204	0.243		
Total	286.903	208			

a. Dependent Variable: CPr
b. Predictors: (Constant), DAWLMP
Source: Survey Data /SPSS output 2024

Table 7: *Test of Linearity – F Statistics for Economic Advancement*

ANOVAᵃ

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1.112	4	1.112	1.102	.005[b]
Residual	285.791	204	0.103		
Total	286.903	208			

a. Dependent Variable: CPr
b. Predictors: (Constant), DAWLMP
Source: Survey Data /SPSS output 2024

The above F-value and the significance were summarized into the below table.

Table 8: *Summary of the ANOVA Linearity Tests*

Variables	F- Value for linearity	Significance
WLB	12.075	.000[b]
Mot	22.513	.000[b]
CPr	9.147	.007[b]
EAd	1.102	

Source: Survey Data, 2020

According to the results given in table above, F value of linearity is at significance level in all the examined pair of relationships, as respective p values were reported 0.00. Those two tests assured that the adequacy of the linearity for proceeding respective data analysis of the present study.

4.3.3 Homoscedasticity

Homoscedasticity is a fundamental assumption in parametric statistical studies. In univariate studies, such as the analysis of variance (ANOVA), the homoscedasticity assumption refers to the homogeneity of variance. This assumption is applicable when there is one quantitative dependent variable (Y) and one or more categorical independent variables (X). It is assumed in this context that the dependent variable has identical variances across different levels of the independent variables. Homoscedasticity refers to the notion that the variability in the residuals or error in the model is consistent at every point across the model. Put simply, the dispersion of the residuals should be somewhat consistent at every point of the predictor variables or throughout the linear model. The researcher utilized Levene's test. Additionally, it is not feasible to perform Levene's test on non-normally distributed data in a single step. Thus, the researcher begins by preparing the data through a series of steps to generate three new variables: ranked data, group mean ranks, and deviation from mean ranks.

Table 9: Summary of Variables of Levene's Statistic and P Value

Variable	Levene's Statistic	Sig.
Work life balance	1.427	0.173
Motivation	1.453	0.186
Career Progression	1.251	0.156
Economic Advancement	1.958	0.236
Leadership Accession	0.579	0.784
Top level leadership support	1.680	0.151

Source: Survey Data, 2024

The null hypothesis posits that there is an equivalence in the variability of each dependent variable across different levels of the independent variables. If the P value exceeds 0.05, we retain the null hypothesis and assume that there is equality of variance. According to summary table, all of the p-values are more than the threshold of 0.05. Thus, the null hypotheses were accepted, indicating that the assumption of equal variance for each dependent variable holds true across different levels of the independent variables. (Nordstokke, Zumbo, Cairns, & Saklofske, 2011).

4.3.4 Test of Multicollinearity

Collinearity, as defined by Tabachnick and Fidell (1996), pertains to the linear correlation between two independent variables. Collinearity increases the accuracy of parameter variance estimations

and renders models unnecessary. Multicollinearity refers to the presence of strong correlations between two or more independent variables in a multiple regression model. Moreover, it can result in broader confidence intervals, which in turn yield less dependable probability regarding the impact of independent variables in a model. Therefore, the statistical conclusions drawn from the data may lack reliability (Hair et.al. 2010). Hair et al. (2017) state that the presence of multicollinearity in the model can be detected by utilizing the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) state that VIF values exceeding 10 indicate the presence of multicollinearity in the model. Under such circumstances, the researcher must make specific modifications to the independent variables before conducting any more study. If the tolerance value is below 0.2 or 0.1 and the VIF value is 10 or higher, then there is a problematic presence of multicollinearity.

Table 10: *Model Summary of Linear Regression for Durbin-Watson Statistic*

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.732[a]	.539	.536	.95109	1.414

a. Predictors: (Constant), Composit_WLB, Composit_Mot, Composit_CPr, Composit_EAd

Source: Survey Data, 2024

The Durbin Watson Test is a quantitative tool used to assess the presence of autocorrelation. The Durbin Watson test calculates a test statistic that ranges from 0 to 4, where a result of 2 indicates the absence of autocorrelation. Typically, test statistic values between 1.5 and 2.5 indicate a somewhat normal distribution. The Durbin Watson Statistic for this investigation, as indicated in the above is 1.414. Therefore, one may argue that there is no autocorrelation.

Table 11: Summary of Test of Multicollinearity

Variable	SMC	Tolerance statistics	VIF
Work life balance	.126	.815	1.199
Motivation	.422	.536	1.825
Career Progression	.311	.703	1.440
Economic Advancement	.157	.832	1.218
Leadership Accession	.621	.391	2.726
Top level leadership support	.707	.383	2.834

SMC = Squared Multiple Correlation, VIF = Variance Inflation Factor

Source: Survey data 2024

The rule of thumb of multicollinearity is to have SMC<0.9, Tolerant statistics> 0.10 and VIF<3 (Hair et.al. 2010). As per the results of the given table, all the values of the variables do not exceed the threshold level. Consequently, it can be concluded that all explanatory variables are free from multicollinearity.

4.4 Reliability Testing

As mentioned in chapter 3, it is crucial to assess the internal consistency and reliability of each dimension by utilizing the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Reliability analysis was performed at this stage to evaluate the internal consistency of the dimensions in the main survey before proceeding to the SEM. The results were presented in the table.

Table 12: Test of Reliability

Dimension	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Work life balance	06	0.866
Motivation	04	0.789
Career Progression	04	0.723
Economic Advancement	03	0.741
Leadership Accession	05	0.715
Top level leadership support	05	0.804

Source: Survey Data, 2024

Based on the Smart PLS results presented in the above table, the Cronbach's alpha values exceed 0.700. Therefore, it may be concluded that the reliability test yielded Cronbach's alpha values that were deemed acceptable for each construct, allowing for further analysis to be conducted.

4.5 Sample Profile

4. 5.1 Age

No of women in Managerial Leadership Positions

- Above 56 years 3%
- 20-30 years 6%
- 31-40 years 30%
- 41-55 years 61%

Legend: 20-30 years | 31-40 years | 41-55 years | Above 56 years
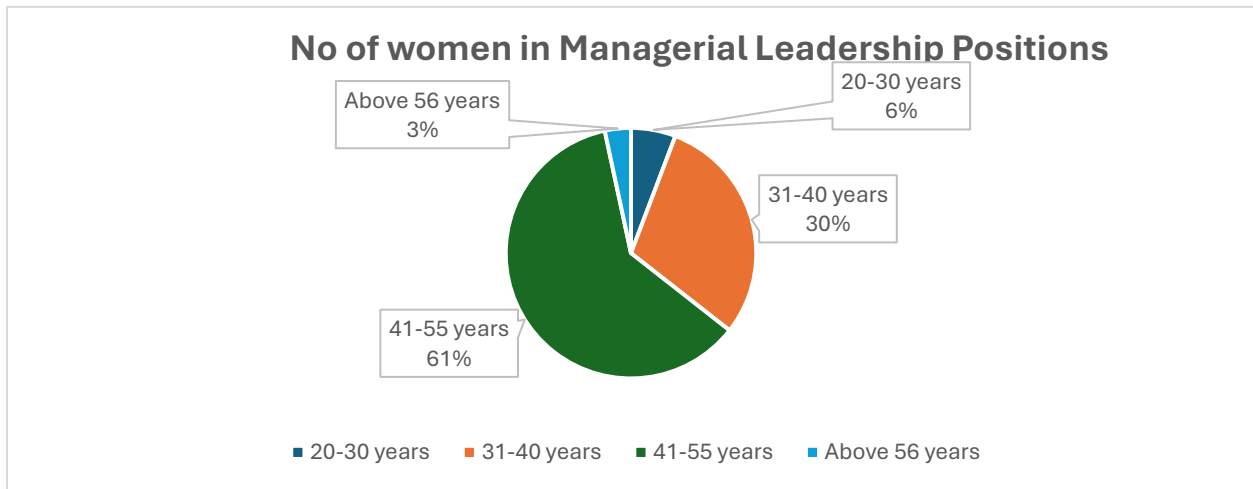
Figure 5: Number of Women in Managerial Leadership Positions

There is a distinct age trend among women in managerial leadership positions, according to the data. The age distribution of the participants is as follows: 61% are aged between 41 and 55, while a considerable proportion (30%) belongs to the 31-40 age bracket. This observation implies that experience might have a substantial impact, given the higher representation of women in their mid-career stages. Nevertheless, the underrepresentation of women aged 20-30 (6%) and over56 (3%) in leadership positions prompts inquiries regarding possible obstacles for younger women and the progression of individuals in their later professional years.

4.5.2 Material Status

Material Status

- Other, 9
- Single, 8
- Married, 191
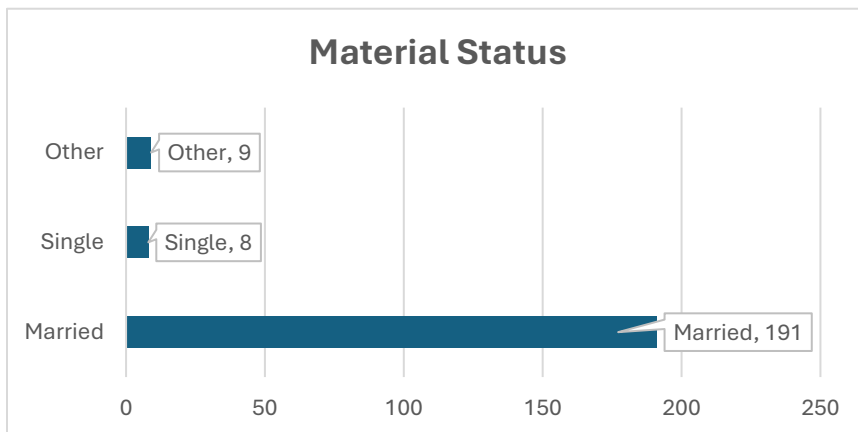
Figure 6: Marital Status

As per the above line chart regarding the material status of the sample it depicts that the selected sample mainly grounded with married women with a count of 191 respondents bearing a percentage of 91%. There are 8 single ladies and 9 of the total respondents have stated the option "other". This represents that most married women have been able to achieve managerial leadership positions in the workplace as a final conclusion.

4.5.3 Educational Qualification
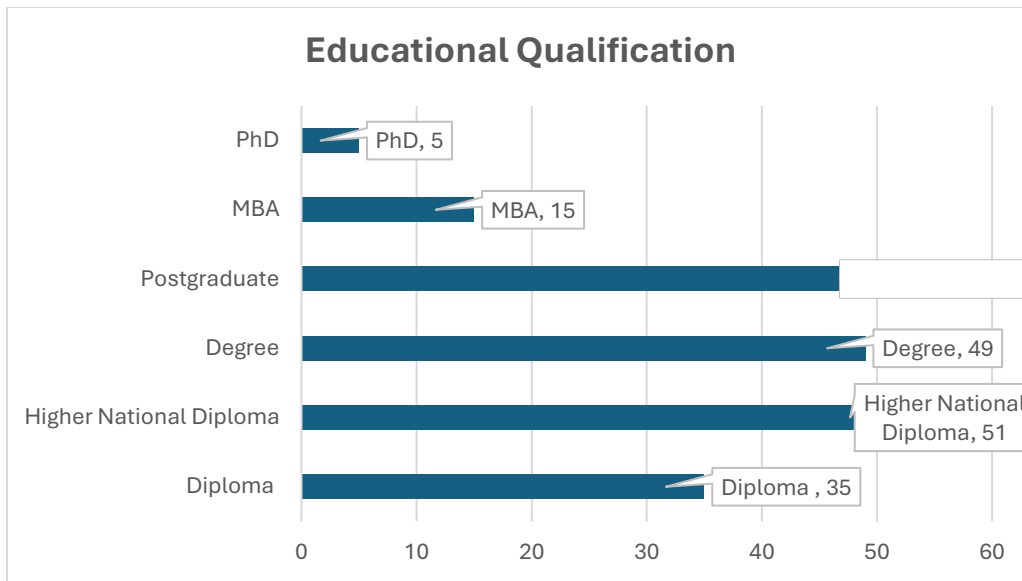
Figure 7: Educational Qualifications

The graph depicting the "Educational Qualification of Employees" indicates a workforce that is quite well-balanced, with a little inclination towards Higher National Diplomas (HNDs). The majority of employees (51) possess a Higher National Diploma (HND), but a considerable portion hold degree (49), certificates (35), and postgraduate qualifications (53). The presence of a wide range of educational backgrounds indicates that the workforce is well-prepared to undertake a diverse range of jobs. Nevertheless, the relatively small proportions of personnel with MBAs (15) and PhDs (5) necessitate additional investigation to comprehend the precise job prerequisites or the general composition of the workforce.

4.5.4 Extensive experience in the industrial industry

Experience in the Industry
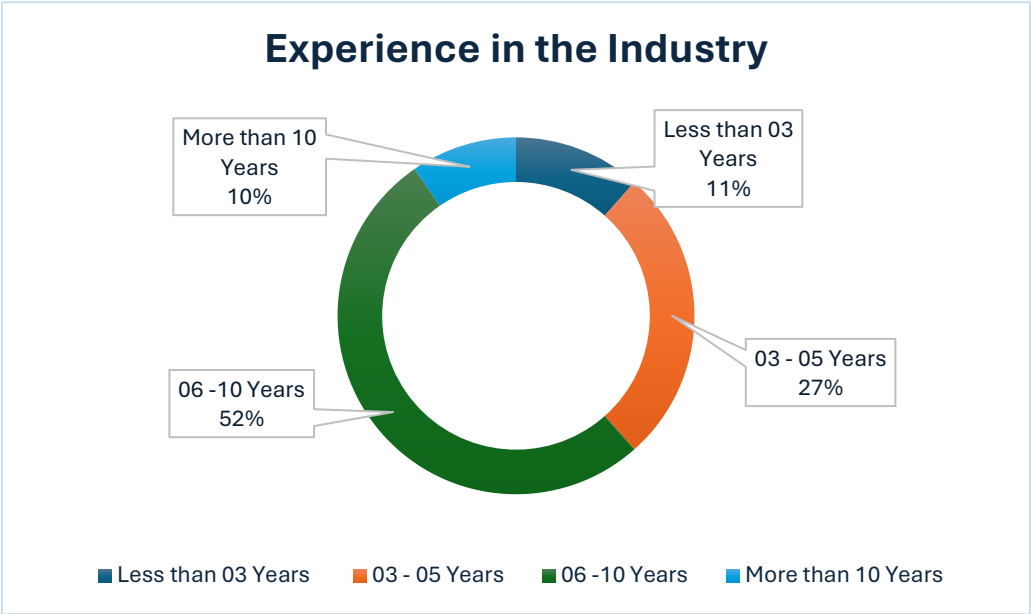
Figure 8: Experience in the Industry

Illustrated by a pie chart, a distinct pattern in industry experience is evident based on a sample size of 208 respondents. The majority section (52%) is comprised of professionals with 6-10 years of experience, suggesting a high concentration of people in the middle stage of their careers. This is beneficial for companies looking to hire experienced staff. The significance of experience is further emphasized by the fact that 89% of respondents possess a minimum of 3 years of experience. Nevertheless, the existence of individuals with less than 3 years of experience (11%) and those with over 10 years of experience (10%) implies the presence of entry-level employment and maybe a scarcity of senior representation in this field.

4.5.5 Years of experience in managerial positions
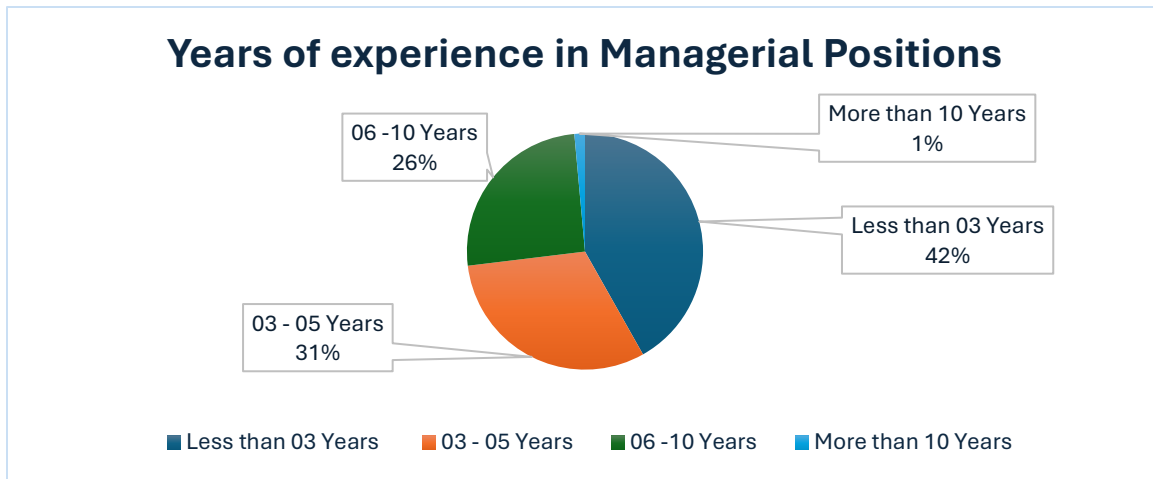
Figure 9: Year of Experience in Managerial Positions

This stacked bar chart offers insights into the experience levels of individuals in managerial roles, based on a sample of 208 respondents. Of the total, 73% possess a range of 0 to 5 years of experience, with 42% having 0 to 3 years and 31% having 3 to 5 years. This could suggest either robust training programs for newly appointed managers or possibly a significant rate of turnover in these positions. Remarkably, only 1% of individuals possess experience beyond 10 years. Although the research does not directly indicate that experience is irrelevant, it does indicate that other characteristics may possibly play a significant role in obtaining managerial roles within this particular sample.

4.5.6 Type of manufacturing organization
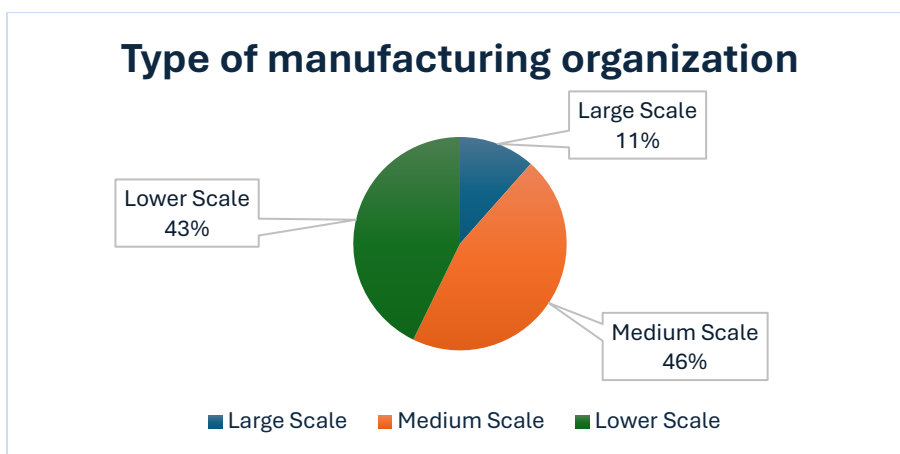
Figure 10: Type of Manufacturing Organization

The above figure represents the sample respondents' organizational type whether it is a lower, middle or large-scale organization. As per the data available, 46% of respondents represent medium-scale manufacturing organizations. In the parallel line, 43% of respondents represent lower scale manufacturing organizations. Only 24 respondents are working in large scale manufacturing organizations.

4.5.7 Position / Title within the organization

Position/title within the organization

Position	Value
Senior Engineer/Engineering Manager	11
Supply Chain Manager	46
Health and Safety Manager	17
Quality Assurance Manager	47
Operations Manager	26
Production Manager	18
Plant Manager	34
General Manager	7
Managing Director	2
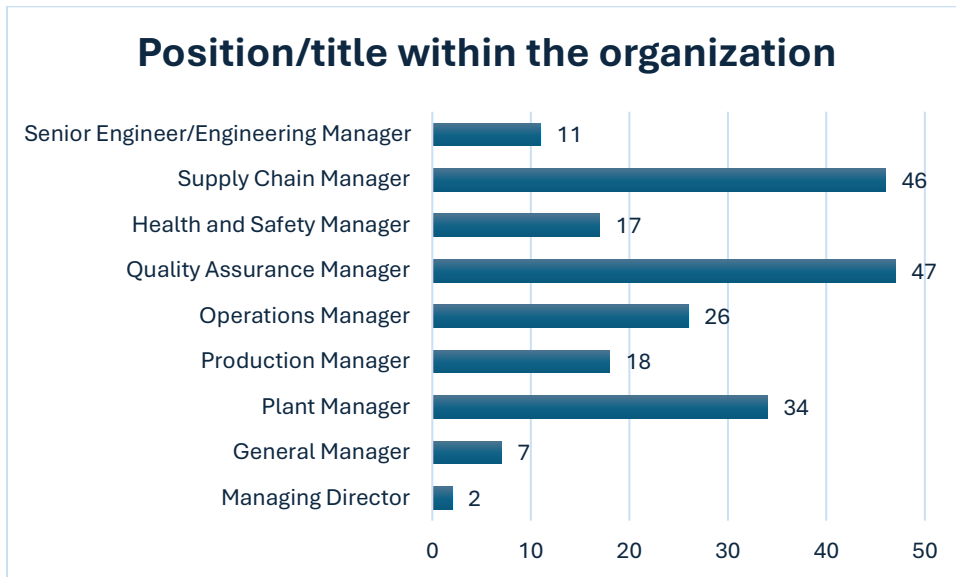
Figure 11: Position / Title within the Organization

Since the present study is focusing on the dynamics influencing the women leadership in reaching the managerial positions, the position or the title has been asked from the respondents. Here the sample comprises 208, out of 208 46 of them are supply chain managers, and equally 47 respondents mentioned as quality assurance managers. The next highest portion goes to plant managers with a total of 34 respondents bearing 16%. There were 26 operations managers, 18 production managers representing the senior management were joined for the data collection process. In addition, there were 17 health and safety managers, 11 senior engineers. The sample represented with members in the top level management which can be depicted through the 7 general managers and 2 managing directors who contributed for the data collection of the present study.

4.6 Descriptive Analysis

The primary objective of this study is to examine the dynamics of women in managerial leadership positions on leadership accession in the manufacturing industry catering to Hand Protective Solutions companies. The researcher is interested in investigating the role of top level leadership support in mediating the relationship between dynamics influencing women in managerial leadership positions and leadership accession. Descriptive statistics can help determine the average cognitive response of the chosen sample towards the specific aspects of the investigation. Therefore, the researcher conducted a descriptive statistical analysis prior to evaluating the proposed structural model in the current investigation. Nevertheless, the researcher examined the primary components of the model pertaining to this procedure. The methodology chapter employed a 5-point Likert scale to assess the items within each dimension. The literature review chapter provided justification for the evaluation of the primary constructs in a few dimensions. Descriptive statistics were conducted by calculating the mean values for each of the constructs. The summary is provided in the following table.

Table 13: Summary of Descriptive Statistics

Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD
Work life balance	4.1654	0.735
Motivation	3.8751	0.665
Career Progression	3.0415	0.540
Economic Advancement	2.4222	0.574
Leadership Accession	3.8535	0.690
Top level leadership support	3.6741	0.764

Source: Survey Data, 2024

As stated in the methods chapter, this study utilized a five-point Likert scale as the acceptable response style. Therefore, the mean values of each construct should fall between the score range of 1 to 5. The neutral point would have a value of 3. Based on the summary of the descriptive statistics shown in the above table, the impact of work life balance on leadership accession is higher than usual, with a mean value of 4.17 (M = 4.17, SD = 0.735). Nevertheless, it was observed that the average values of work life balance and motivation are higher compared to economic advancement. This suggests that work life balance and motivation have a greater influence on the dependent variable. The average economic advancement score is 2.42, with a mean of 2.4222 and

a standard deviation of 0.574. The average career progression score is 3.04, with a mean of 3.0415 and a standard deviation of 0.540. The average value of leadership accession is significantly higher, specifically at 3.674 (M= 3.6741, SD= 0.764).

4.7 Structural Equation Modelling

Byrne (2010) asserts that Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is considered the best suitable tool for non-experimental research because of its inherent benefits over traditional multivariate procedures. SEM provides two main methods for analyzing data: Covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The study utilized PLS-SEM, as explained in Chapter 3, because to the specific characteristics and extent of the investigation. According to Hair et al. (2017), PLS analysis consists of two models: the measurement model and the structural model. The measurement model includes all the characteristics that are usually examined in Confirmatory Factor study (CFA) (Wong, 2016; Becker et al., 2018), hence removing the necessity for a separate CFA study in the PLS-SEM approach (Memon et al., 2018, 2019; Becker, 2018; Ringle et al., 2018). PLS-SEM can be organized as a Hierarchical Component Model (HCM), which includes observable Lower-Order Components (LOCs) and unobservable Higher-Order Components (HOCs) to simplify the path model (Lohmöller, 1989). In addition, Hair et al. (2014) asserted that HCM (Hierarchical Component Model) aids in reducing problems associated with collinearity and discriminant validity. In addition, the Hierarchical Component Model (HCM) is capable of accommodating both reflecting and formative variables, as stated by Hair et al. (2017).

Prior to constructing the measurement model, it is imperative for the researcher to ascertain the characteristics of the latent variables. This study involved the identification of the characteristics of each variable, categorized as Lower-Order Constructs (LOC) and Higher-Order Constructs (HOC), with the support of operational definitions. Here is a concise overview of the characteristics of latent variables.

Table 14: Latent Variable of the Study

LOC (Lower Order Construct)	HOC (Higher Order Construct)
Work life balance	**Dynamics of women in managerial leadership positions**
Motivation	
Career Progression	

Economic Advancement	
Leadership Accession	
Top level leadership support	

Source: Literature review, 2024

4.7.1 Nature of the Latent Variables in the Model

When generating constructs, Edwards & Bagozzi, (2000) determined that there are two main categories of measurement models dubbed reflecting and formative in PLS-SEM based on the nature of the variables employed in the measurement models. Further it was noticed that in a reflective model which is also called as Mode A, a latent variable is reflected by cause of items. Thus, path of the model should be drawn from the latent variable towards cause of items. In contrast, in a formative measurement paradigm which is also referred as Mode B the premise is on the assumption that casual indicators form the construct means of linear combination. Further formative indicators are not interchangeable; Thus, composite variable is generated by a combination of independent or connected antecedents. Hence, a path flow can be traced from indicators/antecedents towards the composite variable (Hair et al., 2017). However, formative versus reflective variables should be distinguished based on the causal priority between the indicator and the latent variable (Bollen, 1989). Therefore, the researcher should identify formative and reflective variables separately relevant to the present study (Memon et al.,2019). Hair et al. (2018) proposed to undertake confirmatory tetrad analysis (CTA) to determine the factors as opposed reflective or formative. Failure to specify the measurement model could lead to inaccurate estimates of the parameters (Hair et al., 2019). Thus, the Confirmatory Tetrad Analysis (CTA) gives a basis to recognize whether the data support a formative measurement model specification or a reflective model specification (Hair et al., 2019).

4.7.2 Confirmatory Tetrad Analysis

The confirmatory tetrad analysis in PLS-SEM (CTA-PLS; Gudergan et al., 2008) allows for the identification of whether the measurement model is formative or reflective. The research is based on Bollen and Ting's (2000) confirmatory technique, which tests the disappearance of model-implied tetrads in the context of PLS-SEM. The implementation of CTA-PLS was primarily intended to enhance the user-friendliness of the SmartPLS 3 software (Hair et al., 2018). CTA-

PLS can be applied to latent variables that are measured both reflectively and formatively (Hair et al., 2018). In all circumstances, the null hypothesis presupposes a reflecting measurement model for conducting the statistical test. The CTA-PLS results might either provide support for or present a challenge to the chosen reflective or formative measuring strategy.

According to Hair et al. (2019), the second guideline is to examine if the indicators in the measurement model have correlations that are extremely close to zero. It is imperative that these associations exhibit statistical significance. The reason for this condition is that if the tetrad were to be zero by definition, the CTA-PLS would be meaningless. Consequently, we conducted indicator correlations, and the following table displays the correlation between each indicator.

Table 15: Indicator Correlations

	CPr1	CPr2	CPr3	CPr4		
CPr1	1.000					
CPr2	0.672	1.000				
CPr3	0.623	0.523	1.000			
CPr4	0.493	0.434	0.563	1.000		
	EAd1	EAd2	EAd3			
EAd1	1.000					
EAd2	0.454	1.000				
EAd3	0.357	0.437	1.000			
	LA1	LA2	LA3	LA4	LA5	
LA1	1.000					
LA2	0.647	1.000				
LA3	0.683	0.795	1.000			
LA4	0.399	0.572	0.430	1.000		
LA5	0.224	0.315	0.412	0.536	1.000	
	Mot1	Mot2	Mot3	Mot4		
Mot1	1.000					
Mot2	0.511	1.000				
Mot3	0.454	0.577	1.000			
Mot4	0.357	0.498	0.586	1.000		
	WLB1	WLB2	WLB3	WLB4	WLB5	WLB6
WLB1	1.000					
WLB2	0.741	1.000				
WLB3	0.658	0.691	1.000			

WLB4	0.514	0.574	0.568	1.000		
WLB5	0.487	0.418	0.437	0.467	1.000	
WLB6	0.411	0.391	0.319	0.359	0.319	1.000

Source: Smart PLS algorithm

According to the table above, it is observed that all indicators have minimal correlation values that are not equal to zero. Consequently, the CTA was conducted. The results of the CTA-PLS analysis are presented in appendix 3. The results of CTA indicate that the bis-corrected and Bonferroni-adjusted confidence intervals can determine if the nonredundant tetrads are statistically different from zero. CI The terms "Low adj." and "CI UP adj." in the data represent the lower and upper limits of the 90% confidence intervals that have been adjusted for bias and adjusted using the Bonferroni method. If the value of zero is inside the confidence interval, it indicates that the tetrad is not significantly different from zero. This shows that the tetrad is a vanishing tetrad and assumes that the measurement models for these "constructs" are reflective. On the other hand, if the value of zero is not within the bis-corrected and Bonferroni-adjusted confidence range, it can be concluded that the nonredundant tetrad significantly differs from zero. This suggests that the measurement models of the "constructs" are formative (Hair et al., 2019). All the confidence intervals of the indicator's tetrads in this study contain zero for the CTA outcomes. Thus, according to the general principle, we make the assumption that all the components of the measurement model are reflective.

The results of CTA confirm that all latent variables in the present study are reflective in character. The research employs a reflective measurement criterion for model estimate.

4.7.3 Evaluation of Measurement Model

In addition to the rationale provided in the preceding chapter, the researcher has chosen to utilize SmartPLS for the analysis of the measurement model. Additionally, the CTA analysis confirmed that the current research model accurately represents reflective factors. Hence, the researcher adhered to the criterion proposed by Hair et al. (2017) to assess the measurement model. The examination of reflecting measurement models involves evaluating internal consistency through composite reliability, assessing individual indicator reliability, and evaluating convergent validity through average variance extracted (AVE). Evaluating the reflecting measurement models also involves assessing discriminant validity. The Fornell-Larcker criterion, cross-loadings, and the

heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations are useful tools for assessing discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2017).

4.7.3.1 Indicator Loadings

The first step of an evaluation of a model in a reflective nature is to examine the indicator loadings (Ringle et al., 2018).

Table 16: Indicator loading

	CPr	EAd	LA	Mot	WLB
CPr1	0.735				
CPr2	0.830				
CPr3	0.674				
CPr4	0.754				
EAd1		0.623			
EAd2		0.611			
EAd3		0.689			
LA1			0.868		
LA2			0.867		
LA3			0.784		
LA4			0.814		
LA5			0.811		
Mot1				0.782	
Mot2				0.748	
Mot3				0.751	
Mot4				0.822	
WLB1					0.827
WLB2					0.612
WLB3					0.785
WLB4					0.812
WLB5					0.795
WLB6					0.747

Source: Smart PLS Algorithm

Loadings with a value above 0.70 are considered ideal when evaluating the measurement model, according to Chin (2010). Additionally, it was observed that there are a limited number of loadings that fall within the range of 0.7 to 0.5. However, when these components are removed and the model is rerun, it is observed that there is still an effect on the R square. Consequently, these were kept.

4.7.3.2. Reliability of the Measurements

The validity and reliability of measurements should be assessed to determine if the identified indicators accurately and consistently measure the corresponding variables (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). They proposed that two criteria can be used to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales. The primary criterion is the assessment of Cronbach's alpha values, which is the conventional method for evaluating internal consistency. Hair et al. (2017) proposed that Cronbach's alpha values provide an estimation of the internal consistency of measuring scales by considering the inter-item correlations among the indicators. In addition to the rationale provided in chapter 3, each scale was constructed using existing research and widely established scales. Nunnally (1978) and Hair et al. (2017) proposed that the Cronbach's alpha criterion should exceed 0.70 in order to ensure the trustworthiness of the scales. Furthermore, it was observed that certain researchers recommended doing tests on composite reliability in addition to Cronbach's alpha assessments, recognizing the inherent limits of the latter (Shook et al., 2004; Partanen et al., 2017, etc.). Composite reliability, as discussed by Hair et al. (2017), primarily concerns the varying outer loadings of measurement indicators. In addition, it is important for composite reliability to be within the range of 0 and 1. A higher composite reliability indicates a greater level of reliability. In addition, prior researchers have observed that composite reliability ratings should exceed 0.60 in order to ensure the internal dependability of measurement scales. The following table provides the predicted Cronbach's alpha values for the composite reliability of each construct in the model.

Table 15: Cronbach's alpha values for the composite reliability

Variable	Dimension	Code	No of Items	Cronbach's alpha	rho_a	Composite reliability
Factors influencing women in managerial leadership positions	Work life balance	WLB	6	0.715	0.724	0.745
	Motivation	Mot	4	0.741	0.788	0.808
	Career Progression	CPr	4	0.866	0.909	0.912
	Economic Advancement	EAd	3	0.789	0.791	0.802
Leadership Accession	Leadership Accession	LA	5	0.723	0.740	0.768

Source: Survey data, 2024

According to the data shown in the above table, it was discovered that all variables have Cronbach's alpha values that exceed the threshold level. Therefore, the dependability of all the factors is ensured. Furthermore, the study indicated that both rho_A and Composite Reliability values for

each measurement scale are above the threshold of 0.7, which is considered a commonly accepted guideline. Therefore, it ensures that all the metrics of the model are internally consistent in the current model. This table provides values that are evaluated using two measures: Cronbach's alpha represents the minimum value, while composite reliability represents the maximum value (Hayduk & Littvay, 2012). Therefore, the constructs of the present investigation demonstrated a strong level of internal consistency reliability.

4.7.3.3. Validity Test

Hair et al., (2017) proposed that it is important to establish the validity of the measurement scales used by researchers to ensure that the constructs in the model are accurately measured. There are three types of validity: content validity, construct validity, and criteria validity (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). The content validity of the study was determined during the literature review and operationalization process. The specifics were thoroughly examined in chapters 2 and 3. This part mostly centers on assessing the construct validity using the data obtained from the primary survey. Prior studies (e.g., Gerbing and Anderson, 1988; Sekaran and Bougie, 2016, etc.) have proposed that concept validity can be assessed through the utilization of convergent validity and discriminant validity.

4.7.3.3.1 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity refers to the extent to which a measurement is positively correlated with other measurements that assess the same concept (Hair et al., 2017). Indicators of a particular reflective construct should exhibit convergence, meaning they should share a significant amount of variance. Researchers assess the convergent validity of reflective conceptions by examining the outer loadings of the indicators and the average variance extracted (AVE) (Hair et al., 2017). The AVE (Average Variance Extracted) is a measure of the average communality of a latent variable in the measurement model. According to Partanen et al. (2017) and Hair et al. (2018), the AVE value should be higher than 0.5. This indicates that the construct accounts for 50 percent or more of the variability observed in the items that are combined to measure the construct. Furthermore, composite reliability is also considered to assess convergent validity. The findings are condensed and shown in the following table.

Table 17: Composite Reliability and AVE Value for the Dimensions (LOCs)

Variable	Dimension	Code	No of Items	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Factors influencing women in managerial leadership positions	Work life balance	WLB	6	0.745	0.723
	Motivation	Mot	4	0.808	0.608
	Career Progression	CPr	4	0.912	0.556
	Economic Advancement	EAd	3	0.802	0.507
Leadership Accession	Leadership Accession	LA	5	0.768	0.569

Source: Survey data, 2024

According to the data presented above, it is evident that both the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability for each construct are much higher than the specified threshold. This confirms the convergent validity at the dimensional (LOC) level.

4.7.3.3.2 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to the degree to which a concept is distinct from other concepts based on empirical criteria. Establishing discriminant validity demonstrates that a construct is distinct and encompasses occurrences that are not accounted for by other constructs in the model (Hair et al., 2017). Historically, there were two primary methods used to assess the discriminant validity of a model: cross-loadings and the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Chin, 1988; Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt, 2014; Hair et al., 2017). Cross-loadings are commonly used as an initial method to evaluate the discriminant validity of the indicators (Hair et al., 2017). However, Hair et al., (2018) proposed that cross loadings in hierarchical components models (HCM) lack significance as a means to assess discriminant validity. Therefore, Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2015) suggest that the Heterorait - Monotrait (HTMT) criterion is the most appropriate technique to assess the discriminant validity of HCMs. The HTMT technique often calculates the actual correlation between two constructs when those constructs are measured precisely (Hair et al., 2018). The optimal threshold value in the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) is below 0.90, as stated by Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt in 2015.

Table 18: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio

	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
EAd <-> CPr	0.866
LA <-> CPr	0.395
LA <-> EAd	0.666
Mot <-> CPr	0.597
Mot <-> EAd	0.581
Mot <-> LA	0.444
WLB <-> CPr	0.466
WLB <-> EAd	0.641
WLB <-> LA	0.568
WLB <-> Mot	0.435

Source: Survey data, 2024

4.8 Evaluation of Structural Model

Once the measurement model of the current research project has been confirmed, the following stage is to analyze the structural model of the study. The assessment of the structural model follows a standardized procedure that considers various criteria, such as the coefficient of determination (R2), blindfolding-based cross validated redundancy measures (Q2), and the statistical significance and relevance of the path coefficients (Hair et al., 2019). In addition, when evaluating the structural model, it is important for the researcher to analyze the model's ability to predict outcomes beyond the data it was trained on. This can be done by utilizing the Partial Least Squares (PLS) product approach, as suggested by Shmueli, Ray, Velasquez Estrada, and Shatla (2016).

4.8.1 Assessing the Structural Model for Collinearity

Prior to evaluating the structural relationships of the study, it is crucial to thoroughly investigate the collinearity in order to ensure that it does not introduce any bias in the final analysis. Collinearity concerns can be assessed by analyzing the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) values of all predictor variables in the structural model. A VIF score below 5 indicates that collinearity is not a significant concern in the model (Hair et al., 2017). Optimally, VIF levels should be in the vicinity of 3 or below. If the model is experiencing collinearity concerns, the optimal course of action is to construct higher-order models that are substantiated by the theory.

The study includes an independent variable that was constructed using a first-order model, and no difficulties of collinearity were observed.

4.8.1.1 Assessment of relevance of the significance of the structural model's relationships

When assessing the structural model of the present study, it mainly focuses on path analysis of the model in identifying relationship or the impact of each and every variable for other variables. The identified values of each path have been given as follows.

Table 19: Assessing Structural Model of the Present Study – Values of the Path Analysis

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	2.5%	97.5%	P values
CPr -> LA	0.037	0.040	0.137	0.271	0.233	0.302	0.000
DIWMLP -> TLS	0.081	0.048	0.166	0.490	0.268	0.303	0.000
EAd -> LA	0.141	0.118	0.156	0.903	0.406	0.178	0.000
Mot -> LA	0.388	0.361	0.176	1.200	0.027	0.672	0.000
TLS -> LA	0.164	0.054	0.207	0.791	0.310	0.341	0.000
WLB -> LA	0.413	0.064	0.177	0.640	0.346	0.296	0.000

Within the process of assessing the structural model, it is a must to assess the significance of the structural model relationships. Here according to the analysis done, the construct WLB (Work life balance, 0.413) has the strongest positive effect on LA (Leadership Accession), Bootstrapping results ensures that the effect of TLS (Top Leadership support) significant in the relationship of factors influencing women in managerial leadership positions towards leadership accession.

4.8.1.2 Assess the level of R^2

R^2 measures the variance which is explained in each of the endogenous constructs. It ultimately reflects as the model's explanatory power (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2018). Also, it is known as an in-sample predictive power (Rigdon, 2012). R^2 value normally ranges from 0 to 1 and if it bears a higher value that may indicates a strong explanatory power. Other than that, the value can be noted as substantial, moderate and also weak (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009; Hair et al., 2011).

	R-square	R-square adjusted
CPr	0.398	0.395
EAd	0.762	0.761
LA	0.123	0.102
Mot	0.942	0.941
TLS	0.006	0.002
WLB	0.154	0.150

4.8.1.3 Assess the F^2 Value

Assessing the F^2 effect size provides a proper understanding for the researcher in case of removal of a certain predictor construct and how it affects the dependent construct R^2 value (Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, & Ringle, 2018).

Table 21: Assessing F2 Values

	CPr	DIWMLP	EAd	LA	Mot	TLS	WLB
CPr				0.191		0.011	
EAd				0.312			
LA							0.584
Mot				0.035			
TLS				0.030			
WLB				0.611			

According to Cohen (1988), the rule of thumb of reporting F^2 effect is, if the values get higher than 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 depict small, medium and large F^2 effect sizes. So according to the values stated Leadership Accession bears the lowest F^2 and TLS has a small effect and CPr has a higher effect on brand avoidance other than that WLB has a higher effect on Leadership accession as the F^2 value is above the 0.02.

4.8.1.4 Assessment of the Predictive Value Q^2

The Q^2, the model's prediction accuracy is evaluated as follows (Hair et al., 2017). The Q^2 value is calculated by removing individual data points from the matrix, imputing the removed elements, and estimating the model parameters. The model's ability to accurately anticipate the accuracy and relevance of data is determined by the Q^2 criteria, with smaller variances between predicted and original values indicating more accuracy and relevancy. If the Q^2 score for a certain endogenous construct is greater than zero, it indicates that the predictive accuracy of the route model is

appropriate for that construct.

Table 22; Predictive Value Q2

	Q²predict	RMSE	MAE
CPr	0.356	0.787	0.618
EAd	0.751	0.497	0.394
LA	0.041	0.981	0.815
Mot	0.938	0.252	0.202
TLS	0.022	0.988	0.809
WLB	0.039	0.942	0.762

According to above table the construct cross validated redundancy which generated through Blindfolding procedure are positive and higher than 0. So it ultimately expresses a moderate predictive accuracy from each of the constructs.

4.8.1.5 Model Fit summary of PLS-SEM

CB-SEM places a significant emphasis on model fit, unlike PLS-SEM, as stated by Hair et al. (2019). Consequently, numerous researchers have erroneously concluded that PLS-SEM is not valuable for testing and confirming theories. The rationale is that the explanatory power of the model fit in CB-SEM cannot be directly compared to that of PLS-SEM when establishing targets for evaluating model parameters. It is important for researchers to be aware and implement these strategies for PLS-SEM (Henseler & Sarstedt, 2013; Hair et al., 2019). Since there is no specific guideline for determining model fit, any approach mentioned in the literature is regarded to be highly preliminary. Since the procedure for deriving PLS-SEM solutions does not involve minimizing the difference between observed and estimated covariance matrices, Chi-Square based model fit metrics used in CB-SEM cannot be applied. It is important to use considerable caution when using bootstrap-based model fit measurements, as stated by Henseler et al. (2015). Several tests, such as SRMR and exact fit test, can be discovered to configure the model fit of PLS-SEM. However, it is necessary to examine the model fit of the PLS-SEM before evaluating the inner and outer model of the study. The summary table of the model fit analysis is presented below.

Table 23: Model Fit Summary

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model	Reference Value
SRMR	0.101	0.129	0.10-0.08
d_ULS	3.041	5.023	

d_G	1.069	1.132	
Chi-Square	1874.512	1950.337	
NFI	0.629	0.614	

According to the above table the SRMR value which measures the model fit of PLS-SEM, Estimated Model is so close to 0.1. So that both models Saturated and Expected are meeting the required criterion and ensure the good fit (Hair et al., 2017). Having successfully assessing the inner/ measurement model and the outer/ structural model, it proves that all the values are within the acceptable range so can further continued towards testing hypothesis.

4.9 Hypothesis Testing

In the present study, based on the above analyzed conceptual model and measured variables, seven hypotheses were developed here examining the direct and indirect relationships.

H1: Work life balance positively impacts on leadership accession.

H2: Intrinsic Motivation positively impacts on leadership accession.

H3: Career progression positively impacts on leadership accession.

H4: Economic advancement positively impacts on leadership accession.

H5: Dynamics influencing women leadership in managerial positions positively impacts on gaining top level leadership support in the organization.

H6: Top level leadership support positively impacts on leadership accession.

H7: Top level leadership support positively mediated the relationship between the dynamics influencing women leadership in managerial positions and leadership accession.

4.9.1 Bootstrapping Direct Effect Results

The Smart PLS-SEM structural model results are being generalized using the Bootstrapping procedure provided by the software. Bootstrapping does not make the assumption that data follows a normal distribution. Parametric measurements cannot be used to test coefficients such as outer loadings, outer weights, and path coefficients. Bootstrapping is used as a nonparametric measure to analyze the relevance of PLS-SEM results in analyzing a model (Davison & Hinkley, 1997). The table below displays the conclusive outcomes of the direct impact produced by bootstrapping PLS-SEM.

Table 24: Bootstrapping Direct Effect

Hypo.	Path	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Decision	2.5%	97.5%
H3	CPr -> LA	0.037	0.137	2.271	0.000	Supported	0.233	0.302
H5	DIWMLP -> TLS	0.081	0.166	1.490	0.000	Supported	0.268	0.303
H4	EAd -> LA	0.141	0.156	0.903	0.000	Supported	0.106	0.178
H2	Mot -> LA	0.388	0.176	1.200	0.000	Supported	0.027	0.672
H6	TLS -> LA	0.164	0.207	2.791	0.000	Supported	0.310	0.341
H1	WLB -> LA	0.113	0.177	2.640	0.000	Supported	0.346	0.296

According to the analyzed data, all the hypotheses including H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6 and H7 get significant. H1 indicates the direct positive relationship of Work life balance and Leadership Accession which has been previously stated by (Taylor, 2001; Felstead et al., 2002). So, the hypothesis gets accepted with a better strength of 2.640 in between two variables. H2 examined the positive relationship between Motivation and Leadership Accession. As per the previous researchers stated that Motivation may have positive effects on Leadership accession, the hypothesis has been accepted through the structural model with a significant value of 1.200 T statistics. The 3rd hypothesis focused on the positive relationship which stated in between Career Progress and Leadership accession. It stated that when it provides opportunities for career progression, it may positively impact on Leadership accession. The fourth hypothesis also accepted with a relevant significant value. As per the elaborated content in chapter 3, economic advancement / upliftment and good pay would drive women towards achieving success. Hypothesis 5th, which directly adhering to the mediating effect direct relationship which is from dynamics influencing females in managerial leadership positions towards gaining top management support. It is evident that these two have a positive relationship with this acceptance. The 6th hypothesis explains the direct and positive relationship had with top leadership support and leadership accession. In previous research studies, it has been clearly stated that, if an individual is passionate about what they are doing, especially in working environment, the top management support will be given for the employees to reach the next levels along the career. Therefore, it has been clearly proved here with the remarks of the analysis.

4.9.2 Bootstrapping Indirect Effect results

This study contains a mediator effect which is known to be Top level leadership support. The results through bootstrapping the specific indirect effects are as follows.

Table 25: Bootstrapping Indirect Effect

Hypo.	Path	Original sample (O)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Decision	2.5%	97.5%
H7	DIWMLP -> TLS -> LA	0.013	0.028	1.482	0.001	Supported	0.045	0.065

According to the above results the 7th hypothesis has been accepted ensuring that the dynamics influencing women in managerial leadership positions on leadership accession is being mediated by the top-level leadership support.
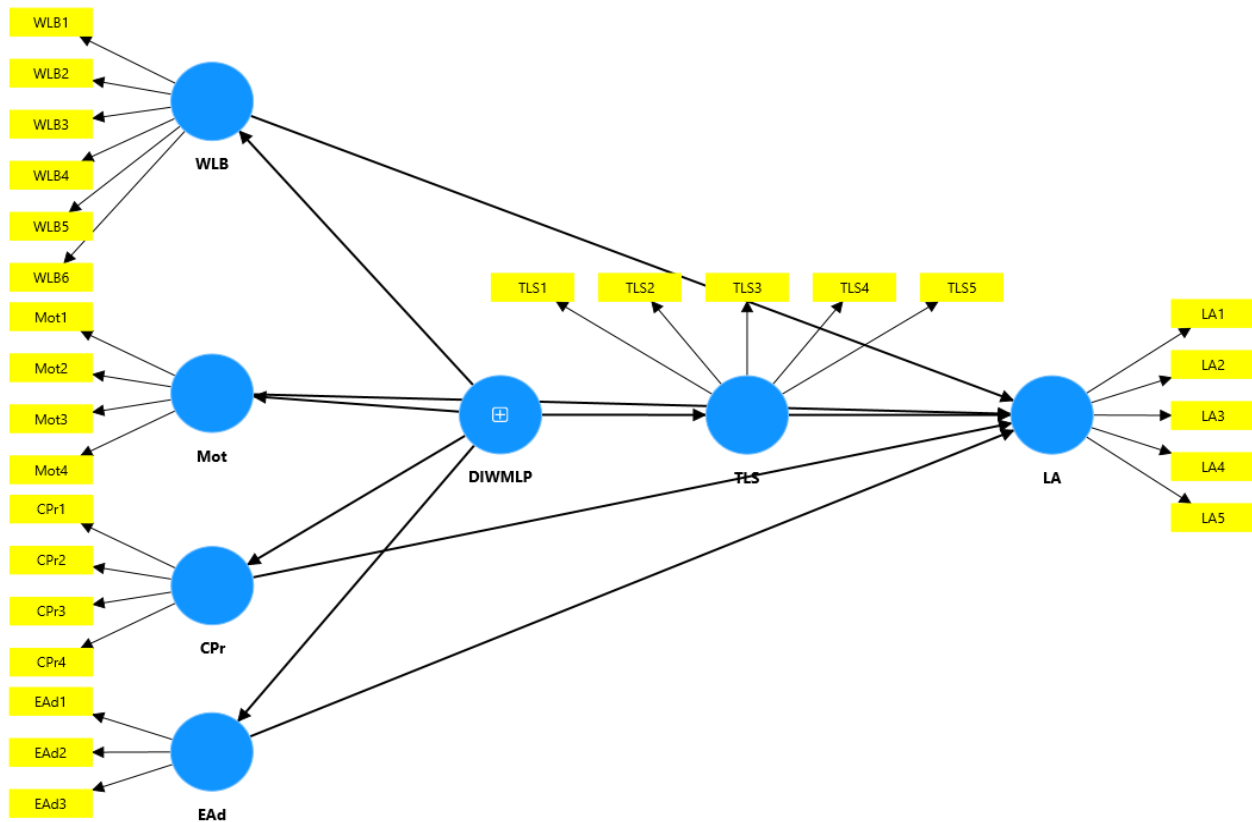

Figure 12: Hypothesis Testing

4.10 Hypothesis Testing summary

The author has formulated seven hypotheses for the current investigation to illustrate the linkages identified in the created conceptual framework. The hypotheses were formulated to fulfill the research objectives and solve the primary research topic that prompted the current investigation. The researcher utilized the Partial Least Squares, Structural Equation Modeling approach to evaluate the formulated hypothesis. This section provides a summary of the hypothesis testing based on the non-parametric data analysis conducted before.

Table 26: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Status	Justification
H1	WLB -> LA	Accepted	β =0.113 P=0.000 Bootstrapping CI LL- 0.346 Bootstrapping CI UL- 0.296
H2	Mot -> LA	Accepted	β =0.388 P=0.000 Bootstrapping CI LL- 0.027 Bootstrapping CI UL- 0.672
H3	Cpr -> LA	Accepted	β =0.037 P=0.000 Bootstrapping CI LL- 0.233 Bootstrapping CI UL- 0.302
H4	EAd -> LA	Accepted	β =0.141 P=0.000 Bootstrapping CI LL- 0.106 Bootstrapping CI UL- 0.178
H5	DIWMLP-> TLS	Accepted	β =0.0.081 P=0.000 Bootstrapping CI LL- 0.268 Bootstrapping CI UL- 0.303
H6	TLS -> LA	Accepted	β =0.164 P=0.000 Bootstrapping CI LL- 0.310 Bootstrapping CI UL- 0.341
H7	DIWMLP -> TLS -> LA	Accepted	β =0.013 P=0.001 Bootstrapping CI LL- 0.045 Bootstrapping CI UL- 0.065

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

With reference to related research in the ongoing literature, this chapter illustrates how the main findings of the current study contribute to practice. This study's first section critically assesses the study's main findings and discusses how far they have filled in the gaps in the literature related to the chosen environment. This chapter's second portion provides an illustration of the study's overall conclusion with regard to the current research aims. The third half of this chapter discusses recommendations for enhancing women in managerial leadership positions, and the fourth section of this chapter addresses topics that warrant additional investigation on this phenomenon.

5.2 Key Findings and Discussion

The current study basically referring to identify the dynamics which influence women in managerial leadership positions in manufacturing organizations. The following were explored based on the proposed conceptual model laying the facts via the literature review.

The first hypothesis tested for this assignment lines up the relationship between work life balance and leadership accession. As per the findings of the data analysis carried out in the pervious chapter, it has proved that Work life balance positively impacts on leadership accession in the selected context. This has been already proved in different contexts referring to the literature review, which explained the role of women in daily life and workplace adhering to the challenges encountered during the time. Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey (2006) argue that it is essential for women's leadership in the industry to prioritize maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Research regularly shows that providing help to women in maintaining a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives enhances their likelihood of progressing into leadership positions. Enabling adaptable work arrangements, such as providing opportunities for remote work, flexible scheduling, and family-oriented policies, not only enhances the ability to recruit a greater number of women to the labor market but also empowers them to seek leadership roles without compromising their personal lives. These programs have a dual impact: they not only enhance the well-being of individual women, but also foster a workplace culture that is characterized by diversity and inclusivity. This, in turn, brings significant advantages to the business as a whole. Considering the previous studies done exploring the women leadership and work life balance,

Lazar et al. (2010) emphasizes the need of considering managerial and organizational support when establishing and executing work-life balance strategies in a company. These practices are frequently linked to higher levels of job satisfaction and offer employees, especially women in executive leadership roles, more autonomy over their work schedules. The study revealed a number of advantageous outcomes resulting from the implementation of work-life balance methods, such as heightened employee productivity, dedication, and allegiance (Bharadwaj & Shanker, 2019; Vasumathi, 2018). By the way, work-life balance strategies are particularly vital for women in managerial leadership roles. By providing management and organizational assistance, these women can effectively handle their work and personal commitments, resulting in increased job satisfaction and enhanced overall well-being (Agarwal & Lenka, 2015). When women have support in managing the demands of their professional and personal life, they are more inclined to exhibit higher levels of productivity, dedication, and loyalty as employees. Hence, firms that give priority to work-life balance programs not only reap benefits for their people but also boost their organizational productivity and performance (Sundaresan & Lakshmi, 2014). As we know that women have been a prominent presence in the workplace, the struggles around the woman's work-life balance still drive most women to opt out of career opportunities. Women now make up to more than half of the populations in Sri Lanka, yet they are not advancing into the highest positions at the same rate as the male counterparts. However, findings from this study indicates that women are more likely to be successful at work if their career is made to be more meaningful. Companies adopting work-life balance strategies will definitely standout from the rest and become more meaningful organizations. For a question that was asked from a Comedian Tina Fey (2011), who is a working mom. "How do you juggle it all?", she chooses to reply to it by saying, "I have the same struggles as any other working parent" highlighting that it is work-life balance is not only a woman issue, it is also a men issue as well, but rarely asked about it from a man. Successful women who have gone through this dilemma feels humiliated as such questions are not asked from their male counterparts. Therefore, while organizations adopting to the policies, and flexibility to support women succeeding to the leadership positions, it is also important that the organizational culture is defined and all employees at all levels are embracing the policies.

Next in line the second hypothesis tested and accepted with a significant value of 0.000. It was mainly grounded upon the relationship between motivation and leadership accession. Motivation is a crucial factor in influencing women's leadership in the field. In the advancement of women into leadership positions, intrinsic motivation emerges as a prominent and influential feature. Intrinsic drive frequently encompasses a powerful aspiration to create a significant influence, pursue personal and professional development, and contribute to constructive transformation (Cox & Salsberry, 2012). Women who possess this intrinsic motivation are more likely to actively pursue and excel in leadership roles. Aside from internal motivation, extrinsic factors such as mentorship, conducive work environments, and chances for skill enhancement and career progression are crucial in inspiring women to seek leadership roles. Organizations that place a high value on creating a workplace culture that is supportive and inclusive, guaranteeing equal chances for career advancement, and offering mentorship and networking opportunities, are more likely to motivate and enable women to pursue and excel in leadership positions within their companies (Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey, 2006). Hence, it is imperative for businesses to not only acknowledge and endorse women's inherent drive for leadership but also establish a conducive atmosphere that fosters and promotes their professional advancement and progress. By implementing this approach, firms can successfully incentivize and enable women to take up leadership roles and flourish within their enterprises. Motivation will play a pivotal role in influencing women to pursue and thrive in leadership roles within the manufacturing organizations. Various factors contribute to women's motivation such as, rewards, supportive work environment, clear career pathways, family support. Women are often motivated by the desire for personal growth, autonomy, and professional impact. When they feel their work aligns with their values or offers them more opportunities, they are more likely to motivate to pursue leadership roles. Leadership positions allow women to challenge gender norms, stereo types, and prove their abilities. Which can create personal satisfaction and drive. A supportive workplace culture, that promote gender diversity and welcome women and provides work-life balance options such as flexible work schedules or childcare support motivates women to leadership accession. Such companies creates a sense of belonging and purpose for women, which strengthens women's motivation to take on leadership roles.

The third hypothesis which draws the relationship between the career progression and leadership accession. According to previous research organizations that place a high value on having a balanced representation of genders in their leadership positions and actively employ tactics to facilitate the advancement of women's careers are more inclined to both attract and retain highly skilled female professionals (Taylor et al., 2016). Women can enhance their professional progression through mentorship programs, leadership training initiatives, and sponsorship possibilities, which offer them the necessary support and advice (Scheepers, Douman & Moodley, 2018). Career advancement opportunities are essential for promoting leadership growth inside businesses. Employees are more motivated to pursue leadership positions when they have a clear understanding of the opportunities for professional advancement and development inside their businesses. The motivation is driven by the aspiration for career advancement, heightened accountability, and the chance to have a more significant influence inside the company. Cox and Salsberry (2012) found that job advancement prospects greatly inspire persons who aspire to leadership positions. According to the survey, employees who believe they have clear chances for progress inside their firms are more inclined to actively pursue leadership roles. In addition, Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey (2006) stress the significance of offering equitable chances for professional advancement to inspire individuals to seek leadership positions. Organizations that place a high priority on cultivating a workplace culture that is both supportive and inclusive, while also offering mentorship, training, and networking opportunities, are more effective in inspiring and enabling people to strive for and achieve leadership roles. Hence, it is clear that the availability of career advancement prospects plays a crucial role in the promotion of individuals to leadership positions inside firms. Organizations may effectively motivate and empower individuals to pursue leadership roles and contribute to the success of the firm by offering clear pathways for growth and investing in employee development. Career Progression plays a crucial role in motivating and enabling women to ascend into leadership positions by providing a clear path for growth, recognition of potential, and the development of essential skills. Skill development with rotational job assignments, promotions and cross functional roles allow women to build the confidence working in any area of the company, build the competencies required for leadership, such as problem solving, decisions making in different contexts, strategic thinking. Progressive career paths will help women to take on senior roles. Companies that provide access to training and development programs and equip women with both technical and leadership skills, ensuring that

they meet the criteria for leadership positions in manufacturing and other male-dominated industries. Companies that adopt clear and transparent promotion pathways, and practically follows same in the case of both women and men, always attract the women to leadership accession. Companies that offer well-defined career trajectories signal fairness and motivate women to pursue higher roles by showing that advancement is attainable. Similarly, recognizing women's contributions with early promotions helps to foster ambition which leads strengthen and validates their efforts and encourages them to pursue leadership opportunities. Along with career path, companies that adopts Mentorship Programs that support women throughout their career progression help them navigate challenges such as gender biases, double binds, imposter syndrome as mentors often provide advice how to prepare for leadership roles, making it easier for women to build their confidence. Career Progression directly influences women's readiness and motivation for leadership by strengthening their skills, recognizing their contributons, and providing essential support systems. Organizations that create transparent career paths, more likely to see women ascend into leadership positions.

Considering the fourth hypothesis addressed to the economic advancement and its impact towards the leadership accession ensured that economic advancement in terms of good salary and sufficient facilities along with the leadership accession. The progress in the economy plays a crucial role in shaping the presence of women in management leadership roles in enterprises. As women advance into positions of leadership, they frequently enjoy economic advantages such as higher salaries, bonuses, and additional financial rewards. Studies suggest that economic incentives are highly effective in motivating women to overcome obstacles and pursue positions of leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2007). Furthermore, women are more inclined to seek leadership positions when they believe that these roles provide substantial economic advantages, indicating that economic progress plays a crucial role in influencing women's professional goals (Lazar et al., 2010). Economic progress not only enhances the well-being of individual women, but also plays a significant role in promoting the general economic empowerment of women in society. Through shattering the glass ceiling and attaining positions of leadership, women have the ability to act as exemplars and champions for gender equality within the professional sphere. Hence, firms that place a high value on offering equal possibilities for economic progress and guaranteeing fair compensation can effectively inspire and enable women to actively pursue and excel in leadership positions, resulting in mutual benefits for both the individuals and the organizations they are

associated with. Multiple studies have consistently found that companies with a greater proportion of women in positions of power tend to exhibit better financial results (Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017; Scheepers, Douman, & Moodley, 2018). Thus, guaranteeing equal opportunities for women to hold leadership roles not only promotes gender equality but also leads to improved business outcomes. The prospect of higher pay and improved financial stability acts as a major incentive for women to strive for leadership roles. This desire drives women to acquire the necessary experience and qualifications to succeed in their professional pursuits, ultimately benefiting both themselves and the businesses they work for. Organizations can enhance workplace inclusivity and productivity, as well as achieve superior financial performance, by actively supporting gender diversity in leadership roles and ensuring equal chances for economic success. Economic Advancement significantly influences women's accession into leadership roles by providing both the incentives and the resources to pursue higher positions, especially in industries like manufacturing. Financial independence is a key to a woman with children as it creates a competitive advantage to support the family for a better future. Higher salaries and benefits linked to leadership roles incentivize women to pursue these positions as a means to improve their personal and family economic well-being. Economic advance reduces reliance on traditional structures, allowing women to focus more on career growth and leadership development. Women in leadership positions also experience greater job security and bargaining power motivating them to advance into these roles. Companies that adopt equal pay for managers without been bias are able to balance a diverse workforce. When manufacturing organizations close wage gaps and offer equal pay for leadership positions, they encourage women to aim for executive roles. Companies that align compensation with performance rather than gender demonstrate fairness, fostering women's motivation to pursue leadership pathways. Similarly, further economic advances such as performance bonuses and stock options associated with leadership positions make these roles more attractive to women and encourage them to invest in their career development. Economic advancement allows women to afford higher education, professional certifications, and training programs, which are often prerequisites for leadership roles. This is especially critical in industries like manufacturing, where technical skills are values. Companies that offer leadership programs for women further motivating women by reducing financial burden associates with skill building. As the findings of this study reveals that the economic advancement is a major dynamic influencing successful women in leadership positions in manufacturing organizations in Sri Lanka,

it is found that the companies that invest in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives allocate economic resources to support women trough mentorship, sponsorship, and leadership programs. These initiatives promote workplace equality and create environments where women feel empowered to pursue leadership positions. Successful women in leadership positions in manufacturing organizations reveal that their organizations prioritize women's leadership development and offer flexible policies which are helping them to succeed in their leadership roles. Economic Advancement influences women's leadership aspirations by offering greater financial incentives, reducing barriers to skill development, and fostering equitable work environments. Companies that align their compensation structures with gender equality and invest in leadership development for women are more likely to see increased female representation at the top level, and this helps increasing more women taking leadership positions in the senior roles in manufacturing organizations.

When evaluating the mediating effect of top-level leadership as an enricher of women in reaching to managerial leadership positions also accepted and proved with a significant value of 0.001. Top-level leadership support plays a crucial role in mediating the relationship between the dynamics influencing women's leadership in managerial positions and their accession to leadership roles within organizations. Research conducted by Bartunek, Walsh, & Lacey (2006) emphasizes the importance of managerial and organizational support in fostering women's leadership development. The study suggests that supportive leadership and organizational practices positively influence women's access to leadership positions within organizations. Similarly, Lazar et al. (2010) highlights the significance of organizational support in shaping women's leadership aspirations. They argue that organizations that provide support for women's career development and advancement are more likely to see an increase in the number of women occupying leadership positions. Top-level leadership support serves as a mediator in this relationship by creating an environment that encourages and empowers women to pursue leadership roles. When top-level leadership is supportive of gender diversity and provides equal opportunities for women to advance in their careers, women are more likely to aspire to leadership positions and succeed in obtaining them. Supportive leadership can take various forms, including mentorship programs, leadership training, flexible work arrangements, and the implementation of policies that promote gender equality and diversity in the workplace. Therefore, top-level leadership support positively mediates the relationship between the dynamics influencing women's

leadership in managerial positions and their accession to leadership roles within organizations. By fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace culture, organizations can create an environment where women are empowered to pursue and succeed in leadership positions, ultimately benefiting both the individuals and the organizations they serve. Top level leadership support and sponsorship are pivotal in advancing women into leadership roles within manufacturing companies in Sri Lanka. Such support manifests through various actions like mentoring, championing diversity initiatives, and providing visible growth opportunities. Creating inclusive policies and opportunities, organizations that actively promote inclusive cultures like Maersk Lanka, which has diversified leadership, demonstrates that such efforts foster talent from the entire workforce, benefiting the company's overall performance. Developing women friendly policies, such as mentorship programs ensures women can break through cultural barriers and personal constraints that traditionally hinder their career progression. High level leaders serve as sponsors by advocating for female employees, giving them exposure to challenging projects, and helping them build their professional networks. This approach accelerates career progression, especially in sectors like manufacturing, where women's presence has traditionally been limited. Leadership support can also help change stereotypes and gender biases embedded in male-dominated industries. This change is crucial in a context like Sri Lanka, where balancing family responsibilities with professional growth often limits women's career advancement. Top management's commitment to diversity encourages organizations to redefine workplace expectations and reduce such barriers. Ultimately, companies that demonstrate top-level commitment to diversity are more likely to attract and retain talented female professionals. This, in turn, strengthens leadership pipeline and aligns with broader economic and social goals of reducing gender disparity in Sri Lanka's workforce in the manufacturing organizations.

5.3 Competency Development Model

According to Gary Yukl (2006), leadership is the act of exerting influence on others to ensure that they comprehend and concur on the tasks that need to be accomplished and the methods by which they should be carried out. It also involves supporting the combined efforts of individuals and groups to achieve common goals. Comprehensive research validates the strategic significance of augmenting the representation of women in executive positions within corporations. Research regularly demonstrates that having a diverse range of genders in leadership roles has a good effect on the performance and financial results of organizations (Catalyst, 2019; McKinsey & Company,

2020). Organizations that have a greater representation of women in leadership positions typically exhibit elevated levels of innovation, more effective decision-making procedures, and enhanced financial success. Furthermore, leadership teams that include individuals of different genders possess superior abilities to comprehend and address the requirements of varied client demographics, resulting in heightened market dominance and customer contentment. Hence, augmenting the representation of women in executive positions is not solely a matter of fairness and societal obligation, but also a crucial necessity for companies aiming to optimize their performance and competitiveness in the contemporary global economic landscape.

Therefore, based on the research findings of this particular study, a competency development model could be addressed specifically adhering the challenges faced by women in the general working place context. Highlighting the effect of gender disparity, cultural norms, stress and frustration, stereotypes (Bailyn, 2003; Kjeldal, Rindfleish, & Sheridan, 2005; Eagly & Sczesny, 2009; Simpson, 1997) means as the challengers / barriers for what women get backward rather going forward along with the leadership positions of the workplace itself. Addressing all these barriers the researcher has developed this competence development model catering the dynamic identified for influencing women in managerial leadership positions. Here the researcher herself understood the importance of work life balance, motivation, career progression and economic advancement plays a vital role in mitigating the barriers and enhancing the career with leading managerial positions. The developed model is as follows:
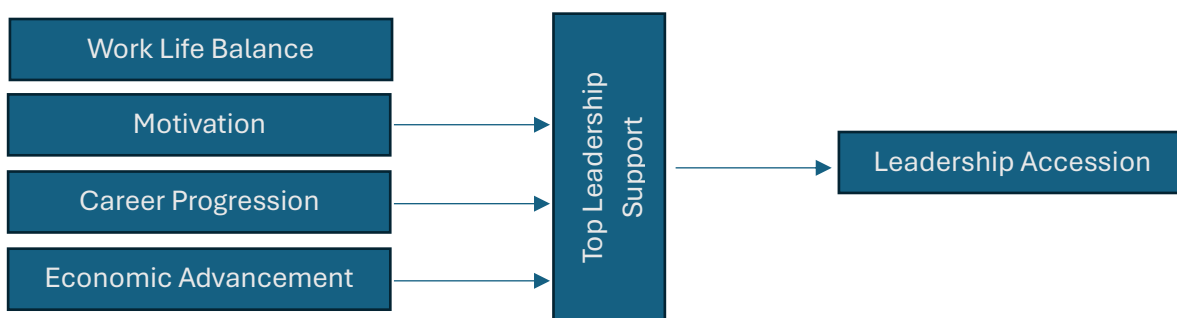
Source: Author Developed

Figure 13: Competency Development Model

The model recognizes the need to attain a harmonic equilibrium between work and personal life. It highlights the necessity of a work environment that is supportive and allows for personal duties.

Furthermore, the model emphasizes the significance of internal drive, external assistance systems like mentorship, and well-defined routes for professional progress. The concept places great importance on economic empowerment, aiming to provide equitable possibilities for professional advancement and ensuring that women in leadership roles are financially incentivized. The competency development approach seeks to empower women by taking into account these characteristics. Its goal is to help them overcome challenges, attain career success, and excel in managerial leadership positions, thereby fostering a more inclusive and diverse workplace culture. To be more specific in each area of the Competency Development Model, together, these factors create an environment that not only supports women's leadership aspirations but also enhances overall organizational performance.

Work-Life Balance: Achieving a healthy balance allows women to manage personal and professional responsibilities effectively. Flexible work arrangements can reduce stress and improve job satisfaction, enabling women to pursue leadership opportunities without sacrificing personal commitments.

Motivation: A supportive environment that recognizes and rewards achievements fosters motivation. When women feel valued and empowered, they are more likely to take initiative, seek leadership roles, and drive positive change within their organizations.

Career Progression: Clear pathways for career advancement are essential. Access to mentorship, training, and networking opportunities can help women develop the skills and confidence needed for leadership positions. Organizations that actively promote diversity in leadership create an inclusive culture that encourages women to aim higher.

Economic Advancement: Economic advancement plays a vital role in helping women access leadership positions in several way. With financial independence a woman achieve economic stability, they gain confidence and freedom to pursue leadership roles without the constraints of financial insecurity. This independence allows them to take risks, seek promotions, and advocate for themselves.

Top leadership support and sponsorship: are crucial for helping women achieve leadership positions in several key ways: When senior leaders actively support women, it

increases their visibility within the organization. This recognition can lead to more opportunities for advancement and influence, as leaders are more likely to consider them for high-profile projects and leadership roles. Sponsorship often comes with mentorship, where experienced leaders provide guidance, share knowledge, and help navigate organizational challenges. This support can enhance women's skills and confidence, making them more prepared for leadership responsibilities.

5.4 Conclusion and Managerial Implications

This study examined the factors that affect women in managerial leadership roles in manufacturing businesses. The study investigated the connections between work-life balance, motivation, career development, economic progress, and leadership promotion by analyzing the proposed conceptual model and conducting an extensive analysis of existing literature. The results of this study validate that achieving a balance between work and personal life has a good effect on the advancement of leadership positions. Organizations that place a high value on promoting a harmonious equilibrium between work and personal life for women are more certain to witness a rise in the proportion of women in leadership roles. Implementing strategies such as offering flexible work arrangements, remote work choices, and family-friendly policies not only improve the overall well-being of individual women but also cultivate a workplace culture that embraces diversity and inclusivity, ultimately leading to advantages for the entire firm. Furthermore, the study revealed that motivation plays a vital role in shaping women's leadership. Internal drive, along with external resources like guidance from mentors and chances for professional growth, greatly influences women to pursue and thrive in positions of leadership. Organizations that cultivate a nurturing and all-encompassing workplace environment, provide equitable chances for professional growth, and facilitate guidance and networking opportunities are more effective in inspiring and empowering women to strive for leadership roles.

Along the way, the study uncovered that the presence of career advancement prospects is crucial for fostering the development of leadership skills within businesses. Employees exhibit more motivation to assume leadership roles when they are provided with well-defined avenues for professional growth and advancement. Organizations that place a high value on fostering a friendly and inclusive workplace culture, along with providing mentorship, training, and networking opportunities, are more successful in motivating and empowering individuals to pursue and attain

leadership positions. Moreover, economic progress is essential in determining the representation of women in positions of managerial leadership. Women are more likely to pursue leadership positions when they see these roles as offering significant financial advantages. Hence, organizations that provide equitable possibilities for economic advancement and guarantee just remuneration can successfully motivate and empower women to actively seek and achieve in leadership roles, leading to reciprocal advantages for both the individuals and the organizations they are affiliated with. Ultimately, this study has verified that strong support from top-level leaders plays a crucial role in facilitating the connection between the various factors that influence women's leadership and their ability to attain leadership positions inside businesses. Supportive leadership fosters an atmosphere that motivates and enables women to actively seek and assume leadership positions. Organizations that cultivate a nurturing and all-encompassing workplace environment, offer equitable prospects for professional growth, and enforce measures that advocate for gender parity and variety in the workplace are more effective in inspiring and empowering women to attain managerial leadership roles.

The results of this study have significant ramifications for management application:

- Organizations should give priority to establishing work-life balance efforts to support women in managerial leadership positions. Implementing strategies such as flexible work arrangements, remote work choices, and family-friendly policies can improve the well-being of female employees and promote a more inclusive workplace culture.

- Organizations should offer both internal motivation and external support systems, such as mentorship, career advancement prospects, and networking opportunities, to encourage and empower women to actively pursue and succeed in leadership positions.

- Career advancement opportunities: Organizations should provide well-defined routes for professional growth and improvement to inspire individuals to strive for leadership roles. Offering mentorship, training, and networking opportunities can facilitate the acquisition of essential skills and experience required for success in leadership positions.

- Economic Progress: Organizations must guarantee equitable chances for women to advance economically and receive fair compensation, so motivating and empowering them to pursue and achieve in leadership roles. Organizations can attract and retain competent

women in leadership roles by providing competitive salaries and supplementary financial incentives.

- Organizations should cultivate a workplace culture that is supportive and inclusive, ensuring equitable chances for professional progression, and enforcing rules that encourage gender equality and diversity in the workplace, with the backing of top-level leadership. The presence of strong leadership at the highest level is essential in managing the connection between the factors that affect women's leadership and their ability to advance into leadership positions within companies.

By employing these techniques, organizations can establish a conducive climate that empowers women to actively pursue and excel in leadership roles, hence yielding mutual benefits for both the individuals and the organizations they are associated with.

5.5 Recommendations and Areas for future research

Recommendations

According to the results of this study, organizations that want to have more women in managerial leadership roles should focus on implementing work-life balance programs, providing motivation and support systems, offering clear opportunities for career advancement, ensuring economic progress, and promoting support from top-level leaders. Implementing work-life balance measures, such as offering flexible work arrangements and family-friendly policies, can improve the overall well-being of female employees and promote a more inclusive workplace culture. By offering both internal motivation and external support systems, such as mentorship and career advancement prospects, women can be encouraged and empowered to actively seek and thrive in leadership positions. Establishing unobstructed routes for professional growth and improvement, together with equitable chances for financial advancement and just remuneration, are crucial in inspiring and empowering women to actively seek and thrive in leadership roles. Moreover, it is essential to cultivate a workplace culture that is both supportive and inclusive, ensuring that all employees have equal opportunity for professional progression. Furthermore, it is imperative to establish policies that actively encourage gender equality and diversity. Future research should prioritize longitudinal and cross-cultural studies, qualitative investigations, and examining the effects of organizational policies. These efforts will deepen this comprehension of the factors that

influence women in managerial leadership roles. Additionally, they will provide valuable insights for developing effective strategies and initiatives to promote women's leadership advancement within organizations.

Below is a reflective overview of the findings to broader societal and organizational goals. Author identified that this will help to understand the relevance and urgency of the need of the hour to strengthen the policies, procedures and practices to help women to advance to pursue the career growth, to take meaningful actions to achieve gender equality in manufacturing organizations in Sri Lanka.

Influencing factors for women accession to leadership role in manufacturing organizations	Findings as opportunities to create the enabling environment.
Work-Life Balance	Implement gender inclusive and women friendly policies and procedures and create an enabling environment for women to thrive into leadership accession. Every woman to feel the work environment is equal, no difference between gender, it is open for development and performance. Below are areas found from the study which can be implemented to create the enabling environment. ▪ Flexible and Remote Working where possible, these options make leadership positions more attractive and appealing for women. ▪ Shift or Roster working, where it is possible to accommodate in manufacturing organizations. ▪ Enabling career continuity through family-friendly policies such as access to Maternity Leave, Breast Feeding times, Childcare Support, Caregiver Leave, Parental Leave. ▪ Culture alignment and Gender Sensitization - Create supportive culture to retain women in managerial positions, normalize the importance of work-life balance, this will reduce stigma associated with balancing work and personal life, motivating women to step into leadership roles without fear of being judged or sidelined.
Motivation	▪ Highlight successful women as Role Models. Showcase successful women in manufacturing organizations, to inspire and encourage more women to pursue leadership roles. ▪ Visible Compensation, Job Security, and Promotion Opportunities serve as motivators. Manufacturing companies adopt to these practices attract more women pursue to take leadership roles.

Career Progression	- Policies enforcing and educating for Bias-free Hiring and Promotion practice / culture, creating opportunity for women to apply for leadership roles and accession to leadership within the company. - Clear Career Pathways, training and development opportunities, executive education, technical skill development play a crucial role in motivating women to pursue leadership roles. - Skill Progression through rotational assignments, cross functional roles allow women to acquire competencies required for leadership roles such as decision making, problem solving etc.
Economic Advancement	Establish Policies removing Pay Gaps and Economic Inequality. Women should be paid as equal as to their male counterparts.
Top Leadership Support and Sponsorship	- Give opportunities for women managers to develop cross functional skills and assign male mentors for shadowing. - Establish and promote Mentorship and Sponsorship programs to help women build networks and access opportunities for career advancement. Sponsors actively advocate women to develop required skills to leadership accession. - Offer leadership development programs focus on developing women's leadership skills and providing them with the tools to thrive in managerial roles. - Appreciate and Recognize women leader's contributions. - Gender Sensitization - Establish programs and projects for women to lead with male counterparts.

In today's world with volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (VUCA word), there is a clear understanding of having diverse workforce to support the operational issues at the production floors. Women's underrepresentation in the manufacturing environment is an agenda discussed in every organization. Women bring unique strengths to leadership toles in manufacturing, including collaboration, empathy, communication which are very crucial for the challenges faced in the Industry 5.0. Gender diversity in manufacturing enhances innovations and profitability, by fostering a more gender inclusive working environment. As per the findings of this study, women in manufacturing encounter significant barriers, which can hinder their career advancement. Encouraging women in manufacturing requires inclusive and enabling work environments. Empowering women in manufacturing is essential for the sector's growth in the Industry 5.0 as there is a demanding shift towards a gender equality and valuing diversity for a more sustainable industry.

As per Deloitte, "Research shows that gender diversity benefits a manufacturing firm through improved ability to innovate, higher return on equity (ROE), and increased profitability. When employees believe, their organization is committed to inclusion, they report better business performance in terms of their ability to innovate"

Areas for Future Research

This research project has its own limitations. Only successful women from manufacturing companies were interviewed and selected for this specific study. Since this research project only analyzed successful female leaders, so the strategies that surfaced might not be applicable to women in general. Future studies should explore strategies adopted by successful men in manufacturing industries to explore further to develop required skills and competencies of women to leadership accession. Such research can support enriching the Competency Development Model from this study.

There are several opportunities to broaden this study in the future. According to the findings in this study, there are a significant number of strategies that can be used for supporting women to pursue into leadership accession. Further investigation on this subject could only strengthen the pool of resources for working women. Women can benefit from the lessons from the highly effective and successful women leaders who have overcome challenges. A parallel study should be conducted with men to identify the strategies they use for work-life balance, career progression, motivation, and economic advancement and any other dynamics specific to men with a compare and contrast to the findings from this study. The study analyzes females only, from the manufacturing industries, so the strategies that surfaced might not be completely transferable across all industries. Some of the strategies can apply to both males and females, for an example parental leave. It would be interesting to see if the most frequent strategies remain the same across gender lines. This sample for this study was intentionally selected to understand the manufacturing industry related challenges. Future studies could also can take different information and compare/contrast with this study. The women in this study were educated, managerial level. These additional studies could generate rich data to equip women for the challenges of competing roles.

Conclusion

In the Industry 4.0 and Industry 5.0 era, the manufacturing sector is at a crossroads where the integration of intelligent machines and focus on people are redefining production paradigms. The new era, which is still in its infancy, promises transformations that go beyond automation and efficiency, aiming to harmonize technological advances with human and environmental values. Manufacturing organizations not only be focusing on automating and optimizing processes for cost optimization, but also about caring for employees, to make the lives of employees easier and more productive and meaningful. The beginning of this new industrial revolution is an advantage for women to thrive in manufacturing organizations.

Findings from this study is for the manufacturing industry stakeholders, such as government and institutional policy makers, organizations, women who is dreaming to pursue leadership. Below is an illustration of the findings and recommendations that could help all the women out there, not only from manufacturing industries in Sri Lanka, but also any woman who strives to take challenges, develop and grow to become leaders.

Stakeholder	Required Change or improvement
Government	- Increased Government advocacy for Gender Diversity. Establish policies promoting and supporting gender diversity. Raising awareness among the society in importance of women leadership in the workplace. - Reform educational policies and practices, promote STEM fields and equip schoolgirls to pursue studies in the STEM. - Gender Sensitization Policies – establish schools to be diverse. Boys only or girls only schools separating the two genders. One of the biggest barriers for women to strive to leadership roles in manufacturing is the culture of girls only environment that they grow up. These female students face challenges when they enter to the corporate work and start working with male counterparts. Hence, separation should be stopped and allow growing up in inclusive environment which helps as they grow and become adults. - Through government policies, mass communication systems; establish actions to change the societal attitudes. Shift from societal attitudes to more

	progressive views on gender roles, challenge stereotypes that associate leadership with masculinity
Employers / Organizations	Supportive Career Progression Policies: ■ Family-friendly policies such as Flexible Working Hours, Shift Roster Systems that could support women to balance the Work-Life activities, Maternity Leave, Parental Leave, Caregiver Leave. ■ Establish Diversity Equity and Inclusion policies: foster a culture that helps women to feel welcomed, supported that will be a motivating factor to pursue leadership roles. ■ Establish gender KPIs for each department, hold leaders accountable to maintain a balanced gender ratio. ■ Skill development through progressive roles - Create unbiased rotational or cross functional roles aiming at developing women. ■ Mentorship Programs that support women throughout their career progression help them navigate challenges. Mentors often provide advice on how to prepare for leadership roles, making it easier for women to step into those positions with confidence. ■ Top level Sponsorship – sponsors actively advocate for women's promotion and inclusion in leadership conversations.
Women	Women who are dreaming to pursue careers in leadership roles; can change their own attitudes which becomes barriers for their own success. Some strategies from the findings from this study: ■ Maintain Work-Life Balance: Finding own coping strategies to balance work and personal life, can reduce stress and allow women to focus on career advancement without feeling overwhelmed. ■ Embrace a Growth Mindset: Accept challenges as opportunities for self-development this can help women develop resilience and confidence. ■ Set Clear Personal Goals: Defining specific, achievable career goals can provide direction and motivation.

	- Build Confidence: Engaging in self-affirmation, seeking feedback, and celebrating achievements can boost self-esteem. - Seek Out Mentorship: Do not wait for the organization to arrange mentorship. Do it yourself. Connecting with mentors or role models who have successfully navigated similar paths can provide guidance, support, and inspiration. - Develop Strong Networks: Building a professional network can offer valuable resources, support, and opportunities. - Be Proactive: Taking initiative in projects and expressing interest in leadership opportunities can demonstrate ambition and readiness for advancement. - Enhance Skills and Knowledge: Pursuing additional training or education in relevant areas, such as management or technical skills, can increase confidence and competence. - Challenge Stereotypes: Actively confronting and discussing gender stereotypes in the workplace can help shift perceptions and create a more inclusive environment.

In conclusion, advancing women into leadership positions is not only a matter of equity but also a strategic imperative for organizations seeking to thrive in today's competitive landscape. By prioritizing work-life balance, fostering motivation, and ensuring clear career progression paths, organizations can create an environment where women can excel. Moreover, the support and sponsorship from top leadership are essential in breaking down barriers and facilitating access to opportunities. As we continue to champion diversity and inclusion, we not only empower women but also enhance organizational effectiveness and innovation. Embracing these principles will ultimately lead to a richer, more diverse leadership that reflects the strengths and perspectives of the entire workforce. It's time to commit to this vital change, recognizing that when women succeed, we all succeed.

Appendix 1 – Survey Questionnaire

Questionnaire of the study on "An enquiry into dynamics influencing successful women in managerial leadership positions in manufacturing organizations: A competency development model to account for challenges in achieving workplace accession."

Section No 1: Demographic Information

1. Age

20-30 years	
31-40 years	
41-55 years	
Above 56 years	

2. Material Status

Single	
Married	
Other ……………………	

3. Educational Qualification

Diploma	
Higher National Diploma	
Degree	
Postgraduate	
MBA	
PhD	

4. Experience in the industry.

Less than 03 years	
03-05 years	
06-10 years	
More than 10 years	

5. Years of experience in managerial positions?

Less than 03 years	
03-05 years	
06-10 years	
More than 10 years	

6. Type of manufacturing organization

Lower scale	
Medium scale	
Large scale	

7. Position / Title within the organization.

Senior Engineer / Engineering Manager	
Supply Chain Manager	
Health and Safety manager	
Quality Assurance Manager	
Operations Manager	
Production Manager	
Plant manager.	
General Manager	
Managing Director	

Section No 2: Dynamics influencing women leadership in managerial positions.

The below mentioned statements stand for evaluating the Dynamics influencing women leadership in managerial positions. Please put your genuine response by marking "√" in each raw based on the level that you agree or disagree with the statement.

(Scale radiates from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) as 5 Point Likert Scale)

Factor 1: Work Life Balance

1. I feel that flexible work arrangements of my organization help to achieve a better work-life balance as a woman in the managerial position.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

2. I think my organization's leave policy meets the work-life balance that I need as a woman in my managerial position.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

3. I think I am able to manage work hours and overtime to maintain a healthy work-life balance as a woman in a managerial role.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

4. I believe workload distribution is managed to ensure a work-life balance for women in managerial positions in my organization.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

5. I believe that I am satisfied with work-life balance, particularly for women in managerial positions in my organization.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

6. I think the organizational initiations towards work life balance would increase my work performance within the organization.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

Factor 2: Motivation

7. I am interested in working as a woman in a managerial position in my organization.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	

Strongly Agree	

8. I am always enthusiastic about working in my organization within the given working environment.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

9. I feel that my organization recognizes and appreciates my work most of the time.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

10. I am ok with the set working conditions since it is supportive rather than disturbing the working environment.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

Factor 3: Career Progression

11. I think there are ample opportunities for career progression within the organization for women in managerial positions.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

12. I feel encouraged by the management to pursue career advancement opportunities as a woman in a managerial position.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

13. I believe that women in managerial positions are fairly rewarded with benefits and recognition for their job performance.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

14. I feel that my job performance as a woman in a managerial position is appropriately recognized and valued within the organization.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

Factor 4: Economic Advancement

15. I believe that women in managerial positions receive good pay for their work.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

16. I feel economically secure in my position as a woman in a managerial role.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

17. I believe that my quality of life has improved as a result of my economic advancement as a woman in a managerial position.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

Section 2: Leadership Accession

The below mentioned statements stand for evaluating the Leadership accession. Please put your genuine response by marking "√" in each raw based on the level that you agree or disagree with the statement.

(Scale radiates from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) as 5 Point Likert Scale)

1. I receive adequate feedback and coaching to develop my skills as a woman in a managerial position.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

2. I believe there are sufficient leadership development programs available to support my growth as a leader in the organization.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

3. I feel that the organization has effective succession planning processes in place to support the advancement of women in managerial positions.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

4. I think performance reviews are conducted fairly and accurately for women in managerial positions within the organization.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

5. I believe that the organization effectively assesses leadership competencies for women in managerial positions to support their career advancement.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

Section 03: Top Level leadership support / Sponsorship

The below mentioned statements stand for evaluating the Top-Level leadership support / Sponsorship. Please put your genuine response by marking "√" in each raw based on the level that you agree or disagree with the statement.

(Scale radiates from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) as 5 Point Likert Scale)

1. The top management of my organization provides effective mentoring opportunities for women in managerial positions.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

2. The top management of my organization offers valuable coaching support to women in managerial positions.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

3. The top management of my organization prioritizes training and development opportunities for women in managerial positions.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

4. The top management of my organization facilitates effective networking opportunities for women in managerial positions.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

5. The top management of my organization actively supports and encourages the promotion of women in managerial positions.

Strongly Disagree	
Disagree	
Neither Agree nor Disagree	
Agree	
Strongly Agree	

Thank You

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