



WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP: THE CASE OF WOMEN MANAGERS IN LEBANON

Lina Shouman

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LINA SHOUMAN

**WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP:
THE CASE OF WOMEN MANAGERS IN LEBANON**

DOCTORAL THESIS

**Directed by:
Dr. Antoni Vidal Suñé
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DEPARTAMENT DE GESTIÓ D'EMPRESSES



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ACCREDITATION OF THE THESIS SUPERVISION

I STATE that the present study, entitled "**Women and Leadership: The Case of Women Managers in Lebanon**", presented by **Lina Shouman** for the award of the degree of Doctor, has been carried out under my supervision at the Department of Business Management of this university.

Reus, February 20, 2023

Doctoral Thesis Supervisors,

Dr. Antoni Vidal Suñé

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation work to my mother, Maha Jalloul, who instilled in me the value of perseverance, and to the memory of my father, Mounir Shouman, who would have been immensely proud of this achievement.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Ahmad Itani, who has been a constant source of support and inspiration, and my children Karim, Omar and Rayan who encouraged me to pursue my dreams. To my brothers, Toufic, Houssam and Abdul-Ghani who have never failed to give me moral support, and my sisters, Rima and Dina whose good examples have taught me to work hard for the things that I aspire to achieve.

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“The connections between and among women are the most feared, the most problematic, and the most potentially transforming force on the planet.”

(Adrienne Rich, *Disloyal to Civilization: Feminism, Racism, Gynophobia*; Chrysalis, 1979).

INDEXES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Thesis Summary.....	18
INTRODUCTION.....	22
Dissertation Overview	23
Background of the Study	26
Statement of the Problem.....	33
Research Questions and Objectives.....	39
Rationale of the Study	44
Significance of the study	45
Structure of the thesis	47
CHAPTER 1: FEMALE LEADERSHIP.....	50
1.1. Introduction.....	51
1.2. Contemporary Leadership.....	52
a) Charismatic and Transformational Leadership.....	58
b) Transactional Leadership	60
c) Ideological and Pragmatic Leadership	61
d) Servant Leadership	63
e) Authentic Leadership.....	64
f) Ethical Leadership	65
g) Spiritual Leadership	66
h) Integrative Public Leadership.....	67
i) Shared/Distributed Leadership	68
j) Laissez-faire Leadership	69
1.3. Leadership Style and Gender.....	69
1.3.1. Gender Differences in Personality.....	74
1.3.2. The Queen Bee Phenomenon.....	76
1.3.3. Bias Against Female Leaders	80
1.4. Leader's Gender and Subordinates' Job Satisfaction.....	85

1.4.1. When the Boss Is a Woman.....	89
1.4.2. Women Supporting Other Women	93
CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	96
2.1. Introduction.....	97
2.2. Social Role Theory.....	98
2.2.1. Social norms, gender stereotypes and leadership	100
2.2.2. Development strategies and the way they experience gender stereotypes in the workplace	103
2.2.3. The glass ceiling phenomenon and gender bias in leadership	107
2.3. Role Congruity Theory of prejudice toward female leaders.....	110
2.3.1. Descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes	112
2.3.2. The incongruity between women gender role and leadership role	114
2.4. Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses.....	117
2.4.1. Work-Life Balance.....	118
2.4.2. Work-Life Balance for Male and Female Leaders.....	120
2.4.3. Work-Life Balance, Organization Commitment and Performance.....	122
2.5. Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates	124
2.5.1. Leadership style and gender.....	125
2.5.2. Bias against female leaders.....	128
2.5.3. Leader’s gender and subordinates’ job satisfaction.....	130
2.6. An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy.....	133
2.6.1. Female entrepreneurship.....	133
2.6.1.1.Feminist theories from entrepreneurship perspective	135
2.6.2.Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in developing countries.....	137
2.6.3.Supporting female entrepreneurs in developing countries.....	140
CHAPTER 3: BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW.....	145
3.1. Bibliometric review of female leadership.....	146
3.1.1. Selecting databases	146
3.1.2. Selecting keywords.....	147

3.1.3. Selecting criteria for inclusion.....	149
3.1.4. Selecting descriptors for analysis	151
3.2. Findings and discussion.....	153
3.2.1. Initial data statistics: top journals, top authors	154
3.2.2. Geographic distribution	155
3.2.3. Keywords analysis of female leadership literature	159
3.2.3.1. Co-occurrence keywords relationships.....	159
3.2.3.2. Distribution of papers by sectors.....	161
3.2.4. Discussion.....	162
3.3. Theoretical elements of our research paper.....	165
3.3.1. Drivers empowering female leadership in organizations.....	165
3.3.2. Barriers hindering female leadership in organizations	167
3.3.3. Methods, techniques and policies that foster female leadership in organizations.....	170
3.3.4. Gender, leadership style and job satisfaction.....	174
3.4. Conclusion.....	176
CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS MODELS AND HYPOTHESES.....	180
4.1. Introduction.....	181
4.2. Analysis 1: Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses.....	182
4.2.1. Summary of the main theoretical elements.....	182
4.2.2. Exposure of the analysis model and its corresponding hypotheses	187
4.3. Analysis 2: Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates.....	193
4.3.1. Summary of the main theoretical elements.....	193
4.3.2. Exposure of the analysis model and its corresponding hypotheses.....	198
4.4. Analysis 3: An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy.....	203
4.4.1. Summary of the main theoretical elements.....	203
4.4.2. Exposure of the analysis model and its corresponding hypotheses	208
CHAPTER 5: METHODOLOGY.....	215
5.1. Introduction.....	216

5.2. Study 1: Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses.....	216
5.2.1. Description of the population and the sample	217
5.2.2. Information collection: description of the questionnaire	218
5.2.2.1. <i>Description of the variables included in the study</i>	218
5.2.2.2. <i>Questionnaire</i>	220
5.2.3. Statistical techniques for data analysis	227
5.3. Study 2: Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates.....	232
5.3.1 Description of the population and the sample	233
5.3.2. Information collection: description of the questionnaire	233
5.3.2.1. <i>Description of the variables included in the study</i>	234
5.3.2.2. <i>Questionnaire</i>	236
5.3.3. Statistical techniques for data analysis	245
5.4. Study 3: An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy.....	247
5.4.1. Description of the population and the sample.....	248
5.4.1.1. <i>A secondary data analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon</i>	249
<i>World Bank Blogs</i>	250
5.4.1.2. <i>A Primary Data analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon</i>	254
5.4.2. Information collection: description of the questionnaire	254
5.4.2.1. <i>Description of the variables included in the study</i>	255
5.4.2.1. <i>Questionnaire</i>	257
5.4.3. Statistical techniques for data analysis	265
CHAPTER 6: RESULTS.....	266
6.1. Introduction.....	267
6.2. Socioeconomic situation in Lebanon.....	267
6.3. Study 1: Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses.....	271
6.3.1. Empirical analysis of the results	271
6.3.1.1. <i>Evaluation of Measurement Model</i>	272

6.3.1.2. <i>Evaluation of the Structural Model</i>	277
6.3.1.3. <i>Multigroup Analysis</i>	281
6.3.2. Discussion.....	281
6.4. Study 2: Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates	286
6.4.1. Descriptive results	287
6.4.2. Hypothesis Testing	288
6.4.3. Discussion.....	298
6.5. Study 3: An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy	301
6.5.1. Analytical Approach.....	302
6.5.5.1. <i>Evaluation of Measurement Model</i>	303
6.5.5.2. <i>Evaluation of the Structural Model</i>	308
6.5.2. Discussion.....	312
CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSIONS	315
7.1. General conclusion	316
7.2. Conclusion and limitations of study 1: Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses	324
7.3. Conclusion and limitations of study 2: Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates	327
7.4. Conclusion and limitations of study 3: An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy	331
7.5. Future lines of research	333
REFERENCES	342
ANNEXES: COMPILATION OF ARTICLES DERIVED FROM THE THESIS	424
ARTICLE 1	425
1. Introduction	426
2. Literature Review	428
2.1. <i>Work-Life Balance</i>	428
2.2. <i>Work-Life Balance for Male and Female Leaders</i>	430
2.3. <i>Work-Life Balance, Organization Commitment and Performance</i>	431
3. Research Methods	433

3.1. <i>Sample and Data Collection</i>	433
3.2. <i>Measures</i>	433
4. Results	434
4.1. <i>Analytical Approach</i>	435
4.2. <i>Evaluation of Measurement Model</i>	436
4.3. <i>Evaluation of the Structural Model</i>	441
4.4. <i>Multigroup Analysis</i>	444
5. Discussion	447
5.1. <i>Theoretical and Managerial Implications</i>	447
5.2. <i>Limitations and Future Research</i>	448
References	449
ARTICLE 2	456
Abstract.....	457
1. Introduction	458
2. Literature Review	459
2.1 Types of leadership styles.....	459
2.2 Leadership style and gender	460
2.3 Leadership style and employees' job satisfaction.....	460
3. Methodology	461
3.1 Selecting databases	461
3.2 Selecting keywords.....	462
3.3 Selecting criteria for inclusion.....	463
3.4 Selecting descriptors for analysis	464
4. Findings and discussion	465
4.1 Initial data statistics: top journals, top authors	465
4.2 Geographic distribution	466
4.3 Keywords analysis of female leadership literature	467
4.4 Discussion.....	468
5. Theoretical elements of our research paper	469
5.1 Drivers and barriers to female leadership in organizations	469
5.2 Methods and techniques that foster female leadership in organizations.....	471
5.3 Gender, leadership style and job satisfaction.....	472

6. Research gaps and directions for future research.....	473
7. Conclusion.....	473
8. References.....	474
ARTICLE 3.....	481
Abstract.....	482
Introduction.....	483
Literature review.....	484
Leadership style and gender	485
Bias against female leaders.....	487
Leader’s gender and subordinates’ job satisfaction.....	489
Research methods.....	491
Measures.....	492
Descriptive results	493
Hypothesis Testing	494
Discussion.....	505
Conclusion and recommendations.....	507
References.....	508
ARTICLE 4.....	515
Abstract.....	516
Introduction.....	517
Literature review.....	518
Female entrepreneurship.....	518
<i>Feminism theories from entrepreneurship perspective</i>	<i>520</i>
Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in developing countries	521
Supporting female entrepreneurs in developing countries	524
Research Methodology.....	527
Sample and data collection	527
A secondary data analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon	527
A Primary Data analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon	530
Measures.....	530

Results	531
Analytical Approach.....	533
Evaluation of Measurement Model	533
Evaluation of the Structural Model.....	537
Discussion & Conclusions	542
Theoretical and Managerial Implications	543
Limitations and Future Research	544
References	544

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA).	150
Figure 3.2: Geographic location of the top 10 contributing countries on female leadership.	156
Figure 3.3: Geographic location of all received citations of papers on female leadership.	157
Figure 3.4: Country co-authorship network of female leadership related papers.	158
Figure 3.5: Co-occurrence keywords network.	160
Figure 3.6: Distribution of articles by industry sector.	162
Figure 4.1: The conceptual model of the research.....	192
Figure 4.2: The conceptual model of the research.	203
Figure 4.3: The conceptual model of the research.	214
Figure 6.1: Structural model.	277
Figure 6.2: Structural model.	308

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1: Hypothesized differences for charismatic, ideological and pragmatic leaders.	63
Table 3.1: List of journals and proceedings that provided at least five relevant articles.	154
Table 3.2: Authors with H-Index of 5 considering only their papers related to female leadership.	155
Table 3.3: Clusters of co-authorship by countries (clusters with more than 1 item). ..	158
Table 3.4: Methods, techniques, and policies that foster female leadership.	171
Table 5.1: The selection of secondary data.	250
Table 6.1: Descriptive statistics of the sample (N = 141).	272
Table 6.2: Full Collinearity Test.	273
Table 6.3: Evaluation of Measurement Model.	274
Table 6.4: Cross Loadings.	275
Table 6.5: Fornell and Larcker's Criterion.	276
Table 6.6: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).	277
Table 6.7: R ² matrix.	278
Table 6.8: Construct cross-validated redundancy (Q ²).	279
Table 6.9: Model Fit Summary.	280
Table 6.10: Path Coefficients Matrix.	281
Table 6.11: Results of Multigroup Analysis (MGA).	281
Table 6.12: Descriptive statistics of the sample (N = 186).	288
Table 6.13: Supervisor Gender and Leadership Style.	289
Table 6.14: Comparison of Leadership Style Items between Female & Male Subordinates.	290
Table 6.15: Employee and supervisor's gender impact on supervisor's support.	291
Table 6.16: Female & Male Subordinates.	291
Table 6.17: Employee-Supervisor Relationship.	292
Table 6.18: Comparison of Employee-Supervisor Relationship Impact on Employee Satisfaction Items between Female & Male Subordinates.	293

Table 6.19: Female Leaders Having Masculine Traits – Independent Samples t-Test	293
Table 6.20: Comparison of Female Bosses and Masculine Traits between Female & Male Subordinates.....	294
Table 6.21: Female Subordinates Prefer Male Leaders – Independent Samples t-Test.	295
Table 6.22: Female & Male Subordinates.	296
Table 6.23: Impact of Having More Female Leaders – Independent Samples t-Test.	296
Table 6.24: Female & Male Subordinates.	297
Table 6.25: Descriptive statistics of the sample (N = 53).	302
Table 6.26: Full Collinearity Test (VIF).	303
Table 6.27: Evaluation of Measurement Model.	305
Table 6.28: Cross Loadings.	306
Table 6.29: Fornell and Larcker’s Criterion.	306
Table 6.30: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).	307
Table 6.31: R ² matrix.	309
Table 6.32: F2 matrix.	310
Table 6.33: Model Fit Summary.	310
Table 6.34: Path Coefficients Matrix.	311

THESIS SUMMARY

Many research papers have studied the effect of reporting to a female supervisor on female subordinates' career prospects. Yet, it is surprising that there is so little study of why women do not want a female boss and whether or not female subordinates are always supportive of female bosses. Therefore, the proposed study aims to provide a more holistic understanding of the concept of female boss misogyny and the role women subordinates play in helping their female boss advance at work. In addition, it seeks to gather knowledge and information that can fill gaps in existing work or even make an original contribution to existing knowledge.

Thus, this thesis consists of three empirical research articles and one bibliometric review article, which can provide a coherent body of work related to Lebanese female managers. The bibliometric review investigates the status of gender diversity in organizations and its implications to subordinates' performance. With this purpose, we analyzed numerous research papers and identified the barriers that can impede the inclusion of women on corporate boards of directors, as well as the drivers that might improve females' representation on boards. We also examined some of the factors that influence subordinates' satisfaction including satisfaction with their leader, their leader's performance, and their own performance. As for the three empirical research articles, their aim was to examine some of the challenges that continue to hinder Lebanese women advancement to leadership roles, explore some work-life strategies that can be implemented by Lebanese men and women leaders to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders, as well as investigate Lebanese female entrepreneurs' challenges and opportunities.

For each research article, an online survey created in Google Forms was distributed to male and female Lebanese employees working in different sectors in an effort to provide a more holistic understanding of the situation of the Lebanese female managers. Data was analyzed using structural equation modeling with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) in the latest release of the software application SmartPls 3.3.7 and SPSS (Version 20).

The bibliometric review provided us with the opportunity to determine the existing gaps and to open the research arena for future research in the area of female leadership. We identified seven major gaps that are appropriate for further research. Future research can examine how leadership development training and diversity programs can help an organization can be used as effective methods to help not only female leaders but female subordinates as well.

Our study discovered that female employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses and showed a preference for male over female managers. This has important implications for the success of women in leadership because the negative perception towards female leaders would compel them to start applying less effective management strategies or become less interested in occupying leadership positions.

Our study also showed that supervisors can improve their employees' WLB by understanding and supporting their family responsibilities, allowing them to use flextime to attend to family matters, and by accommodating when family matters pull them away from work.

Our findings show that employee WLB is significantly related to organizational R&D performance. In addition, both male and female employees who adopt work-life balance strategies can help organizations improve their innovativeness and R&D performance. Therefore, in order for organizations to excel at R&D, their main concern should not

only be how to recruit and retain individuals with outstanding research skills (Torbeck et al. 2013) and intensive experience in their fields (Thompson & Heron 2006; Coccia, 2008). Nevertheless, they must ensure that their employees are not trapped in the work-life balance conflict and are provided with the adequate work life balance policies that go beyond traditional practices such as health and wellness programs, childcare benefits and flexible work arrangement.

Lastly, the findings of the study were consistent with past research, demonstrating that women entrepreneurs play a significant role in creating jobs, providing financial security, reducing poverty in rural areas and enhancing community involvement especially in developing countries. However, despite the emergence of female entrepreneurs, there is still a sizable gender gap in business performance (Ladge et al., 2019). This research is also in accordance with past research since it shows that the barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs may have a significant impact on the economic development. However, our findings are not in accordance with previous findings as it shows that the opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs do not have a significant impact on the economic development. Nevertheless, Lebanese female entrepreneurs are carving out niches, conquering markets, and opening doors for themselves, their teams, and the communities they serve (Youness, 2007).

INTRODUCTION

Dissertation Overview

The present PhD thesis aims to examine some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement to leadership roles, why some women do not accept having a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female boss. Therefore, the document is comprised of two parts. The first part includes the conventional thesis, which is organized in seven chapters detailing the theoretical and empirical work on which the analysis is based. As for the second part, it is in the form of a compendium of four articles where three articles are dedicated to address our research questions and related objectives (see below section 1.4), and a fourth article that includes a bibliometric literature review.

Women, organizations, scholars and legislators have worked hard towards overcoming gender inequality issues in the workplace. For over three decades, internationally and in Lebanon (our country of study) women have been progressively obtaining more bachelor's degrees than men have. In addition, they are requesting promotions and negotiating for a raise as much as men are. Moreover, contrary to popular belief, the percentage of women who are staying in the workforce is the same as that of men (Krivkovich, et al., 2018).

Society in general has started to accept the idea of female CEOs, although some industries remain male dominated. As of May 2018, the list of Fortune 500 shows that there are 24 female CEOs or just below 5% of the total list. There are two assumptions to be made from that news. On the one hand, the surge shows that women are moving up the corporate ladder. On the other hand, 24 is still an extremely low number and does not represent at all the wider population. Simply put, women are still fighting to acquire business chief executive leadership positions. Female CEOs in the Fortune 500 is not something familiar yet, but they have made great progress (Zarya, 2017).

Modern Western concepts of gender equality are inextricably related to ideas of democracy and agency in both the public and private scopes, making it a contentious subject (Sieder & McNeish, 2013). In order to comprehend how the locals perceive the term, it is crucial to situate ideas of equality within the intellectual history and socio-politics of a nation or region. In non-Western societies such as the MENA region, gender equality is frequently linked to modernization and human development (Basu, 2018). While gender equality and women's participation and leadership in the public domain are vital, it is also necessary to consider women's lived experiences in both the public and private spheres from a historical and socio-political viewpoint. Therefore, three complementary studies were conducted in Lebanon to examine the range of options available to female leaders for handling their conflicts and interpersonal relationships, seizing opportunities for realizing their full potential and becoming a catalyst for growth. (Reader will be able to read details of Lebanon context in Chapter 1, Section 1.1., Chapter 4 and Chapter 5).

The idea of work–family balance has generated considerable interest for researchers who tried to focus mainly on the increased female engagement in the labor market, the rise in dual-income households, as well as the changing nature of organizations, work and the workplace. While some individuals prefer work-life balance (WLB) strategies that set fair and realistic limits between their professional and personal lives, others prefer initiatives that provide harmony between the different aspects of their lives. By surveying both Lebanese male and female employees, the first research explored work-life strategies that can be implemented by men and women leaders to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders. In addition, it aims to explore if those work-life strategies enhance organizational performance by means of increased innovativeness, and research and development.

Women are no longer restricted to traditional female jobs such as teachers or nurses. They are currently present in industries and occupations that were previously male dominated such as pharmacy, police officers, entrepreneurs, etc. However, despite all the efforts that have been exerted to reinvent the workplace for greater gender equality, the workplace still has not become more accepting of women. Therefore, the aim of the second study was to examine some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement to leadership roles, why some women do not accept having a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female boss. Thus, a survey was distributed to male and female Lebanese employees working in different sectors in an effort to provide a more holistic understanding of the concept of female boss misogyny and the role women subordinates play in helping their female boss advance at work.

Research shows that female business owners positively contribute to private sector employment as well as investment. However, many barriers still hinder the ability of women to pursue a business career and generate a genuine income. Women have difficulty obtaining support (institutional, family, and financial), maintaining a successful balance between personal and professional activities, as well as handling patriarchal societies and gender discrimination.

Lebanese businesses that meet the 51 percent female ownership threshold, and/or have a woman occupy a senior executive position are known as women-owned and/or women-led businesses (WOLBs). WOLBs' challenges, opportunities and their effect on the growth of the local economy is an understudied topic in Lebanon. In addition, there is a lack of research highlighting WOLBs' revenue contribution to the Lebanese economy. Therefore, the third study attempted to address this knowledge gap by investigating women-led businesses challenges and opportunities. In addition, it aimed to tackle those challenges and seize those opportunities in order to increase revenue and subsequently contribute to the growth of the local economy.

Thus, this thesis consists of three empirical research articles and one bibliometric review article, which can provide a coherent body of work related to Lebanese female managers. The bibliometric review investigates the status of gender diversity in organizations and its implications to subordinates' performance. With this purpose, we analyzed numerous research papers and identified the barriers that can impede the inclusion of women on corporate boards of directors, as well as the drivers that might improve females' representation on boards. We also examined some of the factors that influence subordinates' satisfaction including satisfaction with their leader, their leader's performance, and their own performance. As for the three empirical research articles, their aim was to examine some of the challenges that continue to hinder Lebanese women advancement to leadership roles, explore some work-life strategies that can be implemented by Lebanese men and women leaders to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders, as well as investigate Lebanese female entrepreneurs' challenges and opportunities.

Background of the Study

Although females' share of the labor force has peaked to constitute approximately half of the U.S. workforce (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011), men occupy top positions in business and politics (Catalyst, 2016; Center for American Women and Politics, 2016; Eagly & Carli, 2007). The scarcity of female leaders in top leadership remains quite deceptive, despite the fact that women were successful in occupying supervisory and middle management jobs in rates relative to their representation in the workforce (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011).

The United States is not the only country that experiences underrepresentation of females in top leadership positions. Globally, women have fewer opportunities for gender equality than men do (Thornton, 2016; Union, 2016). A third of organizations around the world do not have any females occupying senior level positions, while men

continue to hold two-third of all executive-level positions (Thornton, 2016). In addition, women's political representation ranks low worldwide. Only 19 countries presently have women serving as elected or appointed heads of state or government (United Nations, 2016). Globally, there are less than 23 percent of women in national parliaments (Union, 2016).

According to Gumbi (2006), top leadership is seen as a masculine realm, and cultural norms on gender and leadership have historically excluded women. The aforementioned idea is still prevalent in Middle Eastern societies, especially Lebanon. As per to the Global Gender Gap Report 2022, Lebanon is ranked 119 out of 146 countries. The labor market in Lebanon is characterized by low employment, a low level of female economic participation, a sizable unorganized sector, a substantial intake of foreign workers, and a sizable number of competent Lebanese seeking and getting employment overseas. Under Lebanon's labor laws, men and women who hold the same position must be paid equally. However, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World claims that this rule is not implemented, indicating that there is some salary discrepancy in the Lebanese workplace (Latif & Helou, 2016).

Arabs are expected to comply to predefined gender roles and behaviors that are stereotyped as male or female. They learn how to act and behave in accordance with gender at a young age (Karam et al., 2013; Tlaiss, 2014a). The majority of the Lebanese culture still views women as being solely responsible for taking care of their homes, raising their families, and being wives; as a result, women are expected to fulfill these roles (Tlaiss, 2014b). Arab women's professions are sometimes said to be hampered by the importance of the home and the framing of domestic work and childcare as female obligations (Karam et al., 2013; Tlaiss, 2014b). Due to societal, educational, familial, and religious expectations and limits, the majority of Lebanese women do not receive much support or encouragement when seeking higher degrees in challenging professions. This is particularly true in fields where men predominate, where issues like

bias, marginalization, and discrimination may be more common. Women who want to work outside the home typically do so in sectors that are viewed as socially respectable, such education and healthcare, and hold lower-level jobs and positions (Tlaiss, 2014a). Less than 5% of senior management jobs are held by Lebanese women, who are also concentrated at lower levels of management (Tlaiss, 2014b). They are also discouraged from pursuing entrepreneurial professions or challenging socially normalized gender stereotypes. Those who do so contest gender norms and are frequently the target of negative societal views (Itani et al., 2011).

In recent years, a noticeable generational change has begun in Lebanon in recent years. More young women than ever are pursuing educational possibilities, and about 42% of them complete a university degree. It is noteworthy that more Lebanese women than males pursue education past the secondary level. Even though as of 2017, just roughly 29% of Lebanese women were employed, many more are choosing corporate employment (Abu Zeinab–Chahine, 2017). An estimated 93 percent of Lebanon's female workforce is employed in the financial and services industries (International Labor Organization, 2017).

Currently, independent directors are not permitted in Lebanon due to the requirement that board members own shares of the company. Additionally, actual practices differ by organization. This provides a significant barrier for women, a group with limited influence and connections in the corporate sector. Women frequently lack the resources needed to satisfy shareholder demands. Standards and practices that are inconsistently applied produce a cloudy and ambiguous atmosphere that disadvantages women particularly.

Although it appears that women in Lebanese institutions are able to advance to respectable levels of seniority, they are still far behind males in positions of top management that require strategic planning and decision-making. There are numerous

actions that need to be performed, first by the workforce itself (to erase biases and perceptions), then by the business (to provide flexible work arrangements), and ultimately by the government (pass laws concerning gender representation) (Hejase, 2013).

Gender inequality in leadership still exists, and in recent decades, a growing number of research has tried to find an explanation for the disparity between men and women in executive positions. Previous research has emphasized that gender stereotyping and gender-based discrimination are major causes to the gender gap in high-level positions (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Garcia-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2006; Heilman, 2001). Other research points to a pipeline problem where there simply are not enough skilled females to be promoted to leadership roles (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Ibarra et al., 2013).

Gender stereotype is a generalized view or cultural preconception about the attitudes and characteristics that are or should be possessed by men and women and the roles that are or should be carried out by men and women (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Therefore, stereotypes can be both descriptive and prescriptive in nature. When discussing descriptive stereotypes, women are stereotypically viewed as warm, caring, and nurturing (Fiske et al., 2007; Heilman, 2001). However, prescriptive stereotypes command women to be communal and avoid being dominant (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Conversely, men are frequently labeled with agentic characteristics such as leadership ability, competitiveness and self-confidence (Huddy & Terkildsen, 1993). Furthermore, agentic characteristics are important attributes for becoming a leader (Dodge et al., 1995; Koenig et al., 2011; Rudman et al., 2012). Conversely, female leaders who have agentic characteristics are perceived by followers as violating their communal gender role, and tend to become subject to vilification and criticism which is known as the “backlash effect” (Phelan et al., 2008; Rudman & Glick, 2001). Thus, women leaders must only display the agentic characteristics that are considered important for their leadership role.

The topic of gender discrimination within organizations is at the core of many theories and frameworks that try to find an explanation for the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions. These theories include the role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), which is based on previous theories such as Schein's (1973) think-manager think-male paradigm, Heilman's (1983) lack-of-fit model, and Eagly's (1987) social role theory. Women's perceived suitability for senior positions is hindered by gender stereotypes and gender discrimination, and these frameworks help in understanding the stereotypical gender roles, which women have been trying to annihilate for years. Schein's (1973) think manager–think male paradigm shows that men and women described a successful leader in masculine terms, which is generally attributed to masculine stereotype (Sczesny, 2003). Another study conducted by Heilman et al. (1995) and which reproduced that of Schein's, described women as having less qualities in common with successful leaders than men do. Additionally, Koenig and her colleagues (2011) meta-analyzed data from 40 studies discovered that cultural stereotypes link men more strongly than women to leadership traits. Related studies have also revealed that both men and women believe that males are ideal leaders (Schein, 2001). This is more predominant in organizations where males occupy the majority of leadership roles (Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010; Phillips, 2005).

Previous and current literature associated leadership with masculine features, and both men and women described a successful leader in masculine terms (Jackson et al., 2007). This gender stereotype is challenging for women who aspire to be leaders but are not considered as having the masculine attributes of leadership. Prejudice against women is a result of the incongruity between the female gender role and the leadership role. Women regularly find themselves unable to hold leadership roles because the traditional perception of leadership is founded on masculine traits. This leads to the concept of “lack-of-fit” (Heilman, 1983, 2001). Similarly, role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) perceives women less favorably than men as potential occupants of leadership roles, and that a leader role is less favorable when it is enacted by a woman. One

consequence is that attitudes toward female leaders are less positive than toward male leaders. In addition, it is more challenging for females to become leaders and to become successful in leadership roles.

The representation of women in senior positions differs based on the industry in which they work, which would imply that selecting a leader is very context specific. Services industries like education, healthcare, government, and hospitality have the highest representation of females (Bowles & McGinn, 2005; Eagly et al., 1995), while males are highly represented in more traditional industries (e.g., manufacturing, construction, and financial services) (Oakley, 2000). In addition, support functions of the organization are usually assigned to female leaders as opposed to core functions. They are also less likely to be employed in visible positions or in positions that have high responsibility (Bowles & McGinn, 2005). Therefore we deduce that both industry, role and context have an impact on the relationship between gender and leader selection.

For female managers to play effective roles in the careers of female subordinates, they must obtain strong positions in organizations and later act on their motivation to advise and support female apprentices. However, still undetermined are questions about women's access to power and their motivation to aid female subordinates, leading to dissimilar views on the career impacts of having to work for a female boss (Maume, 2011).

Many research papers have studied the effect of reporting to a female supervisor on female subordinates' career prospects. Yet, it is surprising that there is so little study of why women do not want a female boss and whether or not female subordinates are always supportive of female bosses.

A number of researchers (Martín & Carrasquer, 2005; Hughes & Bozionelos, 2007) suggest that WLB practices assist employees in reducing the levels of workplace stress, improving their quality of life and enhancing their organizational performance and commitment. Consequently, the literature emphasizes that WLB practices can improve organizational performance including increased productivity and reduced turnover.

The research aims to examine how the organization's commitment to work-life balance leads to greater involvement of employees in achieving the organization's objectives. Thus, linking it to organizational performance and innovativeness. A healthy WLB positively affects the physical and psychological development of an individual as well as the sustainability of organizations. Thus, in order to foster and nurture employees' well-being and improve their performance, organizations must provide access to work-life balance arrangement (WLBA). Organizational performance can be assessed through different aspects, including career motivation, employee attendance, employee recruitment, employee retention, organizational commitment, and productivity (Beauregard & Henry 2009; Sheppard, 2016).

People tend to evaluate women leaders based on their gender and not their skills and capabilities (Eagly & Carli, 2003). Therefore, women may be perceived as not holding the required leadership qualities since "the traits commonly associated with traditional, heroic leadership are closely aligned with stereotypical images of masculinity" (Fletcher, 2002, p. 1). For instance, Mulvaney et al. (2007) argue that women are not able to advance in their careers because of the conflicts between their traditional social role of women (i.e. staying at home and taking care of the family) and the roles and responsibilities of being an employee (i.e. spending time away from home). Other researches focus on how male leaders have privileges over their female counterparts because they possess masculine capabilities (Muller-Kahle & Schiehl, 2013).

For female managers to play effective roles in the careers of female subordinates, they must obtain strong positions in organizations and later act on their motivation to advise and support female apprentices. However, still undetermined are questions about women's access to power and their motivation to aid female subordinates, leading to dissimilar views on the career impacts of having to work for a female boss (Maume, 2011).

It has been acknowledged that female entrepreneurs are a source of economic growth and development; nevertheless, they are limited by a variety of circumstances (Etim & Iwu, 2019). In fact, successful female business owners serve as role models for aspiring entrepreneurs worldwide (Al Mamun et al., 2019). By stimulating innovation, opening up new economic sectors, and generating employment possibilities, women entrepreneurs play a crucial part in boosting local economies and improving societal welfare (Jafari-Sadeghi, 2020).

The study makes two important contributions to entrepreneurship theory and practice in Lebanon: it extends the existing literature by stating the key obstacles that women entrepreneurs face, and it outlines the main opportunities that await them. Furthermore, the study also shows the vital socio-economic role that women entrepreneurs play since WLBOs are key to economic growth in developing economies.

Statement of the Problem

The topic of gender discrimination within the realm of female leadership has not attracted much attention although the vast majority of research papers has examined the relationship between gender diversity in management and firm performance (Bertrand & Schoar, 2003; Matsa & Miller, 2013), as well as gender diversity in management and the increasing gender pay gap (Flabbi et al., 2019; Fortin, 2008). Moreover, few research studies focus on female leaders' experiences as targets of discrimination in the

workplace, and on whether leader gender would make any difference (Artz & Taengnoi, 2016; Booth & Leigh, 2010; Lazear et al., 2015).

Women in leadership positions need to make a point of mentoring other women. However, this is not the case as women have found it increasingly difficult to trust each other in the workplace. “Feminism is blind to the fact some of the biggest roadblocks to female progress are women themselves” (Lyster, 2015, p.34). Many factors have been shown to contribute to this problem, including the fact that women are less likely to have mentors or receive formal mentorship from women leaders, and are afraid to support other women as they might reach leadership positions before they do. Thus, both women and organizations are affected by this phenomenon alike since companies are facing the risk of losing highly qualified female leaders.

Research found that women subordinates anticipate their women bosses to be more compassionate, more nurturing, more giving and more supportive than men (O’Leary & Ryan, 1994). Mattis’s (1993) research shows that women directors want to be recognized for talents and abilities, not as representatives of the interests of women. In Rindfleish and Sheridan’s (2003) study, when senior women were asked whether they actively lobbied senior executives at work or implemented programs to increase female representation at the highest levels, over 60% of women said no. There seems to be however, a failure in providing a complete framework that seeks to show why women do not support each other in the workplace and eventually bring about more equal gender representation at all organizational levels.

Our study showed that supervisors can improve their employees’ WLB by understanding and supporting their family responsibilities, allowing them to use flextime to attend to family matters, and by accommodating when family matters pull them away from work. Our findings show that employee WLB is significantly related to organizational R&D performance. In addition, both male and female employees who

adopt work-life balance strategies can help organizations improve their innovativeness and R&D performance. Therefore, in order for organizations to excel at R&D, their main concern should not only be how to recruit and retain individuals with outstanding research skills (Torbeck et al. 2013) and intensive experience in their fields (Thompson & Heron 2006; Coccia, 2008). Nevertheless, they must ensure that their employees are not trapped in the work-life balance conflict and are provided with the adequate work life balance policies that go beyond traditional practices such as health and wellness programs, childcare benefits and flexible work arrangement.

The findings of the study were consistent with past research, demonstrating that women entrepreneurs play a significant role in creating jobs, providing financial security, reducing poverty in rural areas and enhancing community involvement especially in developing countries. However, despite the emergence of female entrepreneurs, there is still a sizable gender gap in business performance (Ladge et al., 2019). This research is also in accordance with past research since it shows that the barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs may have a significant impact on the economic development. However, our findings are not in accordance with previous findings as it shows that the opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs do not have a significant impact on the economic development. Nevertheless, Lebanese female entrepreneurs are carving out niches, conquering markets, and opening doors for themselves, their teams, and the communities they serve (Youness, 2007).

Purpose of the Study

Professors Tsui and Gutek (1999) have studied the importance of the relationship between an employee and his or her direct supervisor. Frequently, the supervisor represents the firm to the employee. The supervisor not only presents the employee with the opportunity to perform a job, he or she influences the quality of the employee's life at work. An employee might become stagnant under one supervisor while progressing

under another to turn into a productive contributor (Tsui and Gotek, 1999). Research on gender stereotyping in the workplace shows that female bosses are often considered as missing leadership skills when compared to their male equivalents (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman et al., 1989; Martell et al., 1998). Many studies show that women's distinguished leadership styles are not only advantageous to the career prospects of female subordinates, but also encourage innovation within the organization and improve sales and market share (Catalyst, 2007; Claes, 1999; Maxwell, 2006; Helgeson, 1990). However, the question that arises is: do women consider other women partners in management?

The aim of this work is, first, to review research available on gender and leadership styles as determinants of subordinates' satisfaction. While the noticeably inadequate representation of women in executive positions in organizations has been the topic of study for many years, the problem seems to be even more severe at board levels. Secondly, this work aims to investigate the status of gender diversity in organizations and its implications to subordinates' performance.

The long-held belief that most women entrepreneurs in underdeveloped nations are survivalist or necessity entrepreneurs who do not exhibit growth ambitions or growth-oriented entrepreneurship is now being challenged by academics studying entrepreneurship. Numerous studies reveal that a complex interplay of micro- and macroeconomic factors in the economies, including a lack of financial resources, a lack of personal assets, stereotyping (marginalization), a psychological fear of failure, a lack of education and training, socio-cultural boundaries, a lack of networks, legal and regulatory requirements, and ineffective marketing tactics, limit the success of women entrepreneurs (Tuyishime et al., 2015; Ahmed, 2016; Halkias et al., 2011; Nsengimana, 2017; Josiah & Themba, 2015; Anwar & Rashid, 2012; Itani et al., 2011; Bajpai, 2014; Kumbhar, 2013). Due to the fact that most lending institutions need collateral, it

remains difficult for women entrepreneurs to raise money to start or maintain a business (Moses & Amalu, 2010; Anwar & Rashid, 2012; Ali & Ali, 2013).

According to studies, most women have worse educational backgrounds, which makes it difficult for them to understand the sources of finance that are accessible and how to get such funds by creating strong business plans (Bullough & Abdelzaher, 2013; Halkias et al., 2011; Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, 2019; International Center for Research on Women, 2019). The aforementioned is further supported by Rao et al. (2012), who contend that because women entrepreneurs are often seen as less serious than men, they have fewer opportunities to access credit than men. As a result, they frequently turn to their meager personal savings and family loans to finance their businesses, which leads to inadequate stocking and replenishing of supplies. Studies have shown that traditional belief systems, such as the notion of the male-female role, which suggests that women should be subordinate to men, deprive women of opportunities for leadership roles, self-confidence, and self-expression, all of which have negative repercussions for women when they want to stand on their own in businesses (Kapinga & Montero, 2017; Mwobobia, 2012; Zororo, 2011; Mordi et al., 2010). As a result, women lack the practical knowledge and abilities necessary to operate their enterprises successfully.

Women entrepreneurs continue to be perceived as a minor component in entrepreneurship while providing numerous and varied benefits to the entrepreneurship sector due to the predominance of male entrepreneurs (Mustapha & Subramaniam, 2016; Ramadani et al., 2015; Sowmya et al., 2010). Anwar and Rashid (2012) acknowledge that women's entrepreneurship is a crucial tool for liberation and empowerment in terms of raising the standard of living for women. According to De Bruin et al. (2007), there is no question that women are starting more businesses, even though this rise is affected by a complex network of micro- and macro-level influences.

Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is to investigate challenges faced by and opportunities open to women entrepreneurs in Lebanon. Furthermore, it aims to explore how WLBOs can play a significant role in generating more revenue for the Lebanese economy leading to prosperous outputs.

Work-life balance (WLB) has received a lot of attention from researchers and management professionals over the past few years (Nicklin et al., 2019; Kaya & Karatepe, 2020). This can be ascribed to the quick changes in the workplace as well as other sociocultural and demographic issues that have made it harder for people to successfully balance their personal and professional life (Cegarra-Leiva et al., 2012). Organizations have implemented a number of initiatives to help workers manage the proper separation between their professional and personal lives, including the development of family-friendly policies and work-family balance programs. Additionally, a number of new trends have been noticed in organizations' WLB practices, including an increase in women's employment, the presence of dual-career couples, and an emphasis on a high quality of work-life through leisure activities (Cegarra-Leiva et al., 2012). Existing research supports the multiple advantages of effective WLB treatments that result in favorable organizational outcomes such as decreased work-family conflict (WFC), high organizational citizenship behaviors, high organizational commitment, and higher job satisfaction (Baral & Bhargava, 2010; Kelliher et al., 2019). Another study by Kelliher et al. (2019) supported the idea that employer care for WLB has a favorable effect on employee motivation and retention. Effectiveness in work-family balance is crucial for organizations to build welcoming workplaces for both women and business, as well as to support cultural change, according to the Catalyst Report (Forbes, 2017). WLB programs are a welcomed recent addition to the literature on employee retention since they concentrate on finding a balance between employees' work and personal lives and how it affects retention.

Hence, the purpose of the study is to explore the work-life strategies that can be implemented by men and women leaders to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders. In addition, it aims to explore if those work-life strategies enhance organizational performance by means of increased innovativeness, and research and development.

Research Questions and Objectives

Study 1: Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses

For the purpose of this study (stated above), the following research questions were addressed:

1. Why women are less likely to be appointed to leadership positions in the workplace than men are?
 - a. Do Women have a chance at top leadership positions as men do?
 - b. Are women in leadership positions as effective as men are?
2. What are the barriers that women face in their positions of leadership?
 - a. Do women's responsibilities towards their families stand in their way of becoming top business executives?
 - b. Are female subordinates considered part of the barriers that hinder female leadership?
3. Do women consider other women partners in management?
 - a. Do women have lower aspiration to leader roles than men do?
 - b. Do female subordinates help or hinder the progress of other women in senior positions?

Research objectives

In recent years, work-life balance has become one of the most important research topics. Numerous studies have been linking the work-life balance to various factors in various circumstances. Maintaining a good work environment depends in large part on work-life balance.

Mainly, work-life balance is about keeping a healthy balance between personal and professional life. According to studies, a balanced life is achieved through allocating time to work, family, health, vacations, and other essential responsibilities. Burnout is a result of prolonged work stress.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to explore the different work-life strategies used by male and female bosses in order to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders. In addition, it aims to investigate whether those strategies enhance organizational performance by means of increased innovativeness and research and development.

Study 2: Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates

For the purpose of the study entitled " Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: the different strategies used by male and female bosses ", the following research questions were addressed:

1. How does supervisor's support link to employee work-life balance?
 - a. How do supervisors facilitate WLB for employees?
 - b. What are the benefits of supporting employee work-life balance?

2. How does organizational provisioning of WLB strategies link to employee work-life balance?
 - a. To what extent does organizational provisioning of WLB policies buffer the effect of occupational stress?
 - b. What is the effectiveness of these practices?
3. How does individual's WLB link to employee's WLB?
 - a. To what extent do job demands impact employee productivity and well-being?
 - b. Does the use of flexible work arrangements improve the well-being of individuals?
4. How does employee WLB link to organizational research and development performance?
 - a. What factors act as barriers to WLB initiatives?
 - b. How Is Work–Life Balance Arrangement Associated with organizational Performance?

Research objectives

Women have outperformed men in terms of educational attainment and leadership skills (Zenger & Folkman, 2019). However, despite the fact that women make up 45% of S&P 500 employees, they only account for 37% of mid-level managers, 26% of senior-level managers, and 5% of CEOs (Catalyst, 2019). This talent misallocation not only raises equity questions, but it can also have detrimental implications on growth and productivity (Hsieh et al., 2019). Why then do women have a lower likelihood of moving up the corporate ladder? The "mommy tax," hiring discrimination, and gender variations in competitiveness and risk-aversion are a few of the explanations (Bertrand, 2011; Blau & Kahn, 2017; Neumark, 2018).

Many research papers have studied the effect of reporting to a female supervisor on female subordinates' career prospects. Yet, it is surprising that there is so little study of why women do not want a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of female bosses. Thus, the aim of this paper is to examine some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement to leadership roles, why some women do not accept having a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female boss.

Study 3: An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy

For the purpose of the study entitled " Women-owned businesses in Lebanon: entrepreneurs stimulating the local economy", the following research questions were addressed:

1. What motives do female entrepreneurs employ to start, grow, and sustain their business?
 - a. What were the key factors that motivated you to start your own business?
 - b. What were your desired outcomes in starting this new business?
2. What opportunities are offered to female entrepreneurs in order to start and grow their business?
 - a. How do working conditions influence women's perception of their work?
 - b. What are the key factors that influence the success of female entrepreneurs?
3. What challenges or obstacles do female entrepreneurs encounter as they start and grow their business?
 - a. Were there unique factors you experienced as a woman?
 - b. Do gender stereotypes moderate female entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial performance?

4. Which strategies do female entrepreneurs use to contribute to the development of the local economy?
 - a. What is the role of female entrepreneurship in creating employment opportunities?
 - b. What is the role of female entrepreneurship in providing economic opportunities for women and youth?

Research objectives

In developing countries, there are substantial advantages to supporting female entrepreneurs. Supporting women to launch and expand their own enterprises facilitates advancement on a number of crucial fronts, including advancing diversity, household welfare, and the worldwide goal of women empowerment. However, it is still a difficult task for women to begin and maintain successful entrepreneurial operations. Nevertheless, women entrepreneurs contribute significantly to economic growth, and their small companies are crucial for boosting the economy, creating jobs, reducing poverty, raising living standards, and fostering sustainable livelihoods (Van Vuuren & Groenewald 2007).

The challenges and opportunities of women-owned and/or women-led businesses (WOLBs) and their effect on the growth of the local economy is an understudied topic in Lebanon. In addition, there is a lack of research highlighting WOLBs' revenue contribution to the Lebanese economy. Therefore, this study attempts to address this knowledge gap by investigating women-led businesses challenges and opportunities. In addition, it aims to tackle those challenges and seize those opportunities in order to increase revenue and subsequently contribute to the growth of the local economy.

Rationale of the Study

Trade publications (Roddick, 2000; Wilson, 2004), the popular press (Gutner, 2006; Kantrowitz, 2007), and many other studies (Claes, 1999; Fagenson, 1993; Helgeson, 1990) confirm that women are better managers than men are since they have proved to be more empathetic leaders. Women assign more responsibility and promote the careers of their subordinates, mainly the women who work under them. One study revealed that organizations perform better and seize larger market shares when they hire more women in management (Catalyst, 2007). Other analysts are more doubtful, arguing that when women obtain managerial power, they usually have lower positions in the firm's hierarchy and do not own the power to impact the working conditions and expectations of their subordinates (Smith, 2002; Stainback & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2009; Vecchio, 2002, 2003).

The participation of women in the labor force has grown significantly over the past 50 years, and with this, women are increasingly holding managerial and supervisory positions. Yet little is known about how female supervisors impact employee well-being. Using two distinct datasets of US workers, we provide previously undocumented evidence that women are less satisfied with their jobs when they have a female boss. Male job satisfaction, by contrast, is unaffected. Crucially, our study is able to control for individual worker fixed effects and to identify the impact of a change in supervisor gender on worker well-being, without other alterations in the worker's job.

For female managers to play effective roles in the careers of female subordinates, they must obtain strong positions in organizations and later act on their motivation to advise and support female apprentices. However, still undetermined are questions about women's access to power and their motivation to aid female subordinates, leading to dissimilar views on the career impacts of having to work for a female boss (Maume, 2011).

Many research papers have studied the effect of reporting to a female supervisor on female subordinates' career prospects. Yet, it is surprising that there is so little study of why women do not want a female boss and whether or not female subordinates are always supportive of female bosses.

WLB practices assist employees in reducing the levels of workplace stress, improving their quality of life and enhancing their organizational performance and commitment. Consequently, the literature emphasizes that WLB practices can improve organizational performance including increased productivity and reduced turnover. However, there is a lack of research on the different WLB strategies used by male and female bosses and how those strategies can impact organizational performance and innovativeness.

WOLBs' challenges, opportunities and their effect on the growth of the local economy is an understudied topic in Lebanon. In addition, there is a lack of research highlighting WOLBs' revenue contribution to the Lebanese economy. Therefore, this study attempts to address this knowledge gap by investigating women-led businesses challenges and opportunities. In addition, it aims to tackle those challenges and seize those opportunities in order to increase revenue and subsequently contribute to the growth of the local economy.

Significance of the study

Consistently, the careers of men have evolved in a linear, organized and steady manner (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2006; Sullivan et al., 2009), and despite the fact that this may be changing, especially for the younger, it is still the principal career pattern for many men (O'Neil et al., 2008). On the other hand, women's careers do not seem to evolve in such a linear manner. They are more pragmatic, unorganized, and experience more career breaks and discontinuations than the careers of men (Doherty & Manfredi, 2010; Lalande et al., 2000; Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005; Sullivan & Mainiero, 2008).

The proposed study aims to provide a more holistic understanding of the concept of female boss misogyny and the role women subordinates play in helping their female boss advance at work. In addition, it seeks to gather knowledge and information that can fill gaps in existing work or even make an original contribution to existing knowledge.

A growing number of employees are seeking flexible work arrangements as they aspire to find the right balance between their work and personal life. Therefore, companies are trying to accept this request for flexibility as it may lead to a number of performance benefits as well as better candidates. Specifically, if an organization has supportive work–life-balanced culture, employees presumably strive to create harmony and synergy in working behaviors by utilizing their knowledge and skills. Organizational support has been referred to as the critical success factor for project success as it reduces turnovers, absenteeism, lack of interest, etc. (Mohammed et al., 2009).

The proposed study aims to describe the direct effect of work–life balance on organizational performance by means of increased innovativeness, and research and development. In addition, the study examines the effects of individual coping WLB strategies and organizational provision of WLB policies on employee affective well-being.

While women continue to make a substantial contribution to entrepreneurial activity, funding and family support remain the major barriers for women starting their own business. Nevertheless, the challenges that female entrepreneurs have to deal with in the 21st century are more significant than before, including but not limited to technology and innovation. Other challenges include access to information, inadequate skill training, gender issues, social environment issues, financial resources, and many more (Zainuddin et al., 2017). On the other hand, women entrepreneurs can reap the rewards in new market opportunities. Having a career as a woman entrepreneur is positively

perceived by the society (Sultan, 2016). In addition, women entrepreneurs have better work-family balance than women who work in organizations (Rembulan et al., 2016).

The study makes two important contributions to entrepreneurship theory and practice in Lebanon: it extends the existing literature by stating the key obstacles that women entrepreneurs face, and it outlines the main opportunities that await them. Furthermore, the study also shows the vital socio-economic role that women entrepreneurs play since WLBOs are key to economic growth in developing economies.

Structure of the thesis

The thesis, in addition to this introduction, is divided into six chapters. The content of each of them is briefly detailed below:

Chapter 1 (Female Leadership) introduces the research study and gives the inquiry a contextual and conceptual framework by touching on important issues and disputes that arise in the literature. The research's goals, questions, and contribution to the field of female leadership are also covered in this chapter.

Chapter 2 (Literature Review) draws on a diverse range of literature around the topic of female leadership, gender stereotypes and leadership styles. By emphasizing the dearth of sufficient research, it provides evidence from existing research on the significance of such topics. This chapter also identifies common frameworks that are used to devise healthy coping strategies and skills to meet the new needs of work and family for both male and female leaders. Moreover, the topic is further discussed within the Lebanese context by investigating female entrepreneurs' challenges and opportunities and the role they play in the Lebanese economic development.

Chapter 3 (Bibliometric Review) offers a literature review of female leadership research using bibliometric methods to show the originality and pertinence of the research questions (i.e. drawing conclusions from concretely empirical evidence related to female leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction in the workplace).

Chapter 4 (Analysis Models and Hypotheses) presents a summary of the main theoretical elements for each study. Furthermore, it provides an exposure of the analysis model and its corresponding hypotheses.

Chapter 5 (Methodology) meticulously explains the general design of the research and the methods applied for data collection and introduces the research methodology for the following quantitative studies. In addition, the chapter describes the sampling size and the criteria applied to select the sampling strategy. The instrument used for data collection is also depicted as well as the procedures that were followed to carry out the studies.

Chapter 6 (Results) is organized in four parts to explain the gender gap in leadership using direct factors such as gender stereotypes, glass ceilings, and institutional sexism. First, the socioeconomic situation in Lebanon is explored because inequities in resource access as well as problems with privilege, power, and control are frequently discovered when socioeconomic status is investigated. Second, the chapter explores the different work-life strategies that can be implemented by men and women leaders to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders. Third, some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement to leadership roles, why some women do not accept having a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female boss are examined. Finally, the chapter discusses the vital socio-economic role that Lebanese women entrepreneurs play in the economic growth taking into consideration the key obstacles that they face and the main opportunities that await them.

Chapter 7 (Conclusions) provides a general conclusion for the study. In addition, specific conclusions are discussed for each research study. The limitations of the studies are also examined while reflecting on the findings of each study and providing recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 1

FEMALE LEADERSHIP

1.1. Introduction

Females can be strong allies at work for other females. However, the belief that women are supportive of other women may not be the actual reality and thus, the “ally” notion is often substituted with the “queen bee”. Some even demonize women as evil stepmothers rather than idealize them as fairy godmothers. Consequently, they will be forever penalized for not playing the role of helping other women advance at work (Mavin, 2006; Mavin, 2008).

Women who dissociate themselves from other women in male-dominated organizations are given the “queen bee” label. Such women often take on masculine traits in order to thrive in male-dominated work environments (Derks et al., 2016; Kanter, 1977 & 1987; Staines et al., 1974; Baykal et al., 2020). Far away from a sorority perspective, over the last few decades, many researchers have emphasized the nature of women's negative intra-gender work relations. In workplace cultures that are more masculine, women refuse to help other women rise up the ranks. Instead of taking on responsibilities for championing other women in management, women tend to treat other women as being of little worth by disparaging derogatory comments about them (Nieva & Gutek, 1981; Cushman, 2019).

In general, people presume that women bosses are more compassionate, more likely to attend to subordinates' needs, more tolerant and giving than their male counterparts (O'Leary & Ryan, 1994; Bissessar, 2013). However, when female leaders do not take on masculine traits that are attributed to success, they encounter difficulty in fulfilling their managerial role (Mavin, 2006; Bhatti & Ali, 2021). Those gender-specific theories that perceive women as being less qualified for leadership roles may cause women to feel disconnected and estranged from other women. This may also result in a conflict because women cannot violate the gender role norms although the descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes indicate the characteristics that are desirable or

appropriate for women and men (Eagly & Karau, 2002). In order to be promoted to leadership positions, women work hard to be viewed more competent than their female counterparts are. Therefore, when trying to modify their behavior to be more favorable to leadership (e.g. decisiveness, confidence, forcefulness...), women tend to distance themselves from other women and have gender stereotypes against other women (Ellemers et al., 2004; Derks et al., 2016).

Some researchers have tried to explain this by stating that women tend to criticize and compete against each other more than men do, and that women will try to hinder the success of other women (Sheppard & Aquino, 2013). A recent study shows that female leaders believe they possess the masculine traits of leadership and are more work-committed than junior women are and that is why they tend to keep their distance from them. However, they do not dissociate themselves from women who are at the same level (Faniko et al., 2015). Thus, this proposes that female leaders only stay away from women who are not as accomplished as they are and not from all women in general.

Therefore, our aim is to investigate whether the “queen bee” phenomenon stems from a general sense of competitiveness toward all women or only reveals a negative attitude toward more junior women who refuse to support their female leader.

1.2. Contemporary Leadership

One of the concepts that we have an ingrained talent for identifying but have a tough time defining is definitely leadership. Almost half a century ago, Stogdill (1974) confirmed that “there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept”. At the end of the twentieth century, Bennis provided an approximate number for the total number of definitions that the term leadership has in literature, which was at least 650 definitions (Bennis & Townsend, 1995). Kellerman (2014), in an interview with Volkmann, mentioned that

there has been a statistically significant increase in that number and stated: “I heard that there are approximately 1,400 different definitions of the words leader and or leadership” (Kellerman, 2014). Regardless if the aforementioned numbers are true or overemphasized, there is not still an agreement about what leadership is. Thus, the search for finding a better definition continues.

The term “leadership” brings to mind different views. However, numerous definitions provide the same conception about leadership, which is having the skill to influence others into realizing a certain objective. Several prominent others have provided innumerable definitions of leadership. For instance, Rost (1991) defines leadership as “an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes”. Gemmill and Oakley (1992), on the other hand, defined leadership as “a process of dynamic collaboration, where individuals and organization members authorize themselves and others to interact in ways that experiment with new forms of intellectual and emotional meaning”. As for Manolis et al. (2009), they define leadership as “inspiring and mobilizing others to achieve purposeful change.”

In addition, Ndalamba et al. (2018) define leadership as:

“profound knowledge that creates the moral and ethical capacity to conceive of a feasible and contextually relevant plan of action that inspires and motivates others to pursue the best possible outcome; identifies the resources required and barriers to be overcome in achieving a desired purpose; and unites others in understanding and carrying out that plan, despite obstacles that may arise”.

A more recent definition that aims to differentiate leadership from management suggests that leadership is “an interactive influence relationship among different persons who agree to work together in a given situation so as to realize their mutual purposes” (Genza, 2021).

Giving leadership a definition that includes all the different properties or attributes of leadership might be challenging since the subject of leadership is considered manifold. In order to understand leadership better, one needs to examine someone’s behavior (Pardey, 2007). Some people describe leadership as a series of actions or steps that are taken in order to motivate people. Accordingly, motivation is key to an organization’s success since highly motivated employees are frequently more productive and perform better than their unmotivated colleagues. Motivated employees correlate with an organization’s success and can contribute to several organizational benefits such as human capital management (HCM), alignment of company and personal goals, higher job satisfaction and work efficiency, and improved work environment (Ganta, 2014; Shin & Hur, 2021). Conversely, Arnold et al. (2005) and Grint (2005) think that the emphasis needs to be placed on the leader’s power or ability to achieve goals as well as their distinctive attribute or characteristic.

For years, the definitions of leadership focused on identifying the personality traits linked to successful male leaders. As years went by, and workplaces started witnessing a greater representation of women in leadership positions across diverse sectors, the definition of leadership took on a new meaning. Now, the definition acknowledges the role of the followers who carry out organizational initiatives and achieve results. The definition witnessed another transformation as the Y Generation, also known as Millennials, started occupying leadership positions. Nowadays, the need for people to work together in order to complete a shared goal, have harmony between the different aspects of life, and be involved incessant feedback and learning are all additional elements that must be taken into consideration (Mcdonnell & Sikander, 2017).

Process leadership is considered an important development in the field of leadership because it places great emphasis on the interaction between the leader and the followers. When followers feel that leaders are downplaying or ignoring their needs, the leadership process may be negatively affected (Rost, 1993; Bligh, 2017). Furthermore, research suggests that unethical leadership has long-term consequences for both individuals and organizations such as the gradual demise of the leader-follower relationship, follower marginalization, and organizational decline (Chandler, 2009).

The role of women in the workplace has changed tremendously over the last years as women now possess the traits that allow them to occupy leadership positions and consequently make their organizations outperform others (Hoobler et al., 2018). Women led to important changes to the practices of leadership since the late 1960s and early 1970s. How did they do it? Women leaders spend more time than men supporting the people on their team. They have the courage to say, "I don't know the answer." They not only focus on the long-term success, but they also pay close attention to the short-term goals. Women are better team players than men are, as they like to help their colleagues with what needs to be done (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001). In addition, Rovira-Asenjo et al. (2017) suggest that teams led by female leaders are more cohesive and more cooperative than teams with male leaders because female leaders may focus more attention on building and sustaining relationships and endorse communication styles that support and maintain social exchanges.

As female leaders bring skills, different perspectives, and innovative ideas to the workplace, they are able to conquer the major challenges that they face (Glass & Cook, 2016). This is mainly due to the perseverance of the male leadership model. Nowadays, the principal qualities of a good leader are obtained through research, opinion, and surveys. Some of the most novel qualities are perseverance, having a sense of humor, and flexibility (Prasad & Prasad, 2021; Hossain, 2015). Furthermore, one of the essential qualities that a leader must possess is modesty (Walters & Diab, 2016). Behrendt et al.,

(2017) divided the list of leadership qualities into three main categories: improving understanding, reinforcing motivation, and enabling implementation.

Millennials prefer using a different approach to leadership than previous generations as they try addressing information challenges by referring to their acquired knowledge in technology (Green & Bean, 2017). They use a variety of social networks to obtain updated news and information. As more millennials join the workplace, leadership styles are witnessing major transformations, which have an enormous impact on business outcomes. Millennials seek impulsive feedback, and communication, can adapt to major changes almost instantaneously, share leadership actions, focus on collaborating with others, support a healthy work-life balance, and believe that breaks at work help employees restore their motivation (Anderson et al., 2017).

The digital revolution and the advent of information technology have led to the transformation of leaders into e-leaders who conduct tasks and activities through electronic means (Mohammad, 2009). What makes e-leadership different from traditional leadership is that it is mediated by technology and promotes the effective use and mixing of electronic and traditional means of communication in organizations (Putriastuti & Stasi, 2019). Thus, e-Leadership achieves organizational goals of via information technology (Iriqat & Khalaf, 2017). Technology has become essential in the workplace as it gives business teams the opportunity to get more done in less time and facilitates knowledge sharing among co-workers through the use of collaborations tools such as e-mail and web conferencing (Solaja & Ogunola, 2016). E-Leaders use a variety of communication tools that allow them to get in touch with their employees remotely. Therefore, they must be technology savvy to build workplace relationships and meet employee expectations (Mohammad, 2009; Rubavathi & Balamurugan, 2022).

Workplaces are experiencing a dramatic shift in generations as baby boomers (people born from 1946 to 1964) and Generation X (people born from 1965 to 1980) are being replaced with millennials (people born from 1981 to 1996). By 2025, millennials are expected to make up 75% of the workforce. Millennials are tech savvy and they have more positive attitudes about technology than other generations (Solaja & Ogunola, 2016). In addition, millennials request more flexible work conditions and hours, are pros at multitasking, and expect open communication from their supervisors (Putriastuti & Stasi, 2019; Moorthy, 2014). One disadvantage of being a millennial is the disloyalty to their company. Millennials lack organizational commitment and have a low level of attachment toward their organization (Moorthy, 2014). Then, the organizational culture is not representative of the millennial culture (Putriastuti & Stasi, 2019). Millennials are more independent than other generations, so seem to be more individualistic and often demonstrate lack of empathy for others (Anderson et al., 2016). On the other hand, millennials are characterized by confidence, being optimistic about the future and giving the best performance (Wolor et al., 2020) and receive raises and promotions more often than others (Moorthy, 2014).

Research shows that Millennials prefer interpersonal relationship between leaders and followers, favor a teamwork approach, and like to feel trusted in order to contribute their special abilities to the organization. They prefer a supervisory communication that is accepting to their opinions and encouraging to their decision-making suggestions and feedback (Valenti, 2019).

1.3. Types of Leadership Styles

The field of organizational behavior has a predominant visualization of leadership and believes that the most prevailing leadership style is the charismatic/transformational style (Cooper & Barling, 2008), a style that is frequently compared with a transactional style. However, studies since 2000 have observed an astounding number of other

leadership styles, including servant, integrative public, shared/distributed, ethical, authentic, initiating structure and consideration, pragmatic/ideological, and spiritual (Anderson & Sun, 2017).

a) **Charismatic and Transformational Leadership**

Charismatic leadership is a leadership style that inspires subordinates to abandon the needs or desires of one's self while dedicating their time and power to help their leaders achieve their causes. Subordinates are inspired to act this way by their leader who expresses a stimulating vision of a desired future (Anderson & Sun, 2017). Charismatic leaders have strong hopes and beliefs in order for their followers to achieve what is expected from them and always thrive to achieve their best. Charismatic leaders are excellent role models because they set personal examples. They believe that passion is the fuel to any idea, have a strong sense of self and are willing to take on risks for the benefits of their followers. In addition, charismatic leaders encourage a collective identity and promote group cohesiveness (House, 1977; House & Podsakoff, 1994; Raajalakshmi & Gnanasekaran, 2021). These characteristics help us comprehend the encouraging effect that charismatic leaders have on others. Charismatic leaders are viewed by their followers as having extraordinary communication skills. Their personal magnetic charm arouses their followers' loyalty and enthusiasm and the relationship that they create with their followers is extremely strong that it gives them the desire to imitate their leader and to adopt their values and beliefs (House, 1977). Charismatic leaders can enhance followers' organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs), and contribute to higher levels of supervisor-rated task performance. In addition, charismatic leadership is positively related to organizational performance (Banks et al., 2017).

Charismatic leaders have a compelling vision of the future and are very keen about it. They devise and convey new goals and convince followers of the value that these goals will bring to the organization. As a result, they and their mission are perceived by

others as being remarkable (Banks et al., 2017; Conger et al., 2000) and are seen as the source of hope for a better future (Gebert et al., 2016). Charismatic leaders like to initiate and preserve a substantial level of change within the organization. In addition, they are highly sensitive to the environment and are considered others-centered i.e. attentive to followers' needs. The methods that charismatic leaders deploy to achieve a vision boost staff innovation and creativity (Rast et al., 2016).

As for transformational leadership, it encompasses four sub-dimensions: charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration (Bass, 1985). A key question is whether transformational leadership and charismatic leadership are different styles. Many scholars (e.g. Cote, 2017) seem to agree with Fiol et al. (1999) who said that 'the similarities among these theories are, in our opinion, far greater than their differences' (Fiol et al., 1999). Previous research indicates that effective transformational leadership are skilled at motivating followers working in government and mechanical organizations more than those working in industrial and organic organizations (Mumford & Van Doorn ,2001; Dust et al., 2013). Transformational leadership main purpose is to motivate followers and to focus their attention on their contributions to people who are influenced by their work such as clients, customers or others (Grant, 2012). In addition, there is evidence that female leaders display more transformational leadership qualities than male leaders do (Eagly et al., 2003). Female leaders may prefer a transformational leadership style because it helps them in overcoming the barriers to becoming recognized leaders and naturally prove their aptitude in meeting the requirements of their gender role (Silva & Mendis, 2017).

By using a meaningful and creative standard, transformational leaders are able to influence others and improve their motivation in order to identify with a shared organizational vision (Nielsen et al., 2018). Therefore, transformational leadership is considered a leadership style that stimulates critical thinking and encourages creativity

among followers. In addition, transformational leaders possess great communication and aim to arouse followers' thought and imagination by virtue of inspiration and democracy (Stewart, 2017).

b) Transactional Leadership

Over the last few decades, many researchers have been interested in studying transformational leadership and the impact it has on organizations. Less attention has been given to transactional leadership since it has been characterized by holding employees responsible for the outcomes and not encouraging them to be creative, which reduces followers' motivation and commitment. Lately however, employees who worked in organizations that implemented transactional leadership felt engagement with the job and commitment to the organization, experienced self-initiated behavior as well as psychological attachment to the organization (Breevaart et al., 2014; Chiaburu et al., 2014; Jackson et al., 2013). The negligence of investigating the effect of transformational leadership and only concentrating on transformational leadership was described by Podsakoff et al. (2010) as an "unfortunate consequence" of the high admiration people have for transformational leadership.

In his 'full-range' leadership model, Bass hypothesized that the transactional leadership style is characterized by two factors: management by exception (MBE) and contingent reward (Bass, 1985). Contingent reward refers to how the leader utilizes constructive transactions to reinforce subordinates' positive performance: the degree to which the leader supports followers to identify with the leader and meet desired outcomes (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Aga, 2016). On the other hand, management by exception is considered more corrective than constructive: the degree to which the leader corrects a follower for failure to perform as expected, and it is divided into two categories (active and passive) (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Active leaders actively monitor followers' deviation from the standards, errors, and mistakes and try to correct them when

necessary. Passive leaders take corrective action after deviation from standards, errors, and mistakes take place (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Transactional leaders focus mainly on deviations and mistakes and either immediately take the necessary steps to correct a wrongful action or intervene only if subordinate fails to meet work standards (Musinguzi et al., 2018; Alloubani et al., 2019). Transactional leaders focus on making the daily activities of an organization flow smoothly in order to maximize productivity (McCay et al., 2018). In addition, transactional leaders provide attend to each follower's needs, encourage creativity, motivate followers to perform beyond expectations, and will go beyond their individual self-interest for the greater good of the group (Alloubani et al., 2019).

c) Ideological and Pragmatic Leadership

Evidence shows that many leadership traits such as character and trust are more fundamental than charisma (Pasternack & O'Toole, 2002; Yukl, 1999; Khurana, 2002). Research on the CIP (charismatic, ideological, pragmatic) model of leadership has debated that alternative pathways to charismatic/transformational leadership styles are the ideological and pragmatic leadership styles, and this can result in achieving outcomes and outstanding leadership. Strange and Mumford's (2002) have examined the ideological leadership style as a distinctive approach in a historiometric study of 60 distinguished leaders across history. The finding indicates that there are two different types of vision. While the charismatic leader acts according to a vision that stipulates a better future, the ideological leader does not articulate a future-oriented vision but rather a vision that encourages and adheres to traditional values (Strange & Mumford, 2002).

Ideological leadership is founded on a strong belief system through which the leaders ensure that their vision will become a reality by depending on groups that share and reinforce the same vision as theirs (Hunter et al., 2009; Mumford et al., 2006). The

vision of ideological leaders focuses the bulk of time on previous experiences and it is directed toward an idealized past in order to show the weakness of the existing system (Mumford et al., 2007; Strange & Mumford, 2002; 2005). In addition, ideological leaders link their vision to emotionally salient experiences that connect groups of like-minded people together through their dedication to their shared belief system (Bedell-Avers et al., 2008). Ideological leaders explain and describe the context of the problem by following the norms while focusing on previous experiences with people who share in their beliefs (Hunter & Lovelace, 2020). Therefore, ideological leaders' vision for the future is engrained in common points of reference and an idealistic view of the past and ideological sense making is often focused on a legendary return to glory (Lovelace et al., 2019).

Pragmatic leaders use a different leadership style, which is based on problem solving rather than a shared vision. Through this approach, pragmatic leaders encourage intellectual stimulation, which involves arousing followers' critical thinking and imagination, as well as spurring their skills in identifying and solving problems in a creative way (Mumford & Van Doorn, 2001). Therefore, pragmatic leaders convey messages to their followers meticulously, and are susceptible and responsive to their input. They like to use logic and evidence to influence others and gain their support instead of persuading them by appealing to their emotions (Mumford et al., 2008; Mumford et al., 2006). Pragmatic leaders are good problem solvers who continuously pursue activities that are beneficial to the organization, as well as create suitable solutions based on their current situation (Lovelace & Hunter, 2013). Pragmatic leaders are logical in their way of thinking and exhibit a flexible approach to problem solving. Instead of focusing on achieving specific goals, pragmatic leaders provide a complete evaluation of the situation that can be modified due to changes in the environment (Lovelace et al., 2019). Pragmatic leadership focus their efforts on small groups of "well connected, well-educated elites" (Griffith et al., 2018) who can approach issues in a

comprehensive manner than a large group of charismatic or ideological leaders would (Griffith et al., 2015).

Mumford and colleagues (Mumford, 2006; Bedell-Avers et al., 2008) proposed that there are mainly ten distinctive characteristics that differentiate the three leader types and that describe the CIP model. These characteristics are: (a) time frame orientation, (b) type of experience used, (c) nature of outcomes sought, (d) number of outcomes sought, (e) focus in model construction, (f) locus of causation, (g) controllability of causation, (h) targets of influence, (i) crisis conditions and (j) use of emotions (Mumford, 2006; Mumford et al., 2008). The three leader types use these characteristics, which were built on early life experiences in managing crises (Mumford, 2006; Ligon et al., 2008). These characteristics and their relations to each leadership type are depicted in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Hypothesized differences for charismatic, ideological and pragmatic leaders.

	Time frame orientation	Type of experienced used	Nature of outcomes sought	Number of outcomes sought	Focus in model construction	Locus of causation	Controllability of causation	Targets of influence	Crisis conditions	Use of emotions
Charismatic	Future ^a	Positive ^a	Positive ^b	Multiple ^b	External	People ^a	High ^a	Masses ^a	Ordered	Positive ^a
Ideological	Past ^a	Negative ^a	Transcendent	Few ^b	Internal	Situations	Low	Base Cadre	Chaotic	Negative ^b
Pragmatic	Present ^a	Both ^a	Malleable ^a	Variable ^a	External	Interactive ^a	Selective ^b	Elites ^b	Localized	Rational

Note. Table represents predictions taken from Mumford and colleagues (Bedell-Avers, Hunter and Mumford, 2008; Mumford, 2006; Mumford & Strange, 2002).

^aFully supported by the study.

^bPartially supported by the study.

d) Servant Leadership

Servant leaders are committed to developing the people they lead and serve personally and professionally (Stone et al., 2004). Servant leadership focuses on the needs of others and on making sure that the highest priority needs are taken care of first (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leadership supports followers' career growth and development, encourages team members to collaborate and share ideas, and clarifies the team's roles for achieving goals effectively (Hu & Liden, 2011). The application of servant

leadership principles creates increased job satisfaction and commitment as employees become more familiar with the perception of fairness and equitable treatment (Mayer et al., 2008; Van Dierendonck et al., 2014). Furthermore, servant leaders instill the importance of service within the organization (subordinates) as well as outside of the organization (customers and other stakeholders) (Liden et al., 2014), which reduces followers' intentions to quit their jobs (Liden et al., 2014) and endorses voluntary actions intended to help others (Liden et al., 2014; Neubert et al., 2008).

Recent studies revealed that servant leadership has a positive impact on employees' perception of work-life balance and family support (Tang et al., 2016). Since holistic leadership is characterized by being complete and progressive, it is therefore positively linked to a number of job-related attitudinal consequences. These comprise employee engagement (Van Dierendonck et al., 2014), feeling self-motivated (Mayer et al., 2008), having a sense of vitality and learning (Walumbwa et al., 2018), finding work to have significance and purpose (Khan et al., 2015), and having good mental health (Gotsis & Grimani, 2016). Research also shows that servant leadership is negatively associated with mental distress and ego depletion (Rivkin et al., 2014), frustration (Bobbio et al., 2012), feeling disconnected in your job (Walumbwa et al., 2018), and the feeling to resign (Hunter et al., 2013).

e) **Authentic Leadership**

Authentic leadership is:

“a pattern of leader behavior that draws on and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development” (Walumbwa et al., 2008).

One inconsistency in the authentic leadership style is the leader–follower relationship. Walumbwa et al. (2008) note, “A core prediction of authentic leadership theory is that the leaders’ espoused values/beliefs and actions become aligned over time and across varying situational challenges”, and propose that authentic leadership is so transparent and influential that followers take on their leader’s characteristics as their own. Nevertheless, this disregards the fact that inauthenticity is unavoidable since followers may have fidelity to their own personal values and beliefs; thus, inspiring followers to be authentic to their own values and beliefs might create value divergence rather than convergence (Algera & Lips-Wiersma, 2012).

Authentic leaders try continually to show who they are as a person and to make a difference in the organization. In addition, they have a transparent management style, something that seems familiar, but mostly as a desire, value, or a belief (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2016). “Authentic leaders thus make moral judgments freely and independently, without concern for potentially opposing normative or external social pressures” (Lemoine et al., 2019).

f) **Ethical Leadership**

Although organizations have realized that leaders are responsible for setting the foundations of ethical performance within the workplace, Brown et al. (2005) and Lee et al. (2010) considered ethical leadership to be distinctive since it proposes that new behaviors can be acquired by observing and imitating others. Ethical leadership is described as “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision making” (Brown & Trevino, 2006). Principally, ethical leaders are righteous decision makers who act in an ethical, honest, and trustworthy manner. In addition, they serve as role models to their followers who lead by example, and are thus considered an idol they can look up to

(Brown et al., 2005; Mayer et al., 2009). An ethical leader continuously behaves according to ethics and rewards followers' ethical conduct and disciplines. All these managerial attributes of ethical leaders distinguish them from transformational leaders (Brown & Trevino, 2006).

Ethical leaders have positive effects on a variety of followers' outcomes including work engagement, intrapreneurship (Özsungur, 2019), job satisfaction, organization commitment, skepticism and employee retention (Karim & Nadeem, 2019), task performance and turnover intentions (Lee et al., 2019), feedback -seeking (Gong et al. 2019), followers' abusive behaviors (Paterson & Huang, 2018), and organizational citizenship behaviors (Tourigny et al., 2017).

g) Spiritual Leadership

Spiritual leadership has appeared as a new leadership style that is fundamental to supporting followers' organizational performance (Albuquerque et al., 2014). It is described as "comprising the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and membership" (Fry, 2003). Both leaders and followers experience a sense of calling in a way that they can make a difference in the world and that their lives have purpose. Spiritual leaders establish an organizational culture that creates a sense of membership, a sense of belonging to the organization as well as being understood and appreciated. Combining 'calling' with 'membership' provides a suitable environment for employees where they can feel a sense of meaningfulness and connection with others (Fry, 2003). Spiritual leadership theory proposes that leaders' values, attitudes and conducts create a spiritual environment that helps followers prosper (Fry, 2003; Reave, 2005; Samul, 2019). The vision of spiritual leaders is based on altruistic love whereby both leaders and followers have genuine care for themselves and for others.

Consequently, spiritual welfare is improved within the workplace (Ferguson & Milliman, 2008; Wahid & Mustamil, 2017).

Spiritual leaders have a distinct leadership style than other leaders as they always seek to lead while keeping emotional and spiritual equilibrium. As a result, spiritual leadership may improve employee commitment to the organization by keeping them more engaged and having a higher level of energy (Yang et al., 2017). Yet, researchers are still unsure about how spiritual leaders might promote employees' proactive behaviors. Therefore, they have become attracted to studying the factors that may contribute to enhanced proactive employee workplace behavior. This is because organizations can deal with rapidly developing changes in the environment by seeking proactivity (Park and Jo, 2017).

h) Integrative Public Leadership

Integrative public leadership is defined as “bringing diverse groups and organizations together in semi-permanent ways, and typically across sector boundaries, to remedy complex public problems and achieve the common good” (Crosby & Bryson, 2010). Integrative public leadership involves developing partnerships across organizational boundaries (Morse, 2010), and functions on the notion of non-hierarchical collaboration among partners. Although collaborators may have objectives that do not essentially interconnect, they can still manage to work together. Since the theory of integrative public leadership has been developed relatively recently, scholars dispute that is different from other leadership styles such as charismatic/transformational or ethical (Ospina & Foldy, 2010).

In their research on integrative public leadership, Osborne and Cui (2019) draw on the importance of value co-creation in relation to integrative public leadership. In order to create value in public management research, several parties must work together to

create new services and find a solution to a common problem (Torfing et al., 2016). In addition, public management research value co-creation refers to the steps that are required to create value for service users during and after they receive a service (Hardyman et al., 2019). Therefore, value has five measurable elements—temporary satisfaction, longstanding results, lived experience, capacity creation and public value. It can be attributed to the society, to the individual, and/or to the service delivery system. Value can be produced in the public service production process as well as when people use these services. It also takes place in the context of the lives of individuals producing or using a public service (Osborne, 2020).

i) Shared/Distributed Leadership

The last leadership style we examine is shared or distributed leadership, expressed as the “distribution of leadership influence across multiple team member” (Carson et al., 2007). Distributed leadership is mostly significant for teams, where leaders and subordinates share information and participation in order to meet collective goals and objectives. In this leadership style, the direction of influence within the team may not clearly be predictable (Carson et al., 2007). Distributed leadership occurs when several members within a team lead and influence each other in order to maximize team effectiveness (Thorpe et al., 2011). Distributed leadership is significant for today’s environment because team members share responsibility for tasks, rather than being led by a specific leader (Carson et al., 2007).

Shared leadership moves away from the traditional leader/follower concept and team members act as both leaders and followers in order to achieve organizational objectives (Wu & Chen, 2018). While shared leaders allow leadership to be distributed among team members rather than focused on a single leader, team members must possess the necessary characteristics in order to adopt shared leadership (Chiu et al., 2016).

j) **Laissez-faire Leadership**

Laissez-faire leadership is defined as "the avoidance of intervention," which refers to the leader's unwillingness to acknowledge or take into account the requirements of followers for development or well-being (Skogstad et al., 2007). Thus, laissez-faire leadership can appear as a lack of presence or as a reluctance to intervene (Bass & Avolio, 1994), which lowers the perception of the efficacy of the leader (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 2008). The laissez-faire leaders are absent when their subordinates need them. According to research, a laissez-faire leadership style is associated with poor levels of satisfaction with one's employment and with their immediate supervisor (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). In fact, research demonstrates that psychopathic leaders are more effective at Laissez-Faire leadership and less effective at Transactional and Transformational leadership (Mathieu et al., 2015).

Avolio (1999) noted that there are occasions when laissez-faire leadership is suitable (for example, when an athlete leader does not view the task or situation as important or critical), and that the frequency with which the athlete leader exhibits laissez-faire behaviors will determine their perceived effectiveness.

1.3. Leadership Style and Gender

Examining followers' relations with their leader and the leadership style they adopt has become normal practice in the last few years; thus, it was essential for researchers to explore the different leadership styles such as the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire (Bass, 1990; Silva & Mendis, 2017). Transformational leaders encourage creativity among their followers, and inspire them to explore new ways to achieve their goals and learn. In addition, they boost team performance and create higher levels of commitment to organizational mission. Conversely, transactional leaders value order and structure, and they do not take their interactions with their followers flippantly

(Bass, 1990). Furthermore, the relationship between leaders and their followers has also been documented in other recent research on authentic leadership and servant leadership (Avolio et al., 2004; Greenleaf, 1977; Liden et al., 2014). The descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes in the workplace might lead to men and women demonstrating different behaviors (Heilman, 1983; Eagly & Karau, 2002) and can hinder the career progress of ambitious women (Heilman, 2012).

It is also likely that those stereotypes might affect the daily behaviors of both men and women (ingrained in both the leader and his or her followers), and that the perceptions that people have towards a certain leadership style may be influenced by the gender of the leader endorsing those behaviors (Ayman et al., 2009). Conflict in leadership style is another behavioral difference between males and females (Brewer et al., 2002; Korabik et al., 1993), as well as the organizational citizenship behaviors (Kidder, 2002), or the basic interpersonal communication styles that do not fall under the umbrella of formal leadership styles but do have an impact on how females are perceived as leaders. For instance, women are more likely than men to communicate with others by implementing core values such as respect and inclusiveness (Matthew et al., 2013), and contrary to their male counterparts, women tend to make unbiased decisions staying away from the dominant approach (Luxen, 2005). Women are less likely to self-promote than men do, less likely to initiate discussions in order to settle differences, and less likely to claim what is theirs (Bowles et al., 2007; Kray & Thompson, 2004).

Research has also shown that women are being instructed by society and culture to be modest (Rudman & Glick, 1999; Smith & Huntoon, 2014), and are expected to be humble and prettify themselves with proper conduct (Rudman, 1998). Additionally, self-promotion is an essential tool for career advancement and transition (Kacmar et al., 1992; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Stevens & Kristof, 1995). However, women are less likely to self-promote (Bowles & McGinn, 2005) since they are viewed as more dominant and arrogant than self-promoting men, whose behavior is in harmony with

stereotypical expectations (Rudman et al., 2010). It is also more probable that women choose positions that are lower down the career scale and tend to shy away from taking on the roles of leaders (Fletcher, 2001). Women leaders are better at taking the initiative of developing the competence and skills of others (Cavallo & Brienza, 2006), as well as promoting teamwork and interpersonal relations with coworkers more than their male encouraging others stimulating and inspiring others, building relationships, and creating effective collaboration and teamwork than their men do (Zenger & Folkman, 2012). Moreover, when trying to resolve conflict style, men and women deploy different styles. While females prefer employing an avoidance style, men try resorting to the dominant style (Brewer et al., 2002). Lastly, women seem to bring different perspectives to boardrooms debates by applying “complex moral reasoning” and they try to discuss matters that are central to the stakeholders’ interests rationally (Bart & McQueen, 2013).

Moreover, research that compared women and men on transformational leadership style found that women are more likely to exhibit a participative leadership style. Findings related to distinct leadership styles are still ambiguous and thus cannot be used to carry out an objective gender comparison. Notwithstanding the findings that are significant, as Eagly and Carli (2007) note “differences in men’s and women’s styles generally appear as mild shading, with considerable overlap” and some researchers who have studied gender differences believe that they have been altered beyond normal proportions (Hyde, 2005). In addition, while human behaviors, principles, and skills are important determinants of gender differences (see Eagly, 2013), it’s still unclear what the reason behind those differences are and whether there’s a relationship between those differences and the leaders’ style. The question that still awaits an answer is whether women in leadership positions are deemed as effective as men. The answer is relevant to research pertaining to leadership as it helps them decide if equal representation of women in the workplace can have positive effects across the organization. If it becomes obvious that females lead in a style that is effective under existing conditions

as some researchers state (e.g. Eagly & Carli, 2003), there may be significant ramifications for the field of leadership studies. For example, if females are considered to be more effective in leadership positions than men are, the leadership advantage viewpoint is legitimate, then why women are less likely than men to be appointed to leadership positions in the workplace?

The process of measuring an employee's job performance is influenced by a variety of circumstances related to their surroundings (Eagly et al., 1995; Al-Omari & Okasheh, 2017), which makes it necessary to enquire if those circumstances are related to gender differences and leadership. However, subordinates' expectations of their leader and prejudice towards him have an impact on the assessment of leaders' effectiveness in the workplace (Eagly & Chin, 2010).

In addition, leaders expect their followers to be devoted to them and to the tasks that leaders assign to them; part of a leader's duty is to ascertain dedication from followers, irrespective of their predetermined ideas and prejudices. One would argue that leaders must practice what they preach to be considered successful leaders; therefore, while a leader's performance may not be the determinant of the leader's ability to inspire and motivate others, the leader's views and capabilities are indivisibly related and must be part of any research study related to leadership and gender differences. In addition, the researchers realized that leader role might be more aligned with the female gender role or male gender role. Men's leadership skills were seen as more decisive and powerful when working in a male-dominated environment.

In addition to studying the direct cause and effect relationship that male and female leaders have on the organizational performance, research should also take into consideration the gender differences in leadership performance. The preponderance of research investigating the impact of the leader's gender on the organizational performance reveals that the presence of female leaders on the corporate board has a

significantly positive influence on the organizational performance (measured by return on assets (ROA), return on equity (ROE), and sales performance) (Jalbert et al., 2013; Khan & Vieito, 2013; Peni, 2014; Smith et al., 2006). However, it is worth noting that the majority of research is based on a large data set of companies operating in the United States. Thus, more research is required to reveal patterns in smaller organizations and covering more countries.

As for corporate social responsibility (CSR), research reveals that female leaders care about social issues more than male leaders do (Bear et al., 2010; Boulouta, 2013; Larkin et al., 2013; Post et al., 2011). Generally speaking, a growing body of research on gender diversity in the boardroom suggests that the number or proportion of women directors is positively associated with a firm's CSR strengths (Bear et al., 2010; Post et al., 2011), and negatively associated with a firm's CSR worries (Boulouta, 2013). This mainly alludes that the strong representation of female leaders on the corporate board may have a positive impact on the non-financial organizational performance.

With respect to group/team processes and organizational practices, Nielsen & Huse (2010) realized that women directors are more probable to be associated with activities that improve the organization's internal processes, for example corporate governance programs and boardroom performance appraisal. The more gender-diverse the board is, the more women are likely to join monitoring committees. Female directors have fewer attendance problems at board meetings; diverse boards can be more effective than homogeneous boards when it comes to male directors' attendance to board meetings (Adams & Ferreira, 2009). Moreover, organizations with at least one female board member are less probable to remediate accounting and financial reporting. This suggests that a gender-balanced corporate board is more likely to pay attention to managing and controlling risk and is less likely to ignore alternatives to the dominant view when making decisions than all-male boards (Abbott et al., 2012; Kulik & Metz, 2017). However, Triana et al. (2014) observed that the relationship between a gender-balanced

corporate board and amount of strategic change is the most negative. The authors propose that this may be the case since diverse groups have more intellectually diversity, and this might lead to having issue consenting to strategic change.

Despite the significant progresses in women's representation in management positions, women are still reluctant in accepting leadership roles. Grossman et al. (2015) and Li et al. (2020) realized that women are less enthusiastic about leading than men are. Furthermore, they feel most comfortable leading an all-female group and less at ease taking on a leadership role when group members are notified of the leader's gender. Likewise, Born et al. (2019) discovered that females are more prepared to lead a group consisting mainly of women. On the other hand, men like to occupy leadership roles especially leading groups consisting mainly of females. When compared to equally performing women, men rank higher as they are characterized as being assertive and having more influence. Chakraborty and Serra (2019) conducted an experiment that simulates corporate decision-making. The scenario was a replica of a real-world situation where subordinates communicate angry message to their leader. The experiment revealed women refrain from accepting leadership role due to "backlash aversion".

1.3.1. Gender Differences in Personality

What does it take to enjoy career success? A shared belief and team spirit, being creative, perseverance, motivation, and having a passion for your career are a few answers that directly come to mind. However, research shows that women who hold a small share of top executive positions frequently have different leadership characteristics than male leaders.

Several research studies reveal consistent differences between men and women personality traits (Hyde, 2014; McCrae et al., 2005; Schmitt et al., 2008). Women scored higher, on average, on personality traits associated with agreeableness, gregariousness and positive emotions, and on some aspects of orderliness such as organization and carefulness. On the other hand, men tend to score higher than women do in areas of assertiveness, emotional stability, as well as accomplishment and perseverance (Stanek & Ones, 2018).

Another personality trait related to leaders is risk aversion. Researchers have used several inventories of personality to study the connection between personality type and risk tolerance. A study conducted by Hoang et al. (2019) shows that firms having male CEOs are more likely to operate in more risky industries than firms having female CEOs. The average risk index of firms with male CEOs is higher than that of firms with female CEOs. In addition, when estimating the percentage of firms that operated in high-risk industries, there was a large gap between firms having male CEOs and those having female CEOs. This concludes that female leaders are more risk averse than their male counterparts.

Leadership can involve taking a sacrifice on behalf of the team, such as occupying a role on any voluntary management committee, or providing logistical assistance to the organization. Babcock et al. (2017) show that women are more likely to do hard work that brings very few rewards i.e., women are more willing to “take one for the team”. Women’s act of selflessness plays a role in their career decisions and their lower wages. In addition, women are considered more generous than men as they don’t mind giving to an anonymous counterpart; and the difference is even more noticeable when the person she’s giving to is a disadvantaged person or a philanthropic institution (Bilén et al., 2021).

In some cases, women don't believe that they have what it takes to occupy leadership positions. In male-dominated industries, when taking part in group discussions women don't feel comfortable sharing their ideas (Bordalo et al., 2019), which demonstrates that women tend to undervalue themselves and hold themselves back from career advancement. Women's self-assessment of how qualified they are even though they somewhat outperform men's performance. Women's negative self-promotion continues despite their past performance. This reluctance to self-promote leads to women being underrepresented in leadership positions (Exley & Kessler, 2019).

Cason et al. (2022) discovered that both men and women both consider women to be more socially concerned and are more involved in providing benefits to the community. Another area that affects leadership confidence. Not only confidence affects women's representation in executive positions, stereotypes about confidence also play an important role as they might influence women's representation in leadership positions. Bordalo et al. (2019) contended that men are overconfident mainly because of the overstatement of real fundamental differences, and partly because they overestimate their own capabilities. This endorses the notion that stereotypes increase the performance gap.

1.3.2. The Queen Bee Phenomenon

A woman who applies different techniques in order to cope with working and becoming successful in male-dominated environments is known as "queen bee". She tries to adapt to the masculine workplace by disconnecting herself from other female workers (Kanter, 1977; Staines et al., 1974; Derks et al., 2016). Furthermore, she employs three different approaches for that purpose: (1) adopting and validating the existing gender hierarchy, (2) disconnecting herself from other women in the workplace in order to succeed (3) possessing masculine traits and trying to behave in a more masculine way.

As more and more females hanker for leadership positions, they attempt to find a way to belong to a workplace culture where men have most of the power and influence. The most evident way to blend in is by exhibiting masculine traits and leadership styles. Women do not have an equal shot at leadership positions as men do, and this is because people believe that a successful leader must pertain to self-assertion and independence, while women are considered more friendly, helpful and fair (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Schein, 2001; Koburtay et al., 2019). In order to achieve success in their careers, women try to find a solution to accommodate to their roles as women and their roles as leaders by adopting male characteristics. For instance, a research that was conducted in an Italian university among senior faculty members revealed that females labeled themselves as possessing equal or more masculine traits (e.g., aggressive, driven, audacious) than their male counterparts (Ellemers et al., 2004; Derks et al., 2016). It was also remarkable that the more women adopted male characteristics in the workplace, the greater the number of subordinates they supervised. When combined, the results of these studies demonstrate that women are moving up the corporate ladder by adapting to the masculine side of leadership and not by modifying their leadership style to include the feminist perspective.

Since challenges increase tremendously in male-dominated workplaces, women seek to enhance their career development opportunities by staying away from other women. For instance, in their study on the queen bee syndrome, Derks et al. (2011) and Faniko et al. (2015) reported that female bosses compared themselves to their female subordinates and not to their male subordinates concerning determination and dedication to their career. Moreover, women do not consider themselves similar to other women whenever they become successful in a workplace where gender discrimination exists (Derks et al., 2011; Stroebe et al., 2009). Not only do they identify themselves as possessing masculine traits, they also consider themselves more masculine than other females (Faniko et al., 2015).

A research study that occurred in law firms consisting mainly of men reinforced these results since junior women actually believe that female co-workers tend to stay away from their gender identity (Ely, 1994). Remarkably, Faniko et al. (2015) realized that female bosses do not try to stay away from women of similar status; however, they keep away from junior co-workers by declaring that they have more commitment to their career and are more masculine than they are (Faniko et al., 2015). In conclusion, this demonstrates that female bosses try to stay away from women who have not proven to be as successful as they are and not from women in general.

Conceivably, the most negative impact that “queen bees” have on other women is endorsing gender inequality in the workplace rather than changing stereotypes about women. They do so by resisting actions aimed at reducing gender inequality in the workplace, approving negative stereotypes about women, and refuting the illegitimacy of lower outcomes for women as a group. For example, queen bees contribute to gender disparities in women career outcomes and put them at a disadvantage by treating female subordinates unjustly, constantly criticizing them and accusing them of being less motivated and less dedicated than male subordinates (Derks et al., 2011; Ellemers et al., 2004; Faniko et al., 2015). Research also shows that females who were able to succeed in organizations that are controlled mainly by men, considered the employees’ selection process to be valid although gender bias was prominently visible (Stroebe et al., 2009). In their research about female police officers, Derks et al. (2011) noticed that senior female police officers refused to provide advice or train their female subordinates. Furthermore, they disagreed that gender inequality still exists in their organization.

“Queen bees” are also guilty of opposing measures aimed at reducing gender inequality in the workplace, which further encourages structural disadvantage in organizations (Derks et al., 2011). One research study showed that female bosses refused to support gender equality policies (e.g., flexi-time, quota policies, additional training for women)

as much as men did. However, females who occupied non-managerial positions were much more supportive of these policies than men (Ng & Chiu, 2001; Faniko et al., 2016) were. Likewise, another study that took place in Australia showed 58% of female bosses were against quota policies that aimed at improving the representation of women in leadership roles (Rindfleish & Sheridan, 2003). Another research about quota policies revealed that “queen bees” encourage policies. A recent study on quota policies revealed that “queen bees” encourage the implementation of policies that support females who hold senior-level positions like them. However, they showed resistance to quota policies that provide support to the careers of junior women even if they were of benefit to them (Faniko et al., 2015). This finding again proposes that queen bees are supportive of quotas that would benefit women that they are directly competing with but not junior women.

Females who seek professional advancement, stay away from other women and identify themselves weakly with other women in the workplace are considered queen bees (Derks et al., 2016). In addition, “queen bees” behave in a more masculine way, agree with negative aspects of stereotypes about women, and may belittle other women by considering them emotionally unstable and less determined than men. Furthermore, they deny the existence of gender discrimination within the workplace, which discourages other women from getting ahead in their careers and achieving gender equality at work (Derks et al., 2016). In addition, compared to male managers, queen bees are less supportive and less eager to help younger women employees in their career advancement and development (Derks, 2017). Interestingly, a study conducted by Gabriel et al. (2018) shows that women behave in a more uncivil way than their male counterparts did, which implies that women acts in a mean way towards other women than they do towards men. More interestingly, the same study suggests that when employees experience incivility that is initiated by women, such as feeling unnoticed, disliked, or treated disrespectfully, this leads to a higher turnover (Gabriel et al., 2018).

A research conducted by Sterk et al. (2018) revealed that employees who work with a leader exhibiting queen bee behavior felt more irritated, depressed and worried than employees who work with a leader that displays a neutral behavior. The same research also proposes that the “queen bee” behavior is not considered harmful to junior women. However, they are still negatively affected by the “queen bee” syndrome as they worry that the success in their career is unattainable. Wuertele’s (2017) study disclosed an interesting finding, which states that leaders who exhibit control and authority over employees, even if they don’t have bad intentions, can be classified as bullies and manifesting queen bee behavior and may lead to toxicity in leadership.

1.3.3. Bias Against Female Leaders

Research studies conducted by Maume (1999) and Tyrowicz et al. (2020) suggested that as the number of females increases in an organization, women are less likely than men to be appointed to leadership roles. However, another study proposes that the reason why men still greatly outnumber women in leadership positions is the persistent gender bias in organizations, following patriarchy schemes. The review of literature on the topic of prejudice against women leaders proves that there is a tendency for subordinates to evaluate female leaders less favorably than male leaders. They are also more inclined to like male leaders more than they like female leaders, and to punish female leaders for taking on male leadership traits (Eagly et al., 1992; Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Heilman et al., 2004; Johnson et al., 2008). So why all this bias against female leaders? This bias is believed to originate from the inconsistency between the expected female gender role and the traits of a leader (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Schein, 1975).

Eagly’s (1987) social role theory explains how gender stereotypes tend to emerge from examining men and women as they are distributed into traditional social roles within their society. While men are stereotypically identified as having agentic attributes and are persistently associated with breadwinning roles, women continue to be placed in

traditionally female dominated, communally demanding positions that are defined as compassionate and affectionate, such as nurses, childcare providers and homemakers. Therefore, gender role stereotypes expect men to be strong, aggressive and bold. These stereotypes are so prevalent that they often occur unconsciously or automatically (Banaji & Hardin, 1996; Zhang et al., 2019). People have been shown to recall gender stereotype-consistent behaviors and gender stereotypes help people understand and provide meaning to social behaviors (Dunning & Sherman, 1997). Perhaps surprisingly, use of gender stereotypes is not related to sexism, as those scoring low on sexism scales are just as likely to make inferences based on gender stereotypes as those scoring high on sexism (Dunning & Sherman, 1997). Nevertheless, spending more time with people having different backgrounds can lead to expressing fewer stereotypes (Fiske, 1998). A research conducted by Elsesser (2016) concluded that employees were less biased to female leaders when they knew the female target very well and had first-hand information on her aptitude and performance as a leader. Thus, the role congruity theory confirms that when people act in ways that conflict with their gender stereotypes, they would have to deal with problems (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Similarly, when employees behave in ways that are congruent with their sex roles, they will be evaluated positively. When defining an effective leader, the attributes are linked to the male gender role. Consequently, female leaders suffer because inconsistencies exist between the characteristics associated with the female gender stereotype and those associated with effective leadership (Schein, 1975; Koenig et al., 2011). Thus, because of this unconscious bias against female leaders, women often take on masculine traits. Schein (1975) was the first to demonstrate the relation between being an effective leader and having masculine characteristics.

Schein conducted a study in the United States that included both female and male middle managers who worked in insurance companies and utilized a 92-item instrument known as the Schein Descriptive Index (SDI). Schein asked respondents to identify

adjectives as representing only females, only males or successful middle managers. The result of the study showed that the characteristics of successful middle managers are more often associated with agentic traits (e.g. aggressiveness, assertiveness, confidence, and enthusiasm), which respondents referred to in the study. The majority of participants agreed that in order for a leader to be successful they must possess masculine traits, and only few considered some female characteristics to be useful for managers (e.g. being kind and having empathy toward others. Other similar studies that took place in Germany, Japan, China and the United Kingdom revealed the same result, which is referred to as the “think manager – think male” phenomenon (Lee & Hoon, 1993; Schein, 2001; Braun et al., 2017). Schein’s study was reproduced in the United States and it indicated that women are less likely than men to sex-type the management role (Deal & Stevenson, 1998; Jackson et al., 2007; Schein & Mueller, 1992; Schein et al., 1996).

Consequently, women struggle between keeping their traditional female social role or adopting masculine traits in order to obtain the leadership position. If women adhere to the traditional view of the feminine gender role, they may be considered as failing to meet the requirements of their leader role. Nonetheless, if women don’t behave in a feminine manner because of adopting the agentic traits of successful leaders, they risk being evaluated negatively by others. As women find themselves struggling between keeping their traditional gender role or sacrificing it for the leadership role, the role congruity theory expects female bosses to endure two types of prejudice: descriptive and prescriptive (Eagly & Karau 2002; Johnson et al. 2008; Ridgeway, 2011). Descriptive stereotypes refer to beliefs about what characteristics should men and women possess. Descriptive bias occurs when women in leadership positions are perceived as being less effective than men are. On the other hand, prescriptive stereotypes refer to beliefs about the characteristics that are suitable for each gender to possess within the context of a certain culture. Prescriptive bias occurs when women

receive a less favorable evaluation of the actual leadership behavior than men because such behavior is considered less appropriate in women than men.

One type of bias is known as the implicit, or unconscious, bias that involves unconsciously giving a negative evaluation of a person based on irrelevant traits such as race or gender. Based on previous research indicating that the human mind is not always driven by consciousness, the duo social psychologists Mahzarin Banaji and Anthony Greenwald delved into the concept of implicit bias in 1995. Implicit bias was best described by the author Malcolm Gladwell's bestselling book "Blink" (2005):

"All of us have implicit biases to some degree. This does not necessarily mean we will act in an inappropriate or discriminatory manner, only that our first "blink" sends us certain information. Acknowledging and understanding this implicit response and its value and role is critical to informed decision-making and is particularly critical to those whose decisions must embody fairness and justice".

Banaji and Greenwald (2013) think that implicit bias is often unnoticeable since it is manifested in people's tendency to favor members of one's own group over those in other groups. For instance, researchers discovered that male participants implicitly linked positive leadership traits (e.g. aggressive, assertive, and ambitious) to men, although they never revealed any explicit favoritism to female or male leaders. On the contrary, female participants linked females to positive leadership traits (Latu et al., 2011). Another study, aimed at examining implicit biases, used a simulated initial public offering (IPO) based on a real one as an instrument to test the researcher's theory. In this scenario, researchers changed the gender of the IPO's top management team, which lead participants to consider female CEOs as less competent than their male counterparts. In addition, they regarded women's IPOs as less appealing than men's in spite of having similar firm finances and managerial traits (Bigelow et al.,

2014). Likewise, a study conducted by Ratcliff et al. (2015) on the relinquishment of power revealed that both female and male leaders perceived male co-workers to be more competent than female co-workers, and were more likely to relinquish power to male co-workers than female co-workers (Ratcliff et al., 2015). Not only men are accused of biases against women in the workplace. Studies show that a significant barrier for women in the workplace is implicit bias that comes from women co-workers. For instance, the more positions a woman holds, the more likely she is to favor a man as her boss. Women have also age bias, specifically against female bosses. However, male participants were indifferent to the gender or age of their bosses (Buchanan et al., 2012).

Studies indicate that when women have a preference, they would select to have a male manager instead of a female manager (The Telegraph, 2010). Women often experience a double bind because when they follow the feminine stereotypes and behave communally, they are observed as weak leaders, and this is what researchers refer to as “role incongruity”. When female leaders don’t behave in accordance with their gender role, they frequently suffer from defiance or backlash. In addition to their diminishing odds of promotion, the fear of backlash causes women to become reluctant self-promoters. Naturally, since men conform to masculine norms, they do not experience backlash.

Erkal et al. (2020) observed whether gender causes a creation of biased belief about the leader’s outcomes. They discovered that gender falsifies outcomes perceptions in dangerous surroundings. Similar to the unbiased Bayesian model of belief updating, when women display good outcomes their efforts are credit to luck. However, men’s bad outcomes are attributed to effort. In situations in which leaders are penalized or rewarded for their performance, women receive a bonus payout lower than that of men. The authors detected the fundamental reasons behind bonus payments and realized that the outcome is important for both males and females; however, beliefs about intentions are only significant for men. Therefore, in order for women to receive a bonus they

must provide good outcomes. However, men will still receive a high bonus even if they show bad outcomes so long as evaluators regard them with a large amount of respect or admiration.

Women advancing into leadership roles is highly affected by gender stereotypes. For example, organizations do not expect women to be demanding, which affects whether they can negotiate a promotion. Negative stereotypes against women can therefore affect the career advancement of women to leadership roles (Eckel et al., 2021).

1.4. Leader's Gender and Subordinates' Job Satisfaction

Research in the 1920s focused on leadership traits and emphasized that leadership style is an important factor since it may affect employee's satisfaction regarding their job. Studies that were conducted during the 1950s and 1960s investigated how the leadership style plays a vital role in influencing employee's job satisfaction (Northouse, 2015). One of the main contributors to overall employee high self-esteem and job satisfaction is the quality of the relationship between the leaders and their employees (De Cremer, 2003; Kiarie et al., 2017). When employees feel empowered and appreciated by their leaders, this leads to stronger job performance, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization. Subsequently, employees' job satisfaction and commitment depend on the leadership style of their managers (Al-Ababneh, 2013).

Yousef (2000) deduced that employee job satisfaction is correlated with their manager leadership style and hence managers need to implement the appropriate leadership behavior. An analysis of relevant studies shows that by adopting transformational leadership which inspires change, managers increase employees' expectations and recognition of their work and enhance their job satisfaction (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010; Gill et al., 2010; Omar, 2011; Albion & Gagliardi, 2007; Mohammad et al., 2011; Nielsen et al., 2009). Transformational leaders motivate followers to take initiative and solve

problems, which leads to improved employee job satisfaction (Watson, 2009; Albagawi, 2019). Cumming et al. (2010) mentioned that leadership that neglects the emotional intelligence of its followers while concentrating only on employee productivity is not capable of motivating and inspiring the staff. Research recommends that one of the effective ways that can help managers in increasing followers' satisfaction is thorough employing transformational leadership since it has significantly positive effect on employees' job satisfaction (Al-Hussami, 2008; Eliyana & Ma'arif, 2019).

Previous studies show that women do not lead differently than men do (Posner & Munson, 1979; Powell, 1990; Cuadrado et al., 2012). However, recent research on the gendered differentiation of leadership shows that there are different qualities and styles of leadership of men and women and which is known as masculine and feminine styles of leadership (Burke & Collins, 2001). Previously, the traditional idea of an effective leader in the United States was the leader who possess the traditional masculine leadership trait. Masculine leaders often exhibit autocratic behavior and are concerned about the output per employee. Hasan and Subhani (2011) stated that "men are more argumentative, give their opinions and don't share any personal information". They continue to mention that men are more decisive in decision making however, they like to exercise complete authoritarian control over their followers.

If there is a preference for the masculine leadership style, then female leaders must act more like men in order to be considered effective. However, some empirical evidence proposes that when female managers lead with a high degree of masculine traits they have negative impacts on their followers' in terms of effectiveness (Geddes, 2001; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). Actually, when examining feminine and masculine characteristics in the workplace, research shows that feminine personality traits are more attractive than masculine traits are (Geddes, 2001). Schieman and McMullen (2008) carried out a similar research that aims to study the cross gender supervisor subordinate relationships; the study confirmed the result of previous research that

women who are forced to lead with masculine characteristics find themselves in an unfavorable position.

With respect to the different types of leadership, it is common to believe that subordinates might have different viewpoints regarding their manager's leadership style and aptitude. It must be mentioned that the preferences of men and women are different when deciding upon the gender of their leader (Preko, 2012). The supervisor's leadership style and/or gender are important variables that might influence their success and their ability to be considered credible by their followers, keeping in mind that credibility is the cornerstone of persuasive communication. Remarkably, subordinates' perceptions about gender differences in leadership effectiveness have been developed (Grissom et al., 2012); for instance, previously research indicated that men and women showed biases to male leaders (Schein, 1973). About 15 years later, research discovered that women were less in favor of male leaders; however, men's opinions remained consistent through time (Grissom et al., 2012).

Researchers confirm a positive relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment. According to Robins (2005), when leaders adopt an appropriate leadership style, leaders build a solid foundation of trust and commitments with their subordinates. In their study, Dale and Fox (2008) mentioned that superiors who are approachable and empathetic are more likely to support their subordinates on both professional and personal levels. According to the leader-member exchange theory, leadership is a dyadic relationship between leaders and subordinates, which seems to endorse performance appraisal (Linden et al., 1993), long-term organizational commitment (Nystrom, 1990; Boyatzis, et al., 2012), and improved workers' contentedness with their job (Scandura & Graen, 1984; Judge et al., 2004). On the other hand, study shows that there is a strong connection between the interactions of managers and employees on the employees' productivity and commitment (Nystrom, 1990; Boyatzis et al., 2012).

Saleem (2015) detected that transformational leadership has a positive impact on employees' job satisfaction while there's a negative association between transactional leadership and employees' job satisfaction. Goleman (2000) proposes, "A leader should hold each leadership style in his bag like a golfer and he should be well averse to know that what style he should use in which situation because at every round of golf, you cannot use the same ball". It is significant to know that contingency theories are suitable for improving team productivity and maintaining employee morale. Rad and Yarmohammadian (2006) confirmed, "employees demonstrated less satisfaction with salaries, benefits, work conditions, promotion and communication as satisfier factors and more satisfaction with factors such as the nature of the job, co-workers and supervision type factors".

Erkutlu and Chafra (2006) explained that leadership has a significant effect on job satisfaction. For instance, transformational leadership inspires followers to reach their fullest potential, and its major role is in the implementation of knowledge-management processes for enhancing organizational performance (Eliyana & Ma'arif, 2019). Transformational leaders create a vision for their followers and guide the change through inspiration and motivation (Lo et al., 2020). They also encourage their followers to be imaginative, focus on empowering employees to make their own decisions, and encourages employees' share of voice (Anyiko Awori, 2018). Furthermore, transformational leaders foster team spirit and motivate followers to attain the organization's strategic objectives (Brooke, 2006; Saboe et al., 2015). Conversely, in transactional leadership, rewards and punishments are contingent upon the followers' performance. Rowden (2002) explains in his study that having employee satisfaction measured by their perspective leaders is not easy but still there exists a strong joy between leadership style and employee satisfaction. Rose et al. (2009) deduced that there is a positive relationship between organizational learning, organizational commitment, job satisfaction and work performance. Precisely, organizational learning culture functions as a predictor for organizational commitment and job satisfaction

(Hsu, 2009), and job satisfaction functions as a mediator between organizational commitment and work performance (Carmeli & Freund, 2004). In addition, group performance, achievement of goals, and job satisfaction are closely related to the supervisor's leadership style.

The inspirational leader inspires followers by deploying several psychological techniques and employee motivation strategies to inspire teams and boost productivity. Similarly, leaders try to improve their followers' productivity by pushing them to try things that are of interest to them and giving them the opportunity to take a risk (Nicolaidis & Duho, 2019; Rao & Zaidi, 2020). Job satisfaction is a complicated phenomenon because employees may be pleased with one facet of their job but displeased with another. Thus, job satisfaction may affect employees' organizational commitment and turnover intentions, employees' participation, trust in their leader, attendance at work and productivity (Khan et al., 2018). An effective leader creates an environment where employees can develop their independence at work, which leads to a greater workplace productivity. Conversely, ineffective leadership is linked to many negative outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, absence, mistrust in leader, corrupt and unethical behavior, and intention to quit. Trust is crucial for employee retention. Trusting that the leader has your best interest at heart enables organizations to prevent a high employee turnover rate thus increasing efficiency, performance and loyalty (Akhtar & Nazarudin, 2020).

1.4.1. When the Boss Is a Woman

Good communication is the basis for a successful relationship between supervisors and their subordinates. In order for a leader to gain their followers support, they must have a clear and well-communicated vision. The methods that leaders may utilize to achieve that particular vision include but are not limited to negotiating, influencing, problem solving, coaching, and inspiring (Tomal & Jones, 2022). This reflects on the well-being

of employees because this relationship involves continuous interactions that may possibly become tense and having lasting consequences (Duffy & Ferrier, 2003). Managers who value their subordinates and treat them with empathy are considered good bosses. On the other hand, managers who have rude personalities and constantly insult their employees are considered bad bosses, and subject to legal or internal sanctions in many countries (Frost, 2007; Kock et al., 2019). Similar management's approach can negatively influence the employees' physical and mental health. In their study on employee psychological wellbeing, Gilbreath and Benson (2004) discovered that even when employees had control over their relationships with their families, friends and colleagues, their supervisor's conduct was long determined to be critical to their overall wellbeing. For instance, sickness absence in organizations was greater in the victims of bullying than among other employees (Kivimäki et al., 2000; Nielsen et al., 2019).

A study of 550 managers revealed that when employees of both gender were supervised by a woman, they felt higher levels of social support, suffered less from depression and has fewer work-family conflict issues (Moore et al., 2005). However, do female employees perceive a female manager to have higher performance standards than a male leader? A few studies related to the social identity/social categorization theories propose that it's an advantage when the supervisor and employees are of the same gender. Moreover, when the supervisor and employees are of the same gender, the quality of the relationship and the levels of trust that employees experience are greater (Pelled & Xin, 2000; Johansson & Wennblom, 2017). Specifically, female employees experience higher levels of family support than male employees do (Foley et al., 2006) as well as higher levels of organizational support (Konrad et al., 2010) from female supervisors than from male supervisors. However, the results are not in any way coherent.

Many studies reveal that female employees find men and women to be equally effective. Schaffer and Riordan (2013) showed in their study on the supervisor-subordinate dyads that employees rated supervisory support, inequity, or relationship quality the same when the supervisor and employees were of the same or opposite sex. For instance, Grissom et al. (2012) discovered that female teachers were indifferent to the sex of the principal and had the same level of satisfaction and job retention when a female or male principal supervised them. Conversely, when a school was being overseen by a female principal, male teachers showed less satisfaction with their job and were more likely to quit. Furthermore, results from previous studies show employees were less satisfied with the female supervisee-female supervisor dyads. When female employees report to female supervisors, they reported having less trust in the organization (Jeanquart-Barone & Sekaran, 1994; Buchan et al., 2008) and lower relationship quality (Adebayo & Udegbe 2004; Elsesser & Lever 2011). Other studies found that female subordinates with female supervisors reported the lowest levels of trust in the leader than other dyadic combinations (Adebayo & Udegbe, 2004). In addition, researchers found a significant difference between female supervisors with female subordinates on measures of and employee commitment, job satisfaction, and employee morale (South et al., 1982). Female subordinates think that female supervisors are less skilled (Elsesser & Lever, 2011) and more dominant than male supervisors are (South et al., 1982). In addition, this combination dyad cause them to suffer from certain symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression such as headaches, stomach pain and fatigue (Schieman & McMullen, 2008).

How do female supervisors stimulate the negative feelings? Maume (2011), using the American National Study of the Changing Workforce data, drew a cross-sectional sample of 839 men and 670 women. He proved that when reporting to a female supervisor, male subordinates received more support and promotional opportunities from their bosses than did female subordinates. Consequently, male subordinates reported being more optimistic about their career opportunities when they reported to a

female boss. In a study on the barriers and facilitators on women's managerial advancement, female participants declared that impediments to female advancement were rarely female supervisors (Metz & Tharenou, 2011). However, the recurrent negative behaviors of female supervisors lead subordinates to doubt their honesty or reliability. Employees usually have no preference between a male or female boss. However, when they do, they prefer having a male boss (Elsesser & Lever, 2011; Husain et al., 2021). Female employees do not believe that female bosses are supportive of their needs, thus, they do not consider them a reliable source of support for their career advancement and refer to men who hold senior positions instead. The only reason they tend to interact with women is to obtain psychosocial support (Chow & Ng, 2007).

The implications of the above findings for gender discrimination in the workplace are in coherence with most of the previous research, which demonstrate that female bosses engage less in gender discriminatory practices, are more aware of their followers' achievements, and help reduce gender bias in the workplace that it's a significant barrier to women's career. In this context, Lucifora & Viganic (2022) demonstrated that women who occupy management positions play an important role in allowing employees to balance their work commitments with their family responsibilities (mainly women), which reduces gender discrimination in the workplace (Lucifora & Viganic, 2022). When women occupy leadership positions, employees are less likely to suffer from workplace gender discrimination. When there is a higher proportion of women in the workplace, female bosses have been linked to reduced gender discrimination, with positive spillovers particularly on female subordinates. Having more flexible working hours and policies that allow employees to easily balance family and work are important factors that boost gender equality in organizations especially for female leaders. Therefore, an organization that has an increased presence of female employees in executive positions is a propitious workplace since it eliminates barriers related to gender bias and discrimination toward female employees. This has direct and indirect effects on female employees in jobs that are mainly performed by women (Lucifora & Viganic, 2022).

1.4.2. Women Supporting Other Women

From increasing productivity and job satisfaction, to helping employees control physical and emotional exhaustion, the benefits of having women in the workplace either as supervisors or co-workers are well recognized. However, these psychological outcomes are not always complemented by economic outcomes and thus, women are often required to choose between their wellbeing and their income and job security (Kulik & Olekalns, 2012). Therefore, in order to reap economic benefits, individuals should avoid working in female-dominated work environments as well as being mentored by women instead of men.

Research shows that the female boss-female subordinate dyad is characterized by low trust (Jeanquart-Barone & Sekaran, 1994; Buchan et al. 2008), low morale (South et al., 1982) as well as emotional and physical discomfort (Schieman & McMullen 2008). Since supervisors lay the groundwork to employees, these outcomes are unanticipated (Ambrose et al., 2013; Mawritz et al., 2012).

If gender diversity leads to a workplace that promotes employee growth and goal attainment, then female supervisors should be able to enjoy more privileges and consequently, should become better at encouraging their subordinates' development and improving their engagement. Since mentorship contributes to the advancement of individual's careers, women who hold leadership positions are expected to mentor their female subordinates, serve as an example to other women, and encourage women to pursue opportunities for career advancement (Kurtulus & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2012). One would expect that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less burnout; however, this is not the case. For instance, in her study on leadership, Applebaum (2013) talks about the chief operating officer of Facebook Sheryl Sandberg who although was present at the top of Facebook and Google, has not found a way to

alter the corporate culture of either companies in a way that improves working women's lives. What's really happening? Based on several frameworks that explain intergroup behavior and intergroup communication, such as the social categorization, social identity and status characteristics theories, women's strong gender identifications may improve their support for other women but may also contribute to backlashes against women. The dynamics of social identity state that senior women are expected to help junior women resolve gender-related issues. Conversely, those same dynamics render female leaders unwilling to tackle gender-related issues. The same-sex supervisor-subordinate dyad is a source of dissatisfaction for female subordinates who keep raising standards and expectations, and for female supervisors who untiringly keep trying to escape the responsibilities of dealing with gender-related issues. Female bosses may promote gender equality policies in the workplace; however, they do not initiate them.

Cohen and Huffman (2007) demonstrated that female managers are supportive of policies that improve gender equality more than male managers. They showed that in the 1996 General Social Survey, female managers were 1.32 more likely than male managers to comply with the statement "Because of past discrimination, employers should make special efforts to hire and promote qualified women." When joining the results of both managerial and non-managerial workers the gender difference was insignificant, but still statistically important. Naturally, more research should be conducted before determining if the measures and solutions taken toward gender inequality are the same based on gender among managers. With that in mind, women will continue to work hard towards closing the gender gap in organizations more than men will. Thus, female managers will continue to promote and support gender equality in the workplace. In conclusion, female managers will have a great but indirect impact on gender inequality in organizations. The indirect effects function through processes that enable individuals to take advantage of being part of a social group. For example, women in leadership roles may weaken traditional stereotypes which portray men managers as more effective than female managers (Kurtulus & Tomaskovic-Devey,

2012), which may develop a more gender-diverse leadership (Perry et al., 1994; Dobbin et al., 2011).

As more women occupy managerial roles, the prominence of sex as a pertinent classification will diminish (Ely, 1995; Lawson, 2022), which will create a different view about female bosses in the workplace. As Kurtulus and Tomaskovic-Devey (2012) have noticed, when individuals start paying less attention to leadership stereotypes, both taste-based (Becker, 1957) and statistical discrimination (Aigner & Cain, 1977; Bielby & Baron, 1986) will start to vanish in the workplace. Attracting and retaining women in traditionally male-dominated occupations defy societal expectations and beliefs about women's leadership abilities and reduce gender stereotypes, which hold women back in the workplace and feeds into gender discrimination and gender bias (Heilman & Caleo, 2018).

A study conducted by US Gallup found that employees, especially females, who work for a female boss, are more emotionally committed to the organization and its goals. Furthermore, employees who work for a female boss have improved skills and motivation (Fitch & Agrawal, 2015). When organizations have a good process that moves people through leadership channels at the right pace, they will increase the number of women in top executive roles. Previous research has shown that women's experiences are frequently under estimated by organizations who don't provide them with the appropriate leadership development skills (Clerkin & Wilson, 2017). When women support other women in the workplace, they would have enough power to become agents of change; when they work towards the common goal of reducing and eliminating gender discrimination in the workplace, they would be making a big social change impact (Cornwall, 2016).

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

The theoretical framework for this research was built on the Social Role Theory (SRT) and the Role Congruity Theory (RCT) of prejudice toward female leaders from the field of social psychology, used in different social sciences, from organizational studies to psychology and sociology. The social role theory contends, in the sociological and psychology tradition, the gendered division of labor, which dictates that tasks in the workplace are assigned to workers based on their gender and social expectations (Eagly, 1987, 2007; Eagly & Wood, 2012). As for the RCT of prejudice toward female leaders, it suggests that incongruity exists between the characteristics that are ought to be possessed by females and those that people associate with leadership. This leads to two forms of prejudice: (a) considering women to be less effective in leadership positions than men are (b) assessing female leaders' efforts less favorably than those of their male counterparts (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Furthermore, researchers have resorted to the RCT of prejudice toward female leaders in order to better comprehend the perception that causes societies to ascribe to women characteristics and attributes that are acceptable for their gender (e.g., not being suitable for leadership positions) (Koenig & Eagly, 2014). Gender stereotyping expect women to have better communication skills than men, and to promote the value of caring for others (Gallant, 2014). Furthermore, women often adopt characteristics that are traditionally considered as masculine in order to achieve career advancement (Brannan & Priola, 2012), whereas men continue to occupy leadership roles in the workplace (Ross-Smith & Huppertz, 2010). Consequently, since societies expect women to adopt the traditional gender roles, i.e. mothers and housekeepers, they face severe consequences (Wessel et al., 2014). Together, these two theories provide a scholarly approach that explores the lived experiences of women leaders in Lebanese organizations.

The Social Role Theory (SRT) is used in this research to explore female subordinates' perceptions of their female leader and whether they believe that women must be responsible for childcare and housework and should not occupy positions that give them great authority; on the contrary, men are to hold positions of power and leadership. As for RCT, it is used as a framework to examine the body of literature on gender and leadership and to assess the various conclusions on the congruity (or incongruity) between gender and leader role stereotypes.

2.2. Social Role Theory

In the 1960s and 1970s, research was increasing in the neglected area of study related to gender, which was surfacing as a “significant political, social and psychological issue” (Eagly & Wood, 2012). In her book entitled “In a Different Voice”, Carole Gilligan (1982) expressed her dissatisfaction with the male centered personality and developmental psychology of Sigmund Freud, Jean Piaget, and Lawrence Kohlberg. She believed that their theories were unfair as they excluded women from psychology. She claimed that only by including both male and female viewpoints, societies could survive and prosper (Gilligan, 1982; Kabeer, 2021). Nowadays, many academic psychologists have found Gilligan's (What perspective different to development psychology)work offered insight on gender studies (Hamidullah et al., 2015).

Based on Gilligan's work, Alice Eagly (1987) developed the SRT, which ascribes current gender differences to the division of labor between women and men. The theory states that the gender social norms cause women and men to act in different ways (Eagly, 1987; Hamidullah et al., 2015). The society's concept of how men and women should behave based on societally created norms was considered by Eagly as gender roles. In addition, Eagly stated that gender stereotypes are the beliefs that people have about the traits of males and females (Dulin, 2007). Eagly (1987) noted that people expect women to be more communal (e.g., concerned for the welfare of others). On the

other hand, men are expected to show more agentic characteristics such as aggressiveness, confidence and dominance (Eagly, 1987).

SRT explains that society forms gender role beliefs that can affect the way men and women behave and expect others to behave (Fyall & Gazley, 2015). Based on their daily-life social interactions, people make gender roles part of their nature (Eagly & Wood, 2012). This results in “deeply intertwined with social hierarchies and leadership status” (Seo et al., 2017). Thus, gender stereotypes turn into “shared expectations about appropriate qualities or behaviors” (Eagly, 1987) and become typical rules that limit behavior by provoking obedience (Bicchieri & Mercier, 2014). Organizational designs and social interactions influence human’s behaviors and the way they collaborate with others within those organizational designs and social interactions (Bronars, 2015).

When people refuse to accept generally accepted beliefs, they must weigh the costs of nonconformity against the reward. Social expectations are conveyed through verbal and nonverbal communications, which are expressed through signs of approval or rejection (Thackeray, 2016). The endorsement of gender stereotypes in organizations made women shy away from occupying masculine job titles as they self-doubt their abilities and assume they lack the necessary traits and skills (Heilman, 2012). To reveal women’s experiences at work, the social role theory has traditionally utilized a variety of measures such as recruitment statistics, performance reviews, or employees’ viewpoints (Eagly & Wood, 2012).

However, it was necessary to understand women’s viewpoints, the way they design their career development strategies and the way they experience gender stereotypes in the workplace by studying the subjective experiences of women (Caleo & Heilman, 2014; Chinyamurindi, 2016; Faulkner, 2015; Glass & Cook, 2016; Heilman, 2012; Pheko, 2014; Seo et al., 2017). When asked about female leaders’ inner experiences, they reported suffering from a hostile work environment, receiving less mentorship and

being denied access to the network of successful male leaders (Glass & Cook, 2016; Kossek et al., 2017; Metz & Kulik, 2014; O'Neil & Hopkins, 2015; Sabharwal, 2013). The shortage or lack of women in leadership positions makes other women less self-assured about their skills and capabilities, and less ambitious about attaining high-level positions (O'Neil & Hopkins, 2015). The existence of gender stereotype against female leaders was better apprehended by Isaac et al. (2012) using the social role theory. Their research explored the glass ceiling metaphor, which refers to the evident hierarchical obstacles that prevent women from reaching advanced professional success. Gender bias reinforces the glass ceiling, which represents upper-level positions that have proven to be unattainable to the vast majority of females (Isaac et al., 2012, p. 80). In addition, prejudice against women results in a significant barrier to women's career advancement, even though women can make great leaders (Isaac et al., 2012).

2.2.1. Social norms, gender stereotypes and leadership

Gender stereotypes play a significant role in defining the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles, which was highlighted in the most significant psychological theories of gender and power (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Heilman & Eagly, 2008; Ridgeway, 2001; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Rudman et al., 2012). For instance, three of the most eminent research Heilman's lack of fit model (1983), Rudman's et al. status incongruity hypothesis (2012), and Eagly and Karau's role incongruity theory of prejudice against female leaders (2002)—all posit that since men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles, men outpace women in leadership roles. Furthermore, society has a set of ideas about how men and women behave and present themselves. Thus, women can be penalized for behaving contrary to gender stereotypes and are perceived as unlikable and unworthy of organizational rewards.

Gender stereotypes, and their two major defining features of agency and communality, have been used to evaluate female leaders. Women are usually described as being less agentic traits than men are (i.e., assertive, motivated, autonomous, etc.) and being more communal (i.e., kind, caring, considerate, etc.). However, in order to be perceived as effective, leaders must possess agentic traits. Therefore, female leaders find themselves in a double bind. On one hand, their roles as leaders require them to be agentic. On the other hand, their stereotypical roles as females forbid them to display agentic behavior (Heilman, 2001; Flynn et al., 2013). Nevertheless, even when women violate their gender stereotypes and act in a more agentic way they do not cast off the consensus that women are deficient in agency. Furthermore, backlash effects occur when women do not demonstrate communal behavior and display agentic behavior instead (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Okimoto & Brescoll, 2010). In addition, since women have a lower status than men do, when displaying agentic behavior they are seen as violating a prohibition against enacting dominance (Rudman et al., 2012). For instance, self-promoting women are seen as dominant since they are violating the feminine norms (Rudman et al., 2012). This behavior results in them being evaluated less favorably than women who don't self-promote, and eventually may not end up with access to leadership positions (Rudman & Glick, 1999; Rudman et al., 2012).

Research shows that successful leaders (both males and females) are not only agentic, but also incorporate into their behavior traits of emotional self-regulation such as being reasonable, reliable, calm, sensible, determined, and not easily offended by what others say (Koenig et al., 2011). For instance, a research pertaining to workplace gender stereotypes shows that in order to better comprehend prejudice toward female leaders, it is essential to examine emotion stereotypes (Heilman et al., 1995). In this study, Heilman et al. (1995) divided the 92-item index of the think manager think male phenomenon into six subscales (Schein, 2001). Two subscales were directly related to emotions such as emotional stability and rationality, and four subscales were associated with agentic behaviors. When asked to rate the characteristics of an effective female

leader, participants considered her as possessing the same traits as her male counterpart except the emotion-related items. Therefore, participants continued to perceive successful female leaders as more emotional than their male counterparts, and less reasonable or logical.

Conversely, Kimmel (2012) noticed that men also have to cope with gender and emotion stereotypes in work vs. non-work contexts or intimate relationship contexts. When in a relationship, individuals must display emotions of sympathy, caring, compassion, attentiveness, concern and openness (Clark et al., 2003). Although women, according to literature, are more likely to express these emotions, which are consistent with her traditional gender role, these emotions oppose the gender stereotypes that are enforced on men. A large body of literature discussed how men are not supposed to express outwardly emotions of vulnerability and weakness, which are natural feelings when in an intimate relationship. Therefore, men find it hard to show feelings of intimacy and affection because they contradict with their default masculine style (Robertson et al., 2001). Accordingly, the emotional symptoms that female leaders experience in the workplace are the same ones that men feel when in an intimate relationship. Thus, men may have difficulty displaying not only the type of emotion but also the amount.

In conclusion, gender and emotion stereotypes not only negatively affect women's career advancement, but may also organizations because gender bias prevent organizations from identifying, investing in, and leverage their high-potential female talents. Therefore, organizations should offer training programs that increase awareness of unconscious bias, (Moss-Racusin et al., 2014) which should how gender and emotion stereotypes in the workplace can hinder women's ability to attain leadership positions.

2.2.2. Development strategies and the way they experience gender stereotypes in the workplace

Gender stereotypes continue to be harmful to women since they limit their capacity to develop their professional careers although many barriers and biases have been reduced with time. Gender stereotypes hold women back in the workplace, which leads to a patriarchal culture where men hold the positions of power and have more privileges than women. The percentage of women who occupy senior management roles is only 29% (Thorton, 2020). The World Economic Forum benchmarked the evolution of gender-based gaps, which stand at 32%, among four key namely, 'Economic Participation and Opportunity', 'Educational Attainment', 'Health and Survival' and 'Political Empowerment' (Schwab et al., 2017). This shows that the gap has broadened compared to the previous edition of the index. Furthermore, gender stereotypes that lead to gender discrimination persist, although there was remarkable progress in movement toward gender equality over the last decades.

Organizations play an important role in widening gender gaps and spreading gender discrimination in the workplace. Gender stereotyping influences the decisions for selecting and hiring female applicants (Davison & Burke, 2000; González et al., 2019). Gender stereotypes help people perform well in domains that are recognized as gender-appropriate by stereotypical attitudes, although gender stereotypes stop people from standing out in counter-stereotypical domains (Koenig & Eagly, 2005). Individuals must exert extra effort in order to beat the negative motivational effects of gender stereotyping (Ellemers et al., 2018). Only when women are offered enough support to acquire resilience skills in the workplace, change will occur and the proportion of women in senior management roles will grow (Tabassum et al., 2019).

In order to effectively investigate and tackle problems related to gender stereotypes in management, it is important to comprehend the three clear conceptual shifts in management literature, which are: (a) Women in Management (WIM), (b) Women and Management (WAM) and (c) Gender and Management (GAM). The theoretical shift from Women in Management to Women and Management guided the conceptual transition to focus on the problems of gender stereotyping and its influence on women's career advancements in different levels of management.

In 1985, the publication of the journal *Women in Management Review* resulted in the first conceptual shift. From this point forward, the supporters of the Women in Management theory (WIM) contended that positive actions (Cooper, 1985) based on equal opportunities (Marshall, 1985) are necessary to the attainment of the full potential of women in management. Such actions are important for achieving equality between men and women in management and for addressing issues related to gender stereotyping. Through this method, women are treated as a target group, which aims to take advantage of the unused female labor power in order to increase managerial productivity. As such, this process aims to eliminate gender stereotypes. Since it did not find proper solutions to the problems of gender stereotyping, the Women in Management approach was criticized although it helped achieve greater gender equality and empowered women to hold managerial positions. Consequently, gender stereotyping continued to be a major obstacle to women's advancement in management globally (Schein, 2007).

The WIM theory was a major milestone that enabled women to be part of the workplace and to distance themselves from the society's expectation (Cabrera et al., 2009), family upbringing (Fagot et al., 1992), education (Sayman, 2007) and cultural barriers (Hinton, 2000). Furthermore, the persistent Think-Manager-Think-Male phenomenon had implications on the organizational culture (Schein, 2007; Grobler et al., 2006). Women were divided into categories (Operario & Fiske, 2001) based on their physical and

demographic variances (Johnson & Redmond, 2000). Accordingly, women were treated with inequality (Bell, 2007), prejudice (Zahidi & Ibarra, 2010) and were victims of stereotype threat (Steele et al., 2002).

During the 1990s, the theory of WAM was developed after the WIM theory proved to be unsuccessful, and this marked the second conceptual shift. Organizations must recognize problems related to women and management as well as attract and retain skilled female talent (Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Singh et al., 2018). These contentions are considered an expansion to the previous approaches of Women in Management. The proponents of both the theoretical and practical approaches of the Women and Management theory debated that women should have the right to participate in the processes of management and decision-making within the organization (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). Not only did the approach encourage the representation and participation of women in management, it also stressed on equality within the workplace and the distinctive qualities female possess, which can improve the management process. Unfortunately, this approach was not successful, as it did not properly tackle the problems related to gender. Both approaches perceived women as a productive force by applying a patriarchal managerial perspective (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). Contrariwise, gender stereotyping is still viewed as a persistent human and women rights violation (Cusack, 2013).

Although the Women and Management approach played a major role in increasing the percentage of women in the paid workforce but women still suffered from the lack of equality in the workplace. Women were negatively evaluated due to generalization of information (Canal et al., 2015), threat to self-esteem (Inesi & Cable, 2015) and in-group–out-group bias (Galinsky & Moskowitz, 2000). Compared with men at their level, women were considered intellectually inferior (Gilbert et al., 2010) and experienced gender discrimination in the workplace (Ball & Brewis, 2008). As a result, women were hired in order to prevent criticism and to make it seem as if they were

being treated equally (Bilimoria et al., 2007). Women were perceived as emotionally unstable, feeble and shy (Schein, 2001), risk-averse (Maxfield, 2010), instinctive decision-maker (Gilbert et al., 2010). Consequently, women were not being promoted to senior positions.

As a new approach that supports achieving equality between women and men in different aspects and levels of managerial emerged, it was time for the third conceptual shift. The aim of the Gender and Management approach was to concentrate on social constructions, which have an impact on gender stereotyping. The Gender and Management approach was fixated on gender-based social constructions and stereotypes, which weakened women in management. This approach emphasized the gender-centered value system, which is the basis for gender stereotypes and inequalities. Thus, many researchers encouraged referring to the existing gender discrimination in the society and establishing a more gender-inclusive organizational culture (Berkery et al., 2013; Ellemers, 2018). Other researchers recommended tackling gender stereotypes in the workplace through accepted practice, which will eventually lead to gender equality (Brescoll, 2016; Bosak et al., 2017). All these three theoretical shifts and conceptual transitions formed women's empowerment in management. However, stereotypes continue to hinder women's career advancements.

Based on her experience with social and organizational psychology, Ellemers (2018) highlighted the effect of categorization and socialization. Women face several obstacles in management due to gender stereotypes, which are the results of social and cultural status quo (Cuddy et al., 2015), society's expectation (MacNeill et al., 2015), culture (Hinton, 2016), education (Islam & Asadullah, 2018) and family upbringing (Endendijk et al., 2014). Over the years, gender stereotypes continued to exist although the share of women in senior management roles has increased. Management literature has experienced several theoretical shifts but they did not include transitions in the practice of gender stereotypes in society. Women's career

progress is compromised by gender stereotyping that continues to exist in the workplace.

2.2.3. The glass ceiling phenomenon and gender bias in leadership

The term glass ceiling refers to a metaphorical invisible barrier that is often mentioned in the academic and practicing management societies. In 1978, the writer Marilyn Loden coined the term “glass ceiling” while speaking as a panelist at the women’s Exposition in New York. Then in July of 1979, the metaphor became more popular as Katherine Lawrence used it at a Conference of the Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press (Fernandez, 2011). According to the Oxford English Dictionary and to several offline and online sources, the metaphor “glass ceiling” was first explained in the American Magazine *World/Adweek* in 1984: “Women have reached a certain point – I call it the glass ceiling. They’re in the top of middle management and they’re stopping and getting stuck.” (Morgan, 2015). Furthermore, Hymowitz and Schellhardt used the term “glass ceiling” in their article about the challenges faced by women in the business world in the 1986 *Wall Street Journal* edition. In principle, the metaphor “glass ceiling” refers to the hierarchical impediments that women face in organizations, which prevent them from obtaining higher-level positions and better salaries (McCarthy & Burns, 2013).

Historically, the social perception of the traits of men and women has led to two fundamental dimensions: agency and communion (an explanation exists in the next paragraph), with agency being associated with the male stereotype and communion with the female one (Bem, 1974; Eagly, 1987; Spence et al., 1974; Abele et al., 2008). Agency involves such qualities like efficiency in goal attainment (e.g., competent, striving), assertiveness (e.g., commanding, powerful), and autonomy (e.g., free of the influence of others, self-reliant). As for communion, it focuses on others while excluding an individual's self (e.g., thoughtful, supportive), affiliation with others (e.g.,

friendly, pleasant), and emotional sensitivity (e.g., caring, thoughtful) (Broverman et al., 1972; Diekmann & Eagly, 2000; Heilman et al., 2015; Hentschel et al., 2019). Agency and communion signify the core dimensions of gender stereotype, where agency is linked to male traits and communion to female traits (Bakan, 1966; Eagly et al., 2000; Abele & Wojciszke, 2014). Women continue to be identified as more communal and men as more agentic despite their rising labor force participation (Eagly et al., 2019). Traditionally, men have occupied top corporate positions, which are associated with masculinity (Gaucher et al., 2011; Koenig et al., 2011).

Scholars and researchers have proposed many factors that prevent women from being promoted to senior and executive positions. For example:

- The normative social roles expectations and gender stereotypes create biases that prevent women from occupying leadership positions, as they are deemed inapt for roles that require authority. These stereotypes cause women to question their abilities and consequently obstruct their career progressions in management (Dowling, 2017).
- Gender differences in personality traits propose that in an organizational setting, men and women tend to behave differently when tackling the same management-related issues or when making decisions related to work (e.g. Ho et al., 2015).
- Personality differences between genders consider men more assertive than women and women less aspirant than men. In addition, organizational cultures encourage men to show assertive traits in the workplace in order to be regarded as good leaders. This leads to the stereotype known as “think manager – think male” (Dowling, 2017).

- The nature of leadership positions requires leaders to be available at all times to provide constant support, as well being ready for frequent traveling. However, these conditions may not be suitable for women and may impede their advancement in the workplace (Dowling, 2017).
- The lack of career support for women from female mentors negatively affects the promotion of qualified candidates. Contrariwise, the “old boy networks” provides support to its members and facilitates their career’s advancement. Furthermore, female role models have a positive impact on women within the workplace, and their absence is a major barrier to the advancement of women into senior positions (Dowling, 2017).
- Similar to the “glass ceilings”, the so-called “glass walls” where women are isolated into jobs that do not lead to executive advancement within an organization. For instance, women occupy staff functions instead of general management and line operational positions (Wellington et al., 2003). This is significant since the key performance metrics that are applied in operations and general management positions are easier to link to corporate success than those applied to staff roles.
- The “always available” organizational culture which requires employees to be accessible outside of business hours and on weekends (Dowling, 2017).
- Women has continued disproportionate share of household labor and responsibility towards their extended family (Hewlett, 2008).

Women have two roles that they play at the same time in society and this may negatively influence their chances of being selected and promoted to leadership positions. The barriers that contributed to this discrimination are both organizational and cultural (Mayssa et al., 2015). The great under-utilization of women's talent is linked to social and cultural norms, values, expectations and stereotypes that are deeply ingrained

in patriarchal norms and religious beliefs (Yukongdi & Benson, 2005; Tatli et al., 2013).

2.3. Role Congruity Theory of prejudice toward female leaders

Gender prejudice against females persists especially in male-dominated organizations where women do not meet the stereotypical expectations that are required to perform their jobs (Joshi et al., 2015). The Role Congruity Theory (RCT) (Eagly & Karau, 2002) proposes that the apparent incongruity between the characteristics of a strong leader and those assigned to women's gender roles are the basis for prejudiced evaluations of women as leaders. In order to investigate how the incongruity between woman and leader roles results in less satisfactory evaluations of women leaders and a favoritism for men, Eagly and Karau (2002) developed this theory that is "based on an analysis of the descriptive and injunctive aspects of gender roles" (p. 588). According to RCT, this discrepancy may result against women as actual or potential occupants of leadership roles.

People tend to evaluate women leaders based on their gender and not their skills and capabilities (Askehave & Zethsen, 2014). Therefore, women may be perceived as not holding the required leadership qualities since "the traits commonly associated with traditional, heroic leadership are closely aligned with stereotypical images of masculinity" (Fletcher, 2002, p. 1). Numerous researchers are advocate of the concept of RCT. For instance, Mulvaney et al. (2007) argue that women are not able to advance in their careers because of the conflicts between their traditional social role of women (i.e. staying at home and taking care of the family) and the roles and responsibilities of being an employee (i.e. spending time away from home). Other researches focus on how male leaders have privileges over their female counterparts because they possess masculine capabilities (Muller-Kahle & Schiehl, 2013). Furthermore, women are less likely to be hired in leadership positions when there is a lack of job role congruence

(Garcia-Retamero & Lopez-Zafra, 2006; Ready, 2020). Conversely, many organizations consider female traits, such as being kind, thoughtful and supportive, as essential qualities for being a leader. For example, unlike men, female leaders are considered to be more caring and cooperative (Duffy et al., 2015; Marco, 2012). Contemporary forms of organizational structures regard female traits such as caring and supportive as appealing qualities for leadership positions (Eagly & Carli, 2003).

RCT proposes that women are commonly ascribed communal traits, which entail the qualities of care and empathy. As for men, they are ascribed agentic traits, which entail the qualities of confidence and risk taking (Gupta et al., 2018). This incongruity contributes to the prejudice towards female leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Based on RCT, effective leaders must adopt male characteristics, which leads to prejudice against women in the workplace. Research shows that prejudice against women becomes evident when they exhibit masculine personality traits (Keck & Babcock, 2018). This form of prejudice can reduce women's chances of becoming leaders and attitudes are less encouraging toward actual and prospective female leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Dambrin & Lambert, 2012). According to Eagly and Carli (2003), "prejudice consists of unfair evaluation of a group of people based on stereotypical judgments of the group rather than the behavior or qualifications of its individual members" (p. 818). Simply put, prejudice considers women in leadership roles to be less effective than men (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Concerning gender prejudice, it encompasses descriptive gender stereotypes (defining what women and men are like) and prescriptive gender stereotypes (defining what women and men should be like). Thus, if incongruity between the female gender role and leadership role exists, prejudice is bound to occur (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Leaders' own perceptions of themselves and their followers' perceptions of them can be investigated through the role congruity theory, which can be used to apply its practical application in research on women's experiences (Greer, 2015). People are prejudiced

against female leaders who regularly report suffering widespread discrimination in the workplace, and prior research on women leaders has provided details about individual women's subjective experiences of leadership (Hoyt, 2014; Kossek et al., 2017; Wilkinson & Blackmore, 2008). Implicit biases still exist in organizations, although many organizations have realized that being overtly biased is no longer acceptable (Kossek et al., 2017). Such bias "sends powerful social cues creating differentiated workplace experiences for stigmatized groups" (Kossek et al., 2017). This persistent gender bias affects women's likelihood of becoming leaders, and affects their performance if they are assigned leadership positions (DeFrank-Cole et al., 2014).

2.3.1. Descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are both descriptive and prescriptive in nature. Descriptive gender stereotypes designate what men and women characteristically do. As for prescriptive gender stereotypes, they designate what men and women should do (Fiske & Stevens, 1993; Cialdini & Trost, 1998). This prescriptive aspect is a result of the high level of interaction and interconnection between men and women (Fiske & Stevens, 1993), which establishes estimates of how men and women actually behave and sets expectations for how they must behave.

Prescriptive stereotypes are divided into positive and negative components. Positive prescriptive stereotypes (PPS) specify desired conducts that one gender is encouraged to demonstrate more than the other. As for the negative proscriptive stereotypes (NPS), they specify unwelcomed conducts that one gender should try to avoid more than the other. Although these are acceptable for one gender and prohibited for the other, they frequently include behaviors that are undesirable for either gender. For instance, women are expected to be more communal (sincere, thoughtful, supportive; PPS for women) and avoid dominance (e.g., aggressive, daunting, overconfident; NPS for women). As for men, they are expected to be more agentic (confident, competitive, independent;

PPS for men) and avoid weakness (e.g., vulnerable, self-doubting, sensitive; NPS for men). Although dominance and weakness are unlikable negative behaviors, they are accepted in men and women respectively (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012).

Since prescriptive stereotypes designate accepted or rejected behavior, they are essential for establishing normative expectations for men and women's behavior. When these stereotypes are violated, they evoke perceivers' strong reactions. As for descriptive stereotypes, perceivers expect men and women to behave in a certain way, and when they violate these stereotypes, perceivers demonstrate reactions of anger and moral outrage. (Rudman & Glick, 2010). Thus, since there exists an incongruence between gender stereotypes and role requirements, descriptive gender stereotypes can lead to prejudice and discrimination. Furthermore, when people violate gender norms, prescriptive stereotypes can lead to prejudice (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Heilman, 2001; Eagly & Karau, 2002). The violation of prescriptive stereotypes in particular create an outraged, which translates into hostile social or economic punishments for the individual who violated the stereotype (e.g., feeling disliked or not being hired for a position). The backlash restricts agentic women from reaching high status positions, while it works in favor of men by granting them the opportunity to maintain these same positions. For instance, women who show a dominant behavior may be seen as competent but are less likely to be hired since they prescriptive stereotypes (Rudman et al., 2012). Likewise, when men violate prescriptive stereotypes by showing communal traits such as weakness, they can also be the recipients of backlash (Moss-Racusin et al., 2010; Rudman et al., 2012).

Due to this backlash effect, even when descriptive stereotypes do not predict prejudice, prescriptive stereotypes can. For instance, when men and women applying for the same job have similar education and work backgrounds, prescriptive stereotypes predicted prejudice toward women pursuing male-dominated jobs; however, descriptive

stereotypes did not predict assessments of the candidates (Gill, 2004). In addition, men and women try not to break stereotypes and avoid gender-nonconformity to evade punishments. Therefore, they act in certain ways that increase the rate of abnormal, stereotypic behavior and maintain perceivers' stereotypes (Prentice & Carranza, 2003; Rudman & Glick, 2010; Rudman et al., 2012). Accordingly, prescriptive stereotypes have significant implications for behavior.

It is still unknown if these prescriptive stereotypes are more restricting for adult men or women. Since Women are still underrepresented in top corporate positions, many researchers have examined backlash against women, which is considered a vital discriminatory outcome in society. Nevertheless, several research studies show that the behaviors of adult women are more at liberty than adult men's behaviors. For instance, women were labeled with less stereotypical terms than men were, although men did not have a direct assessment of prescriptive stereotypes (Hort et al., 1990). Other indication for a restrictive male stereotype originates from examining the consequences of stereotype violation. As indicated by the status incongruity hypothesis, women are penalized for showing dominance, while men are punished for displaying two descriptive stereotypes: lacking agency and displaying weakness (Rudman et al., 2012). Thus, when men violate gender norms, they are assessed more negatively than women are and their violation results in losing status while to the contrary, women end up gaining status (Feinman, 1984; Sirin et al., 2004), and status is considered a positive, desired outcome. Furthermore, it is difficult, if not impossible, to attain ideal manhood, and it is easily lost in social performances (Vandello & Bosson, 2013). Men try to avoid any feminine behavior because even one feminine act could affect a man's masculine status. Therefore, men are pressured to adopt agentic behaviors in order to be considered men, keeping in mind that these pressures are not as tough for women.

2.3.2. The incongruity between women gender role and leadership role

The gender-role incongruity theory (GRIT) proposes that individuals whose characteristics do not align with their typical gender roles will be negatively evaluated (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Gender roles in society are prescriptive since they define how

individuals must appear and behave based upon their assigned gender (Heilman, 1983; Perry et al., 1994; Gorman, 2005). Thus, women's successes are not attributed to their competence but rather to luck (Swim & Sanna, 1996). Furthermore, female leaders are evaluated less favorably than men because of the perceived incongruity between the agentic characteristics attributed to the typical leader and the communal traits associated with the female gender (Heilman, 2001; Eagly & Karau, 2002). However, men who occupy jobs traditionally held by women are not subjected to the same gender-incongruence penalties, and are frequently promoted and given more opportunities compared to women (Williams, 1992; Kmec, 2008). One possible reason could be the ordering of gender, which has a predominant status and considers men as usually having higher status than women (Berger et al., 1977; Correll & Ridgeway, 2006). Men who work in female-dominated occupations are still observed as having greater general competence despite the fact that these occupations require having skills that are in accordance with female stereotypes. Therefore, women do not experience a noticeable advantage in female-typed jobs when expectations of general competence and role-specific skills are taken together (Cecilia, 2001).

Expectations about gender roles are shaped by culture and emphasized in different aspects of life. These expectations govern the behavior of men and women and limit their gender identity to what is considered to be appropriate. There exists an involuntary correlation of men with higher-status roles and women with lower-status roles (Taflaga & Kerby, 2020), and more negative attitudes are displayed toward female than male authorities (Rudman and Kilianski 2000); Vial et al., 2016). However, female leaders who display a democratic and participative leadership style, which is how they are expected to act and behave, encountered more positive evaluations than those who adopt a directive and autocratic leadership style (Eagly et al., 1992; Rhee & Sigler, 2015). Thus, women who occupy leadership positions have to deal with double-bind dilemmas. On the one hand, they try not exhibit feminine behaviors in fear of being considered as less competent leaders because leadership has usually been linked to

masculine traits. On the other hand, when women do not exhibit the culturally expected female attributes they are negatively evaluated as they are inconsistent with the feminine gender role (Butler & Geis, 1990; Koch, 2005; Phelan & Rudman, 2010). Furthermore, when women promote themselves or purposefully try to present themselves as highly competent, they are negatively perceived by men and women, which is a major reason why women become unable or unwilling to act with assertiveness (Carranza, 2004) and avoid self-promoting (Moss-Racusin & Rudman, 2010). Self-promotion is a damned-if-you-do and damned-if-you-don't scenario. The positive effect of self-promotion is that it emphasizes women's abilities and increases their chances of being hired (Johnson et al., 2016). As for the negative aspect, when women promote themselves they are deemed less attractive by women and men who are outcome-independent (Rudman, 1998).

According to traditional interpretations of feminine gender role, it is generally associated with kindness, compassion and interpersonal attributes required to succeed in the (Billing, 2011; Dyer et al., 2010; Muhr, 2011). These socially-defined and biologically-created characteristics result "in negative performance expectations for women" since they do not align with the masculine traits of leadership (Peus et al., 2015). This is also emphasized in previous theoretical propositions and research. For instance, the "think-manager-think male" paradigm suggests that successful middle managers possess qualities, attitudes and personalities more commonly attributed to men in general than to women in general (Schein, 1973). A substantial body of literature proposes that there is perceived incongruity between the characteristics of women and the requirements of leader roles. Since leadership skills are ascribed more to men than to women, women's skills to occupy leadership positions are evaluated in a negative, detrimental manner (Koenig et al., 2011; Askehave & Zethsen, 2014). Thus, women's career advancement is negatively affected by the incongruity between the traditional female role (i.e. staying at home and caring for others) and the traditional employee role (i.e. entering the workforce) (Diekman & Schneider, 2010). This creates a bias towards

the advantages that male leaders have given their natural masculine capabilities (Muller-Kahle & Schiehl, 2013).

Based on macro and micro domains in gender research, Joshi et al. (2015) meta-analytically investigated whether industry factors alleviate or aggravate differences in performance evaluations and rewards between men and women. They propose that the industry has a major role in determining gender practices in organizations. For instance, men are more likely than women to hold leadership positions in a masculine work environment (Ho et al., 2012). Furthermore, in masculine dominated organizations male evaluators may discriminate against women more than female evaluators do (Eagly & Carli, 2003). That is to say, when working in a typically masculine industry (e.g. construction), labelling women as kind and relational may put them at risk (Marshall, 2011). Consequently, the detrimental evaluations that women face due to the discrepancy between their feminine qualities (e.g. considerate, thoughtful and kind) and leader/masculine qualities (e.g. confident, influential and independent), lead to challenges in occupying leadership roles (Eagly & Carli, 2003). Therefore, in leadership evaluations, men have advantages over women who display agentic traits such as assertiveness and dominance (Schaumberg & Flynn, 2016).

2.4. Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses

The work-life balance (WLB) is a contemporary issue that has been recognized as an important aspect of a healthy work environment. This area of Human Resource Management (HRM) has always been an apprehension for individuals who are concerned with the quality of working and the way it affects the broader quality of life. Furthermore, it has attracted the attention of organizations since WLB can influence organizational productivity and the welfare of employees in so many different ways. A number of researchers (Martín and Carrasquer 2005; Hughes and Bozionelos, 2007)

suggest that WLB practices assist employees in reducing the levels of workplace stress, improving their quality of life and enhancing their organizational performance and commitment. Consequently, the literature emphasizes that WLB practices can improve organizational performance including increased productivity and reduced turnover.

2.4.1. Work-Life Balance

The research directed at the concept of the work-life balance (WLB) has focused primarily on the work and family theories such as work-family conflict (Hill et al. 2001) and work-family balance (Kahn et al., 1964). The aim of these theories was to resolve any conflict that people face as they play different social roles in life. The notion investigates the interplay between work and non-work activities (Fisher, 2001; Hobson et al., 2001; Zülch et al., 2012). WLB can be achieved when a person achieves equilibrium between one's career and all the remaining aspects of life (Kirchmeyer, 2000). According to Greenblatt (2002), as people try to juggle a demanding career and non-job responsibilities, they might encounter an acceptable level of conflict.

Research on the WLB demonstrates that it falls within three categories: individual, organizational and society. On the individual level, people can achieve the WLB when they split their time and energy between work and other aspects of life such as spending time with their families and enjoying social activities (Reece et al., 2009). Thus, WLB can cause positive mental states such as contentment, happiness, confidence, and feeling at peace with oneself (Clark, 2000; Clarke et al., 2004). Maintaining equilibrium between work and the demands of one's personal life is the key to a healthy, happy more creative human being (McGee-Cooper, 1983)—individuals feel more accomplished, more productive, and are more satisfied with their lives (Robak, 2010). Arnett (2000) believes that in order for people to have an adequate mental growth and balance, they must sufficiently meet their family commitments, adequately perform their work responsibilities, and be actively involved in their local communities.

Nevertheless, the way people balance those three areas differ from one individual to another, and finding harmony between organizational and life can be achieved through effective time management and a supportive network of family and friends (Arcimowicz, 2008; Berłowski et al., 2013).

At the organizational level, companies should promote WLB in the workplace by regularly reviewing their employees' workloads and offering them flexible work arrangements (Tipping et al., 2012). Organizations must always develop tools and strategies in order to promote healthy work-life balance (Borkowska, 2004). From an organizational perspective, greater employee productivity, higher organization profitability, and increased creativity (Naithani, 2009). Organizations can support a better work-life balance for their employees by implementing a variety of strategies (Skarzyński, 2007). This includes providing their employees with flexible work arrangements such as an alternative schedule that gives them a greater freedom in selecting his or her particular hours of work or the option to change their work schedule, and/or deviating from standard full-time employment. Organizations may also offer leave benefits that allow employees to take time off from work for various reasons including non-work family obligations. Employers may also provide some form of childcare support by adopting measures to help their employees with childcare such as a workplace nursery. Furthermore, organizations can offer their employees incentives to drive productivity and engagement such as bonuses, rewards, recognition and appreciation.

At a societal level, the balance between life and work is achieved when an organization has a simple hiring process and provides job security for its employees (Borkowska, 2004). Furthermore, family policies that favor or encourage traditional family structures and values can help balance people's professional and personal life. In addition, the initiatives of the labor market institutions can also help promote WLB even for entrepreneurial firms. A good example of the work-family reconciliation policies is the

European experience which promotes working options for high quality, reduced-hour, and part-time employment. Parents who live in European countries are managing work and family demands with significantly more help from government. Another approach focuses on employers who willingly encourage a healthy work life balance by adopting work-life initiatives also known as the American Model. This model uses different tools to attract and retain top talent as well as maintain a positive work environment where all employees feel valued and treated equally (Borkowska, 2010).

Many studies have analyzed the undesirable outcomes of the disadvantages when there is a lack of WLB at either the individual, organizational or the societal levels. The repercussions at the individual level may result in employed workers leaving the labor force and becoming socially marginalized. As for the organizational level, companies would have a lack of a skilled workforce, higher wage rates, ineffective capacity utilization and would eventually lose their competitive advantage. The negative consequences for societies are manifested through public financial deficit, a slow economic growth and a reduced competitiveness at microeconomic level.

2.4.2. Work-Life Balance for Male and Female Leaders

Working men and women share different experiences on the subject of social support and work-family conflict (WFC) (Adame et al., 2016; Van Daalen et al., 2006). Research suggests a relationship between WFC and work-life imbalance. This imbalance is not the same for both men and women. Women witness an absence of social support from their coworkers and bosses, whereas men receive remarkable and valuable support from their coworkers and bosses, which creates the foundations of WLB (Ferguson et al., 2016; French et al., 2018; Van Daalen et al., 2006). Van Daalen et al. (2006) stated that women provide more social support to their spouses than men do. On the other hand, men tend to receive less support from family and friends than female do. Regardless of the sources of social support that men and women receive,

they both take advantage of this support in a way that helps them minimize work-life imbalance and conflict (McMullan et al., 2018; Van Daalen et al., 2006). Some researchers (Eng et al., 2010; Julien et al., 2011) have deduced that the social support that women receive at home can minimize family-work conflict and that the social support from coworkers and bosses can minimize WFC. However, other researchers concluded that only social support obtained at home is capable of minimizing family-work conflict (Liao, 2011; Van Daalen et al., 2006).

Females have revealed the massive personal costs that are linked to occupying leadership positions (Loeffen, 2016). Women face many challenges of balancing the competing demands of dual roles. Thus, they try to juggle conflicting priorities related to their careers, families and lifestyles. Loeffen (2016) implied that women could not attain successful leadership positions without making personal and family sacrifices nor without having a solid support system. Moreover, expectations can constrain women leadership behaviors. Consequently, they try to prove that they have good technological skills and a sufficient level of competence. In addition, women leaders try hard to be more productive than their male counterparts (Ely, et al. 2011), possibly resulting in a greater demand for WLB.

Research shows that men benefit from an effective work-life balance. Work-life balance is an important aspect of a healthy work environment. In addition, men who maintain a healthy work-life balance tend to exhibit positive attitudes and increased productivity in the workplace (Perrone et al., 2009). Furthermore, and as part of this balance, men who contributed more to family life reported an improved overall enjoyment of life (Aumann et al., 2011; Greenhaus et al., 2003). In addition, men who work in organizations that support a better work-life, enjoy more their current jobs, are more satisfied with their jobs, and are more satisfied with the friendship relations and community commitment (Burke, 2000). It is worth mentioning that the definitions and conceptualizations of work-life balance that men provide are different from the ones provided by women

(Duckworth & Buzzanell, 2009). The aim is not to spend equal time on professional and personal life, but to customize a balance that can be applied across the different roles in ways that make sense to them (APA, 2004; Reiter, 2007).

In their study on WLB, Allen and Russell (1999) deduced that using work–life balance programs (WLBP) in organizations have negative effects on employees’ reward allocation such as being entitled to bonuses and raises in salaries and promotions. Furthermore, employees who use WLBP are perceived by their coworkers as having low levels of commitment towards their organization (Allen & Russell, 1999). Judiesch and Lyness (1999) have also reported that managers suffer negative career consequences associated with family-related leaves of absence, which affects their career or organizational. Consequently, employees try to refrain from using WLBP because they have negative impact on employees’ career paths development (Bailyn, 1997; Whitehouse & Zetlin, 1999). If employees feel that their organization does not encourage a healthy work-life balance, and that by using WLBP they will suffer career setbacks, employees may abstain from using the WLBP in order not to put their careers into a slump (Brenninkmeijer et al., 2010).

2.4.3. Work-Life Balance, Organization Commitment and Performance

Many research studies have analyzed the relationship between employees’ emotional attachment and participation in the organization, also known as affective performance, and the levels of performance and effectiveness of both the individual and the organizational levels (Casper et al., 2002; Kim, 2014). For instance, Casper et al. (2002) observed how both work-to-life and life-to-work could affect working mothers’ commitment to their organizations. Their findings showed that a positive relationship exists between work-to-life and affective commitment. Furthermore, researchers Wood and de Menezes (2010) affirmed that when organizations implement WLB initiatives, affective commitment increases, and employees’ turnover intentions decrease.

Nevertheless, a number of researchers have reported that there is a negative correlation between work-to-life and employees' affective commitment (Thompson et al., 1999; Netemeyer et al., 1996). Nevertheless, the results of a research conducted by Kim (2014) suggested that employees' emotional attachment and participation in the organization increase when organizations implement WLB programs. As a result, employees feel more devoted to their organization.

A growing number of WLB studies across several industries have led to more indications that support the relationship between WLB programs and increased employee productivity and loyalty (Hyman & Summers, 2007). This indicates that affective commitment increases when organizations implement WLB programs because they improve employee performance and commitment towards the organization. Thus, when employers implement work-life balance support programs, employees tend to always put their organizations' goals above their personal interests. This will increase their affective commitment and consequently the organizational performance (Allen & Meyer, 1996). A large number of research studies have demonstrated the positive relationship between WLBP and employees' and organizational performance (Parkes & Langford, 2008; Harrington & Ladge, 2009). In their studies on topics related to work-life and work-family, Muse et al. (2008) and Casper et al. (2011) affirmed that employees' affective commitment to their organizations is positively influenced by WLB, however other researchers believe that work-life conflict can negatively influence employees' performance (Beauregard, 2006). A study conducted in the US by Perry-Smith and Blum (2000) which included a sample of 527 firms, shows that organization that encouraged WLB practices experienced a more recognizable market performance, an increase in sales and profit growth, and an improved organizational performance. In a study conducted by Tunji-Olayeni et al. (2017) in Lagos, Nigeria on work-life balance, the result shows that females who work in jobs that are dominated by males are more likely to have conflicts at home and at work. However, these women do not quit their jobs as they worry about not being able to find replacement. Moreover, other

researchers such as Allen (2001), Schutte and Eaton (2004) realized that the area related to WLB practices and the way they influence employees' and organizational performance is not systematically investigated and remains ambiguous to scholars and practitioners in various industries.

Employees' commitment to their organizations greatly improves organizational performance, which is the key element on which organizations are founded (Prasetya & Kato, 2011). In addition, higher levels of employees' commitment lead to lower levels of staff turnover, absenteeism and tardiness (Bandula & Lakmini, 2016). When employees feel a strong sense of organizational commitment, they believe that they ought to continue working for their organization. They also feel that they can reach their full potential when their goals are aligned with organizational goals. This view has been supported by Kaplan and Kaplan (2018), Aka and Amodu (2016), as well as Irefin and Mechanic (2014).

2.5. Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates

People tend to evaluate women leaders based on their gender and not their skills and capabilities (Eagly & Carli, 2003). Therefore, women may be perceived as not holding the required leadership qualities since "the traits commonly associated with traditional, heroic leadership are closely aligned with stereotypical images of masculinity" (Fletcher, 2002, p. 1). For instance, Mulvaney et al. (2007) argue that women are not able to advance in their careers because of the conflicts between their traditional social role of women (i.e. staying at home and taking care of the family) and the roles and responsibilities of being an employee (i.e. spending time away from home). Other researches focus on how male leaders have privileges over their female counterparts because they possess masculine capabilities (Muller-Kahle & Schiehl, 2013).

For female managers to play effective roles in the careers of female subordinates, they must obtain strong positions in organizations and later act on their motivation to advise and support female apprentices. However, still undetermined are questions about women's access to power and their motivation to aid female subordinates, leading to dissimilar views on the career impacts of having to work for a female boss (Maume, 2011).

2.5.1. Leadership style and gender

Examining followers' relations with their leader and the leadership style they adopt has become normal practice in the last few years; thus, it was essential for researchers to explore the different leadership styles such as the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire (Bass, 1990). Transformational leaders encourage creativity among their followers, and inspire them to explore new ways to achieve their goals and learn. In addition, they boost team performance and create higher levels of commitment to organizational mission. Conversely, transactional leaders value order and structure, and they do not take their interactions with their followers flippantly (Bass, 1990). Furthermore, the relationship between leaders and their followers has also been documented in other recent research on authentic leadership and servant leadership (Avolio et al., 2004; Greenleaf, 1977; Liden et al., 2014). The descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes in the workplace might lead to men and women demonstrating different behaviors in the workplace (Heilman, 1983; Eagly & Karau, 2002). It is also likely that those stereotypes might affect the daily behaviors of both men and women (ingrained in both the leader and his or her followers), and that the perceptions that people have towards a certain leadership style may be influenced by the gender of the leader endorsing those behaviors (Ayman et al., 2009).

Research that compared women and men on transformational leadership style found that women are more likely to exhibit a participative leadership style. Findings related to distinct leadership styles are still ambiguous and thus cannot be used to carry out an objective gender comparison. Notwithstanding the findings that are significant, as Eagly and Carli (2007) note “differences in men’s and women’s styles generally appear as mild shading, with considerable overlap” (p. 127) and some researchers who have studied gender differences believe that they have been altered beyond normal proportions (Hyde, 2005). In addition, while human behaviors, principles, and skills are important determinants of gender differences (Eagly, 2013), it is still unclear what the reason behind those differences are and whether there is a relationship between those differences and the leaders’ style. The question that still awaits an answer is whether women in leadership positions are deemed as effective as men. The answer is relevant to research pertaining to leadership as it helps them decide if equal representation of women in the workplace can have positive effects across the organization. If it becomes obvious that females lead in a style that is effective under existing conditions as some researchers believe (Eagly & Carli, 2003), there may be significant ramifications for the field of leadership studies.

In addition to studying the direct cause and effect relationship that male and female leaders have on the organizational performance, research should also take into consideration the gender differences in leadership performance. The preponderance of research investigating the impact of the leader’s gender on the organizational performance reveals that the presence of female leaders on the corporate board has a significantly positive influence on the organizational performance (measured by ROA, ROE, and sales performance) (Jalbert et al., 2013; Khan & Vieito, 2013; Peni, 2014; Smith et al., 2006). However, it is worth noting that the majority of research is based on a large data set of companies operating in the United States. Thus, more research is required to reveal patterns in smaller organizations and covering more countries.

With respect to group/team processes and organizational practices, Nielsen & Huse (2010) realized that women directors are more probable to be associated with activities that improve the organization's internal processes, for example corporate governance programs and boardroom performance appraisal. The more gender-diverse the board is the more women are likely to join monitoring committees. Female directors have fewer attendance problems at board meetings; diverse boards can be more effective than homogeneous boards when it comes to male directors' attendance to board meetings (Adams & Ferreira, 2009). Moreover, organizations with at least one female board member are less probable to remediate accounting and financial reporting. This suggests that a gender-balanced corporate board is more likely to pay attention to managing and controlling risk and is less likely to ignore alternatives to the dominant view when making decisions than all-male boards (Abbott et al., 2012; Kulik & Metz, 2015). However, Triana et al. (2014) learned that the relationship between a gender-balanced corporate board and amount of strategic change is the most negative. The authors propose that this may be the case since diverse groups have more intellectually diversity, and this might lead to having issue consenting to strategic change.

Despite the significant progresses in women's representation in management positions, women are still reluctant in accepting leadership roles. Grossman et al. (2015) and Li et al. (2020) realized that women are less enthusiastic about leading than men are. Furthermore, they feel most comfortable leading an all-female group and less at ease taking on a leadership role when group members are notified of the leader's gender. Likewise, Born et al. (2018) discovered that females are more prepared to lead a group consisting mainly of women. On the other hand, men like to occupy leadership roles especially leading groups with consisting mainly of females. When compared to equally performing women, men rank higher as they are characterized as being assertive and having more influence. Chakraborty and Serra (2019) conducted an experiment that simulates corporate decision-making. The scenario was a replica of a real-world situation where subordinates communicate angry message to their leader. The

experiment revealed women refrain from accepting leadership role due to “backlash aversion”.

2.5.2. Bias against female leaders

Gender stereotypes play a significant role in defining the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles, which was highlighted in the most significant psychological theories of gender and power (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Heilman & Eagly, 2008; Ridgeway, 2001; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Rudman et al., 2012). For instance, three of the most eminent theories—Heilman's lack of fit model (1983), Rudman's status incongruity hypothesis (2012), and Eagly and Karau's role incongruity theory of prejudice against female leaders (2002)—all posit that since men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles, men outpace women in leadership roles. Furthermore, society has a set of ideas about how men and women behave and present themselves. Thus, women can be penalized for behaving contrary to gender stereotypes and are perceived as unlikable and unworthy of organizational rewards.

A research study conducted by Maume (1999) suggested that as the number of females increases in an organization, women are less likely than men to be appointed to leadership roles. However, another study proposes that the reason why men still greatly outnumber women in leadership positions is the persistent gender bias in organizations.

When defining an effective leader, the attributes are linked to the male gender role. Consequently, female leaders suffer because inconsistencies exist between the characteristics associated with the female gender stereotype and those associated with effective leadership. Thus, because of this unconscious bias against female leaders, women often take on masculine traits (Schein, 1975). Accordingly, women struggle between keeping their traditional female social role and adopting masculine traits in

order to obtain the leadership position. If women adhere to the traditional view of the feminine gender role, they may be considered as failing to meet the requirements of their leader role. Nonetheless, if women do not behave in a feminine manner because of adopting the agentic traits of successful leaders, they risk being evaluated negatively by others. As women find themselves struggling between keeping their traditional gender role or sacrificing it for the leadership role, the role congruity theory expects female bosses to endure two types of prejudice: descriptive and prescriptive (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Johnson et al., 2008).

One type of bias is known as the implicit, or unconscious, bias that involves unconsciously giving a negative evaluation of a person based on irrelevant traits such as race or gender. Banaji and Greenwald (2013) think that implicit bias is often unnoticeable since it is manifested in people's tendency to favor members of one's own group over those in other groups. For instance, researchers discovered that male participants implicitly linked positive leadership traits (e.g. aggressive, assertive, and ambitious) to men, although they never revealed any explicit favoritism to female or male leaders. On the contrary, female participants linked females to positive leadership traits (Latu et al., 2011). Another study, aimed at examining implicit biases, used a simulated Initial Public Offering (IPO) based on a real one as an instrument to test the researcher's theory. In this scenario, researchers changed the gender of the IPO's top management team, which lead participants to consider female CEOs as less competent than their male counterparts. In addition, they regarded women's IPOs as less appealing than men's in spite of having similar firm finances and managerial traits (Bigelow et al., 2014). Likewise, a study conducted by Ratcliff et al. (2015) on the relinquishment of power revealed that both female and male leaders perceived male co-workers to be more competent than female co-workers, and were more likely to relinquish power to male co-workers than female co-workers (Ratcliff et al., 2015). Not only men are accused of biases against women in the workplace. Studies show that a significant barrier for women in the workplace is implicit bias that comes from women co-workers.

For instance, the more positions a woman holds, the more likely she is to favor a man as her boss. Women have also age bias, specifically against female bosses. However, male participants were indifferent to the gender or age of their bosses (Buchanan et al., 2012).

Erkal et al. (2021) observed whether gender causes a creation of biased belief about the leader's outcomes. They discovered that gender falsifies outcomes perceptions in dangerous surroundings. Similar to the unbiased Bayesian model of belief updating, when women display good outcomes their efforts are credit to luck. However, men's bad outcomes are attributed to effort. In situations in which leaders are penalized or rewarded for their performance, women receive a bonus payout lower than that of men. The authors detected the fundamental reasons behind bonus payments and realized that the outcome is important for both males and females; however, beliefs about intentions are only significant for men. Therefore, in order for women to receive a bonus they must provide good outcomes. However, men will still receive a high bonus even if they show bad outcomes so long as evaluators regard them with a large amount of respect or admiration.

Women advancing into leadership roles is highly affected by gender stereotypes. For example, organizations do not expect women to be demanding, which affects whether they can negotiate a promotion. Negative stereotypes against women can therefore affect the career advancement of women to leadership roles (Eckel et al., 2021).

2.5.3. Leader's gender and subordinates' job satisfaction

The inspirational leader inspires followers by deploying several psychological techniques and employee motivation strategies to inspire teams and boost productivity. Similarly, leaders try to improve their followers' productivity by pushing them to try things that are of interest to them and giving them the opportunity to take a risk (Nicolaidis & Duho, 2019; Rao & Zaidi, 2020). Job satisfaction is a complicated

phenomenon because employees may be pleased with one facet of their job but displeased with another. Thus, job satisfaction may affect employees' organizational commitment and turnover intentions, employees' participation, trust in their leader, attendance at work and productivity (Khan et al., 2018).

An effective leader creates an environment where employees can develop their independence at work, which leads to a greater workplace productivity. Conversely, ineffective leadership is linked to many negative outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, absence, mistrust in leader, corrupt and unethical behavior, and intention to quit. Trust is crucial for employee retention. Trusting that the leader has your best interest at heart enables organizations to prevent a high employee turnover rate thus increasing efficiency, performance and loyalty (Akhtar & Nazarudin, 2020).

If gender diversity leads to a workplace that promotes employee growth and goal attainment, then female supervisors should be able to enjoy more privileges and consequently, should become better at encouraging their subordinates' development and improving their engagement. Since mentorship contributes to the advancement of individual's careers, women who hold leadership positions are expected to mentor their female subordinates, serve as an example to other women, and encourage women to pursue opportunities for career advancement (Kurtulus & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2012). One would expect that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less burnout; however, this is not the case. For instance, in her study on leadership, Applebaum (2013) talks about the chief operating officer of Facebook Sheryl Sandberg who although was present at the top of Facebook and Google, has not found a way to alter the corporate culture of either companies in a way that improves working women's lives.

What is really happening? Based on several frameworks that explain intergroup behavior and intergroup communication, such as the social categorization, social identity and status characteristics theories, women's strong gender identifications may improve their support for other women but may also contribute to backlashes against women. The dynamics of social identity state that senior women are expected to help junior women resolve gender-related issues. Conversely, those same dynamics render female leaders unwilling to tackle gender-related issues. The same-sex supervisor-subordinate dyad is a source of dissatisfaction for female subordinates who keep raising standards and expectations, and for female supervisors who untiringly keep trying to escape the responsibilities of dealing with gender-related issues. Female bosses may promote gender equality policies in the workplace; however, they do not initiate them.

A study conducted by US Gallup found that employees, especially females, who work for a female boss, are more emotionally committed to the organization and its goals. Furthermore, employees who work for a female boss have improved skills and motivation (Fitch & Agrawal, 2015). When organizations have a good process that moves people through leadership channels at the right pace, they will increase the number of women in top executive roles. Previous research has shown that women's experiences are frequently under estimated by organizations who do not provide them with the appropriate leadership development skills (Clerkin & Wilson, 2017). When women support other women in the workplace, they would have enough power to become agents of change; when they work towards the common goal of reducing and eliminating gender discrimination in the workplace, they would be making a big social change impact (Cornwall, 2016).

2.6. An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy

While women continue to make a substantial contribution to entrepreneurial activity, funding and family support remain the major barriers for women starting their own business. Nevertheless, the challenges that female entrepreneurs have to deal with in the 21st century are more significant than before, including but not limited to technology and innovation. Other challenges include access to information, inadequate skill training, gender issues, social environment issues, financial resources, and many more (Zainuddin et al., 2017). On the other hand, women entrepreneurs can reap the rewards in new market opportunities. Having a career as a woman entrepreneur is positively perceived by the society (Sultan, 2016). In addition, women entrepreneurs have better work-family balance than women who work in organizations (Rembulan et al., 2016). The access to financial resources is not the only opportunity that women seek for the success of their business or any business in general. Intangible resources such as human and social capital are also of a great significance to women (Cardella et al., 2020).

2.6.1. Female entrepreneurship

Female-owned businesses play a major role in the development of local economies of both developed and less developed nations, since they contribute to over 50 percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Ayogu & Agu, 2015), although less than half of women own businesses compared to their male counterparts (Hossain & Rahman, 2018). For instance, American women offer substantial contributions to the US economy since they have been joining the workforce at a faster rate than men i.e. women occupy 57 percent of the American workforce (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). Female entrepreneurship represents a source of job creation and economic growth for local economies. Therefore, women's participation in the labor market should be encouraged especially in entrepreneurial activities since it promotes economic growth (Ismail et al., 2018). However, in order for female entrepreneurs to achieve

independence, they must bear all the risks that are associated with fulfilling that dream (Nagarajan, 2016). Female entrepreneurs are described as “the ones who develop new businesses and actively participate in running their ventures which can either be in a formal way where businesses are registered or in an informal way where businesses are not formally registered” (Anwar, 2012). Women-owned small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) emerged as a way to alleviate poverty. Thus, the idea of women-owned businesses is not novel (Nasir et al., 2019). In addition, female entrepreneurship increases the living standards for other women by enhancing their job opportunities.

Over the past three decades, a growing number of scholars have shown interest in studying the effect that female entrepreneurs have on the global economy (Jennings & Brush, 2013), especially in Anglo-Saxon countries (Tlaiss, 2015; Al-Dajani & Marlow, 2010). However, more research is required in other regions in order to better comprehend the factors that have an effect on female entrepreneurship.

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region continue to witness the highest youth unemployment rates in the world reaching 30 percent in 2017 (International Labor Office, 2017), particularly among young women who contribute to 15 percent of the labor force. Therefore, as an effort to reduce the worrying unemployment numbers, the governments of the MENA region have reacted by trying to provide 100 million jobs by the year 2020 (Albawaba, 2015). The MENA region must create an entrepreneurial ecosystem that would accelerate job creation. Entrepreneurial firms can produce important spillovers that can serve as a significant source of economic growth. Once fostered into SMEs, they can turn into an important actor that increases employment and the GDP. These new businesses can significantly contribute to the increase of employment and consecutively to economic growth. Furthermore, WOLBs have increased export potentials and contributed to innovations (Tripathi & Singh, 2018), and developed a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem (Chamlou, 2008). Khyareh (2018) has also confirmed this statement by affirming that the main motive for economic

growth in Iran was female entrepreneurship. Female entrepreneurs can create jobs for themselves and for others, can help solve business problems, and exploit new business opportunities (Khyareh, 2018).

When researching entrepreneurship, researchers address it from the gendered societies' context and frequently employ the pull-push model (Uhlaner & Thurik, 2007). Pull factors propose that people are drawn to start their own businesses by a prospect of greater material or non-material benefits. On the other hand, push factors may arise from individuals' general dissatisfaction with their current situation (Verheul et al., 2006). In Lebanon for instance, Lebanese entrepreneurs were motivated by both factors especially that Lebanese women deal with issues of gender discrimination and challenges of being integrated into the labor market (Jamali, 2009). Other factors that pulled women into entrepreneurship were the opportunity to balance work and family, the possibility to generate double income for their families, and by challenge and creativity.

2.6.1.1. Feminist theories from entrepreneurship perspective

Over the years, researchers have proposed several theories to explain the field of entrepreneurship (Hurley, 1999). The entrepreneurship theories help scholars comprehend the entrepreneurial process, anticipate who will become an entrepreneur and understand the reasons why people become entrepreneurs. However, there does not exist an entrepreneurship theory that takes into consideration the feminist viewpoint, nor a feminist theory that covers the entrepreneurship discipline in its entirety (Hurley, 1999). A feminist theory might promise insights into the constitutional elements of entrepreneurship theories by inspecting the historical background in which these theories developed, the research methods on which the theories are based, and the postulations lying behind the theories (Hurley, 1999).

Bringing feminists' views into women entrepreneurship is important because it helps in discovering the root cause of the obstacles that female entrepreneurs encounter (Ahl, 2006; Ahl & Marlow, 2012). For instance, the liberal feminism theory tackles the various challenges that are created by stereotyping beliefs about gender norms which continue to hinder women business owners (Mitchell et al., 2002; Baskerville, 2003), although the legal, political, and economic systems offer the same privileges and advantages to both men and women. Thus, by not drawing on the feminist theories as an analytical framework, the scope of contemporary research on female entrepreneurs is limited, and women are regarded as unsuccessful and hesitant entrepreneurial subjects (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Therefore, entrepreneurial research must take into account gender theories to measure gender and entrepreneurship as culturally produced and reproduced in social practices (Bruni et al., 2004). Furthermore, sociological frameworks that embed theories from multiple areas help explain how, where, and why new ventures are founded (Thornton, 1999).

A variety of movements of feminist ideology have been developed over the years leading to different principles of feminist theories, each with minor changes in perspective. For example, while Marxist feminism accused capitalism of women's submission (Burr, 2002), the African feminism believed that feminist theories focused on issues of particular importance to women in developed countries, without taking into account women living in less developed economies (Giddens & Griffiths, 2006). Furthermore, although there are many differences within feminist theories, the principles of the liberal and social feminist theories offer a valuable dichotomy through which to study the main topics in the area of gender and work (Kearney, 2012). Applying the liberal feminist theory to entrepreneurship concentrates on the relative access to resources essential to found a successful venture. Liberal Feminists contend, "Women are disadvantaged relative to men due to overt discrimination and/or to systemic factors that deprive them of vital resources like business education and experience" (Fischer et al., 1993, p151). Due to the aforementioned discrimination, it is

assumed that women-owned businesses will have a lower success rate than their male-owned counterparts (Watson, 2002). Female entrepreneurs may face many barriers while trying to acquire the sought after resources such as accessing funding, obtaining the applicable work experience and gaining access to the necessary networks (Brindley, 2005). In contrast to the liberal feminist theory, the social feminist theory highlights the constant socialization of men and women instead of focusing on the different opportunities presented to men and women. Social feminists suggest, "due to differences in early and ongoing socialisation, women and men do differ inherently. However, it also suggests that this does not mean women are inferior to men, as women may develop different but equally effective traits" (Fischer et al., 1993, p152). As for their entrepreneurial skills, social feminists believe that female entrepreneurs may implement different approaches to business than male entrepreneurs (Watson, 2002). For instance, DeTienne and Chandler (2007) found that although men and women use their distinctly different stocks of human capital to detect opportunities, there was no difference in the innovativeness of the identified opportunities. Thus, although women and men use different approaches to discover opportunities, neither approach is essentially superior (DeTienne & Chandler, 2007). This finding is an example of the social feminist theory in practice, which states that men and women operate their businesses differently due to their socialization throughout life.

2.6.2. Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in developing countries

Entrepreneurship is often portrayed as a masculine activity and its success is frequently contributed to men (Yunis et al., 2018). An increasing number of women has been progressively participating in entrepreneurship due to the support of the transformation into a knowledge economy, although entrepreneurship is usually considered a male-dominated field. Activities and decisions related to entrepreneurship are often restricted by gender inequality, which hinders women's participation in the labor force. In addition, several other factors reduce women's contribution to economic activities such

as the limited access to financial services, social and cultural factors, and the poor support from social networks, which are associated with women's confidence in their skills and greater fear of failure (Quiñones, 2016). Thus, women entrepreneurs continue to be restricted from starting and running economic enterprises due to many social and operational constraints (Tuyishime et al., 2015).

In the MENA region, the trends in entrepreneurship are characterized by prevalent gender ideologies that are stimulated by patriarchal socio-cultural norms. Several religious practices and common beliefs limit women's ability to start and develop their own businesses. For example, in the majority of the MENA countries, women suffer from inequality in the workplace (Danon & Collins, 2021), and their participation in the labor market is staganating at a 24 percent (World Bank, 2015). What raises more concerns is that men's labor force participation is much higher than that for women (Sidani, 2016). Conversely, the labor market in the MENA region is greatly segregated by gender, where men occupy leadership roles, while women women represent a large proportion of teachers, and social and health care workers (Metcalf, 2011; Sidani et al., 2015). Across many countries like Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan, Bahrain and the UAE, women are delayed in starting their own business because the support system is absent and they seldom have access to financial advisors (Weeks, 2009).

All female entrepreneurs have many challenges in common such as insufficient support for business, tough business climate, political instability, uncertain economy, limited access to resources, lack of business knowledge, work-family imbalance and internal fears and insecurities. All these obstacles pester women entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Turkey, Lebanon and Nigeria (Danish & Smith, 2012; Halkias et al., 2011; Itani et al., 2011; Jamali, 2009; Maden, 2015). Following are seven key obstacles that continue to hinder the advancement of female entrepreneurs in developing countries:

- **Work-family conflict:** Women often find themselves struggling to keep their traditional social roles and fulfill their dreams. Women entrepreneurs feel pressured and constantly exhausted from trying to find a good balance between work and family (Itani et al., 2011). In addition, the performance of women entrepreneurs is affected by lack of networking and mentoring, since they are not capable of dedicating time to business-related activities (Brush et al., 2009; Panda & Dash, 2015).
- **Financial constraints:** Inadequate access to financial capital is one of the major barriers that women entrepreneurs face across developing countries (Jamali, 2009; Halkias et al., 2011; Maden, 2015; Ramadani et al., 2015; Naguib & Jamali, 2015). This is mainly encounter multiple risks such as bankruptcy, environmental risks, reputational risks, etc. (Thampy, 2010).
- **Lack of access to business support/services:** Women entrepreneurs suffer from lack of access to technology and ancillary business services. Furthermore, they are not able to assess and determine the viability of a certain project or execute a market research because they are restricted to access these necessary resources. In addition, women entrepreneurs have limited access to networking opportunities and consulting services, which negatively affects their firm's operation (Robb & Coleman, 2010).
- **Unfavourable business, economic and political environments:** Female entrepreneurs have to deal and cope with unfriendly business environments, economic recessions and political turbulence, which obstruct the development of any type of entrepreneurship (Panda & Dash, 2014). Other challenges that entrepreneurs face are complicated regulations, complex processes to register businesses, bureaucracy, bribery, unclear compliance policies, high tax rates and obstructive government policies and programs.

- Lack of entrepreneurship training and education: Lack of business knowledge, ineffective capital management, absence of marketing strategy that appeals to the customer, and recruitment and retaining of talent are major challenges that women entrepreneurs have to overcome (Panda, 2018).
- Personality characteristics and female entrepreneurs traits: Other factors that impede the performance of women entrepreneurs are lack of self-confidence and self-doubt (Shelton, 2006). In addition, women entrepreneurs have been found to have lower psychological support due to the absence of female role models who provide women with inspiration in their industries (Danish & Smith, 2012). Women entrepreneurs do not enjoy their well-deserved success and downplay their achievements to avoid aggravating male family members and business counterparts (Panda, 2018).
- Networking: women 's lack of access to informal social networks puts them at a disadvantage and generates gender discrimination. Furthermore, when men attend informal communication networks and women do not, they are more likely to achieve professional development and grow their businesses more than women do (Banihani, 2020).

2.6.3. Supporting female entrepreneurs in developing countries

According to the United Nations, economic growth and social development can be enhanced through female empowerment. In fact, a country economic growth rate increases as female labor force participation increases (Fund, 2018). However, women's economic empowerment does not necessarily achieve gender equality. Furthermore, gender-based discrimination has inflicted a loss of up to 12 trillion US dollars or 16% of global income (Cuberes & Teignier, 2016; Ferrant & Kolev, 2016).

By owning a business, female entrepreneurs break free from social constraints as they become financially independent and contribute to poverty reduction. Moreover, for the national economic to row, it is necessary to encourage privately owned small businesses (Chamlou, 2008; Pines et al., 2010; Mathew, 2010; Hattab, 2012; World Bank, 2013; De Vita et al., 2014; OECD, 2014; Fleck, 2015; Mbaruku & Mutalemwa, 2015; Mustapha, 2016; Tripathi & Singh, 2018). WOLBs are innovation-focused, export-oriented (Tripathi & Singh, 2018) and creators of a vigorous entrepreneurial environment (Chamlou, 2008). For instance, in Iran, female entrepreneurs have been playing an increasing role as drivers of growth for the Iranian economy (Khyareh, 2018). The reason behind this growth is that female entrepreneurs create job opportunities by hiring new workers, offering society solutions to a variety of business-related issues and capitalizing on entrepreneurial opportunities (Khyareh, 2018).

Based on the literature, it has become evident that WOLBs contribute considerably to the world economy, and their number has grown over time. However, how can women entrepreneurs be supported?

Following are six key opportunities that can help female entrepreneurs who operate in developing countries gain insight and advice on how to succeed in the world of entrepreneurship:

- Funding opportunities, physical infrastructure or entrepreneurial development programs are interrelated factors that describe a facilitating environment and can contribute to the growth and sustainability of entrepreneurial enterprises (Meyer et al., 2016). In today's business environment, there are many common challenges every potential entrepreneur faces, especially in emerging countries, such as South Africa. Thus, helping small businesses grow and thrive must be the priority of governments (Banda et al., 2016).

- Some scholars have pointed out that the core fundamentals of entrepreneurship are not purely innate but can also be taught (Kuratko, 2005) and that the desire to own or to start a new business can be achieved through entrepreneurial education (Nabi et al., 2010; Ferreira & Trusko, 2018). Consequently, many developed and developing countries have been supporting entrepreneurship because it contributes to the economic growth. Governments implement a number of strategies that provide different types of entrepreneurial support ranging from education and training programs to procedural and financial assistance (Bhatti et al., 2021).
- Mentoring is a relationship between a more experienced person (mentor) and a less experienced person (mentee), with the purpose of guiding and supporting the mentee's personal and professional development (Ncube & Washburn, 2010). Being part of a mentoring relationship can help women embrace their unique individuality. The modeling strategies applied in mentoring provide women with guidance and give them the opportunity to implement what they have acquired in their own way (Aubert, 2014). Results show that mentoring is associated with a variety of favorable outcomes since it exposes mentees to role models, or reinforces relations among self-employed individuals (Jayachandran, 2021). This has been the case in rural Kenya, where inexperienced female entrepreneurs were paired with a mentor. The outcome of this dyadic relationship was a 20 percent increase in profit (Brooks et al., 218).
- Microenterprises that are owned by females who live in poverty are unable to adopt efficient marketing techniques. They do not swiftly adapt to changes in the marketplace and make product improvements, and they lack the marketing strategies that will allow them to effectively generate a market and promote their products. In India, the International Centre for Entrepreneurship and Career Development (ICECD; icecd.org) in India help impoverished women develop their marketing skills and assist in the selection of a customer-centered approach

to product design. Women are provided with expert advice, meticulous market exposure, and a way to perform test marketing. Women entrepreneurs who were guided by the ICECD responded better to changes in the business market and adjusted rapidly to new work environments (Ruhi, 2016).

- Rural entrepreneurship can achieve sustainable growth for people who live in rural areas, as well as alleviate poverty and improve the livelihoods of rural communities (Elkafrawi & Refai, 2022). Despite the challenges of rural entrepreneurship, opportunities can still exist. Rural entrepreneurs can try a variety of economic activities (seasonal harvesting, selling home-baked bread, moving to the market with her livestock, renting a shop) due to the comparatively low cost of business premises and other related expenses. In addition, kinship ties among rural people allow for substituting loans from financial institutions and borrowing money from friends and family instead (Smith & McElwee, 2013). Furthermore, the physical proximity in rural areas accelerates the transportation of goods without adding much cost which can lead to the prosperity of rural businesses. This was the case of entrepreneurship in rural Pakistan, which witnessed success mainly from the interaction between numerous social, economic and religious contexts (Muhammad et al., 2017).
- Digital entrepreneurship: one of the distinctive features of the Internet is that the barrier to market entry is comparatively low, which offers a significant advantage to the people who weren't able to compete in the traditional brick-and-mortar entrepreneurship (Novo-Corti et al., 2014; Shirazi, 2012; Aldrich, 2014). Digital technology serves as an important “external enabler” supporting entrepreneurial activities, and helps in the reduction of the time and resources required to create disruptive innovations (von Briel et al., 2017). However, the offline gender disparities concerning access to resource will be reproduced in the online environment (Daniels, 2009). The theoretical framework that studies whether the online environment offers a “safe space” for females to engage in

digital entrepreneurship in an unaccommodating socio-cultural context is known as cyberfeminism research (Daniels, 2009). In Saudi Arabia for instance, women relied on their experiences and access to digital resources and technologies to create products/ services, which improved their lives (Nambisan, 2017). For instance, in order to overcome the Saudi women challenges of not being allowed to drive, one Saudi female entrepreneur developed an online package delivery application (McAdam et al., 2020).

CHAPTER 3

BIBLIOMETRIC REVIEW

3.1. Bibliometric review of female leadership

Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative tool/measure that analyzes scientific activities in a research field using mathematical and statistical techniques (Callon et al., 1991; López-Fernández et al., 2016). Bibliometrics provides researchers with knowledge on a particular area of research, which can be categorized by papers, authors, and journals (Merigo & Yang, 2017). Two commonly used approaches in bibliometric analysis are based on performance analysis and graphic mapping of science or bibliometric mapping (Noyons et al., 1999). Performance analysis assesses the impact of citations of the scientific production made by the various actors that interrelate in a certain research field such as researchers, countries, universities and departments. The most common indicators are those that take into account the number of articles published and the number of citations (Yu & Shi, 2015). While the productivity of an author is associated with the number of articles published, the number of citations is used as a measure of the influence that the published articles have on the scientific community (Merigó & Yang, 2017). Conversely, science mapping are visual illustrations of the structure and dynamics of scientific domains and research fields (Zupic & Čater, 2015). It provides a spatial depiction of how disciplines, fields, specialties, and documents or authors are related to one another (Moral-Munoz et al., 2014). Thus, this study conducted a literature review of female leadership research using bibliometric methods to show the originality and pertinence of the research questions (i.e. drawing conclusions from concretely empirical evidence related to female leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction in the workplace). Next, we discuss our search methods, inclusion and exclusion criteria, sample, and data analysis.

3.1.1. Selecting databases

Categorizing journals into research areas is a vital factor for bibliometric studies. A classification system can help with various issues. For instance, it can be utilized to determine research areas (e.g., Glänzel & Schubert, 2003; Waltman & Van Eck, 2012),

to assess and compare the effect of research across scientific fields (e.g., Bornmann & Leydesdorff, 2015; Waltman & van Eck, 2013), and to study the overlapping of research disciplines (e.g., Porter & Rafols, 2009; Porter et al., 2008). The two most significant multidisciplinary bibliographic databases, Web of Science (WOS) and Scopus, both provide a journal classification system.

The Web of Science (WOS) is a platform maintained by Clarivate Analytics comprising numerous literature search databases founded to support scientific and scholarly research. It is multidisciplinary (sciences, social sciences, engineering, and arts & humanities), consists of over 171 million records and is currently a part of Clarivate Analytics. As for the Scopus database, it is provided by Elsevier; it also is multidisciplinary (Life Sciences, Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, Health Sciences) and has over 70 million items. Therefore, these were the two databases included in this review and all results included English-only peer-reviewed journal articles.

In order to collect inclusive data from both databases, a two-step approach was implemented. First, the keywords that were relevant to the search were selected, and second, performing a content analysis of the articles was necessary in order to ‘cross-check’ if the databases identified the right articles for our analysis.

3.1.2. Selecting keywords

The systematic search was carried out using the Boolean operators (AND and OR), and the keywords or descriptors: ‘female leaders’ or ‘female management styles’ or ‘male management styles’ or ‘gender quotas’ or ‘glass ceiling’ or ‘women on boards’. It was necessary for these keywords to appear in the article title for both Scopus and WOS.

Since the latter half of the 20th century, women's representation in the workplace has greatly increased. However, a notable underrepresentation of females in leadership positions still exists. Thus, the keyword 'female leaders' was used because it provides insight into the issues surrounding women and leadership, leader-subordinate gender dyads, as well as the differences in gender, leadership style and leader effectiveness. Previous research on professional management indicate that male leaders give preferentiality to a direct, task-oriented and authoritarian style, while female leaders favor a more indirect, people-oriented, democratic approach (Ladegaard, 2011). Thus, the keywords 'female management styles' or 'male management styles' were included in the search to examine the behavior of male and female leaders performing similar tasks and how male and female leaders' management styles are interpreted and responded to by male and female employees.

Gender quotas are commonly recommended to address persistent gender differences in managerial roles. However, it is ambiguous how quotas for female managers affect organizations and whether quotas improve or damage relationships between bosses and their subordinates. For instance, a common form of quota used to remedy gender inequalities is female gender quotas. However, it might instigate hostility in the workplace if subordinates consider it to be promoting unqualified superiors (Ip et al., 2020). Based on this finding, the keyword 'gender quotas' was included to identify relevant research on female performance in leadership and hierarchical relationships.

Several metaphors are used to describe women's experience and the barriers they face in leadership. One of those metaphors is the glass ceiling, which was selected due to the substantial scientific production constructed on it and since it provides a better understanding gender inequalities in the workplace. The glass ceiling represents the invisible discriminatory barriers that hinder women's access to senior-level positions. When it comes to female obstacles to leadership roles, the glass ceiling metaphor is the most tackled in scientific research (Sabharwal, 2015). A longitudinal analysis

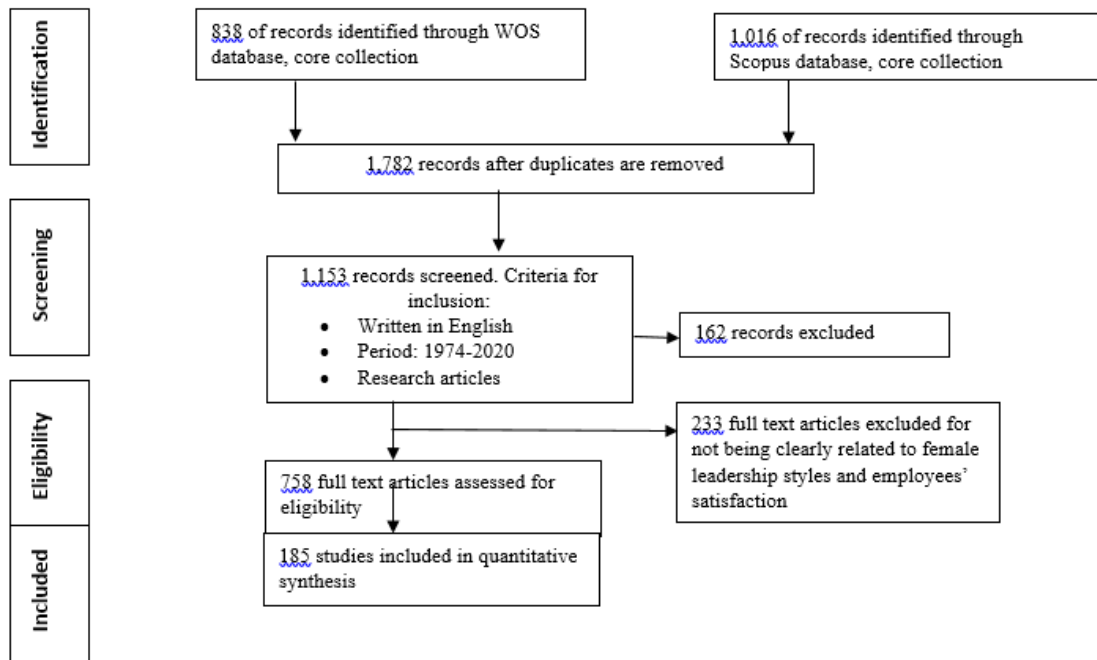
comprising more than 20 million European organizations and extended over a 20-year period, determined that despite having greater gender diversity in leadership roles, 70% of organizations have no females in supervisory boards, and 60% of organizations have no females in management boards (Tyrowicz et al., 2020).

Traditionally, women continue to be underrepresented in senior corporate leadership roles, such as board of directors (Adams, 2016). However, study indicates that the promotion of females into managerial roles has progressively increased, predominantly in countries where gender-based board membership quotas have been implemented (Lee et al., 2015). However, there is an important question that need to be addressed, which is, how diversity in the boardroom affects female workers. Thus, the keyword ‘women on boards’ was used in the search to find out if women on boards of directors inspire their subordinates, help them gain increased motivation, and thereby becoming more effective themselves.

3.1.3. Selecting criteria for inclusion

This review is conducted using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) Statement (Moher et al., 2010). The PRISMA entails 27-item checklist and a four-phase flow diagram (see Figure 3.1) that determines how to identify, select, and critically assess relevant research, and how to combine and study data from the studies included in the review. It also offers a layout for presenting information, which has directed this article.

Figure 3.1: Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA).



Source: Adapted of Moher et al. (2010).

The searches for published studies were carried out in an organized manner, following the order of the databases mentioned above. The identification phase resulted in 838 items in the WOS database and 1,016 in Scopus. After removing duplicates, the number of included items was equal to 1,782. The inclusion criteria were then implemented to only incorporate research articles that are written in English between 1974-2020. Thus, 162 articles were excluded and 991 remained eligible. Lastly, and after screening the research articles titles and abstracts, 233 articles were removed for not being exactly to female leaders, female leadership styles and employees' satisfaction. The reasons for exclusion were:

- The articles studied the effect of female leadership style on firm financial performance and not on employee satisfaction.
- The articles were related to female leadership and legislative reform.

- The articles examined how female leaders can influence the organization CSR strategy.
- The articles studied gender quota and employees' pay gap.

The final sample consisted of 185 articles after eliminating the ones with no available data. The reasons for inclusion were:

- The articles were in the study field of "Business, Management and Accounting"
- The articles were full text, published in a peer-reviewed journal
- The articles were empirical studies (i.e., not an essay, book review, letter, literature review, editorial, opinion, journalistic or antidotal article)
- The articles drew connection between female leadership, leadership/management style and employee/subordinate satisfaction
- The articles examined female leadership theory either quantitatively or qualitatively

3.1.4. Selecting descriptors for analysis

Descriptors were identified in each article; these were used to classify the articles, and are then used as analysis variables in the following section. These descriptors, and the justification for the choice of each, is as follows:

– *First authorship*: this descriptor is used in terms of authors' number of relevant articles and country of affiliation. Identifying authors' contributions and countries of affiliation provided us with a way to examine the work of the authors who have the most contributions to the field of study, establish a ranking of their most cited work, and to discover which countries are the leaders in that field.

– *Keywords*: Adding keyword analysis to the review helped us find the main descriptors used in female leadership research. In addition, it helped to examine the co-occurrence of keywords and find the relations between them, i.e. how often two distinct keywords appear together.

– *Research field*: Five categories were adopted to label each paper according to the field of the journal in which they were published. These categories or research areas were: 1. Business and Management, 2. Human Resource Management, 3. Gender Equality, 4. Organizational Behavior, 5. Others (education, sociology, psychology, etc.). These five groups correspond to different areas related to (1) decision making, (2) employee performance, (3) diversity, (4) human behavior, (5) others.

– *Research methodology*, categorized as Case Study, Conceptual, Survey and Secondary data. In case studies, data revealed the specific situation of one or more organization; conceptual comprised literature reviews or papers without data processing; survey included questionnaires administration; and, secondary data utilized data from secondary sources, such as government departments or journal articles that comment on or analyze research.

– *Year of publication*: the year of publication specifies how recent the data is; the more probable it is that new results have been achieved, and the higher possibility of the paper to contribute to innovation in the knowledge area.

– *Number of citations*: the number of times a paper is cited determines its significance and acknowledgement by the scientific community, and this should be comprehensively examined. However, a recently published paper might have a low number of citations. Hence, it would be incorrect to assign this paper lower scientific significance only based on the criterion number of citations, since this single feature cannot represent the global scientific relevance of a paper.

– *Journal articles*: peer reviewed journal articles with managerial impact on the subject. For the sake of objectivity, unpublished working papers and conference papers were omitted. The search was done for the period 1974 to 2020. The reason for selecting 1974 as the starting point was due to the fact that the debate about gender quota and female leadership can be traced back to the 1960s (Walker & Aritz, 2015).

Subsequently, a database was created in Excel to organize and classify all the relevant articles with the purpose of categorizing them according to where they best fit in the interrelationships found among female leaders, leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction.

Different types of software were utilized for statistical and graphic processing. Graphs and tables were created using Excel, network analysis using VOSviewer (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010) and geographical analysis with mapchart.net. As for the geographical analysis, it was done with mapchart.net. In addition, the descriptive analysis of data was achieved using the bibliometric tools provided by VOSviewer for analyzing citations (excluding self-citations), co-authorships, geographical distribution and word frequency (keywords) in order to draw some conclusions. VOSviewer and Excel made it possible to work with CSV files and merge data from the Scopus and WOS databases.

3.2. Findings and discussion

Review results are specified in the next five subsections. Analysis of the author, journal, country, year, research field, research methodology and keyword variables, depicts female bosses and their leadership styles.

3.2.1. Initial data statistics: top journals, top authors

The first section aimed to analyze the journals and main authors with publications on female leadership. The total number of journals or proceedings with at least one article related to female leaders is 386. Since there is a wide range of sources, only those having five or more articles were displayed in Table 3.1. Using this selection, the list is reduced to 26 sources.

Table 3.1: List of journals and proceedings that provided at least five relevant articles.

<i>Journal</i>	<i>Total Articles</i>	<i>Total Citations</i>	<i>Citing Articles</i>	<i>AVG*</i>
1 Sex Roles	49	1,629	1,442	33
2 Leadership Quarterly	42	4,023	3,233	95
3 Gender in Management	23	268	248	11
4 Leadership & Organization Development Journal	20	247	237	12
5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	18	104	101	5
6 Sustainability	18	49	49	2
7 Journal of Applied Psychology	16	2,333	1,841	145
8 Journal of Business Ethics	15	1,093	1,052	72
9 Gender Work and Organization	14	313	289	22
10 Psychology of Women Quarterly	14	776	736	55
11 Journal of Social Issues	11	1,006	1,507	145
12 Academy Of Management Journal	11	631	583	57
13 Current Psychology	10	13	13	1
14 Journal Of Organizational Behavior	10	497	496	49
15 British Journal of Management	7	645	609	92
16 Journal of Occupational And Organizational Psychology	7	322	317	46
17 Human Resource Management	6	160	154	26
18 Journal of Business Research	6	56	52	9
19 Journal of Management	5	343	329	68
20 Business Horizons	3	19	18	6
21 International Journal of Manpower	3	16	16	5
22 American Sociological Review	2	180	178	90
23 Strategic Management Journal	2	28	28	14
24 Career Development International	2	6	6	3
25 Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	1	61	61	61
26 Journal of Corporate Finance	1	32	32	32

*Average (AVG) = Total number of papers/total number of citations

Source: Own

All the journals that are listed in Table 3.1 are related to female leadership. We identify three large fields of research where female leadership has been analyzed which are management, leadership and gender equality. It is evident by looking at the table, that two journals (Academy of Management Journal and Journal of Business Ethics) collect most of the articles and citations. A total 738 authors have published articles related to female leadership during the period analyzed. Relying on citation counts solely may include an author with only a single but highly cited article. Therefore, another analysis related to the most relevant authors according to their H index in female leadership papers had to take place (Table 3.2). The H index developed by an American scientist, Hirsch, measures an individual's scientific research output by comparing papers and citations. 'A scientist has Index H if h of his or her Np papers have at least h citations each and the other (Np-h) papers have $\leq h$ citations each' (Hirsch, 2005).

Table 3.2: Authors with H-Index of 5 considering only their papers related to female leadership.

	<i>Author</i>	<i>H index</i>	<i>Articles</i>	<i>Citations</i>
1	Baxter J.	141	3431	94,771
2	Eagly A.H.	56	88	21,071
3	Adams S.M	50	220	8,368
4	Terjesen S.	34	102	3,140
5	Galbreath J.	20	84	1,436
6	Lopez-Zafra, E.	16	61	679
7	Heilman M.E.	16	27	2,611
8	Adams R.B.	15	26	3,625
9	Smith N.	14	39	1,428
10	Nekhili M.	8	16	228
11	de Anca C.	5	9	82

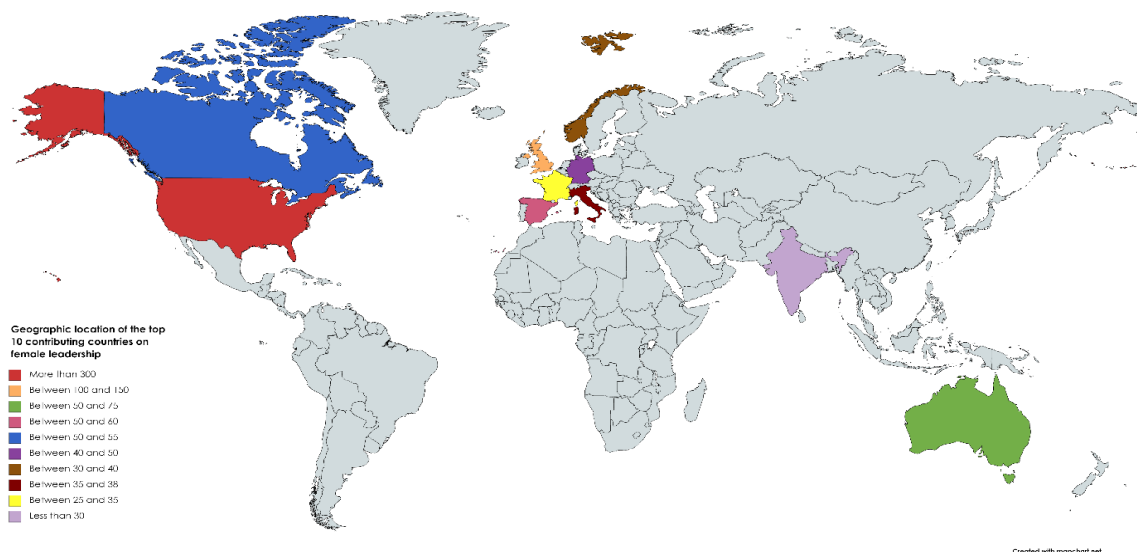
Source: Own

3.2.2. Geographic distribution

Taking into consideration the authors' country of affiliation, it is evident that the interest in studying the field of female leadership is worldwide because there are more than 82 countries that have published at least one article related to the topic. According to

Figure 3.2, the United States is the country where the largest number of articles have been written (more than 350 articles), followed by United Kingdom (more than 100 article), Australia (more than 60 articles) and Spain (more than 50).

Figure 3.2: Geographic location of the top 10 contributing countries on female leadership.



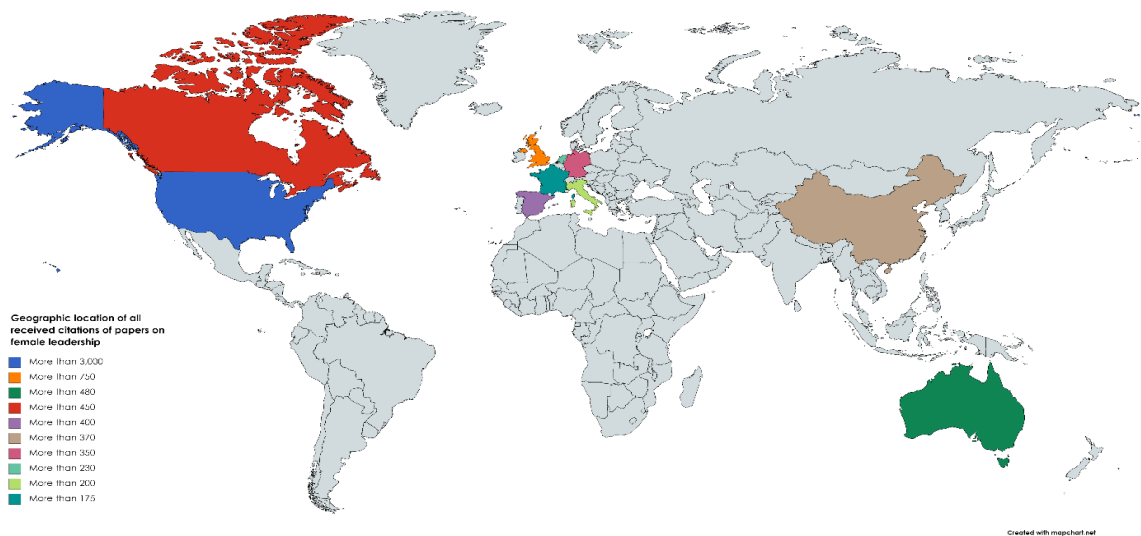
Source: Own

The world map in Figure 3.3 shows which countries have obtained the most number of citations. The United States with 3,510 citations dominates both indicators. It is followed by the United Kingdom with 778 citations and Australia with 484 citations.

The increase in the number of papers related to female leadership in India is remarkable since they did not have any published articles about this topic between the years 1970 and 2000. Although in terms of citations (125) they are well below the top three, our sample suggests that countries such as India, China or even Pakistan will have more presence in the future female leadership publications, even though the United States will undoubtedly remain the leader.

In this section, we also address multinational collaborations. Co-authorship is one of the most quantifiable forms of scientific collaboration and it is analyzed using network analysis to identify the degree of collaboration based on countries. As per Merigó et al. (2016), we consider the authors' affiliation and not their nationality in order to carry out the analysis.

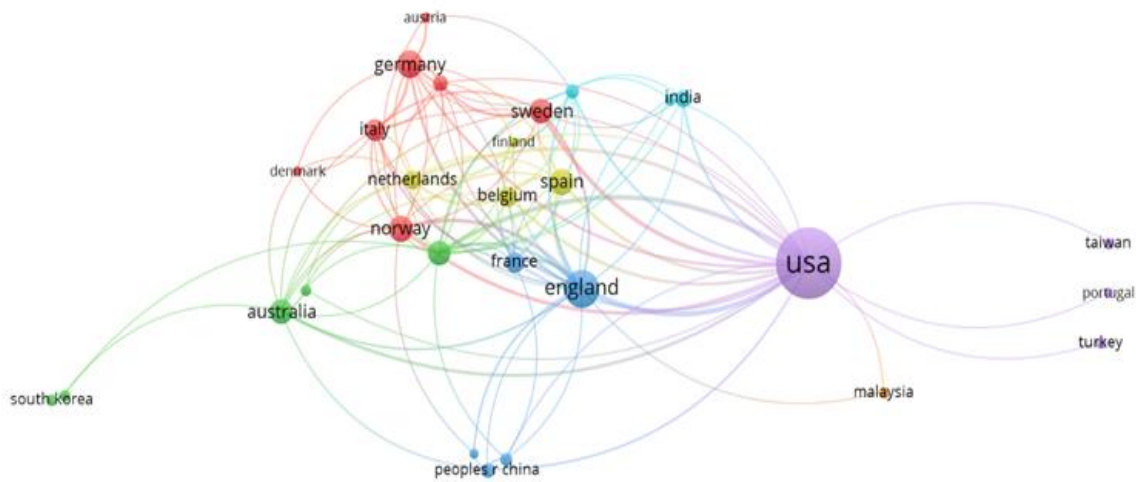
Figure 3.3: Geographic location of all received citations of papers on female leadership.



Source: Own

Of the 73 countries obtained, 27 of them are connected in a way that they have coauthors from different countries of affiliation. In Figure 3.4, the size of the nodes signifies the number of papers published by a country and the arcs represent the links between countries. The normalization method implemented is the default option of association strength (Van Eck & Waltman, 2017). Based on this method, we were able to identify seven clusters. A cluster is a collection of strongly related nodes and each node in a network is appointed to precisely one cluster (Waltman et al., 2010). Our 27 countries form seven clusters meaning that they have many similar attributes to be grouped. They are broken down in Table 3.3 and displayed in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: Country co-authorship network of female leadership related papers.



Source: Own

Co-authorship analysis is a strong tool that is used to evaluate collaboration trends. In this paper, it has demonstrated the importance of territorial similarities in the network analysis clusters. Cluster 1 (Austria, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) and Cluster 4 (Belgium, Finland, Netherlands and Spain) might be explained by the countries proximity and historical relationship. However, it is noteworthy that co-authorship is of international nature. Countries from the first three Clusters 2, 5 and 7 belong to five different continents. In addition, those belonging to Clusters 1, 4 and 6 are from three different continents.

Table 3.3: Clusters of co-authorship by countries (clusters with more than 1 item).

Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5	Cluster 6	Cluster 7
Austria	Australia	England	Belgium	Portugal	Brazil	Malaysia
Denmark	Canada	France	Finland	Taiwan	India	
Germany	Japan	Pakistan	Netherlands	Turkey	Poland	
Italy	New Zealand	China	Spain	USA		
Norway	South Korea	Scotland				
Sweden						
Switzerland						

Source: Own

3.2.3. Keywords analysis of female leadership literature

Co-occurrence is the term used to depict the rate of recurrence and proximity of keywords showing in scientific papers, as well as the relationship between them (Cobo et al., 2011). Co-occurrence takes into consideration that two keywords often concurrently appear in different articles under the same topic, and is used to elucidate literature hot trends. The VOSviewer software includes a clustering function, which ascribes keywords to clusters based on their co-occurrence (Van Eck & Waltman, 2017; Waltman & Van Eck, 2013; Waltman et al., 2010). For the purpose of this study, a map was built using VOSviewer, which analyzes the co-occurrence of keywords relationships and trends.

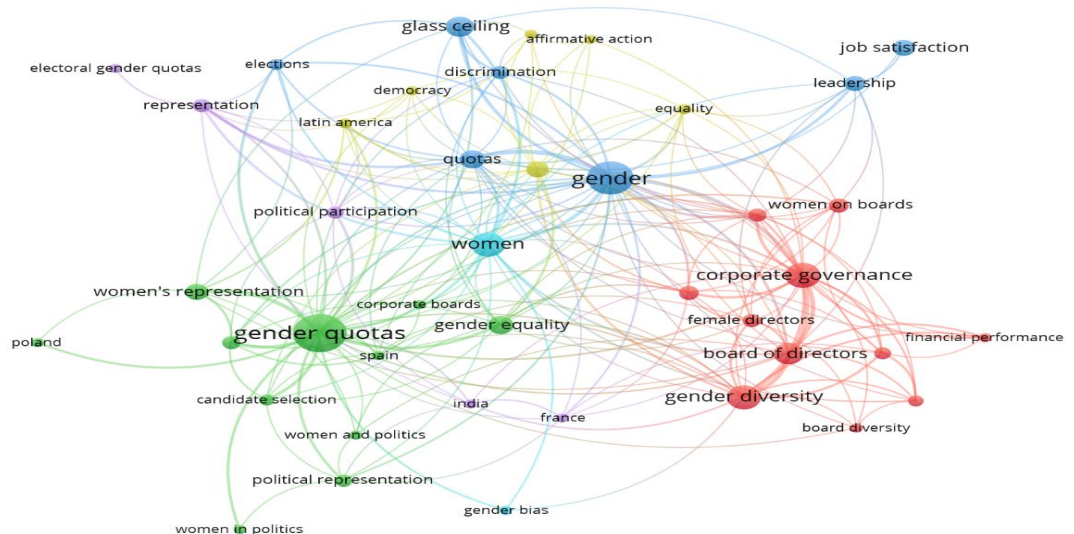
3.2.3.1. Co-occurrence keywords relationships

The purpose of this subsection is to recognize the most common keywords that the authors have utilized to describe the paper. From this analysis, it is likely to detect the most frequently recurring topics in the field. The co-occurrence keywords network of female leadership created by VOSViewer is presented in Figure 3.5. The size of the nodes and words represents the impact of the nodes (keywords) i.e. occurrences. The distance between two nodes reveals the strength of the link between them, i.e. shorter distance means stronger link. The network connections display the keywords that appear together more regularly in the analyzed papers; a line between two keywords shows their co-occurrence. The thicker the line, the bigger the co-occurrence rate of recurrence. Finally, the color of the node signifies that they are part of the same cluster (Van Eck & Waltman, 2017). Figure 3.5 shows the result obtained after restricting the VOSViewer analysis to a minimum number of five occurrences per keyword. Of the 954 keywords obtained from 609 articles, 42 keywords satisfied this condition, and they were put together in six clusters.

The first cluster colored in red and labeled as corporate governance consists of 11 items, including board diversity, women directors, and gender diversity among others. The second cluster colored in green and labeled as gender quotas consists of 11 items and, their main keywords are gender equality and women's representation. The third cluster colored in blue and labeled as gender comprises 7 items. Its biggest nodes are glass ceiling, quotas and job satisfaction. The main component of the fourth cluster colored in yellow is gender quota and includes equality and gender gap. The fifth purple cluster purple labeled as representation include five items. Among them there are keywords related to electoral gender quota or political participation. Finally, the sixth cluster colored in Turquoise and labeled as women includes only two items related to women and gender bias.

Authors tend to identify their research with the field of study, so it is unsurprising that the highest frequency keyword is gender quotas (81 occurrences and 95 total link strength). Gender and corporate governance, with 62 and 35 occurrences respectively, follow gender quotas. The node gender quotas has thicker lines or higher link strengths with women's representation, and gender equality. This means that those keywords often appear together with female leadership when an author illustrates their paper.

Figure 3.5: Co-occurrence keywords network.



Source: Own

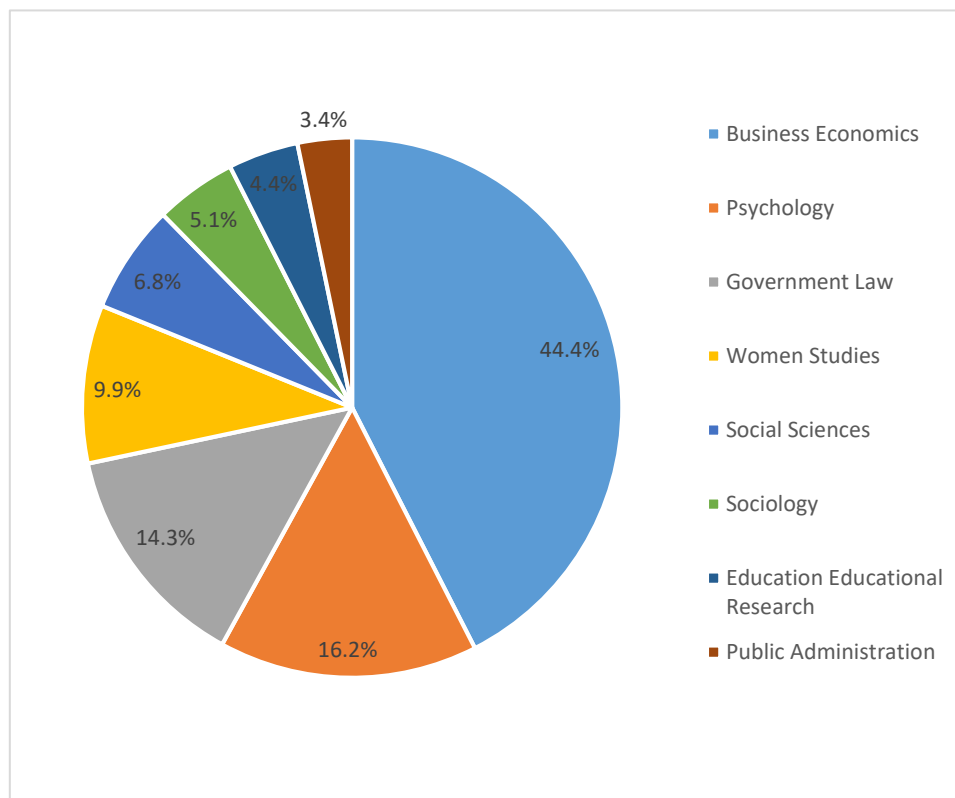
3.2.3.2. Distribution of papers by sectors

Figure 3.6 provides the distribution of empirical research by sectors. It indicates that the majority of publications are related to business economics (44.4%) followed by psychology (16.2%) and government law (14.3%). The distribution also reveals that 9.9% of articles covered women studies. Social sciences, sociology, education educational research and public administration drew the least attention from researchers when compared to the other sectors.

The dominance of the business economics sector could possibly be explained by the fact that the field of business economics tackles organizational issues such as standard business practices, the efficiency of production, and overall management strategy. Business economics also comprises the study of external economic factors and their impact on business decisions. Thus, organizations are interested in studying the effect of gender diversity (in executive boards and top management) on firm performance and especially financial performance.

In addition, psychologists are increasingly interested in studying gender diversity in the workplace and create initiatives that would help develop the potential of each employee and turn their exceptional skills into a business advantage. As for governments, they can play a conclusive role in speeding up the progress toward equality through legislation, fiscal measures, programmatic change, and public–private partnerships. Government laws, policies, and regulations can create a gender-neutral environment, keeping in mind that these laws are the bedrock of efforts that promote women’s equality.

Figure 3.6.: Distribution of articles by industry sector.



Source: Own

3.2.4. Discussion

The main articles analyzed revealed that Eagly and Karau (2002) wrote the top cited document. The article outlines the unique challenges and obstacles that women encounter as they rise into leadership roles, such as role incongruity between gender and leadership roles, and unfavorably evaluating female leaders because of their gender role violation. One consequence is that female leaders may provoke negative reactions even when they are positively evaluated for fulfilling this role. Other consequences include women facing more impediments in attaining leadership roles and becoming effective in these roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Similarly, other top cited articles investigated the reactions to a woman's success in a male gendered occupation. Results indicated that women are less liked as they become more successful. These deleterious reactions arise only when women succeed in male-dominated domains. Being disliked can have detrimental career outcomes on the overall leader evaluation and recommendations for

reward allocation (Heilman et al., 2004). The descriptive beliefs (what women are like) and prescriptive components (how women should behave) of gender stereotypes can result in women being devalued for their performance, not being recognized for their accomplishments, or reprimanded for being competent. Because gender bias influences how supervisors rate employees, of gender bias and the way in which it influences evaluations in work settings, it is argued that qualified women will not necessarily advance within the hierarchy of the organization as their male counterparts do (Heilman, 2001).

Other top cited articles by Eagly et al (2003) on the different leadership styles implemented by men and women uncovered that female leaders displayed more transformational leadership qualities than male leaders. They also realized that female leaders somewhat exhibited a more contingent reward behavior of transactional leadership. This combination may resolve some of the discrepancies between the requirements of leadership roles and the female gender role and therefore permit women to succeed as leaders (Eagly & Carli, 2003). By contrast, male leaders used a laissez-faire leadership style and displayed slightly more the other characteristics of transactional leadership such as active and passive management by exception. Nevertheless, when female leaders manifested stereotypically masculine styles by being more autocratic and nonparticipative, they were perceived less competently and less effective as a leader. Furthermore, the devaluation of women increased when female leaders worked in male-dominated occupations and the evaluators were men (Eagly et al., 1992). Nonetheless, the number of women in leadership roles is increasing including elite executive roles. Thus, organizations must seize this shift to modernity and progressive ideas by assigning women to prominent positions (Eagly & Carli, 2003).

As for the impact of leadership styles on subordinate job satisfaction, it is obvious that subordinates normally favor high-quality supervisor-subordinate relationships. However, gender may affect the explicit characteristics that subordinates use to make this decision, which may influence significant workplace processes and outcomes (Collins et al., 2014). Grissom et al. (2012) studied the effect of the public school principals' gender on teachers' job satisfaction and turnover by carrying out a study using data from a nationally representative sample of public schools in the United States. The results revealed that male teachers working with male principals were considerably more satisfied than male teachers working with female principals. In addition, the results indicated that female teachers who worked with male principals showed higher satisfaction than those who worked with a female principal. In addition, Choi (2013) examined the impact that demographic differences have on employees' job satisfaction. The findings indicated that when the proportion of women in senior management is higher, subordinates tend to be less satisfied with their job (Choi, 2013). However, other studies revealed that subordinates from both genders showed similar satisfaction with their managers and rated their managers' supportiveness equally (Byron, 2007). In conclusion, researchers have not focused on gender in relation to job satisfaction (Iyer, 2017), but rather on leadership style and its impact on employee job satisfaction. Usually, employees enjoy greater job satisfaction when their leaders have elements of both task and relationship orientations (Madlock, 2008). Studies have shown that leadership effectiveness creates a high level of satisfaction for employees (Andrews, 2003). Effective leaders inspire positive change and create the motivation for transformation (Naidu & Van Der Walt, 2005). Consequently, satisfied employees are productive employees (Patterson et al., 2004). In summary, varying leadership styles may influence employee job satisfaction differently. Nevertheless, an organization's situational setting may determine which style replaces the other. Therefore, when organizations attempt to influence employee job satisfaction, they need to be aware of the different existing leadership styles (Loganathan, 2013).

3.3. Theoretical elements of our research paper

It is undeniable that women's rise to leadership positions has been increasing incrementally, although female leaders continue to be evaluated more negatively than their male counterparts, even when carrying out the same leadership roles (Eagly & Chin, 2010). Evidently, the advancement of women to leadership roles triggers a number of benefits to organizations. However, bias against women leaders, which goes against the prevalent concept of "female advantage" in leadership (Fondas, 1997; Leslie et al., 2017), derives partially from the "think– manager–think–male" bias suggesting that men are perceived more qualified to occupy leadership positions than women (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Thus, the purpose of the current review is to attain a better understanding of the drivers and barriers that affect female progression into executive positions, as well as the methods and techniques that foster female leadership.

3.3.1. Drivers empowering female leadership in organizations

Since the advancement of women into executive roles is influenced by a variety of factors, it is essential to investigate the major drivers that empower female leadership in organizations. Female empowerment is driven by both internal and external factors, which include implementing work-life balance strategies, promoting positive role models, reforming laws and regulations, redistributing unpaid work, and changing the workplace culture, practice and policies.

Work-life balance (WLB) has been a main point of interest in several research studies, which confirmed the correlation of work life balance with different variables relating to work (Schieman & Glavin, 2008; Kamau, et al., 2013; Ojo et al., 2014; Oludayo, et al., 2015). New research on leadership has emphasized women's struggles with juggling

work and family responsibilities, conforming to gender stereotypes, and being expected to adopt status quo leadership approaches (Ely et al., 2011; Martin al., 2018). When women are presented with opportunities to balance their various responsibilities and are endorsed by supportive environments, they can successfully assume their leadership duties and improve their unique leadership identity (Brue & Brue, 2018; Debebe, 2011; Orbach, 2017; Schueller-Weidekamm & Kautzky-Willer, 2012).

Research suggests that women's lack of participation in certain academic or high-status fields is partly related to the social psychological barriers created by gender stereotypes. For instance, the underrepresentation of females in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and executive positions may indicate to women that they lack the skills required to prosper in these domains (Eagly et al., 2000). Therefore, the exposure of women to female role models inspires them to participate in STEM and high-status positions where they are usually underrepresented and negatively stereotyped (Lockwood, 2006; Plant et al., 2009; Stout et al., 2011; Bagès and Martinot, 2011). Furthermore, women who hold senior leadership positions function as role models and indicate to women who work further down in the organizational pyramid that organizational career paths can be available to them as well (O'Neil & Hopkins, 2015).

It is evident that the position of women in boardrooms has progressed significantly following the implementation of laws that require corporations of a certain size to conform to quotas for women (Ouedraogo, 2018). Once organizations develop an environment that favors the diversity of thought, they will begin to benefit from the diversity of their boards. When boards are extremely cohesive, they are more inclined to overturn disagreeing opinions, and individuals are less likely to defy the norms that are already in place (Jackson et al., 2003; Stahl et al., 2010).

In spite of a wide convergence in labor force partaking, education, working hours, careers and hours of household work (Goldin, 2014), a large number of research provides evidence of gender differences in economic outcomes of females and males, particularly in the labor market. Even after taking into consideration a variety of demographic and background attributes, females are paid considerably less than males (Blau & Kahn, 2017; Booth, 2009; Weichselbaumer & Winter-Ebmer, 2005), mainly at the top of the salary distribution hierarchy (Albrecht et al., 2003; 2015; Blau & Kahn, 2017; Gupta et al., 2006). Females are also underrepresented in high-paying occupations and high-level jobs (Bertrand & Hallock, 2001; Olivetti & Petrongolo, 2016). Moreover, the culture of many organizations now supports the benefits of embracing women and minorities amongst their leaders. Such organizations may support women by fostering mentoring and networking, and instituting more family-friendly strategies (Eagly & Carli, 2003).

3.3.2. Barriers hindering female leadership in organizations

Irrespective of the relationship that exists between gender and societal roles, there is still a disparity between how they perform in a business environment. There is a struggle to comprehend what traits women need to have and demonstrate to be successful leaders (Pafford & Schaefer, 2017). The journey of female leaders is not easy and barriers are inevitably to be encountered. These barriers include discrimination, work-life conflict, differential hiring and promotion, and gender-based stereotyping.

Gender discrimination against female leaders not only hurts women leaders: this discrimination also reduces the likelihood of women pursuing leadership positions in the first place. Women are cognizant of gender discrimination against female leaders and this understanding weakens their leadership ambitions (Fisk & Overton, 2019). In addition, gender is a factor that shows frequently in research on work-life balance; even though family–work struggle is a problem of both genders, literature concentrates

mainly on women. Women traditionally have more struggles because of the number of roles they accomplish (de Luis et al., 2004, Poelmans, 2001) and even today, family commitments are considered a big hindrance for women's career development (Cross, 2010; Emslie & Hunt, 2009; Grady & McCarthy, 2008).

A critical element that repeatedly emerges in the literature as a driver of work-life balance (WLB) policy implementation is the presence of organizational sustenance for this sort of policies in terms of managers' dedication to attaining work-life balance for their workers (e.g. Thomas & Ganster, 1995; Thompson et al., 1999). Managers have an essential role in implementing family-friendly work policies (Darcy et al., 2012). This notion is pertinent because according to Schein's (1995) logic about leadership and culture, a manager dedicated to WLB can be a leader and a role model who inspires subordinates in order to identify with him, adopting his beliefs and values. Thus, the fact that women in managerial positions can be a contributing factor for founding WLB policies in the firm does not come as a surprise, as some studies state (Baek et al., 2012; Blum et al., 1994; Guzmán-Cuevas et al., 2009; Ingram & Simons, 1995; Milliken et al., 1998).

For decades, the compensations received by males have been bigger those of their female counterparts, bringing about a gender gap in pay. Authors such as Groshen (1991), Johnson and Solon (1986), and MacPherson and Hirsch (1995), among others, verified that men had higher salaries than women did, such as women were working in jobs where average remuneration was lower. Palacio and Simón (2006) deduced that the gender gap in pay in the majority of the cases is because of the way men and women are allocated within the labor market, as women are placed in occupations with low salaries. Similarly, previous studies (Bayard et al., 2003; De la Rica, 2003) indicated that women earned less than men did because females were placed in low-paid jobs. Bell (2005) confirmed that executive women, with the same education level and profession, earned less than executive men did. Simón et al. (2005) inferred that the discrimination against

women increased in low-paid jobs and in those occupations where the number of women was high. Ortega (2007) stated that the greater the occupational discrimination, the greater the gender gap in pay. Therefore, in those occupations having a high concentration of men, the gender gap in pay displayed will be greater. Bell (2005), Bird et al. (2007), and Castaño et al. (2008) confirmed that among male and female directors, women earned less than men did. In the same vein, Castaño et al. (2008) disclosed that female executives received 42% less of the wage than that of men.

For a long period, social psychologists have been interested in studying the psychological factors that cause social inequality. A rising interest has concentrated on how the content of stereotypes reinforces and preserves social hierarchies by communicating causal attributions that validate and justify why certain groups occupy certain jobs (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Reyna, 2000; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Spears et al., 1997). For instance, the underrepresentation of females in leadership positions and in STEM domains steers people to form stereotype-based justifications that males hold and females need the skills and qualities necessary to succeed in those domains (Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Eagly & Wood, 2012; Koenig & Eagly, 2014). As a result, the matter of stereotypes provides practical explanations for group disproportions that exist in the ordinal attributes of groups, thus validating those outcomes as natural and unavoidable. Researchers of hiring bias have extensively demonstrated that male applicants are favored over female applicants for positions that require masculine qualities, such as managerial positions even after controlling for differences in qualifications (Davison & Burke, 2000). Masculine traits are those that we usually linked with assertiveness, competency, or analytical skills (Diekmann & Eagly, 2000; Diekmann et al., 2010). Bosak & Sczesny (2011) added to the limited literature on this topic by revealing that, in the absence of leadership information, when male research participants were requested to make hiring decisions they more frequently chose the male applicants over equally qualified female applicants. Rudman & Phelan

(2010) realized that triggering traditional gender role stereotypes steered women into having lower interest in masculine stereotyped jobs.

3.3.3. Methods, techniques and policies that foster female leadership in organizations

It is about high time that organizations acknowledge what is limiting the development of women professionals and take concrete and steady steps to promote a women-friendly environment. Only then can they benefit from the influence of gender diversity. A number of tools, methods and techniques can help nurture affinity for the growth of women leaders such as recruitment methods, computational modeling and simulation techniques, government initiatives, leadership development training, diversity training, and inclusion of women (Reskin & McBrier, 2000; Samuelson et al., 2019; Debebe, 2017; Terjesen & Sealy, 2016; Duehr & Bono, 2006; Brescoll, 2016; Guillet et al., 2019; Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017). Research shows that congruence of organizational policies across levels with leadership effectiveness increases the probability that organizations will be capable to successfully implement and sustain change (Schein, 2010; Parry & Proctor-Thomson, 2003; Schuller et al., 2013). Table 3.4 shows a review of the literary contributions to exhibit the numerous ways in which the implemented techniques and methods can help foster female leadership.

Table 3.4: Methods, techniques, and policies that foster female leadership.

Methods and techniques	Benefits	References
Recruitment methods	Build a more gender diverse workforce Identify skills gaps Enable higher quality selection Offer organizations greater protection in a climate of increased equality regulations	Reskin & McBrier (2000) Kirton & Healy (2009) Wolf & Jenkins (2006)
Computational modeling and simulation techniques	Improve the precision and transparency of organizational research Facilitate efforts to examine the extent to which barriers in leadership development and organizational entry result in unique patterns and explanations for female leader underrepresentation Provide patterns and explanations for female leader underrepresentation	Harrison et al. (2007); Kozlowski et al. (2013); Vancouver & Weinhardt (2012); Wang et al. (2016) Samuelson et al. (2019)
Government initiatives	Legislation generates the most substantial change to the representation of women on boards Reduce female political, social, and material disadvantages Reduce barriers to women accessing the many goods of paid work Give women greater influence in high-level decision-making	Adams & Kirchmaier (2013) Khaitan (2015), Fine et al. (2020) Meeussen et al. (2020)
Leadership development training	Improves women's leadership effectiveness Helps hidden leaders to be brought into a state of becoming leaders Fosters greater self-awareness, expand learner's perspective of context, and aid in formulating alternative strategies Helps attenuated leaders become aware of blind spots about themselves and their context Allows discouraged leaders to feel grounded in their values, interests, or talents Inspires discouraged leaders to persist despite the lack of support in their external environments	Debebe (2017)
Diversity programs	Decrease gender stereotypes and other prejudiced attitudes Increase awareness and appreciation of differences between individuals Identify stereotypes and promote inclusion, rather than highlighting differences between men and women Reduce implicit stereotypes, which occur on an automatic, unconscious level	Duehr & Bono (2006) Jayne & Dipboye (2004) Greenwald & Banaji (1995)
Inclusion of women	Capitalizex on the full range of intellectual capital available to the firm Equips employees to recognize gendered structures from a critical perspective The business appears as a relevant and attractive place to work for young, well-educated potential leaders	Daily et al. (1999) Scholten & Witmer (2017)

Source: Own

However, these methods, techniques and policies are tools that can create some conflicts and become detrimental to management. For instance, when discussing recruitment methods, the more organizations depend on referrals or urge specific employees to apply, the greater men's share of managerial positions (Reskin & McBrier, 2000). The fact that females are underrepresented in decision-making positions seems to lessen the likelihoods for the recruitment and development of female candidates (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012; Corrice, 2009). De Paola and Scoppa (2015) discovered that female candidates are less likely to be promoted when the committee is composed exclusively

by males, while the gender gap disappears when the candidates are evaluated by a mixed sex committee.

The computational modeling and simulation technique examines the effects of external hiring and developmental opportunities, which may have significances at different stages in women's leadership maze. The model offers a depiction of the typically occurring performance/promotion, turnover, and hiring mechanics that occur in an organizational environment. Accordingly, it presents the opportunity to investigate how the principal barriers in organizational entry and developmental opportunities may unwrap within the context of and interrelate with these mechanisms, and affect the representation of women in organizational leadership positions (Samuelson et al., 2019). Differences in developmental opportunities and external hiring are two main obstacles in the leadership maze faced by women in their daily work experiences (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Existing research ignores the significant role of political bodies, including ruling parties and government legislation, in the implemented governance practices across corporate boards of directors. This is alarming given the substantial worldwide argument and legislation regarding the establishing of gender quotas on boards (Reding, 2012). Moreover, once implemented, legislation may generate the most significant change to the representation of women on boards—far superior than any individual, organization, industry, or country-level factor previously recognized (Adams & Kirchmaier, 2013). However, gender quota legislation has two obvious ethical facets: first, in a pre-legislation environment, females may be underrepresented regardless of their equal competence; and second, in post-quota legislation, females may be nominated directors of publicly traded and/or state-owned enterprises even though they might not be the most qualified candidates (Terjesen et al., 2015).

Numerous organizations use stimulating job assignments to develop employees' leadership skill (Day, 2007; Dragoni et al., 2009; Woodall et al., 1997). Research suggests these assignments have many positive effects on employee learning, assessments, and development (Morrison & Brantner, 1992; Schmidt et al., 1986; Silva et al., 2012). Although females and males usually report equal aspiration to receive high status/high accountability developmental opportunities, research suggests that females are often offered less stimulating, or less “mission critical” opportunities than those offered to males (De Pater et al., 2010; Silva et al., 2012). For example, King et al. (2010) realized that although men and women reported obtaining an identical number of developmental opportunities in their workplace, the prestige and recognition of the opportunities received by women were valued considerably lower than those received by men. Some have attributed these patterns to the continuance of stereotypical beliefs that women should be protected, are less proficient at agentic tasks, and therefore are less capable of succeeding at challenging assignments (i.e., ambivalent sexism; Glick & Fiske, 1997).

As for diversity programs, they include attempts to endorse diversity by developing external relations with underrepresented groups, including minority communities and suppliers. However, increased diversity does not essentially improve the talent pool. An increase in the diversity of a group at the demographic level (gender, age, race...) does not promise an increase in diversity of task-related knowledge, skills, abilities, experiences, and other characteristics (KSAOs). In addition, increased diversity does not essentially build commitment, increase motivation, and decrease conflict. Another expectation is that a happier, more harmonic workplace will be an outcome of diversity. Unfortunately, diversification in the workplace often has the opposite effect (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004).

Diversity and inclusion are necessary to endorse cultural awareness and change, defy conservative ideas, and improve performance across organizations (McLeod et al., 1996). Firms have to work on balancing out gender representation in order to make important visual statements of who is included. Simultaneously, organizations need to address employees' qualitative aspects by raising challenging questions such as what is considered a talent or which gender category is considered trustworthy. Without tackling both aspects, there may be women waiting in the pipeline. However, the power or influence these women have in the organization will stay unaffected (Broadbridge & Fielden, 2015). Consequently, gender equality changes into counting heads without strategic significance, and the philosophy of equity and inclusion is overshadowed by traditions and norms that avoid dealing with issues hampering organizational change and adaptation in these areas (Scholten & Witmer, 2017).

3.3.4. Gender, leadership style and job satisfaction

Gender is a psychosocial construct that is shaped by a person's experience of being male or female (Winter, 2015). In the workplace, gender plays a significant role in defining leadership roles and determining the relationships that leaders build with their employees. In addition, gender norms may endorse behaviors that result in leaders being excluded, included, marginalized or even rejected (Leitch & Stead, 2016). Thus, Collins et al. (2014) suggested examining gender in the workplace to determine if there is a relationship between gender, leadership style and overall employee job satisfaction. Eagly and Johnson (1990) and Eagly et al. (1995) proposed that there are significant gender differences in leadership since there is a mismatch between gender roles and specific leadership roles. Their findings revealed that followers would negatively evaluate their leaders when their behavior differ from the gender norms set by society. Therefore, female leaders receive negative feedback from their followers when they lead with aggression, structure, and assertiveness since these characteristics are considered unacceptable female behaviors (Rhee & Sigler, 2015). However, employees

rate male leaders who exhibit the same characteristics positively since they are regarded as conforming to the stereotypical male role (Cenkci & Özçelik, 2015; Wolfram & Gratton, 2014). Nevertheless, other research shows that female leaders are rated more positively than male leaders when they adhere to their stereotypical role and combine it with characteristics of the male stereotypical role (Taylor, 2017).

The leader-follower relationship is a key determinant to organizational effectiveness, employee wellbeing, overall job satisfaction, and commitment. A leader's management approach may have a negative or positive impact on employee motivation within an organization. Therefore, leadership style is an important factor that may affect employee job satisfaction as well as their trust and support in achieving organizational goals (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016; Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012). For example, transactional leadership is a leadership style based on exchange between leader and follower using rewards for employee motivation and reprimands for underperformance. As for transformational leadership, leaders encourage, inspire and motivate employees to create a work environment built on mutual respect in a leadership style (Chaimongkonrojna & Steane, 2015). Research has consistently found that female leaders adopt a transformational style, which tends to be more democratic and participative, while male leaders adopt a transactional style of leadership, which is in accordance with their stereotypical leader mold (Şahin et al., 2017). Several studies have indicated that transformational leadership results in higher levels of job satisfaction than transactional leadership (Mester et al., 2003).

According to Babalola (2016), "Adopting a leadership style that works best for an organization and its employees remains one of the most effective and efficient means by which organizations achieve their objectives and that of employees' satisfaction". Job satisfaction is an emotional state that depends upon the leadership style of managers and can have a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment and performance (Alghamdi et al., 2018; Gyensare et al., 2016).

In conclusion, different leadership styles have different impacts on employee job satisfaction (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016). There is a significant difference between a leader's gender and their effectiveness, communication style, ability to persuade, trustworthiness. Gender can also influence certain characteristics that subordinates use to make judgments, which can have a significant impact on organizational processes and outcomes (Collins et al., 2014; Jackson et al., 2014). Leaders can have a substantial impact on employee overall job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. According to Amin et al., (2013), the behaviors of transformational leaders and the transactional contingent reward are both necessary to boost job satisfaction. Collins et al. (2014) deduced that in order for leaders to increase job satisfaction across genders, they must adjust their behavior based on the subordinate gender, which can be achieved through recruitment, ongoing training, career development, and an overall understanding of employees' needs. Furthermore, in order for male leaders to improve their transformational leadership traits, they may need additional training or different approaches to team leadership (Brandt & Edinger, 2015).

3.4. Conclusion

In this study, we carried out a bibliometric review on female leadership, leadership styles and subordinates' satisfaction. We identified 185 papers published between 1974 and January 2020 that were considered relevant to our review. The VOS Viewer software was used to conduct the bibliometric analysis by analyzing and visualizing several aspects of publications such as co-occurrence of author keywords, co-authorship analysis on the basis of countries and bibliographic coupling on the basis of authors, keywords, countries and sectors.

The obtained results revealed that although the majority of countries have been showing interest in studying the field of female leadership, the United States is the country where the largest number of articles have been written. In addition, the distribution of papers

by sectors showed that the preponderance of publications that study the field of female leadership are related to business economics. This could possibly be explained by the fact that the field of business economics tackles organizational issues such as standard business practices, the efficiency of production, and overall management strategy. In addition, the analysis of the co-occurrence of author keywords revealed that the most common keyword that authors have utilized to describe their papers on female leadership is gender quotas. Furthermore, the keyword gender quotas often appeared together with the keywords women's representation, and gender equality.

Findings from papers suggest that female empowerment is driven by both internal and external factors, which include implementing work-life balance strategies, promoting positive role models, reforming laws and regulations, redistributing unpaid work, and changing the workplace culture, practice and policies. And while role incongruity between gender and leadership roles is an obstacle that women encounter as they rise into leadership roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002), many other barriers continue to hinder women's rise to leadership positions, including discrimination, work-life conflict, differential hiring and promotion, and gender-based stereotyping. However, a variety of tools, methods and techniques can create an enabling environment for women to hone their leadership qualities such as recruitment methods, computational modeling and simulation techniques, government initiatives, leadership development training, diversity training, and inclusion of women (Reskin & McBrier, 2000; Samuelson et al., 2019; Debebe, 2017; Terjesen & Sealy, 2016; Duehr & Bono, 2006; Brescoll, 2016; Guillet et al., 2019; Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017).

As for the leader's gender, their leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction, previous research indicate that the leader's gender and/or leadership style have a variety of influences on their subordinates such as a manager's effectiveness, including communication style, persuasion ability, and trustworthiness. Findings also show that women leaders are more inclined to exhibit a democratic style and features of

transformational leadership than their male peers do (Robbins, 2006). The recognized gender differences between men and women can influence, somewhat, the leadership styles implemented by each, because of the perceived role incongruity as well as the carryover of gender-based roles into the workplace and the internalization of gender-specific norms. Therefore, in order for women to overcome the dilemma of role incongruity, which proposes that the compliance of women to their role as leader can hamper their ability to meet the requirements of their perceived gender role and vice versa, they may prefer to implement a transformational style (Silva & Mendis, 2017). Consequently, leadership styles have a great influence on employees' job satisfaction and on their confidence and effectiveness in achieving organizational goals (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016; Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012). However, previous research shows that employees' job satisfaction may increase with promotion, reward and recognition, development of their skills, workplace safety, and the nature of the work that they perform (Josanov-Vrgovic & Pavlovic, 2014). Leaders should not be solely concerned with their leadership style, but also with the workplace culture and try to build intercultural competence. For instance, in order for a leader to be in harmony with their employees' preferences, they must pay attention to differences between his or her leadership style and the leadership style preferred by his or her employees (Fein et al., 2015). In addition, promoting gender equality and raising awareness on gender biases can accelerate the change in perception of how female and male leaders are evaluated (Taylor, 2017).

This review provided us with the opportunity to determine the existing gaps and to open the research arena for future research in the area of female leadership. We identified seven major gaps that are appropriate for further research. Future research can examine how leadership development training and diversity programs can help an organization can be used as effective methods to help not only female leaders but female subordinates as well.

The present study is not without limitations. By only using the Scopus and WOS databases this study may not have realized a comprehensive coverage of all empirical articles in the research field. Nevertheless, it seems realistic to presume that the review process covered a large segment of studies available. In addition, the review of the literature was sometimes hindered by the fact that so many different words are used to research the field: towards leadership style (leader behavior, leadership, etc.), female leadership (women bosses, female leaders, women on board etc.), and gender (feminine, masculine, female, male etc.).

In conclusion, our study is a modest contribution to the developing theory of gender, leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction. We hope that our findings will pave the way for other researchers to explore the dynamics of leadership from a contextual perspective.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS MODELS AND HYPOTHESES

4.1. Introduction

The focus of this study was to examine some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement in the workplace and why some women do not accept having a female boss. For that purpose, three different empirical studies were carried out highlighting three specific aspects of my thesis. The first study explored the different work-life strategies that can be implemented by men and women leaders to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders. In addition, its aim was to learn if those work-life strategies enhance organizational performance by means of increased innovativeness, and research and development. An intertwined relationship exists between work-life balance and leadership (Braun & Peus, 2018). Females in senior leadership positions have been urged to help their teams navigate work-life challenges, knowing that a good work-life balance has been proven to have a positive impact on employee productivity (Kalysh et al., 2016). Moreover, improved employer-employee relationships and enhanced levels of employee job satisfaction are achieved when female leaders provide social support initiatives (Braun & Peus, 2018), as well as reduced work-family conflict for employees (Tang et al., 2016).

As for the second study, it examined some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement to leadership roles, why some women do not accept having a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female boss. Aside from gender bias and stereotyping, other factors work against women's leadership aspirations such as the lack of support from their female subordinates. While the culture of women empowerment has become a critical part of a business strategy, some women are the bane of other women in the workplace. With the rise of females to managerial positions, there are regular testimonies of rivalry and pointless competition among female leaders and female subordinates. Therefore, it is important to understand why women might oppose the rise of other women and whether female leaders treat their female subordinates less fairly than male leaders do.

Lastly, the third study attempted to address the lack of research highlighting the revenue contribution of women-owned businesses to the Lebanese economy. In addition, it aimed to tackle the challenges faced by Lebanese women entrepreneurs and shed light on the opportunities that can help them to increase revenue and subsequently contribute to the growth of the local economy. Promoting female entrepreneurship is important for numerous reasons, the main one being the elimination of gender inequality and the generation of equal opportunities between men and women. Other reasons include bringing diversity to the entrepreneurial environment through the inclusion of new leaders, appreciating female talents and skills and encouraging female financial independence.

4.2. Analysis 1: Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses

4.2.1. Summary of the main theoretical elements

Finding a balance between life and work is a challenging task for employees. WLB may impact employees' attitudes towards their organization and consequently the organizations' performance and effectiveness. Deery and Jago (2015) believe that it is necessary to explore the different WLB strategies since they can leverage employees' well-being and job outcomes. Ilies et al. (2017) deduced that when an individual feels equally engaged and satisfied with their contribution to their professional work and family responsibilities, they would be considered to have achieved WLB. Thus, when individuals devote equal amount of time and commitment to both work and non-work related activities, they would reach a high WLB.

There are several important arguments in support of a more comprehensive and current perception of work-life balance. Empirical results demonstrate that a satisfactory WLB has a positive influence on individuals and organizations (Hobson et al., 2001; Kalliath & Brough, 2008; Lero et al., 2008). Numerous research studies attempted to investigate the impacts of implementing various WLB policies, such as flexible working arrangements, on employees (Farivar et al., 2016; Lero et al., 2008). In fact, a number of organizations that promote fundamental principles and rights at work (e.g. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, European Union, International Labor Organization) have been great supporters of a better WLB for employees. There is also evidence that corporate policies that provision WLB have a positive impact on employee motivation, recruitment and retention (Farivar & Cameron, 2015) as well as employee attitudes such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Chang & Cheng-Feng, 2014; Kim, 2014; Shanafelt et al., 2012). Research has also demonstrated that work-life balance leads to high organizational performance (Blazovich et al., 2013), increased job satisfaction (Whiston & Cinamon, 2015), and stronger organizational commitment (Allen et al., 2000). WLB can be improved by organizational support programs including flexible work arrangement (Allen et al., 2013), part-time work (Beham et al., 2012), childcare assistance, parenting resources, eldercare resources and employee health and wellness programs and family leave policy (Beauregard & Henry 2009), and social support at work (Whiston & Cinamon 2015).

Other arguments in support of WLB believe that supervisors play an important role in helping employees achieve WLB. According to Pandey et al. (2018), supervisor support can be regarded as showing concern for and motivating employees, providing important resources, a structured work environment, feedback, opportunities for career advancement, information, and help to manage work-related stress. Moreover, since supervisors exercise authority and can command and control the execution of tasks, their support could be more essential to employees compared to other sources of support (Sguera et al., 2017). Furthermore, Holland et al. (2017) indicated that supervisor

support has a significant impact on employee job satisfaction especially early career success because it increases employee self-awareness and personal goal setting. The authors further stated that employee turnover can be reduced and performance enhanced when supervisors discuss with employees career advancement opportunities and career goals.

The empirical evidence for gender differences in work–life balance is varied. Based on the examination of both Western and Eastern cultures (Australia, New Zealand, the USA, and East Europe), research studies established that no meaningful difference exists between genders (Milkie & Peltola, 1999; Sav & Harris, 2013). According to these studies, both men and women believe that WLB are more positively associated with job and life satisfaction. However, based on other multicultural studies, gender remains of key importance with men experiencing higher levels of WLB than women do (Morgenroth et al., 2021) and more women than men struggling to balance the conflict between work and family (Behson, 2002; Nielson, 2001; Yavas et al., 2008). Women’s imbalanced work and family life stem from the lack of sufficient time and support from their husbands as well as the cultural norms and gender biases in the workplace (Rehman & Roomi, 2012). WLB problems can negatively impact women’s health causing stress, depression, headache, muscle tension, and weight gain (Delina & Raya, 2013), and can become an impediment to women’s career advancement compared to their male counterparts.

According to recent statistics, the majority of millennials would prefer the chance to work from home or have flexible hours (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2013; Deloitte, 2018). In many jobs, future flexible work arrangements are quite likely to become the rule rather than the exception. Flexible scheduling can be a beneficial capability-spanning tool that helps employees, particularly women, adjust their job to family obligations (Singley & Hynes, 2005). Previous studies have demonstrated that due to flexible working, moms can continue to work after giving birth (Chung & Van

der Horst, 2018), and can do so in positions that are labor-intensive during periods of high family demand (Fuller & Hirsh, 2019). By enabling women to preserve both, their happiness with work-life balance is boosted. Flexible working can therefore be a helpful strategy for advancing gender equality in our cultures. Flexible working, however, has the ability to traditionalize gender roles in the workplace and the home because of our society preexisting beliefs on gender roles and our attitudes regarding the roles and responsibilities of men and women (Lott & Chung, 2016; Sullivan & Lewis, 2001). As per Lott & Chung (2016), men employ flexible working to improve their performance and are expected to do so. They also tend to work harder and longer hours and receive more pay, which might lead to a rise in work-family conflicts. On the other and, when working flexibly, women are expected to take on more responsibilities within the family (Hilbrecht et al., 2008), which may intensify their work-family conflict, but unlike males, they are not compensated owing to the differing expectations.

Because women are still frequently in charge of household duties and childcare, and devote more time to these tasks than men do, the relationship between flexible working and work-family conflict has different effects on men and women (Van der Lippe et al., 2019). For men and women, the impact of work role ambiguity on work-family conflict varies (Michel et al., 2011). Additionally, different arrangements can result in various outcomes for both men and women. According to research by Peters et al. (2009), female employees who had greater control over their work schedules had better work-life balance as well as better work-family balance.

Flexible employment has been demonstrated to expand the work sphere rather than limit it, resulting in paid labor impinging on family life, contrary to what many research, who view it as a family-friendly arrangement, would predict (Glass & Noonan, 2016; Lott & Chung, 2016; Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Schieman & Young, 2010). Many theories exist to explain why such expansion occurs, but they can be refined into three categories: (1) gift exchange, employees feeling obligated to repay employers for the

gift of flexibility, (2) enabled intensification, where boundaries are blurred to allow workers to work harder or longer than they otherwise would have, or (3) enforced intensification, where employers may increase workload while also giving workers more flexibility over their work (Kelliher & Anderson, 2010; Chung & Van der Horst, 2020; Lott, 2018).

The ability to prioritize work and uphold the ideal worker culture—a worker who prioritizes work above all else and has no other obligations—is gendered (Acker, 1990; Williams, 1999; Blair-Loy, 2009). Despite some changes, men continue to be expected to provide for their families, especially after childbirth (Miani & Hoorens, 2014; Knight & Brinton, 2017; Scott & Clery, 2013). As a result, women are left to do the majority of household duties, childcare, and providing care for sick family members (Hochschild & Machung, 2003; Bianchi et al., 2012; Hook, 2006; Dotti Sani & Treas, 2016). Such gendered labor divisions and social norms about men and women, and especially about the roles of mothers and dads, influence how flexible employment is practiced and seen by society including employers, colleagues, friends, families, and consequently the outcomes of flexible working. The consequences that flexible working has on one's career will naturally be shaped by such preconceived conceptions of where workers' priorities lie and how they would use the extra control over their job. According to Leslie et al. (2012), flexible working for purposes of improving performance is likely to be rewarded, whereas flexible working for family-friendly goals is not. Flexible working for family reasons might actually have detrimental career repercussions. This is partly because flexible working for family reasons causes employees to stray from the ideal worker image (Williams et al., 2013). Thus, due to people's preconceived notions about women's flexible labor, flexible working has the potential to worsen gender inequality on the job market. Nevertheless, this is not always the case. Studies have demonstrated that flexible scheduling may enable women to work longer hours than they would have otherwise after giving birth (Chung & Van der Horst, 2018), to remain in high-paying but stressful professions (Fuller & Hirsh, 2019) and companies that offer

flexible scheduling with a low gender wage gap (Van der Lippe et al., 2019). In terms of what flexible working may signify for gender equality, the situation is thus very complicated.

4.2.2. Exposure of the analysis model and its corresponding hypotheses

When employees feel pressured by the rivalry for resources between home and work, supervisors can show support by asking about their family needs or by showing concern and encouragement. Supervisors may also allow employees to bring their children to work if childcare cannot be arranged or to have more flexible work hours to accommodate family requirements (Lapierre & Allen, 2006). According to researchers, supervisors' family support is essential for lessening the tension between work and family that employees encounter (Breugh & Frye, 2008). Employees may respond favorably to supervisory family support, which is motivated by supervisors' good intentions and desire to help staff members balance their work and family obligations (Thompson et al., 1999). Employees who feel that their managers are concerned about their family needs may respond by having more positive opinions of their work environment, better job satisfaction, and a greater tendency to stay employed with that organization. In the research on work-family conflicts, the need of supervisor support has been extensively discussed (e.g. Thomas & Ganster, 1995). Employer participation enables the organization to provide child care benefits and increase workplace flexibility for its staff. As a result, employees would become aware that their manager appreciate their efforts. In addition, perceived supervisor support indicates workers' opinions that their boss appreciates their contributions and is concerned for their welfare being (e.g. Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). According to Hobfoll's conservation of resources theory (2002), people can become stressed out when they have to decide how to divide their time and energy between job and family as resources are exhausted. Consequently, supervisor assistance, which is a resource, might lessen the adverse psychological impacts (such as poor WLB) that employees may experience. This

informal support at work, which typically takes the form of emotional support or more direct assistance from the manager, can give staff members the impression that they are being helped to strike a balance between work, life, and family. Employees are better able to balance their work commitments and family demands when their managers show concern for their needs. As a result, employees would experience fewer conflicts between their job and personal lives and live more balanced lives. As such, we propose:

H1.1. Supervisor's support of WLB is positively related to employee work-life balance.

Previous research discovered that WLB is positively associated with job satisfaction (Haar, 2013; Carlson et al., 2009).and career satisfaction (Saraih et al., 2019). Lower stress levels and greater job satisfaction may be characteristics of balanced people (Bruck et al., 2002; Warner & Hausdorf, 2009). People who feel that their job and personal lives are balanced may be happier because they are equally involved in activities that are important to them (Greenhaus et al., 2003; Brough et al., 2014, Carlson et al., 2009). Thus, regardless of culture (Kossek et al., 2014), work-life balance can be extremely important for all employees and may have an effect on people's wellbeing (Lyness & Judiesch, 2014). Accordingly, we introduce the following hypothesis:

H1.2. Individual's WLB is positively related to employee work-life balance.

According to earlier research, when management offers perks to workers, such workers tend to feel obligated to the firm and put forth greater effort to ensure its success (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Vayre, 2019). According to the work-life balance literature, several studies have discovered evidence that when organizations or managers are concerned about their employees' personal and professional well-being, those individuals' performance tends to improve (Campo et al., 2021). Therefore, based on the social exchange hypothesis, this study contends that when employers care for their

employees' personal and professional lives, their perceived good feelings boost their job satisfaction, and they are more likely to return the favor by performing well at work (Talukder et al., 2018).

As work-life balance is regarded as one of the most significant variables affecting job performance, organizations are increasingly focusing on integrating a number of HR practices and strategies, including it (Thevanes & Mangaleswaran, 2018). Previous studies have found plenty of support for the idea that work-life balance is crucial for improving employee job performance (Preena, 2021). Therefore, to preserve the existence of the sector, it is important to identify how work-life balance affects employees' job performance.

H1.3. Organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to employee work-life balance.

The social exchange theory (Klindžić & Marić, 2019), which presupposes an assessment of costs and rewards, can be used to characterize the relationship between work-life balance arrangements (WLBA) and organizational performance (OP). According to Caillier (2016), rewards can be given to workers in exchange for their loyalty to a company. Employers create supportive policies and offer assistance to encourage workers to contribute more, which boosts output, attendance, and retention (Berkery et al., 2017). Giovanis (2018) illustrated the connection between WLBA and OP using the expectancy theory, demonstrating that the availability of WLBA frees up more resources for workers who are more likely to perform well. Furthermore, to attain balance, the boundary theory was proposed as a way to evaluate how people divide or combine their personal and professional lives (Giovanis, 2018; Oludayo et al., 2018). Flexible working arrangements, one of the WLBA, give employees more control over their jobs. Employees are likely to contribute more to the workplace because of improved management of each function.

WLBA has been shown to have positive benefits on OP in a number of recent studies, including ones that improve retention, profit, attendance, sustain commitment, and boost motivation (Berkery et al., 2017; Oludayo et al., 2018). However, some research claim that WLBA has little effects or even negatively affects OP. Meanwhile, numerous studies have shown that improving work-life balance inside an organization might result from lessening the effectiveness of its work-life policy (Hammer et al., 1997; Parasuraman & Simmers, 2001). Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1.4. Employee work–life balance (EWLb) is positively related to organizational research and development performance.

One of the most crucial challenges that human resource management in firms should address is work-life balance (Abdirahman et al., 2020). No matter their size, organizations should make sure that employees have enough time to complete their obligations to both their families and their jobs (Abdirahman et al., 2020). According to earlier academics, success and happiness in family life might influence success and happiness at work (Egbuta Olive et al., 2019). Employees that are satisfied with their accomplishments both personally and professionally are more likely to accomplish the organizational goal (Dousin et al., 2019). Work-life balance has been demonstrated to increase employee satisfaction and job performance in a variety of industries and nations (Mendis & Weerakkody, 2017; Thevanes & Mangaleswaran, 2018; Egbuta Olive et al., 2019; Obrenovic et al., 2020; Rini et al., 2020; Preena, 2021)., whereas the work-life conflict has been shown to have a detrimental influence on employees' job performance and satisfaction (Dousin et al., 2019). Thus, based on the above research findings, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H1.5. Individual's WLB is positively related to organizational research and development performance.

According to researchers, an organization's effectiveness is directly related to the people it employs (Arulrajah & Opatha, 2012). The competitive advantage of an organization is often founded on its strong human resources, hence it is essential for businesses to enhance employee performance to boost overall organizational performance. Therefore, in order to enhance employees' job performance, firms substantially focus on increasing positive work-related attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment, as well as work-related behaviors such as work engagement (Meijerink et al., 2020). In this context, some researchers stated that encouraging work-life balance through HRM practices like telecommuting, job sharing, flextime, etc. can improve positive work-related attitudes and behaviors among employees (Bardoel & Drago, 2016; Chan et al., 2016; Fleetwood, 2007; McCarthy et al., 2013; Winefield et al., 2014). Employee satisfaction levels are strong predictors of an organization's effectiveness. Work-life balance appears to have a number of positive effects for many organizations, including reduced turnover, decreased absenteeism, enhanced work engagement, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), employee productivity, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Konrad & Mangel, 2000; Lambert, 2000; Nawab & Iqbal., 2013; Parakandi & Behery, 2016; Wang & Walumbwa, 2007), which leads to outstanding organizational performance. Therefore, firms should place a higher priority on improving employee work-life balance in order to develop an engaged, loyal, and retained workforce and boost organizational performance. According to the above literature, this study establishes that work-life has a positive relationship with organizational performance. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1.6. Organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to organizational research and development performance.

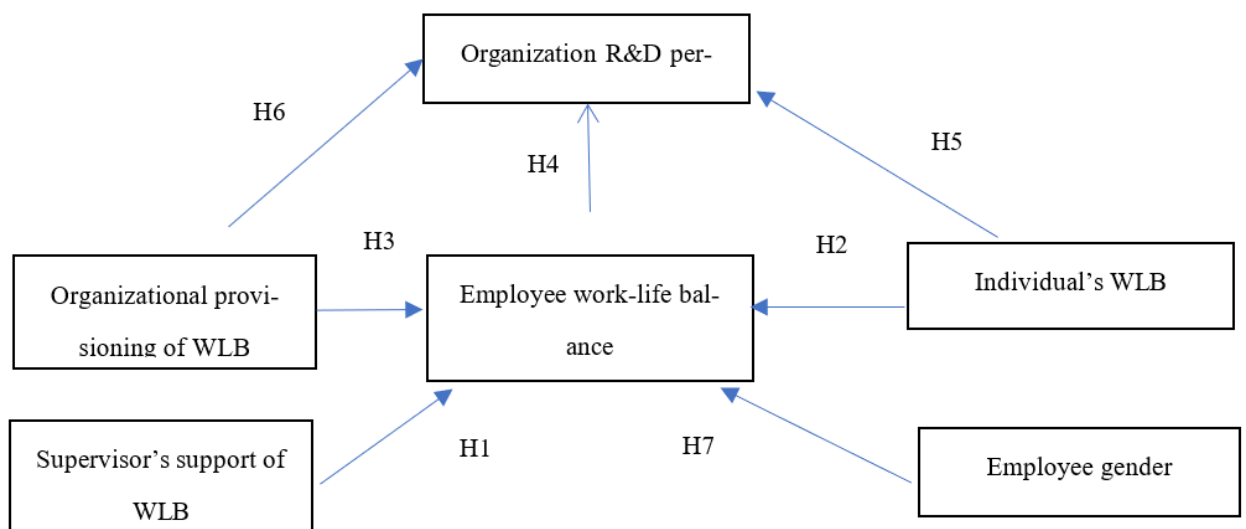
It is particularly intriguing to examine how gender affects a variable that simultaneously accounts for both job and family responsibilities. The literature on work-family balance has looked at gender as a potential predictor of various work-family balance levels.

Women are thought to have worse work-family balance than males since they typically shoulder more of these duties, however these research have not consistently confirmed this theory (McElwain et al., 2005). However, according to study, the work-family balance between men and women still shows considerable gender differences (Sullivan, 2019). Additionally, studies have shown that women value their families more than men do, whereas the converse is true for their jobs (Weisgram et al., 2011; Cinamon & Rich, 2002). This is in line with other studies that showed a stronger connection between the work-family balance and job satisfaction (Boles et al., 2003; Kinnunen*et al., 2004) and women's negative emotional reactions (Livingston & Judge, 2008). Based on these premises, we hypothesize that:

H1.7. There are significant gender differences in the relationship between EWLB and organizational R&D performance.

An analytical framework outlining the impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness is depicted in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: The conceptual model of the research.



4.3. Analysis 2: Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates

4.3.1. Summary of the main theoretical elements

A large body of research on gender and leadership has emerged, particularly on the effect of leaders' gender on the perceptions of their leadership style. The review of literature on the effectiveness of female leadership throughout different settings, including developed and developing countries, reveals somewhat mixed results (Kaiser & Wallace, 2016; Williams & Tiedens, 2016). According to Williams and Tiedens (2016), women who hold executive-level positions tend to be perceived as unlikable. A meta-analysis study by Williams and Tiedens (2016) showed that female leaders, as compared to male leaders, were more negatively evaluated. However, other research studies proved that women in leadership positions are perceived as more effective than men (Khalili, 2016; Verma, 2018).

The lack of sufficient knowledge regarding the boundary conditions for benefits resulting from the positive personality, accomplishment, attributes, or leadership styles of women leaders is one criticism of the evidence supporting a female leadership advantage. The most solid meta-analyses, including those done by Eagly et al. (2003) and Paustian-Underdahl et al. (2018) have served as the foundation for the majority of empirical data. In general, these data demonstrate the effectiveness of female leaders across contexts, but they do not go into specifics on the circumstances in which particular advantages matter and those in which they do not. Organizations today are extremely complicated entities. As social and technological developments continue to fundamentally alter how people work and how leaders lead, new issues are presented that may be better handled by traditional feminine leadership behaviors and styles. The literature has started to answer this question by examining women's leadership in three different situations that are prevalent in contemporary workplaces: leading teams,

leading during organizational crises, and leading in virtual work environments (Offermann & Foley, 2020).

With respect to leadership and gender differences, another debate rooted in the belief that men and women have fundamentally divergent leadership styles comes into view. Among the many leadership styles, women have a particular leadership style, that is, transformational while men exhibit a diversity of styles ranging from servant leadership to dictatorship. In addition, women are considered more trustworthy because they are sensitive, empathetic and humble in nature. Women value relationship building and collaboration with their employees. As a result, employees show innovative behavior without any hesitation (Jung et al., 2003; Khalili, 2016). The unexpected results of a research carried out by Zenger and Folkman (2012) which surveyed 7,280 leaders showed that women demonstrated higher than men did in 12 out of 16 different competencies. In another survey, women were seen as better leaders in 15 out of 16 competencies, which are considered most significant for outstanding leadership.

Although the traditional definition of leadership is expressed in masculine traits and referred to as agentic leadership style, communal attributes such as benevolence and caring are increasingly becoming sought after leadership characteristics. For example, substantial evidence in the area of transformational leadership has repetitively presented the advantages of leading with a communal approach (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Dezso & Ross, 2008; Lowe et al., 1996). Moreover, effective leadership is increasingly being linked to communal leadership behaviors and approaches such as individualized consideration and inspirational motivation (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Eagly et al., 2003). Nevertheless, female leaders who display highly agentic attributes or male leaders who display highly communal attributes are evaluated less favorably and considered less legitimate than if the other gender enacted their social role. Thus, female leaders are more likely to obtain negative evaluation from others when they exhibit agentic characteristics such as being more directive or

dictatorial (Eagly et al., 1992; 1995; Ridgeway, 2001). Female leaders' evaluation becomes equal to that of men only when they are described as "successful" (Heilman et al., 1995) or agentic and communal at the same time (Rudman & Glick, 2001).

Furthermore, female subordinates may be antipathetic to the behaviors of female leaders who adopt leadership styles considered to be "too masculine" (Eagly et al., 1992). Indeed, female subordinates may regard female bosses as having mostly disagreeable personality traits (Elsesser & Lever, 2011). Job satisfaction may not be the only well-being indicator that suffers if women dislike working with female bosses. A woman may suffer emotional health problems when she develops an aversion from a particular supervisor (Schieman & McMullen, 2008). Artz & Taengnoi (2016) found in two different data sets a persistent and negative relationship between women's job satisfaction and having female supervisors. The result is significant. The proportion of women reporting the highest level of job satisfaction drops by 3.7 to 6.9 percentage points when supervised by a woman, which is approximately equal to the negative well-being effects of not getting paid by performance or working in a big company versus a small company (Artz & Taengnoi, 2016). Kaiser and Wallace (2016) observed how followers perceived the appropriateness of different leadership styles. They rated the men and women on whether their leadership style was "the correct amount," "too much," or "too little" using the Leadership Versatility Index (LVI) for subordinate participants. Men's use of the "Forceful" and "Operational" methods was judged as "too little" by the majority of subordinate participants, while women's use of the "Forceful" and "Operational" styles was regarded as "too much" and "the appropriate amount," respectively. However, women employment of the "Forceful" and clearly dominant style was viewed as "too much," despite the fact that women in upper-level management employed amounts of the "Operational" leadership styles that were considered to be effective (Kaiser & Wallace, 2016). The widespread perception of senior managers' leadership abilities among their subordinates and their actual leadership abilities are inconsistent because of a change in management culture. In many organizations that

have evolved to become more democratic and people-oriented, upper-level managers cannot successfully lead by relying purely on stereotypically masculine styles of management (Kaiser & Wallace, 2016). Although subordinate assessments of women's leadership styles have been depicted in a negative light, the results of two meta-analyses on gender bias and leadership style show that the image is incomplete without taking into account how "dominance" is defined. In their meta-analysis, Eagly et al. (1992) noted a statistical tendency that suggested subordinates do, in fact, have a little less favorable opinion of female leaders than they do of their male counterparts. Williams and Tiedens (2016), who discovered comparable conflicting findings in their literature review, also observed this minor variation in a subsequent meta-analysis they conducted. The study findings indicate that women's leadership styles are more overtly dominant than men's are, and that gender bias was only observed against female leaders who exhibited overtly dominant conduct in their leadership, such as making direct requests and being aggressive (Williams & Tiedens, 2016). Each industry may require a different leadership approach to manage employees with different traits. Corporate managers and leaders may also need to acquire additional sets of skills from various/multiple leadership styles in order to successfully lead their subordinates under a variety of circumstances. This is because corporate managers and leaders need to develop specific strategic skills in order to successfully envision and achieve company goals (Kreidy & Vernon, 2018).

Female leadership has become indispensable in enhancing organizational performance and determining the necessary efforts to achieve satisfactory productivity. Numerous empirical studies have been conducted on the effect of gender diversity on corporate performance but the results remain inconclusive. Some studies reported a positive relationship between gender diversity and performance (Campbell & Minguéz-Vera, 2008; Terjesen et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2014), whereas others found a negative relationship (Adams & Ferreira, 2009) or even a non-existent one (Carter et al., 2010). Johnson et al. (2013) claim that the attributes of women (experience, skills, and

demographic characteristics) who are present on corporate boards improve the effectiveness of the board's monitoring, decision-making, and advisory processes. Female directors provide fresh perspectives as well as experienced backgrounds that differ from the "old boys' club" (Bennouri et al., 2018). Female directors bring new skills, new perspectives and valuable advice to the board and executive managers (Anderson et al., 2011), offer better decisions with respect to problem solving (Daily & Dalton, 2003; Hillman et al., 2002), foster creativity and innovation (Robinson & Dechant, 1997), and promote access to information (Beckman & Haunschild, 2002). Furthermore, Mariana et al., (2019) deduced that female leadership positively influence the effectiveness and performance of organizations. Therefore, organizations must focus on improving their effectiveness by strengthening women leadership skills and abilities to enhance organizational performance.

In organizational, political, and entertainment contexts, there is evidence that women are more likely than men are to be chosen to run failing companies (Haslam & Ryan, 2008; Ryan et al., 2016). Researchers have been baffled by why people perceive women to be better leaders during crises. Some attribute hiring bias to gender. For instance, Oelbaum (2016) discovered that women are employed during crises as a means of signaling organizational change. The theory goes that if things have not gone well, perhaps it is time for to modify leadership styles. On the other hand, recent research demonstrates that women themselves are more willing than their male coworkers are to accept insecure leadership roles (Kirolikar et al., 2018). According to these authors, this is consistent with the role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002), which holds that women are more likely to accept glass-cliff jobs because they have internalized gender-role expectations and believe that these jobs will better match their innate affinity for stereotypically feminine traits like cooperation and encouragement. Another possibility is that they accept the dangerous offer because it represents their best opportunity to take on leadership at that level, regardless of the risk. The glass-cliff phenomenon continues to pose a threat to whatever advantage that women may have in leadership,

whether because it results in conspicuous failures that biased people can use as proof of women's poor leadership or because of acceptance by women themselves. Therefore, a crisis setting may encourage the selection of women as leaders but may also set them up for eventual failure in the position (Offermann & Foley, 2020).

4.3.2. Exposure of the analysis model and its corresponding hypotheses

Due to the dynamics of role incongruity and the influence of gender roles on behavior through spillover and internalization of gender-specific norms, the established gender inequalities between men and women can, to some extent, affect the leadership styles used by each. As a result, women may choose a transformational approach because it gives them a way to escape the quandary of role strangeness, which prevents them from fulfilling the demands of their perceived gender role when they conform to their job as leaders. On the other hand, adhering to their gender role may make it more challenging for them to fulfill the demands of their leadership role (Silva & Mendis, 2017). Therefore, transformational leadership may permit women to exercise hierarchical control and exhibit narrowly argentic leadership style, and consequently be able to avoid the overtly masculine impression they might otherwise give off (Yoder, 2001).

H2.1. Female leaders exhibit more transformational leadership qualities than male leaders.

Both male and female managers exhibit a homophilic propensity (Kanter, 1977; McPherson et al., 2001; Elliott & Smith, 2004). According to Kanter's (1977) theory, managerial jobs are marked by a high level of ambiguity, making it more crucial for actors to be able to communicate openly and honestly with one another. Managers, like everyone else, rely on social bases for trust since those who are more like them are more likely to share their beliefs, interests, and "speak the same language" (Kanter, 1977). People anticipate that their same-sex peers will be more similar to them because sex is a

major factor on which they construct social distinctions (England, 2010). Therefore, managers are more inclined to encourage the careers of same-sex subordinates and assign them to jobs directly beneath them because they anticipate fewer challenges dealing with same-sex colleagues (Elliott & Smith, 2004). While Kanter (1977) made the case that men have more opportunities than women, the mechanism of homosocial reproduction may work in favor of women when a female manager is in charge (Maume, 2011; Srivastava & Sherman, 2015). In addition, Studies have revealed that supervisors are more willing to guide and befriend subordinates of the same sex (McPherson et al., 2001; Ehrich & Kimber, 2016). Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2.2. Female subordinates are supportive of their female bosses because they help reduce gender differences in organizations.

According to the role congruity theory, when women display agentic traits, an incongruence occurs since these traits do not fit the stereotypical image of a woman (Rosette & Tost, 2010). Thus, the dissonance felt when leaders defy gender standards may result in a backlash effect. This is a reference to the observation that women who lead with an agentic style frequently face negative stereotypes due to role incongruence (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Zheng et al., 2018). Additionally, women in leadership positions appear to receive less favorable evaluations than their male counterparts do because of the perceived violation of their roles (Rosette et al., 2015). According to Akinola et al. (2018), women leaders reported having a harder time delegating than their male counterparts due to the influence of gender-incongruence, or the fact that they were more likely to identify delegation with agentic attributes than communal traits. The result of this association is that women deal with their employees less favorably than men do because they have more negative connotations with delegation and feel more guilty about it. Therefore, In order to avoid violating traditional gender norms, women should display more agency and less communion at work (Gabriel et al., 2018). These

women may even suffer greater incivility, which is a mild kind of deviant behavior. These results demonstrate the need for additional research on the effects of female leadership—both agentic and communal—on employees. Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2.3. Subordinates are more accepting of female leaders who have masculine traits.

There is a general tendency to connect leadership responsibilities with men (Koenig et al., 2011), away from the areas where women are perceived to have a leadership advantage, such as in middle management positions (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2014). This bias is largely due to the pervasive gender stereotypes that link men with greater competence and emphasize stereotypically masculine traits like assertiveness, ambition, and dominance as being more crucial to leadership than traits more typically associated with femininity, like kindness, agreeableness, and family-oriented behavior (Johnson et al., 2008). The gender stereotypes that define successful leaders elevate males and make them appear more qualified for leadership positions than women (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Additionally, according to research on prescriptive and proscriptive gender stereotypes (Rudman & Glick, 2001), followers may be unreceptive to the idea of female leaders. For instance, women are subject to harsher penalties than men for overt displays of dominance (Williams & Tiedens, 2016). As a result, “female leaders are less accepted than their male counterparts” (Vial et al., 2016; Parks-Stamm et al., 2008). Thus, these findings raise the question of how female subordinates respond to women's leadership and propose the following hypothesis:

H2.4. When stating their preference for managers in general, female subordinates will show a preference for male over female managers.

The most common definition of work satisfaction is the happy emotional state brought on by an employee's professional experience (Locke, 1976) or the level of enjoyment

that an employee has with their job (Furnham et al., 2009). The structure that shapes and aggregates satisfaction with various aspects of work is known as overall job satisfaction (Credé, 2018). Job satisfaction is still the focus of several research due to its importance for both the employee and the firm. Job satisfaction is a very multifaceted notion that depends on a number of different sets of criteria. As a result, job satisfaction has become a vital element in the context of the effective operation of modern organizations. Therefore, the components that influence employee satisfaction at work are a key constituent of the organization's study. The concept of satisfaction can be reflected on both organizational and personal levels. The organizational factors include compensation, opportunity for advancement, communication with superiors, and employee perks. Positive relationships between two or more people engaged in a social and authoritative interaction in an organizational context are referred to as "employee relations" (Asghar et al., 2016). High-quality interaction between workers and managers and a sense of belonging to the organization are signs of good employee relations at work (De Massis et al., 2018). Therefore, this study assumes that there is a link between employee–supervisor relations and job satisfaction. Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2.5. The quality of the employee–supervisor relationship does not have a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction.

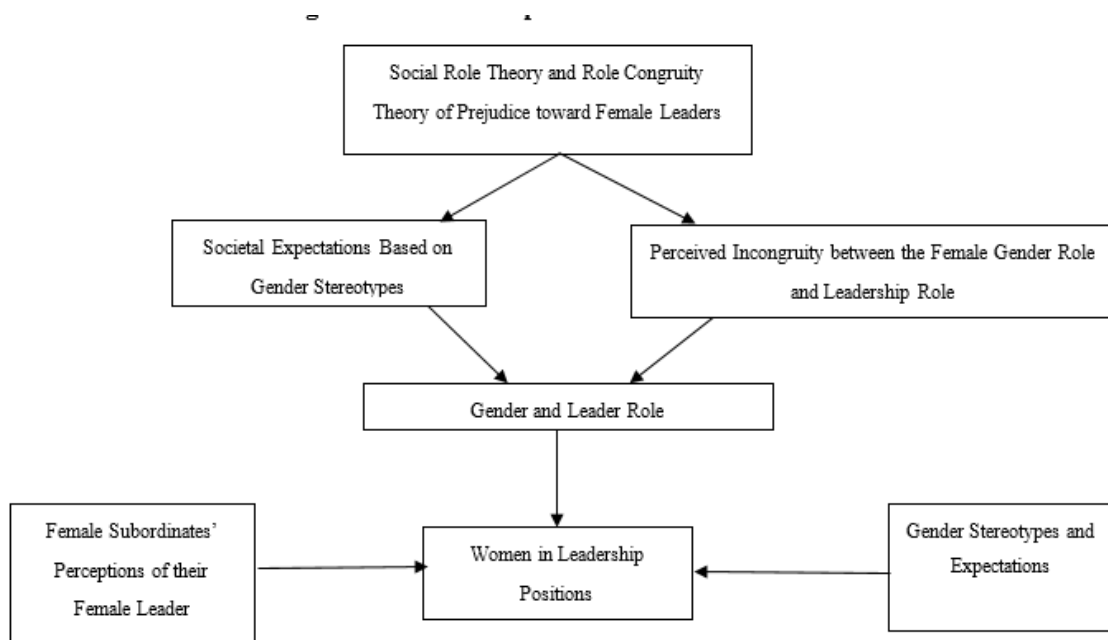
While findings from scholars like Fatokun (2007) and Ogunyinka (2007) show that the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment is weak, and that job satisfaction may not necessarily lead to organizational commitment, researchers like Robbins (2003), McShane and Von Glinow (2011) report strong relationships between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Low levels of job satisfaction among employees are linked to issues with attendance, greater rates of turnover, a lack of active participation in job duties, and psychological withdrawal from the workplace (Camp, 1994). In general, research reveals that when employees have the chance to contribute

to the organization's rules and processes and receive proper recognition for a job well done, they are more likely to be satisfied with their jobs (Slate et al., 2003). The leader-member exchange theory states that a positive "dyadic" relationship resulting from the way a leader treats their subordinates tends to encourage higher performance ratings (Liden et al., 1993), stronger organizational commitment (Nystrom, 1990), and higher overall satisfaction (Scandura & Graen, 1984). According to Nystrom's (1990) research, managers who have poor quality interactions with their line managers typically exhibit low organizational commitment, as opposed to managers who have strong quality interactions. Therefore, one of the main objectives of this study was to determine whether female leadership has repercussions at the level of employee satisfaction, organizational dedication and job burnout. For this purpose, the following hypothesis was outlined:

H2.6. Having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization results in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout.

An analytical framework outlining female subordinates' perceptions of their female leader is depicted in Figure 4.2. The focus of developing the analytical framework is not to exhaust variables, which could have contributed to subordinate satisfaction, but determine if female subordinates' attitudes are less positive toward female than male leaders because their leadership characteristics are not aligning with their social roles; thus, female subordinates would refrain from supporting female leaders.

Figure 4.2: The conceptual model of the research.



4.4. Analysis 3: An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy

4.4.1. Summary of the main theoretical elements

In recent years, female entrepreneurship has been receiving the attention of many academics since it is regarded as the fastest growing category of entrepreneurship worldwide. The emerging literature consider women to be playing an essential part in entrepreneurial activity (Noguera et al., 2013) and economic development (Kelley et al., 2017; Hechevarría et al., 2019). Female entrepreneurs boast the economic development of their country by creating new job opportunities and increasing the gross domestic product (GDP) (Bahmani-Oskooee et al., 2013; Ayogu & Agu, 2015), with positive impacts on reducing poverty and social exclusion (Langowitz & Minniti, 2007; Rae, 2014). However, women are less likely to be interested in entrepreneurship than men are (Elam et al., 2019), and this difference increases as the level of economic development increases (Coduras & Autio, 2013).

The significance of economic and regulatory settings is emphasized by a theoretical framework employed to explain this variation. For instance, it is likely to identify two macro-categories that have a significant and different impact on the entrepreneurial activity of men and women in the literature. The first one discusses how property rights support an entrepreneurial productive activity. Property rights often make it easier to obtain resources, and in many institutional settings, women have notably limited access to the financial resources needed for entrepreneurship (Brush et al., 2009), since entrepreneurs are forced to rely increasingly on informal networks, which are typically dominated by men (Aidis et al., 2008). In addition, men may also be more successful in negotiating with government officials due to gender-defined social positioning (Bardasi et al., 2011). The second macro-category is concerned with a collection of laws and policies set by the government, such as system taxation and welfare. According to some studies, having a larger state sector discourages entrepreneurship (Parker, 2005; Aidis et al., 2010). Thus, higher levels of social assistance offer alternative sources of income and, as a result, by increasing alternative wages, they can reduce incentives for entrepreneurship by weakening the potential for opportunity-oriented entrepreneurs. High levels and rising marginal tax rates can also weaken these incentives. This seems especially significant in the case of women because a significant portion of the state sector is devoted to providing security, educational opportunities, health care, and housing for women, all of which surely lowers their premiums (Cardella et al., 2020). However, there is still a gap between men and women when it comes to starting a business in nations with comparable economic situations, which has prompted requests to broaden the range of explanatory factors (Minniti, 2010; Dheer et al., 2019; McGowan et al., 2015).

The majority of research reveal that women-owned businesses are smaller with respect to the number of employees, sales and assets. For instance, in Latin America male-owned businesses tend to be bigger than female-owned businesses in terms of sales and number of employees (Bruhn, 2009). Likewise, male-owned businesses in Sub-Saharan

Africa have sales that are 31 percent higher than female-owned businesses (Bardasi et al., 2011). Many factors contribute to these differences. For example, female entrepreneurs face reduced endowments of assets, which results in a smaller business size at start-up. In addition, the growth and expansion potential of female-owned businesses are limited because they encounter credit constraints. Furthermore, their businesses suffer from restricted customer base and sales due to the limited access to business networks or unfavorable location such as operating from home. Although studies in developing countries are scarce, the existing ones demonstrate results that are identical to the ones found in developed countries. For instance, in Africa female entrepreneurs are more inclined to work in service sectors such as hotels, food and restaurants, wholesale and retail trade, clothing, fabrics and leather goods, tailor and hair salons (Bardasi et al., 2011; Aterido et al., 2011). In contrast, the businesses of the African male entrepreneurs are spread out across a broader array of sectors, including construction and manufacturing, metal, machinery, wood, furniture, and electronics. Lower start-up costs (Storey & Greene, 2010), lower human capital requirements or a more “people-oriented” nature of the service business are few reasons that contribute to this difference.

The study of gender and entrepreneurship has attracted a lot of attention because it can assist educators and policymakers in increasing the participation of women in the entrepreneurial process (Malmström et al., 2017). As a result, the causes of this problem have been examined from various angles. For instance, in their evaluation of the research on gender and entrepreneurship, Sullivan and Meek (2012), found that gender is primarily utilized as an independent variable to explain other factors like financial capital (Alsos et al., 2006; Boden & Nucci, 2000), discrimination in market access (Bates, 2002), success and profit (Collins-Dodd et al., 2004), and networking (Klyver & Grant, 2010). The majority of earlier research on gender and entrepreneurship shows that men take more risks and have better self-efficacy than women do, but they also need less training in entrepreneurship (Baù et al., 2017; Eddleston et al., 2016; Wilson

et al., 2007). Furthermore, males with entrepreneurial family backgrounds are more likely than female entrepreneurs to launch their own businesses (Matthews & Moser, 1996). Accordingly, effective entrepreneurship education programs or suitable counseling courses at current business schools are required to encourage students' success in an entrepreneurial career and increase the participation of women in entrepreneurial activities (Chrisman et al., 2012). Lately, the importance of entrepreneurship education has increased (Wilson et al., 2004) since it fosters entrepreneurial self-confidence through targeted instruction and ongoing assistance.

Opportunity recognition is related to entrepreneurship (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The type of prospects found will influence the entrepreneur's choice of venture. However, Shane et al. (2003) contend that the establishment of a firm requires more than just an opportunity. An essential element for launching a successful firm is entrepreneurial motivation (Ardichvili et al., 2003). Among the other factors that researchers claimed were connected to a venture's success are the need for achievement (Collins et al., 2000), locus of control (Shapero, 1975), tolerance for uncertainty (Begley & Boyd, 1987), desire for independence (Kolvereid et al., 1993), enthusiasm (Baum et al., 2001), drive (Locke, 2000), and readiness to take risks (McClelland, 1961). However, with some significant exceptions, the majority of empirical studies on entrepreneurial motivation are primarily focused on samples of male entrepreneurs (Bowen & Hisrich, 1986; Hisrich, 1984; Hisrich et al., 2006; Kolvereid et al., 1993). At the same time, research indicates that women typically exhibit different start-up intentions (Westhead & Solesvik, 2016), growth intentions (Iakovleva & Kickul, 2011), and economic results than men (Du Rietz & Henrekson, 2000; Gundry & Welsch, 2001). These differences can be attributed to a lack of resources, skills, knowledge, or self-efficacy (Iakovleva, 2016; Solesvik, 2017a, b). Studies that are already in existence on female entrepreneurship frequently use theories like the need for achievement or risk tolerance (Sarri & Trihopoulou, 2005) that were frequently developed under a paradigm that favored men. The definition of entrepreneurship has evolved over the past few

decades to include more perspectives on what it entails (Peredo & McLean, 2006). One way to think of entrepreneurship is as a catalyst for societal change (Rey-Martí et al., 2016). The traditional understanding of entrepreneurship, which has been linked to achieving financial benefits, is increasingly being expanded to include earning social benefits, i.e., resolving significant issues with environmental sustainability, poverty, health issues, and educational hurdles. These concerns go beyond and above the economic focus and raise the issue of potential additional motivating elements for starting a firm. The incentives of male and female entrepreneurs may differ significantly depending on the context. Women may be more driven to pursue business ambitions that have social impact, according to one plausible theory. However, little is known about these non-economic effects of female-owned and managed firms (Marlow & McAdam, 2013).

Previous studies emphasized the significance of two sets of factors that influence women entrepreneurial effort and control its success: internal factors (personal) and external factors (environmental) (Brush & Cooper, 2012). The internal or personal factors include:

- Low self-confidence
- Reluctance to seek credit
- Negative perception of banks
- Perceived lack of opportunities
- Perceived hostile environment

As for the external or environmental factors, they include:

- Legal system
- Financial discrimination
- Social norms (culture, religion)
- Family and social responsibilities

Many authors, like Patrick et al. (2016), who have criticized the literature for mostly portraying female entrepreneurs as married women with family responsibilities, have emphasized the substantial relationship between female entrepreneurs and problems with work-life balance. According to Patrick et al. (2016), women's decisions to launch a business are diverse and influenced by a range of elements, such as their marital status as well as regional economic and cultural traits. While Nina Gunnerud (1997) criticizes this focus as being too limited since it neglects the connection between geography and gender relations, which is essential for our comprehension of entrepreneurship. Ahl (2006) has also criticized this practice as being gendered because it perpetuates the idea that the private aspect (the family) is distinct from the public aspect (work). Such a division is problematic because it perpetuates the stereotype that female entrepreneurs are primary caregivers who are unsuited for the public aspect of entrepreneurship.

Several policies can help female entrepreneurs cope with the internal constraints such as assisting women in improving their self-esteem, particularly with career related tasks, teaching women about debt and improving their perceptions of banks, or providing mentorship and group support programs. As for addressing external constraints, legal reforms that make laws more equitable for women must be implemented, financial and labor market discrimination must be reduced, and a more gender friendly business environment must be created. Finally, it is important to indicate that particularly in developing countries women are frequently “pushed” into entrepreneurship due to the unfavorable labor market conditions. Improving the labor market conditions could do more to improve women’s well-being than any other policy intended for their business (Carranza et al., 2018).

4.4.2. Exposure of the analysis model and its corresponding hypotheses

Entrepreneurship is essential for boosting economic efficiency, introducing new products to the market, producing more jobs, and increasing employment rates (Shane

& Venkataraman, 2000). Women who demonstrate initiative and have an eye for chances, are prepared to take risks, and can produce wealth and employment opportunities for others with their entrepreneurial abilities and creative thinking are considered to be women entrepreneurs (Rani & Rao, 2007). In addition to being the subject of innovation research, entrepreneurship has emerged as a significant economic and social issue (Fayolle et al., 2007). The economy is significantly impacted by women entrepreneurs because they not only employ themselves but also others (Kamberidou, 2013). Many economists and researchers view female entrepreneurship as a major factor in an economy's growth (Bouzekraoui & Ferhane, 2017). They significantly boost wealth generation, employment, and innovation across all economies (Brush & Cooper, 2012).

Different motives might drive people to create, establish, and run businesses with the intention of making money. In addition to financial reasons, various psychological and emotional aspects need to be taken into account. People who aspire to be entrepreneurs are inclined to have a strong need for freedom. The desire to shift job paths, especially to move from the current situation to one desired, and to lessen control by strong superiors is another motive (Littunen, 2000). Furthermore, people are frequently drawn to entrepreneurship by the prospect of financial gains. Entrepreneurship is one way people can improve their social standing and reputation, which is often driven by status aspirations. Achieving success propels people to the top of their profession, where they can realize their full potential, gain self-worth, and accentuate their relationships with others to demonstrate control over their future. Other reasons are contingent upon interactive and collected relationships in the community that user innovators are participating in prior to joining the market. Such innovators are gradually drawn in by the knowledge gained by exchanging invention and improvement, the perception of a market opportunity, the availability of diversified and complementary assets, and the formation of an entrepreneurial team within the user community. The incentives of male and female entrepreneurs may differ significantly depending on the context. Women

may be more driven to pursue business ambitions that have social impact, according to one plausible theory. However, little is known about the non-economic effects of female-owned and -managed firms (Marlow & McAdam, 2013).

According to Hemmert et al. (2019), entrepreneurial motivation is one of the most important determining variables in the entrepreneurial process, which is directly related to the creation and management of businesses. Entrepreneurs frequently discover new technologies, produce novel goods or processes, and open up new markets (Audretsch, 2002). Often, radical innovations result in economic progress (Valliere & Peterson, 2009). When new businesses enter the market, they create new jobs, which helps to boost employment growth. If entrepreneurs are persistently supported, in both good and bad economic times, then all enterprises are kept alert and inspired to strive constantly to grow and adapt. Considering the above literature, we hypothesize that:

H3.1. The business start-up motivations of Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development.

Up until the late 1970s, all of the literature on entrepreneurship was focused on difficulties specific to male entrepreneurs (Jennings & Brush, 2013). Therefore, a specific gender-based model is required to investigate the opportunities presented to female entrepreneurs. Increasing women's entrepreneurial activity is one strategy to enhance their access to economic possibilities in emerging economies. Through a deeper understanding of the tools that enable women entrepreneurs, there is a significant chance to improve the state of the global economy.

According to their area, industry preference, financial ability, and technical and non-technical capabilities, women entrepreneurs are given a variety of business prospects. Governments create entrepreneurial policies to encourage entrepreneurship in a particular region or country (Stevenson & Lundström, 2001). It requires crafting

policies that concentrate on social and economic aspects (Terjesen et al., 2016). Macroeconomics, taxation, legislation, regulatory agencies, influence over market-related institutions (Smallbone & Welter 2010), microcredit programs for SMEs (Cancino et al., 2015), technology development and innovation programs, subsidized business counseling for small businesses, and the establishment of licensing and registration offices (Nguyen et al., 2009) are just a few examples of government policies that support entrepreneurship.

Greater efforts are being made to revive entrepreneurial education and training as a result of the need to promote entrepreneurship to create innovation, self-employment, and economic growth (Sánchez, 2013). By improving one's capacity to recognize and seize business opportunities (Politis, 2005)., entrepreneurial training indirectly contributes to economic development (Hasan et al., 2017; Nabi et al., 2017; Hahn et al., 2020).

Because entrepreneurship is not just an economic activity but also a social phenomenon, experts continue to contend that it is best to understand entrepreneurial variants by taking the social context in which the organization is founded (Berger, 1991; Shapero & Sokol, 1982; Steyaert, 2007). Even if the economic situation may partially explain the variety, any compelling explanation must also take into consideration the social and cultural facets of entrepreneurial activity (Drakopoulou Dodd & Anderson, 2007).

A key component of entrepreneurial discovery is human capital (Davidsson & Honig, 2003). A comparative advantage exists for business owners with more human capital in solving issues, adjusting to changes, and implementing new technologies (Shrader and Siegel, 2007; Siegel et al., 1997). Additionally, human capital is crucial for entrepreneurs' effective opportunity exploitation and pursuit (Bates, 1990; Davidsson & Honig, 2003).

Female entrepreneurs play a significant role in the growth of the global economy, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, thus it is crucial that they overcome obstacles and take advantage of opportunities that are presented to them and overcome the obstacles in their way. The study therefore hypothesized:

H3.2. The opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development.

In general, entrepreneurs face many hurdles regardless of their gender, but some challenges are particularly unique to women (Matthew & Panchanatham 2009; Epie, 2009). Many people believe that entrepreneurship is a male-gender concept with masculine overtones (Yunis et al., 2018). Gender inequality limits entrepreneurial aspirations or choices by lowering women's participation in economic activity. In addition to financial accessibility and social norms, societal perceptions might influence how women perceive themselves or lead to a greater fear of failure (Quiñones, 2016). Women's access to resources like markets, land, financing, education, technology, networks, and information is constrained (Quiñones, 2016). In general, societal and practical restrictions continue to prevent women from launching and operating economic firms (Tuyishime et al., 2015).

Women's entrepreneurship is hindered by a lack of education entrepreneurship (Gayathridevi, 2014; Benard & Victor, 2013). According to Tanusia et al. (2016), a barrier to women beginning their own businesses is a lack of managerial and entrepreneurial abilities. Female entrepreneurs also face initial obstacles such fear of failure, lack of confidence, marital influence, and family responsibilities, which can result in low profit or a higher risk of business failure. Additionally, the absence of assets, restrictions on access to capital, and gender discrimination have a negative influence on the economic empowerment of women (Gayathridevi, 2014). The fact that women do not have equal opportunities to males is a significant obstacle that has

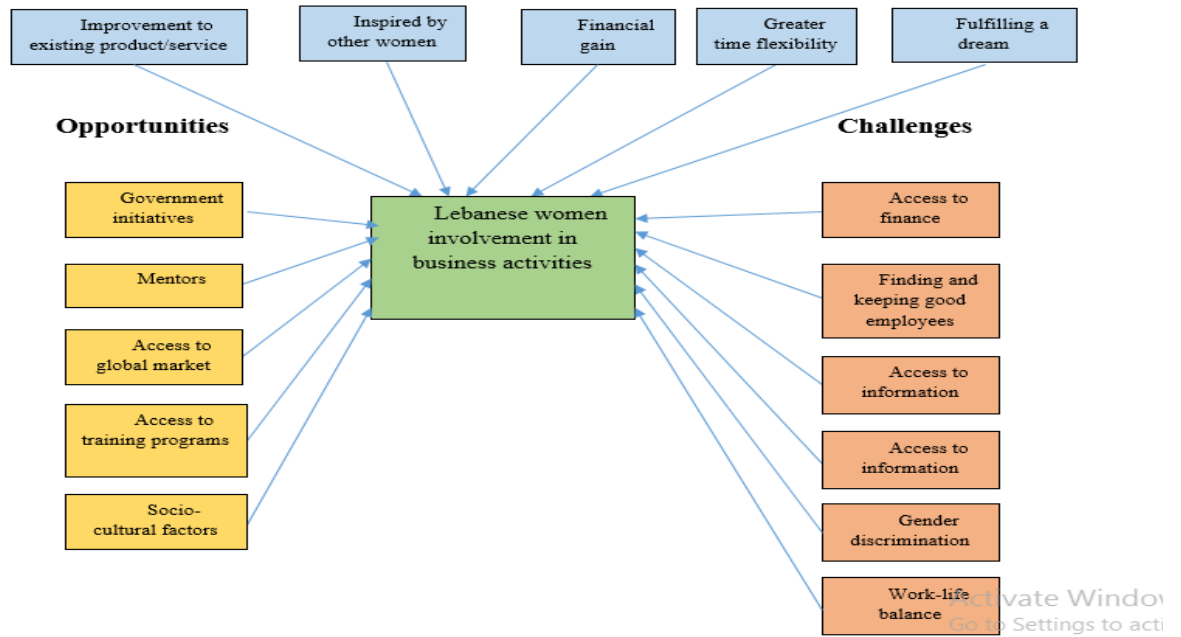
threatened the growth of female-owned businesses in developing countries for many years (Otunaiya et al., 2013). Taqi (2016) acknowledged that one of the issues female entrepreneurs face is a dearth of female role models. In general, women entrepreneurs encounter various challenges depending on their business, regulations, and stage of their current life cycle (Adim & Tamunomiebi, 2018).

Female entrepreneurship helps to build the economy and create jobs, but it's also becoming increasingly clear that it broadens the range of entrepreneurs in any economic system (Jamali, 2009). Due to their positive socioeconomic impact, women entrepreneurs around the world make considerable economic contributions. Women entrepreneurs create jobs, serious energy and money resources for their communities, as well as additional work for suppliers and other indirect business relationships (Iyiola & Azhu, 2014). Therefore, it is not sufficient to simply review the broad factors influencing women's entrepreneurship; it is also required to evaluate how these various factors actually translate into the many barriers that women may encounter during the entrepreneurial process. The study therefore hypothesized:

H3.3. The barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development.

An analytical framework outlining the motives, challenges and opportunities of women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy is depicted in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: The conceptual model of the research.



CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

5.1. Introduction

Research methodology is a systematic process used to demonstrate how research is carried out by converting ontological and epistemological principles into strategies (Sarantakos, 2005). It is also defined as the set of ideologies, processes, and procedures that guide the way research is conducted (Marczyk et al., 2010). This chapter meticulously explains the general design of the research and the methods applied for data collection and introduces the research methodology for the following quantitative studies. In addition, the chapter describes the sampling size and the criteria applied to select the sampling strategy. The instrument used for data collection is also depicted as well as the procedures that were followed to carry out the studies. All studies were designed with attention to ethical issues that were specified in the publication manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). These ethical issues include minimizing the risk of harm, obtaining informed consent, protecting participants' anonymity and confidentiality, avoiding deceptive practices and providing participants the right to withdraw (VandenBos, 2015). The researcher sought to reduce and justify risks of harm arising from their research including psychological, physical, legal, social and economic harm.

5.2. Study 1: Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses

The idea of work–family balance has generated considerable interest for researchers who tried to focus mainly on the increased female engagement in the labor market, the rise in dual-income households, as well as the changing nature of organizations, work and the workplace. While some individuals prefer work-life balance (WLB) strategies that set fair and realistic limits between their professional and personal lives, others prefer initiatives that provide harmony between the different aspects of their lives. By surveying both Lebanese male and female employees, this research explored work-life

strategies that can be implemented by men and women leaders to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders. In addition, it aims to explore if those work-life strategies enhance organizational performance by means of increased innovativeness, and research and development.

5.2.1. Description of the population and the sample

As previously mentioned, the aim of this study is to explore whether the work-life strategies used by male and female bosses enhance organizational performance by means of increased innovativeness and research and development. Thus, an online survey created in Google Forms was distributed via email to male and female employees who work in a Lebanese private university. Participants held different types of positions such as teaching, admissions, academic advising, finance, computer and information technology, and registrar. To begin the assessment, the research participants had to give their permission to be part of the study by reading and approving an informed consent form. The informed consent provided adequate information to the participants about the study and the approximate time required completing the survey. It also guaranteed participants of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses throughout the study process. The survey was disseminated to 148 people out of whom 141 responded (response rate of 95%) of which 70 (49.6%) were men and 71 (50.4%) were women. The survey consisted of five major sections. The first section gathered demographic information about participants including their educational qualifications, experience, and years with current employer. The second section was designed to measure participants' work-life balance (See measures below). The third section of the survey assessed whether participants' supervisor was supportive of work-Life balance. The fourth section consisted of questions related to participants' work-Life balance strategies and their organizational provisioning of WLB. Moreover, the aim of the fifth section was to rate the participants' firm's overall performance during the past 3 years in comparison with competitors in the industry

5.2.2. Information collection: description of the questionnaire

Employee burnout has grown to be a significant contributor to the problem of keeping high performers in many firms. Employers who commit to work-life programs have a number of advantages, including increased productivity, less absenteeism, and improved brand reputation, which gives them a competitive advantage when attracting top talent. As a result, organizations are paying more attention to what employees want. Thus, by conducting this survey, insightful input on what employees really want and need to achieve greater balance between their personal and professional goals can be gained. In addition, the survey can reveal problems that have a significant impact on employee productivity, satisfaction, and retention. It also provides useful information about work-life balance strategies and their impact on organizational performance and innovation.

5.2.2.1. Description of the variables included in the study

While juggling the responsibilities of the workday, home life, and relationships with family and other loved ones, work-life balance is becoming an essential component of self-care. Therefore, the survey variables aim to identify whether employees can maintain a work-life balance without experiencing burnout, demonstrate how more and more leaders are embracing the notion of promoting work-life balance, and reveal the measures that organizations can take to ensure and maintain work-life balance as a way to improve organizational performance and innovativeness.

Following are the survey variables:

Employee work–life balance. Employee WLB was measured using 14 items, which assessed participants' work-life balance. The 14-item scale has been adapted from a 19-item scale originally developed by Fisher-McAuley et al. (2003) that was designed to capture employee perceptions on WLB. Respondents were asked to show their

agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5).

Supervisor’s support of work-life balance. Supervisor’s support of employees’ WLB was measured using 4 items, which assessed the supervisor’s support of employee family responsibilities and flextime; adapted from an instrument reported by Carlson et al. (2013). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5).

Individual employee WLB strategies. This was measured using 6 items, which assessed the strategies that respondents use to maintain a healthy work-life balance; adapted from an instrument reported by Fisher-McAuley et al. (2003) These items were assessed on the basis of a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “not at all important” (1) to “extremely important” (5).

Organizational provisioning of WLB strategies. This was measured using 7 items, which assessed the WLB policies and strategies employed in organizations to advance a better quality of work and life of employees; adapted from an instrument reported by Zheng et al. (2015). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “not at all important” (1) to “extremely important” (5).

Organizational research and development performance. This was measured using 7 items, which assessed the respondents’ organizational research and development in the past 3 years in comparison with competitors in the industry; adapted from an instrument reported by Fey and Birkinshaw (2005). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale, ranging from “very poor” (1) to “excellent” (5).

5.2.2.2. Questionnaire

This questionnaire has been created to observe male and female leaders on work-life balance strategies and their impact on organizational innovativeness in an effort to better understand the variables influencing work-life balance and create a model that may identify the critical variables influencing employee work-life balance, which in turn affects employee performance and, ultimately, company performance and innovativeness,

I. Demographics

1. What is your occupation?

2. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

3.

4. How old are you?

- 18-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55-64 years old

5. How long have you been working with your current employer?

- Less than a year
- 2-5 years
- 6-10 years
- Over 10 years

6. How many hours do you work per week?

- Less than 34 hours
- 36-40 hours
- More than 40 hours

7. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

- No schooling completed
- Nursery school to 8th grade
- Some high school, no diploma

- High school graduate
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Master's degree
 - Doctorate degree
8. What is your marital status?
- Single
 - Married
 - Widowed
 - Divorced or separated
9. How many children do you have?
- No children
 - 1-4 children
 - More than 5 children
10. What is your supervisor's gender?
- Male
 - Female

II. Employee Work-Life Balance

1. My personal life suffers because of work.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral Agree
 - Strongly agree
2. My job makes my personal life difficult.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
3. I often neglect my personal needs because of work.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral Agree
 - Strongly agree
4. I often put my personal life on hold because of work.
- Strongly disagree

- Disagree
 - Neutral Agree
 - Strongly agree
5. I often struggle to balance between work and non-work.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral Agree
 - Strongly agree
6. I am satisfied with the amount of time I spend on non-work-related activities.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral Agree
 - Strongly agree
7. My personal life is draining my energy, which is affecting my work.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral Agree
 - Strongly agree
8. I often feel too tired to be effective at work.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral Agree
 - Strongly agree
9. My work suffers because of my personal life.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral Agree
 - Strongly agree
10. I often find it hard to work due to personal matters
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral Agree
 - Strongly agree

11. My personal life gives me energy for work.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral Agree
- Strongly agree

12. My job gives me energy to pursue my personal activities.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral Agree
- Strongly agree

13. My personal life boosts my mood at work.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral Agree
- Strongly agree

14. My job boosts my mood.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral Agree
- Strongly agree

III. Supervisor's Support of Work-Life Balance

1. My supervisor understands and supports employees' family responsibilities.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral Agree
- Strongly agree

2. My supervisor allows employees to use flextime to attend to family matters.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral Agree
- Strongly agree

3. My supervisor is understanding/accommodating when family matters pull me away from work.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral Agree
- Strongly agree

4. My supervisor facilitates work-life balance.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral Agree
- Strongly agree

IV. Individual Work-Life Balance(WLB) Strategies and Organizational Provisioning of WLB

1. Maintaining a positive outlook is:

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

2. Minimizing stressful situations is:

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

3. Arranging time to fit in others' work commitments is:

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

4. Juggling with childcare responsibilities is: (you may skip this question if you don't have children)

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

5. Meeting community commitments (i.e. voluntary work and club membership) is:
 - Not at all important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important

6. Meeting lifestyle commitments (i.e. sporting, recreational and social activities) is:
 - Not at all important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important

7. A flexible working arrangement is:
 - Not at all important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important

8. Health and wellness programs at work are:
 - Not at all important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important

9. Health and wellness programs are:
 - Not at all important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important

10. Childcare benefits or services are:
 - Not at all important
 - Slightly important
 - Moderately important
 - Very important
 - Extremely important

11. Taking leaves from work as required is:

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

12. Organizational understanding and support are:

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

13. Availability and usage of work-life balance policies in the organization are:

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

V. Research & Development Performance (Please rate your firm's overall performance during the past 3 years, in comparison with competitors in the industry, in terms of)

1. Getting new products or services to market quickly.

- Very poor
- Poor
- Average
- Good
- Excellent

2. Creating with radical/breakthrough technologies.

- Very poor
- Poor
- Average
- Good
- Excellent

3. Bringing breakthrough technologies to market.
 - Very poor
 - Poor
 - Average
 - Good
 - Excellent

4. Attracting and enrolling more students.
 - Very poor
 - Poor
 - Average
 - Good
 - Excellent

5. Gaining a higher market share.
 - Very poor
 - Poor
 - Average
 - Good
 - Excellent

6. Increasing employee job satisfaction.
 - Very poor
 - Poor
 - Average
 - Good
 - Excellent

7. Improving university ranking
 - Very poor
 - Poor
 - Average
 - Good
 - Excellent

5.2.3. Statistical techniques for data analysis

Data was analyzed using structural equation modeling with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) in the latest release of the software application SmartPls 3.3.7 (Ringle et al., 2015). PLS-SEM is a method that allows researchers to calculate very complex models

that have many constructs and indicator variables, particularly when the aim of the analysis is prediction. Partial least squares (PLS) is used to assess the measurement model which represents the relationships between the observed data and the latent variables including internal consistency (composite reliability), convergent validity (indicator reliability and average variance extracted), and discriminant validity. In addition, structural equation modeling (SEM) is used for the evaluation of the structural model and assessing the significance and relevance of hypothesized relationships.

In order to estimate large models with several constructs, indicator variables, and structural routes without imposing distributional assumptions on the data, many researchers find the PLS-SEM method to be particularly intriguing. But more crucially, PLS-SEM stresses prediction when estimating statistical models whose structures are intended to offer causal explanations (Wold, 1982; Sarstedt et al., 2021). The technique thereby resolves the evident dichotomy between explanation, which is often stressed in academic research, and prediction, which is the basis for creating managerial implications (Hair et al., 2019). PLS-SEM combines principle components analysis with ordinary least squares regressions to estimate partial model structures (Mateos-Aparicio, 2011). When models have numerous constructs and a high number of objects, PLS-SEM provides solutions with modest sample sizes (Fornell & Bookstein, 1982; Willaby et al., 2015; Hair et al., 2017). The PLS-SEM technique technically enables this by computing measurement and structural model relationships independently rather than concurrently. According to Akter et al. (2017), the majority of earlier studies on the sample size requirements for PLS-SEM ignored the fact that the technique is also useful for analyzing large amounts of data. In reality, PLS-SEM has a great deal of potential for studying big data sets, especially secondary data, which frequently lacks thorough justification based on measurement theory (Rigdon, 2016).

For exploratory research that looks at less formed or still emerging theory, the PLS-higher SEM's statistical power is particularly helpful. The fact that PLS-SEM is suitable for both confirmatory and exploratory research makes it particularly significant (Hair et al., 2021).

In order to examine a reflective measurement model, one must first look at the indicator loadings. The first step in reflective measurement model assessment involves examining the indicator loadings. It is advised to aim for loadings over 0.708 since they show that the construct provides satisfactory item reliability by explaining more than 50 per cent of the indicator's variance. Reliability ratings, for instance, between 0.60 and 0.70 are deemed "acceptable in exploratory research," whereas values between 0.70 and 0.90 range from "adequate to good." Values of 0.95 and above pose a problem since they suggest item redundancy, which lowers construct validity (Diamantopoulos et al., 2012; Drolet & Morrison, 2001). Although some researchers prefer using Composite Reliability (CR) rather than Cronbach Alpha, "it may be used as a conservative measure of internal consistency reliability" (Hair et al., 2016, pp. 101). When the values of Alpha and CR are above .70, this indicates a good measure of internal consistency of a construct. As for the average variance extracted (AVE), its value should be higher than the minimum threshold of 0.5.

The convergent validity of each construct measure is discussed in the third step of the reflective measurement model assessment. The degree to which a construct converges to explain the variance of its items is known as convergent validity. The average variance extracted (AVE) for all items on each construct is the metric used to assess a construct's convergent validity. The loading of each indication on a construct must be squared in order to determine the AVE, then the mean value must be determined. When the AVE is 0.50 or above, the construct is considered to explain at least 50 per cent of the variance of its items.

Assessing discriminant validity, or how much a construct empirically differs from other items in the structural model, is the fourth step. The standard metric was proposed by Fornell and Larcker (1981), who recommended comparing each construct's AVE to the squared inter-construct correlation (as a measure of shared variance) of that construct and any other constructs in the structural model that were reflectively measured. All model constructs' shared variances shouldn't be greater than their AVEs. However, recent research suggests that this metric is not appropriate for evaluating discriminant validity. Henseler et al. (2015), for instance, demonstrate that the Fornell-Larcker criterion performs poorly, especially when the indicator loadings on a construct differ just marginally (e.g. all the indicator loadings are between 0.65 and 0.85). Therefore, Henseler et al. (2015) suggested the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of the correlations as a replacement (Voorhees et al., 2016). The (geometric) mean of the average correlations for the items measuring the same construct is used to define the HTMT as the mean value of the item correlations across constructs. When HTMT values are high, discriminant validity issues exist. For structural models containing constructs that are conceptually quite comparable, such as cognitive satisfaction, affective satisfaction, and loyalty, Henseler et al. (2015) propose a threshold value of 0.90. An HTMT value above 0.90 in such a situation would indicate the lack of discriminant validity. However, a lower, more conservative threshold value, such as 0.85 is recommended when conceptions are conceptually more diverse (Henseler et al., 2015).

To assess the collinearity of the formative indicators, the variance inflation factor (VIF) is frequently utilized. VIF scores of 5 or higher suggest serious problems with collinearity between the construct indicators. However, at lower VIF values of 3 collinearity problems can also happen (Mason & Perreault, 1991; Becker et al., 2015). The VIF values should ideally be close to 3 and less.

In order to prevent the common method variance (CMV), the full collinearity test was administered. The internal consistency of the constructs was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability approach, and the average variance extracted (AVE) was used as an indication of the convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017).

Furthermore, in order to measure the structural model, this research paper adopted the coefficient of determination (R^2 values), effect size (f^2 values), blindfolding (Q^2 values), model fit indicators, and structural model path coefficients.

R^2 measures the explanatory power of the model and represents the variance explained in each of the endogenous constructs (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). Although acceptable R^2 values are subject to the research context, values of R^2 vary between 0 and 1, where higher values can be considered more substantial (Hair et al., 2014; Sarstedt et al., 2014), i.e. R^2 values that are close to 1 indicate that there is an almost perfect relationship between the model and the data. Accordingly, Chin (1998) considers R^2 values of 0.670 to be substantial, values around 0.333 average and values of 0.190 and lower weak.

The effect size can be determined by calculating Cohen's f^2 . The effect size measures if an independent construct has a significant impact on the dependent construct (Cohen, 1988). The effect size f^2 of less than 0.02 shows that a predictor latent variable has no effect on an endogenous latent variable. However, values between 0.020 and 0.150, between 0.150 and 0.350 and above 0.350 represent small, medium, and large effect sizes respectively (Sarstedt et al., 2021).

Q^2 values are constructed using the blindfolding method, which is an iterative process that provides an internal measure of consistency between the original and cross-validation predicted data. In general, Q^2 values should be greater than zero for a particular endogenous construct to indicate predictive accuracy of the structural model

for that construct. As a guideline, Q^2 values greater than 0, 0.25 and 0.50 represent small, medium and large predictive relevance of the PLS-path model. In blindfolding, the recommended omission distance (D) ranges between 5 and 7 (Hair et al., 2016).

The model fitness of this work was examined using the standardized-root-mean-square-residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), chi-square (χ^2) and RMS Theta values. The purpose of SRMR is to estimate the fitness of the model. According to Hu and Bentler (1998), if the values of SRMR are less than 0.08 ($SRMR = < 0.08$), the model is adequate to fit. Furthermore, the value of RMS theta was used to appraise the outer model residuals' correlation degree (Lohmöller, 1989). When the RMS theta value is closer to zero, the PLS-SEM model will be considered to have a good fit.

Bootstrapping was used to evaluate the path coefficients' significance and assess their values, which usually fall in the range of -1 and +1, where coefficients closer to +1 indicate a strong positive relationship and coefficients closer to -1 indicate a strong negative relationship (Hair et al., 2014; Sarstedt et al., 2014). While taking into consideration the significance and relevance of the inner model relationships, the results showed (with sub samples 5,000, no sign changes option, BCa bootstrap confidence interval and two-tailed sample test at 0.05 significance level) that only two structural relationships between variables are significant.

5.3. Study 2: Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates

The situation of professional women has changed dramatically over the last few decades. The career ambitions of women have greatly expanded and the way women have evolved in their careers is remarkable. Women are no longer restricted to traditional female jobs such as teachers or nurses. They are currently present in industries and occupations that were previously male dominated such as pharmacy,

police officers, entrepreneurs, etc. However, despite all the efforts that have been exerted to reinvent the workplace for greater gender equality, the workplace still has not become more accepting of women. Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement to leadership roles, why some women do not accept having a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female boss.

5.3.1 Description of the population and the sample

In order to test the hypotheses proposed for this research, data were collected using a survey questionnaire created in Google Forms, and the link to the online survey was sent via either email or instant messaging to male and female employees. All respondents were from public and private companies working in different sectors such as education, financial services, technology, telecommunications etc. To begin the survey, research participants had to give their permission to be part of the study by reading and approving an informed consent form. The survey consisted of 41 questions that included demographic questions in addition to questions related to leadership style, factors affecting subordinates' support of their boss, factors affecting subordinates' satisfaction and factors affecting subordinates' choice of leader's gender. The survey was disseminated to 200 people out of whom 186 responded (response rate of 93%) of which 89 (48%) were men and 97 (52%) were women.

5.3.2. Information collection: description of the questionnaire

While there has undoubtedly been improvement for women in the workplace over the past few decades, they are still underrepresented in positions of leadership. There are not enough women in leadership positions in relation to their level of education and representation in the workforce. One reason for the negative discrepancy in women's representation in leadership positions is the strongly held stereotypes about gender and leadership. However, other reasons of why the workplace still has not become more

accepting of women exist. Therefore, the aim of this survey is to examine some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement to leadership roles, why some women do not accept having a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female boss. The survey can record a wide range of viewpoints on critical points pertaining to initiatives to develop women in leadership including leadership style, employee-supervisor relationship and the strategies that organizations can use to create a more workplace.

5.3.2.1. Description of the variables included in the study

The percentage of women taking part in the labor force has increased significantly in recent years. Consequently, the proportion of women in managerial positions has also increased in the workforce. The argument about the effectiveness of female leadership styles has arisen as a result of the steadily increasing predominance of female leaders, which is a relatively recent phenomena. Therefore, the survey variables aim to investigate whether leadership style has an impact on employee satisfaction, discover ways that subordinates can provide to better support their leaders in the workplace, show the impact of employee-supervisor relationship on employee satisfaction, and find out if having more female leaders has a good impact on employees. Following are the survey variables:

Leadership style and employee satisfaction through engagement was measured using 7 items, in order to examine the extent to which employee engagement moderates the explanatory relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction in the workplace. The instrument was adapted from Podsakoff et al. (1990) Transformational Leadership Inventory (TLI) and their contingency reward measure of transactional leadership. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” (1) to “strongly disagree” (7).

Subordinates' support of their boss was measured using 8 items, which assessed the way employees are supporting their supervisor's success. The instrument was adapted from Carson et al.'s (2007) voice scale. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (7).

Employee-supervisor relationship and employee satisfaction was measured using 6 items, which assessed the relationship between managers and employees, its effect on employees' job satisfaction. The instrument was adapted from Spector's (1985) Job Satisfaction Survey. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (7).

Female leaders having masculine traits was measured using 5 items, which assessed whether female leaders need stereotypically masculine traits such as assertiveness and competence in order to be considered successful. The instrument was adapted from Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) (1974). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (7).

Subordinates show a preference for female managers was measured using 5 items, which assessed whether employees prefer working for a female boss. The instrument was adapted from the Women As Managers Scale (WAMS) (Peters et al., 1974). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (7).

Having more female leaders has a good impact on employees was measured using 7 items, which assessed whether female leaders tend to have more engaged teams and drive better job performance. The instrument was adapted from Sargent and Miller's

(1971) leader questionnaire. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” (1) to “strongly disagree” (7).

5.3.2.2. Questionnaire

The goal of this survey is to find out more about what female leadership and investigate the differences between male and female leadership styles and employee satisfaction. In addition, it aims to understand why women do not always want a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female bosses.

I. Demographics

1. What is your gender?
 - Female
 - Male

2. How old are you?
 - 18-24 years old
 - 25-34 years old
 - 35-44 years old
 - 45-54 years old
 - 55-64 years old

3. What is your supervisor’s gender?
 - Female
 - Male

II. Leadership style and employee satisfaction through engagement

1. My supervisor asks for my ideas and input on upcoming plans and projects.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

2. For a major decision to pass in my department, it must have the approval of each individual or the majority.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

3. When my supervisor needs to keep a project or process running on schedule, he/she calls for a meeting to get the employee's advice.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

4. My supervisor delegates tasks when implementing a new procedure or process.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

5. My supervisor thinks that poor performance should be punished, so that it does not happen again.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

6. My boss allows me and other employees to determine what needs to be done and how to do it.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree

- Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
7. My boss does not consider suggestions made by employees, as he/she does not have the time for them.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

III. Subordinates' support of their boss

1. I am willing to go to extraordinary lengths if necessary to help my boss succeed.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
2. When things go wrong, I offer suggestions and, if appropriate, roll up my sleeves and help my boss out.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
3. I often try to anticipate what my boss might require or request and prepare it in advance.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral

- Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
4. I support my boss by getting ahead of deadlines, without having them remind me of what needs to be done.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
5. I often share my concerns directly with my boss and not with my colleagues.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
6. I keep my boss involved and informed and protect him/her from being blindsided (being caught off guard and knowing nothing about the situation at hand).
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
7. I am aware of my boss's goals, objectives, and desired outcomes.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

8. I respect my boss's time and avoid unnecessary interruptions.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

IV. Employee-supervisor relationship and employee satisfaction

1. My supervisor encourages me to give my best effort.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. I feel rewarded for my dedication and commitment towards the work that I do.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. I feel that my opinions are heard and valued by my superior.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

4. I feel that there is a scope for personal growth such as skill enhancement.

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Neutral

- Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
5. The management involves me when taking leadership related decisions.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
6. I feel valued by my manager.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

V. Female leaders having masculine traits

1. I am more accepting of female bosses who present themselves with assertiveness and decisiveness.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
2. I am more accepting of female bosses who provide direction for their employees than those who encourage employees to find their own direction.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

3. I am more accepting of female bosses whose risk-taking tends to increase under stress.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

4. Women are ineffective in leadership roles because they are expected to be the primary caretakers of their family, and this impacts their focus on work.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

5. In my organization, I think women have the same opportunities to advance as men.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

VI. Subordinates show a preference for female managers

1. My organization should be doing more to increase gender diversity.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

2. Women should be paid less for doing the same job as men because they have to take career breaks such as maternity leaves.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

3. Having more women on the board of directors can bring new experiences and approaches to the decision-making process, add depth to existing skills (e.g. communication skills) and ideas and, bring the board closer to properly representing its stakeholders.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

4. Gender equality in the workplace is important i.e. women have the same opportunities as men, and are paid the same as men for equal work.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

5. Criticism has a much larger negative effect on employees' attitudes when it comes from a female boss.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

VII. Having more female leaders has a good impact on employees

1. My company should provide educational programs that promote diversity, equity and inclusion in our workplace.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

2. Having more women in my organization makes it a better place to work.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

3. Having more female leaders in an organization is associated with positive organizational outcomes for both men and women.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

4. Female bosses are more supportive of their employees' career development.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

5. Female bosses are more effective at helping their subordinates manage the pressures of the workplace.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

6. Female bosses are more likely to praise and recognize good work when it has been done.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

7. Female bosses have people skills, and they would rather build a relationship with those around them instead of giving orders.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neutral
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

5.3.3. Statistical techniques for data analysis

To measure internal consistency and reliability, researchers use Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient to check if surveys that use Likert scale are reliable. The value of Cronbach alpha was above the recommended level of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1975), and was equal to 0.879. Hence, the questionnaire was approved in terms of reliability. The collected data was imported to and analyzed by SPSS (Version 20). In order to test the proposed hypotheses, two tailed tests, two-way ANOVA, Spearman's correlation test and independent samples t-test were conducted.

One of the most used statistical methods is the analysis of variance (ANOVA), which has applications in several industries including business, finance, and medicine as well as the biological and medical fields. ANOVA is merely an illustration of the general linear model (GLM), which is frequently applied to factorial designs. In a factorial design, the experimental circumstances can be divided into groups based on one or more factors, each with two or more levels (Winer et al., 1991). The ANOVA approach compares the average variance within groups (between group variance) to the relative magnitude of variance between group means (within group variance). As a result, the two purposes of ANOVA—testing theory or generating theory—can each be supported by multiple comparison analysis. The t-test of two independent samples is extended by ANOVA to include more than two groups (Ostertagová & Ostertag, 2013). Data must be homogeneous, normally distributed, and independent across groups in order to use ANOVA (Abebe, 2019; Kirkwood & Sterne, 2020).

There are two main types of ANOVA tests that vary based on the number of factors influencing the dependent variable and the number of dependent variables that are impacted by the factors under study. Univariate ANOVA is applied when there is just one dependent variable. However, when there are multiple dependent variables, a multivariate analysis of variance is conducted. A one-way ANOVA is used when there is only one factor, and a factorial ANOVA is used when there are multiple factors (Miari et al., 2022). Each observation in a one-way ANOVA is categorized just once, based on which treatment or subject group it belonged to (Armstrong et al., 2000).

In the one-way, (Armstrong et al., 2000), each observation is classified in only one way, i.e. in which treatment or subject group the observation fell. One-way ANOVA can yield valid conclusions if various presumptions are true, such that the observations are independent of one another, the dependent variable is almost normally distributed across all groups, and the variances are normally distributed across all groups (Schober & Vetter, 2020; Abebe, 2019; Kirkwood & Sterne, 2003; Green & Peloza, 2014).

As for the two-way analysis of variance for independent groups, it is used to determine whether there is a significant difference between the group means for a given dependent variable after each group has been exposed to a particular combination of single levels from each of two factors or independent variables. Since the two-way ANOVA effectively extends the one-way ANOVA, it shares many of its components. In addition, the main benefit of two-way ANOVA is that, in addition to examining the impact of a single factor, it also enables the investigation of the impact of combinations of factors on the dependent variable (Norton & Strube, 1986). There are two forms of two-way ANOVA designs: (1) with replication when there are multiple observations in each group, and (2) without replication when there is only one (Kothari, 2013).

Although ANOVA reveals if group mean values are statistically different from one another, it does not reveal which particular groups are distinct from one another. To address this question, various post hoc tests, including Tukey, Dunnett, and Bonferroni, are available (Pandis, 2015). Conceptually, these post hoc tests are comparable to doing numerous paired t-tests, but they account for the inflation of Type I error risk brought on by multiple testing. Fisher's least significant difference test stands out as an exception. The decision is made based on the groups being compared and how cautious the multiplicity adjustment should be (Schober & Vetter, 2020).

5.4. Study 3: An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy

Lebanese businesses that meet the 51 percent female ownership threshold, and/or have a woman occupy a senior executive position are known as women-owned and/or women-led businesses (WOLBs). WOLBs' challenges, opportunities and their effect on the growth of the local economy is an understudied topic in Lebanon. In addition, there is a lack of research highlighting WOLBs' revenue contribution to the Lebanese economy.

Therefore, this study attempts to address this knowledge gap by investigating women-led businesses challenges and opportunities. In addition, it aims to tackle those challenges and seize those opportunities in order to increase revenue and subsequently contribute to the growth of the local economy.

5.4.1. Description of the population and the sample

Both primary and secondary data were used in this study as source of information. Primary data were obtained through a survey. As for secondary data, they were gathered through the examination of several articles in scientific journals, websites, and other library materials.

When using primary data, a researcher personally gathers information in order to address a specific research issue. Utilizing primary data has the benefit of allowing researchers to gather data specifically for their study's objectives. Fundamentally, the questions the researchers pose are designed to elicit the information they need for their investigation.

Alternatively, secondary data is information that has already been collected (Glaser, 1963). Accordingly, neither the participant recruitment process nor data collection are done by the secondary data analyst. Thus, using previously acquired data for a different purpose is what is meant by secondary data analysis. A review of the literature reveals several justifications for performing a secondary data analysis, including the use of a new research question (Heaton, 2004), the creation of new ideas using old data (Fielding, 2004), the "verification, refutation and refinement of existing research"(Heaton, 2004, p. 9), and the exploration of data from a different angle (Hinds et al., 1997).

Our research uses both primary and secondary sources of data as they complement each other in building a strong case. The reason for conducting a secondary data analysis was to re-examine the data from a fresh perspective in an effort to learn new insights. As for primary data, they were used in order to lead the researcher to novel findings, give the researcher's arguments credible support and provide reliable information on the research topic.

5.4.1.1. A secondary data analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon

Secondary data are market research findings gathered for a reason aside than the one at hand. Secondary data has the benefit of being far more affordable and readily available than primary data. However, because secondary data are gathered for a different reason, one must carefully assess whether or not they are applicable in a particular market research circumstance. In this study, secondary data were selected based on several important criteria. The chosen secondary sources are error-free and accurate such as the ones provided from the World Economic Forum (WEF), which works with the top political, commercial, cultural, and other leaders of society in order to influence global, regional, and industry agendas. In addition, the secondary data are pertinent to the current area of inquiry as they shed light on the global rates of women's participation in the labor market particularly Lebanese women economic status. Furthermore, the utilized secondary data are up to date and not collected from old sources. Lastly, the secondary data in this research do not have any restrictions on their use, as they are publicly available data such as the data collected from the UN Women in Arab States organization, which is dedicated to matters of gender equality and women empowerment across the Arab states. Table 5.1 has been formulated based on the selected secondary sources.

Table 5.1: The selection of secondary data.

Author(s)	Title	Year	Selection Criteria	Source Description
World Economic Forum	Global Gender Gap Report 2020	2020	The technique used to conduct the research contained in the report incorporates the most recent data from international organizations and a survey of CEOs.	The purpose of the Global Gender Gap Report is to provide a comprehensive analysis of gender-based disparities across 153 countries, with a focus on gender parity and differences in educational attainment as important findings.
UN Women Arab States	Lebanon	2020	Delivering vital assistance to women and girls in need, UN Women promotes and backs societal mobilization for judicial reform, collaborates with partners and the government of Lebanon to create institutions that are gender-responsive.	The objective is to fully involve women in political institutions and processes and to give them the tools they need to access secure employment.
UN Women Data Hub	Lebanon Fact Sheet	2021	The Women Count Data Hub compiles the most recent information on gender and the <i>Sustainable Development Goals</i> (SDGs) in addition to narratives and research on the real-world experiences of women and girls.	The report examines the SDGs from the perspective of gender and finds gaps in several important areas, including violence against women, unpaid care and domestic labor, and information and communications technology skills.
Lantona Sado & Mayssaa Daher	The life of women and men in Lebanon	2021	The importance of accurate, timely, and high-quality gender statistics has increased in Lebanon as a result of the increased focus on the many contributions and roles that both men and women play in society and the advancement of gender equality ideals.	The Central Administration of Data (CAS) has made a deliberate effort to compile statistics and indicators that depict the position of Lebanese women and men in the key economic, social, and human development categories in order to fulfill the growing interest in gender statistics.
Samantha Constant, Angela Elzir, Jonna Maria Lundvall, and Rachel Dore Weeks / World Bank Group	The Status of Women in Lebanon: Assessing Women's Access to Economic Opportunities, Human Capital Accumulation, and Agency.	2022	This report offers an up-to-date, comprehensive reference on the situation of women in Lebanon against the backdrop of overall development outcomes while taking into account the several crises the nation is currently experiencing.	The World Bank Group works in all key areas of development, offers a wide range of financial instruments and technical assistance, and aids nations in exchanging and implementing cutting-edge knowledge and solutions to the problems they encounter.
Krystel Tabet, Natalia Menhall, Haya Mortada, Jessica Hanna, and Majd Hammad / Oxfam	Counting on Women's Work without Counting Women's Work: Women's Unpaid Work in Jordan, Lebanon, Tunisia and Egypt.	2019	The purpose of this literature review is to identify knowledge gaps that need to be filled in order to provide more precise programs recommendations and to provide information to help create agendas that support women's economic empowerment in the MENA area.	Since 1993, Oxfam has been active in Lebanon. By working with its partners, they support women's rights, economic development, and good governance at the local and national levels. They also provide humanitarian aid to vulnerable people affected by violence.
Angela Elzir / World Bank Blogs	What the mega-crises have done to Lebanese firms and workers	2021	The article includes a summary of the impact of the crises on Lebanon as well as an overview of the industries and workers affected by those crises.	The World Bank Group works in all key areas of development, offers a wide range of financial instruments and technical assistance, and aids nations in exchanging and implementing cutting-edge knowledge and solutions to the problems they encounter.

It is no secret that gender bias manages to weasel its way into most, if not, all aspects of life. While it is true that a lot of effort has been put into alleviating this phenomenon, especially in academic and workplace settings, this cannot be said adamantly in the case of Lebanon and the MENA region in general. Most women can surely vouch for this statement since many have been subject to countless forms of gender bias and discrimination throughout their careers. Statistics pertaining to the actual status of women in Lebanon reveal a substantial need for progress in terms of gender equality and women's rights. In fact, the country is knee-deep in structural gender inequalities, as Lebanon ranks 145 out of 153 in terms of overall gender gaps (World Economic Forum, 2020). Thus, examining the footing of Lebanese females in different aspects is of essence in order to understand how and where changes need to be implemented.

Moreover, when it comes to Lebanese women's economic status, Lebanon has one of the lowest global rates of women's participation in the labor market, 29%, whereas men compose 76% of the market (UN Women in Arab States, 2020).

Data is rather conflicting regarding Lebanese women's unemployment rate, but the UN Women Data Hub (2021) affirms that 14.4% of them are unemployed, as opposed to 10% of men being jobless. This sheds light on the unequal distribution of decent work, prosperity, and inclusive development between males and females in the country (UN Women Data Hub, 2021). An upward trend in women's employment rate has been witnessed in recent years, reaching 31.8% in 2019. However, the rate for women living with children is significantly different compared to women who are not, with a noted difference of 14% in 2018-19 (Sado & Daher, 2021). The same cannot be said for men, whose employment displays a positive association with having children, because they are more likely to work to establish a household and be the main source of income (Sado & Daher, 2021).

This goes together with the fact that women often drop out of the workforce after getting married to fulfill the role that society expects from them (Torres Tailfer, 2010), which is to handle household and childcare responsibilities. These expectations influence women's employment decisions more than factors such as salaries and benefits (Constant et al., 2022). Indeed, Lebanese working women tend to be single and aged between 20 and 29 years old, after which they usually marry and bear children, which results in a decline in their contribution to the labor market (Tabet et al., 2019). However, if they do choose to go back to work after having children, it could prove very challenging to simultaneously handle a job and what is known as a second shift, whereby women are expected to perform certain labor at home. In fact, women handle a substantially disproportionate share of unpaid care work (UCW); women perform 76% of the total hours of global UCW, which equates to approximately 3.2 times as much as men (UNDP in the Arab States, 2021). This gender imbalance acts as a major factor in women's economic and social disempowerment, as UCW does not contribute to economic activity, nor is it rewarded (Tabet et al., 2019).

In addition, despite being educated, women are concentrated in service sectors like education health care, and public administration, but a lot of them are low-skilled specialists and very few of them hold senior management positions. This correlates to fewer hours of work (32 weekly hours for women and 53 for men) influencing remuneration, as the wage gap is about 22%. Societal expectations about women's traditional roles contribute to gender biases in hiring and employers believe that men are more suited for management positions. (Constant et al., 2022).

According to the World Bank (Elzir, 2021), one in five businesses affected by the port explosion was woman-led, most of which closed due to the deteriorating situation caused by the economic crisis coupled with the pandemic, which didn't help women's already small share of the enterprise landscape, taking a toll on female entrepreneurship. Only 10% of Lebanese firms have women owners, half of the MENA average, and only

6% have women in top management, a third of the world's average. Women entrepreneurs provide better employment opportunities for women than men, as their employers are 49% female, compared to men's 22%, and they also offer more formal training to their employees. Moreover, securing finance for business operations is harder for female entrepreneurs as only 31% of them have loans or credit lines compared to 40% of men. More women managers also identify political instability, corruption, and limited infrastructure access as hurdles and obstacles to their establishment than men do. Depending on religious affiliations, there are restrictions on access to assets and inheritance. Access to financial services favors men as the percentage of men having accounts is almost double that of women, some of whom reported dependency on a male family member's account to be the reason, most of whom are in rural areas. Numbers seem to worsen though, due to the 2019 economic crisis preventing most dollar-dominated accounts from cash withdrawal.

Women-owned and/or women-led businesses (WOLBs) are confident that they can succeed in the entrepreneurial activity because they possess all the qualifications needed in the real business world such as the expertise, the persistence, the professional attitude, the hard work, the motivation, the dedication, the determination, the commitment and most importantly the innovation. However, all these qualities are internal factors in contrast to the unavailable environmental/ external factors such as gender equality, access to finance, culture, spouse encouragement, market demand, community support, and mentorship. Therefore, when asked about the difficulties and challenges, women explicitly mentioned environmental factors, namely: the need of more support, masculine community, economic stability, parenthood, financing, and patriarchal family business.

5.4.1.2. A Primary Data analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon

This study was conducted to identify the challenges faced and opportunities available for Lebanese women entrepreneurs. Thus, an online survey created in Google Forms was distributed via email to Lebanese female entrepreneurs. Each research participant had to agree to taking part in the study by reading and signing an informed consent form. The informed consent gave the participants enough information about the study and the estimated amount of time needed to complete the survey. Additionally, it ensured participants' identity and confidentiality throughout the whole research process. The survey was disseminated to 70 people out of whom 53 responded (response rate of 88%).

The survey consisted of five major sections. The first section gathered demographic information about participants including their marital status, educational qualifications, reason for starting their business, and the total number of employees in their firm. The second section was designed to identify the primary purposes that led Lebanese female entrepreneurs to start their businesses. The third section of the survey assessed the forces that encourage women to achieve their entrepreneurial dreams. The fourth section consisted of the impediments holding women back from achieving their entrepreneurial dreams. Finally, the aim of the fifth section was to specify how the increasing number of women entrepreneurs is contributing to the Lebanese economy.

5.4.2. Information collection: description of the questionnaire

Many scholars have focused on female entrepreneurs recently, as they are the category of entrepreneurs that are expanding the quickest globally. The rising literature suggests that women may significantly contribute to economic development and entrepreneurial activity by raising the GDP and creating new jobs, which will have a favorable

influence on lowering poverty and social isolation. Expanding and supporting women's access to economic opportunities, through entrepreneurship and other means, contributes to inclusive economic prosperity and human development. With the shift in economies towards innovation, the objective of our research is to better understand the opportunities and barriers women who founded businesses in Lebanon face, focusing on access to finance, markets and networks. This study will examine enabling entrepreneurial environments for women-founded businesses, and seek to identify how female entrepreneurs contribute to the local economy's growth.

5.4.2.1. Description of the variables included in the study

Globally, the number of female-run businesses is continuously increasing, helping to raise household incomes and strengthen national economies. However, the proportion of women who choose to pursue an entrepreneurial career is smaller than the proportion of men. Nevertheless, the contribution of the women-led businesses to the revenues increase in the Lebanese economy is a serious blind spot. Therefore, the survey variables attempt to address this knowledge gap by investigating women-led businesses challenges and opportunities, how to address these challenges and seize these opportunities to increase revenues as a direct output, then to contribute to the local economy's growth as an outcome. Following are the survey variables:

Business start-up motivation. The business start-up motives were measured using 7 items, which identified the motives that urge women to embrace entrepreneurial activities. The 7-item scale has been adapted from a 29-item scale originally developed by Gatewood et al. (1995) and was designed to learn about the motives of females to start their own. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7).

Opportunities for female entrepreneurs. The opportunities that drive women success as entrepreneurs were measured using 7 items, which determined the opportunities available for women who wish to start and run their own business. The 7-item scale has been adapted from the questionnaire developed by Lock and Smith (2016), which was designed to explore the opportunities that women participants felt they need in order to improve their businesses. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7).

Obstacles to female entrepreneurs. The major barriers in the way of female entrepreneurialism were measured using 7 items, which examined some of the obstacles that cause the exclusion of women from entrepreneurial activities. The 7-item scale has been adapted from the questionnaire developed by Dunn and Liang (2006) in their studies on entrepreneurial triggers. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7).

Female entrepreneurs and economic development. The contribution of women entrepreneurs to the economic development was measured using 3 items, which assessed the significant impact that female entrepreneurs have on the economic development. The 3-item scale has been adapted from the questionnaire developed by Hisrich et al. (2006) that was designed to capture the impact of female entrepreneurship on economic development. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7).

5.4.2.1. Questionnaire

This study aims to understand the motivations behind female entrepreneurship and identify any forces that encourage women to achieve their entrepreneurial dreams as well as the impediments holding women back from growing their entrepreneurial activities. There is very little research into how the increasing number of Lebanese women entrepreneurs is contributing to the economy, and this survey aims to find out if women-owned businesses can make significant contributions to economic growth when challenges are mitigated and opportunities identified.

I. Demographics

1. Please select your gender.
 - Female
 - Male

2. Please indicate your marital status.
 - Single
 - Married
 - Partenered
 - Divorced
 - Widowed

3. Please indicate how you started your business.
 - Self-started
 - Started with partner/friend
 - Inherited
 - Buy-out

4. Please indicate the period for which your company has been in business.
 - 0 - < 2 years
 - 2 - < 5 years
 - 5 - < 10 years
 - 10 - < 15 years
 - 15 years plus

5. Please indicate the total number of employees employed in your company (full-time, part-time & contractual).
 - 1 – 5

- 6 – 10
 - 11 – 20
 - 21 – 50
 - 51 – 100
 - 100 plus
6. Please indicate your highest level of education achieved.
- No Schooling Completed
 - High School Graduate
 - Bachelor's Degree
 - Master's Degree
 - PhD
7. Please indicate the reason(s) for having started your own business (you may select several reasons).
- Material motivation
 - Need for independence
 - Need for achievement
 - Preference for flexibility
 - Glass ceiling / barriers to progression at workplace
 - Financial security
 - Urge for risk taking

II. Business Start-up Motivation among Women and Men Entrepreneurs

1. My firm was started with the purpose of making a significant improvement to an existing product or service.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
2. I chose to go into my own business because of other women who inspired me.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree

- Strongly disagree
3. My firm was started with the purpose of developing and selling an entirely new product or service in my market or community.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
4. My firm was started with the purpose of exploiting a profitable area for business.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
5. My firm was started with the purpose of making more money.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
6. My firm was started with the purpose of gaining greater time flexibility.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
7. My firm was started with the purpose of fulfilling a dream.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

III. Opportunities that Drive your Success as an Entrepreneur

1. As an entrepreneur, I benefited from government initiatives or policies that helped start or grow my business.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

2. As an entrepreneur, I had mentors and role models that helped me improve my operational performance and avoid costly business mistakes.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

3. As an entrepreneur, I have access to local, regional, and international markets through supplier databases, meet-the-buyer events, training, export promotion events, and study tours.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

4. As an entrepreneur, I have access to training programs that enable me to learn new skills (such as financial skills, online marketing, user experience).
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree

- Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
5. Help from the family is an essential condition to make entrepreneurial activity possible.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
6. Help from society is an essential condition to make entrepreneurial activity possible.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
7. Women-owned businesses benefit from government-led special tax breaks.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

IV. Barriers to Innovation for Women-Owned Firms

1. Receiving access to finance was one of the primary challenges I faced when I first started my business.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree

- Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
2. Finding and keeping good employees is a key challenge for my business.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
3. The lack of access to support networks i.e. the lack of available advisors and mentors, is an impediment to my business.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
4. Information in my chosen field of endeavor was easily accessible.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
5. I feel that society encourages and supports women to take on the challenges of the business world.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

6. I experienced personal barriers (e.g. lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, isolation) when I started my own business.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

7. I believe I have suffered gender discrimination by financial markets.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

8. I believe that women experience more barriers than men in making a success of their business.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

9. The views held by society on the traditional roles of women (e.g. wife, mother) impose negatively on women's entrepreneurial endeavors.
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

10. As an entrepreneur, I find it challenging to establish a work-life balance.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

V. Women Entrepreneurship and Economic Development

1. Women-owned businesses create employment opportunities in Lebanon.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
2. Women-owned businesses help provide economic opportunities for women and youth in Lebanese rural areas.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
3. As an entrepreneur, I use my revenue to expand my business which in turn promises further financial security, community involvement, and economic impact.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Somewhat agree
 - Neither agree nor disagree
 - Somewhat disagree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree

5.4.3. Statistical techniques for data analysis

Data was analyzed using structural equation modeling with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) in the latest release of the software application SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM is a technique that enables researchers to compute extremely complicated models with numerous constructs and indicator variables, especially when the analysis's goal is prediction. The measurement model's internal consistency (composite reliability), convergent validity (indicator reliability and average variance retrieved), and discriminant validity are all evaluated using partial least squares (PLS). Furthermore, the structural model is evaluated as well as the significance and relevance of hypothesized relationships using structural equation modeling (SEM). In order to prevent the common method variance (CMV), the full collinearity test was administered. The internal consistency of the constructs was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability approach, and the average variance extracted (AVE) was used as an indication of the convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017).

Furthermore, in order to measure the structural model, this research paper adopted the coefficient of determination (R^2 values), effect size (f^2 values), blindfolding (Q^2 values), model fit indicators, and structural model path coefficients. See a more extensive discussion on the PLS-SEM technique in section 5.2.3 above.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS

6.1. Introduction

The study provides a thorough methodology for examining the disparity between Lebanese men and women's access to leadership roles and examines this inequality as a way to comprehend the female leadership dilemma and address gender disparity in leadership. Therefore, this chapter is organized in four parts to explain the gender gap in leadership using direct factors such as gender stereotypes, glass ceilings, and institutional sexism. First, the socioeconomic situation in Lebanon is explored because inequities in resource access as well as problems with privilege, power, and control are frequently discovered when socioeconomic status is investigated. Second, the chapter explores the different work-life strategies that can be implemented by men and women leaders to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders. Third, some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement to leadership roles, why some women do not accept having a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female boss are examined. Finally, the chapter discusses the vital socio-economic role that Lebanese women entrepreneurs play in the economic growth taking into consideration the key obstacles that they face and the main opportunities that await them. Throughout this chapter, the results of each study are observed in order to derive knowledge from concrete, verifiable evidence.

6.2. Socioeconomic situation in Lebanon

According to Worldometer (2023) of the most recent United Nations data, the population of Lebanon is currently 6,747,920. 78.4% of people live in cities and the median age is 29.6 years. According to Kemp (2022), in Lebanon women make up 49.6% of the population, while men make up 50.4%. Here is a look at Lebanon's population distribution by age group for further context:

- 7.8 percent are between the ages of 0 and 4.
- 13.1 percent are between the ages of 5 and 12.
- 7.8 percent are between the ages of 13 and 17.
- 11.6 percent are between the ages of 18 and 24.
- 16.3 percent are between the ages of 25 and 34.
- 14.0 percent are between the ages of 35 and 44.
- 11.9 percent are between the ages of 45 and 54.
- 9.3 percent of Lebanon's population are between the ages of 55 and 64.
- 8.2 percent of Lebanon's population are 65 and above.

Lebanon has been plagued with the most devastating, multifaceted crises in its recent history for almost three years. The simultaneous economic effects of the COVID-19 breakout and the enormous Port of Beirut explosion in August 2020 have further aggravated the ongoing economic and financial crisis that began in October 2019.

For nearly three years, Lebanon has been assailed by the most devastating, multi-pronged crisis in its modern history. The unfolding economic and financial crisis that started in October 2019 has been further exacerbated by the dual economic impact of the COVID-19 outbreak, and the massive Port of Beirut explosion in August 2020. According to the World Bank (2021), the economic and financial crisis in Lebanon is one of the worst to have hit the world since the middle of the nineteenth century. Nominal GDP decreased dramatically from about US\$52 billion in 2019 to US\$23.1 billion in 2021. The amount of disposable income has significantly decreased as a result of the extended economic downturn. The World Bank downgraded Lebanon from higher middle-income level to lower middle-income status in July 2022 as a result of a 36.5% decline in GDP per capita between 2019 and 2021. A substantial currency devaluation, triple-digit inflation, and a drop in average income all significantly reduced purchasing power. The unemployment rate rose from 11.4% in 2018–19 to 29.6% in 2022. Access to healthcare and clean water has also been hampered by fuel shortages,

and supply chains for businesses that sell food, offer transportation services, and operate communication networks have all been severely affected (World Bank, 2022).

Due to its high proportion of Syrian refugees compared to its population, Lebanon confronts considerable difficulties as a result of the Syrian conflict. Over the past few years, the Syrian conflict has resulted in an influx of more than 1.2 million refugees into Lebanon, putting tremendous strain on the country's economy, politics, and social fabric. The absence of permanent housing and shelter for refugees in Lebanon has led to extensive displacement among thousands of villages, communities, and unofficial colonies (UNHCR, 2015).

Over 225,000 micro, small, and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs) are thought to exist in Lebanon, with two-thirds of them concentrated in the two most economically important areas, Beirut and Mount Lebanon. Although many of these firms are informal, MSMEs are a significant source of potential economic growth, especially in industries like agriculture, construction, and services (which have historically employed Syrian labor), as well as in developing fields like information and communication technology (ICT) and energy (International Rescue Committee, 2016).

Approximately 96% of registered businesses in Lebanon are SMEs, which also employ 50% of the labor force and generate 27% of total sales (International Monetary Fund & World Bank, 2016). Family ownership, centralized administration, use of simple processes, delayed internal growth, financial issues, and a propensity for internal funding are characteristics of Lebanese SMEs (Naimy, 2004). Only 20% of private sector credit is given to SMEs, indicating their poor finances, inability to offer the necessary collateral, and weak business plans (Naimy, 2004), limiting the growth of around 42% of micro and small businesses (Hamdan et al., 2016).

The following can be used to summarize the primary traits of Lebanese SMEs, according to Badreddine (2011): 1) Over 74% of SMEs in Lebanon were started by the present proprietors. The remainder are family companies that were established and have been run by their owners for generations; 2) producing consumer items is a specialty of almost half of industrial companies. A total of 30% of these businesses make intermediate items, while the remaining firms make machinery and industrial equipment.

The percentage of women who are employed in Lebanon is 20.8%. The percentage of the population aged 15 and over who are economically active is known as the labor force participation rate. The percentage of women in the labor force has nearly remained the same since 1990. There is a larger disparity between men and women in terms of labor force participation compared to lower-middle income households. The likelihood of formal work arrangements, social protection, and safety nets protecting against economic shocks are lowest for workers in vulnerable employment; as a result, they are more prone to become impoverished. In Lebanon, vulnerable employment rates for men and women are 35.7% and 13.8%, respectively, for 2019. In comparison to the average rate for the Middle East and North Africa, the rate of vulnerable employment in Lebanon is greater for males but lower for women (World Bank Gender Data Portal, 2023).

According to the labor laws of Lebanon, men and women holding the same position must be paid equally. However, the Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (2016) claims that this rule is not implemented, indicating that there is some salary discrepancy in the Lebanese workplace. Working women face difficulties and restrictions due to a lack of rules and lax enforcement of existing laws, particularly in the unorganized sector (Horwath, 2015). Women find it challenging to stay in the workforce and advance up the corporate ladder due to a variety of additional barriers, such as cultural and societal standards that uphold gender-based stereotypes, which

results in a significant underrepresentation of women in senior-level positions. According to data from 2007, the most recent year for which data on gender diversity at the management level in Lebanon was available, women make up only 8.4% of all Lebanese executives, which includes lawmakers, senior officials, and managers.

Female labor force participation is highest in the banking and service sectors, according to a breakdown of the statistics by industry. However, even though women made up 47% of all banking industry employees in Lebanon as of 2017, their representation on boards of directors is still low. The majority of women in banking have entry- or mid-level roles. Together, these results indicate that Lebanese professional women face a difficult and time-consuming procedure to progress their careers beyond middle management (Abu Zeinab-Chahine, 2017).

6.3. Study 1: Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses

Prior studies on firm innovativeness have focused on the impact of technology adoption (Gil et al., 2012), organizational learning capability, managerial capability, R&D investment intensity, and integration of R&D and marketing (Akgün et al., 2007; Da Rocha et al., 1990; Lefebvre et al., 2000; Walsh et al., 2002; Ho et al., 2005; Chen et al., 2007; Hernandez, 2006). However, no study has examined firm innovativeness by jointly studying firm innovativeness, supervisor support, employee WLB, individual WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB strategies.

6.3.1. Empirical analysis of the results

The dataset used in analysis contained the entire 141 responses since no questions had any missing responses. The participants' ages varied between 25 and 64 years, the percentage of men and women participants was quite balanced (50.4% female

participants and 49.6% male participants). As for the number of years that participants have been working with their current employer, 38% of respondents revealed that they have been working in the same organization for more than 10 years. Among the 141 respondents 28% were single, 66% married, 1% widowed and 5% were divorced or separated. 3% of the respondents had more than 5 children, 64% had between 1–4 children while 33% had no children. In addition, most of the respondents (56%) had a master’s degree. Table 6.1 presents detailed descriptive statistics of the sample.

Table 6.1: Descriptive statistics of the sample (N = 141).

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	71	50.4
	Male	70	49.6
Age	18–24 Years	6	4.3
	25–34 Years	32	22.7
	35–44 Years	51	36.2
	45–54 Years	37	26.2
	55–64 Years	15	10.6
Highest qualification	PhD	42	29.8
	Master’s Degree	79	56
	Bachelor’s Degree	19	13.5
	High School Graduate	1	0.7
Years with current employer	Less than a year	7	5
	2–5 Years	38	27
	6–10 Years	42	29.7
	Over 10 Years	54	38.3
Hours worked per week	Less than 34 h	50	35
	36–40 h	54	38.6
	More than 40 h	37	26.4
Marital status	Single	39	27.6
	Married	93	66
	Widowed	2	1.4
	Divorced/Separated	7	5
Number of children	No children	47	33.6
	1–4 Children	90	63.6
	More than 5 Children	4	2.8
Supervisor’s gender	Male	87	61.7
	Female	54	38.3
Total		141	100

6.3.1.1. Evaluation of Measurement Model

In order to prevent the common method variance (CMV), the full collinearity test was administered. The occurrence of a VIF greater than 3.3 is proposed as an indication of pathological collinearity, and as an indication that a model may be contaminated by

common method bias. In our model, all VIFs resulting from a full collinearity test were lower than 3.3 (Table 6.2), and the model can be considered free of common method bias. In addition, the anonymity of the response and confidentiality has been restated throughout the data collection stage.

Table 6.2: Full Collinearity Test.

	DEMO	EWLB	IWLB_	OP	RDP	SS
DEMO		1.0519				
EWLB					1	
IWLB_		1.9083				
OP		2.0105				
RDP						
SS		1.1213				

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support.

Table 6.3 displays the factor loadings of items belonging to a common construct, Cronbach's alpha, rho A, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) for the latent variables. It is recommended to use loadings having values above 0.70 since they provide acceptable item reliability (Hair et al., 2019). The values presented in Table 6.3 indicate that not all indicators exhibit a sufficient level of reliability (i.e., values close to 0.70). Therefore, all factor loadings having a value less than 0.65 were deleted. In addition, in order to measure the internal consistency of constructs, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were used and the results are shown in Table 6.3. Although some researchers prefer using Composite Reliability (CR) rather than Cronbach Alpha, "it may be used as a conservative measure of internal consistency reliability" (Hair et al. 2016, p. 101). When the values of Alpha and CR are above 0.70, this indicates a good measure of internal consistency of a construct. The CR values shown in Table 6.3 are all satisfactory. As for the average variance extracted (AVE), its value should be higher than the minimum threshold of 0.5. In our case, the obtained AVE value for all constructs is higher than 0.5. Therefore, it can be said that convergent validity was established.

Table 6.3: Evaluation of Measurement Model.

Construct	Item	Indicator	Loadings	t-Statistic (Bootstrap)	p-Value	Cronbach's Alpha	ρ_A	CR	AVE
Employee's Demographic (Demo)	What is your gender	Demo1	1			1	1	1	1
	My personal life suffers because of work	EWLB1	0.63	5.8	0.0000	0.79	0.820	0.83	0.67
Employee Work-life Balance (EWLB)	My job makes my personal life difficult	EWLB2	0.49	3.44	0.0006				
	I often neglect my personal needs because of work	EWLB3	0.51	3.39	0.0007				
	I often put my personal life on hold because of work	EWLB4	0.43	2.76	0.0059				
	I often struggle to balance between work and non-work	EWLB5	0.54	4.7	0.0000				
	I am satisfied with the amount of time I spend on non-work-related activities.	EWLB6	0.24	1.75	0.0800				
	My personal life is draining my energy which is affecting my work	EWLB7	0.67	7.47	0.0000				
	I often feel too tired to be effective at work	EWLB8	0.57	5.32	0.0000				
	My work suffers because of my personal life	EWLB9	0.65	7.23	0.0000				
	I often find it hard to work due to personal matters	EWLB10	0.72	8.6	0.0000				
	My personal life gives me energy for work	EWLB11	0.43	3.71	0.0002				
	My job gives me energy to pursue my personal activities.	EWLB12	0.36	2.5	0.0126				
	My personal life boosts my mood at work	EWLB13	0.44	3.55	0.0004				
	My job boosts my mood	EWLB14	0.47	4.73	0.0000				
Supervisor's Support of WLB (SS)	My supervisor understands and supports employees' family responsibilities	SS1	0.81	4.72	0.0000	0.84	0.840	0.89	0.67
	My supervisor allows employees to use flextime to attend to family matters	SS2	0.81	3.8	0.0002				
	My supervisor is understanding/accommodating when family matters pull me away from work	SS3	0.85	4.15	0.0000				
	My supervisor facilitates work-life balance	SS4	0.80	4.14	0.0000				
Individual Work Life Balance (IWLB)	Maintaining a positive outlook	IWLB1	0.81	7.27	0.0000	0.72	0.730	0.87	0.78
	Minimizing stressful situations	IWLB2	0.79	8.18	0.0000				
	Arranging time to fit in others' work commitments	IWLB3	0.52	3.9	0.0001				
	Juggling with childcare responsibilities	IWLB4	0.54	4.49	0.0004				
	Meeting lifestyle commitments	IWLB5	0.47	3.6	0.0003				
	Meeting community commitments	IWLB6	0.43	2.87	0.0043				
Organizational provisioning of WLB strategies(OP)	A flexible working arrangement	OP1	0.75	8.61	0.0000	0.86	0.870	0.89	0.58
	Health and wellness programs	OP2	0.78	9.91	0.0000				
	Health and wellness programs at work	OP3	0.71	9.15	0.0000				
	Childcare benefits or services	OP4	0.75	9.03	0.0000				
	Taking leaves from work as required	OP5	0.60	5.37	0.0000				
	Organizational understanding and support	OP6	0.80	9.64	0.0000				
	Availability and usage of work-life balance policies	OP7	0.76	9.02	0.0000				
Research and Development Performance(RDP)	Getting new products or services to market quickly.	RDP1	-0.15	0.32	0.7433	0.94	1.010	0.95	0.85
	Creating with radical/breakthrough technologies	RDP2	0.69	1.38	0.1674				
	Bringing breakthrough technologies to market	RDP3	0.89	1.50	0.1325				
	Attracting and enrolling more students	RDP4	-0.16	0.35	0.7206				
	Gaining a higher market share	RDP5	0.69	1.38	0.1679				
	Increasing employee job satisfaction	RDP6	-0.14	0.31	0.7563				
	Improving university ranking	RDP7	0.89	1.50	0.1326				

Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support.

In addition to the above validity measures, discriminant validity was used to measure the degree of differences between the overlapping constructs (Hair et al., 2021). Discriminant validity is usually assessed using two main criteria: cross-loadings, and

Fornell and Larcker’s (1981). Using the cross-loadings approach, “an indicator’s outer loading on the associated construct should be greater than all of its loadings on other constructs (i.e., the cross loadings)” (Hair et al. 2016, p. 105). Table 6.4 demonstrates that all indicators load more strongly on their corresponding constructs than they do on other constructs. Therefore, discriminant validity was established. As for the Fornell-Larcker testing criterion, in order to assess discriminant validity, the square root of each construct’s average variance extracted (AVE) is compared with its bivariate correlations with all opposing constructs (Grégoire & Fisher, 2006). Discriminant validity is established when the AVE square root for each construct is greater than the values of its bivariate correlations (Ringle et al., 2009).

Table 6.4: Cross Loadings.

	DEMO	EWLB	IWLB	OP	RDP	SS
DEMO1	1	-0.0428	0.1748	0.1562	0.0115	0.0999
EWLB7	-0.098	0.8203	-0.3751	-0.4047	-0.1052	0.1419
EWLB9	0.0054	0.832	-0.3092	-0.3113	-0.0027	0.2664
EWLB10	-0.0027	0.8175	-0.2499	-0.3438	-0.1839	0.1672
IWLB1	0.1448	-0.3615	0.9034	0.4916	0.112	-0.0969
IWLB2	0.167	-0.3126	0.8684	0.6796	0.0072	-0.1248
OP1	0.0778	-0.2314	0.5499	0.7383	-0.0044	-0.1651
OP2	0.1004	-0.3279	0.4732	0.7959	0.0085	-0.2341
OP3	0.071	-0.3964	0.3854	0.7311	0.1571	-0.2908
OP4	0.1413	-0.2948	0.4284	0.7456	0.0095	-0.1791
OP6	0.2612	-0.368	0.6089	0.7983	-0.0856	-0.2274
OP7	0.0437	-0.3132	0.5659	0.7681	-0.0755	-0.2391
RDP2	0.0425	-0.0725	0.0633	-0.0274	0.8831	0.2194
RDP3	-0.0082	-0.1276	0.0616	0.0211	0.965	0.1821
RDP5	0.0364	-0.0765	0.0673	-0.0234	0.8827	0.2129
RDP7	-0.0025	-0.1387	0.0733	0.03	0.964	0.1817
SS1	0.0961	0.2104	-0.1709	-0.301	0.1286	0.8097
SS2	0.1103	0.1446	0.042	-0.1767	0.211	0.8047
SS3	0.0734	0.1923	-0.0589	-0.2529	0.203	0.8588
SS4	0.0544	0.1927	-0.1766	-0.2303	0.1534	0.8092

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies = OP; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor’s support.

For instance, Table 6.3 shows that the AVE for the research and development performance (RDP) construct is 0.85, and its square root is 0.92 as displayed in Table 6.5. This value is greater than RDP’s bivariate correlations with all opposing constructs and demonstrates that discriminant validity has been established for the RDP construct.

Table 6.5: Fornell and Larcker’s Criterion.

	DEMO	EWLB	IWLB	OP	RDP	SS
DEMO	1 *					
EWLB	-0.0428	0.8233 *				
IWLB	0.1744	-0.3919	0.8861 *			
OP	0.1536	-0.4328	0.6524	0.7633 *		
RDP	0.0115	-0.1201	0.0715	0.0079	0.9246 *	
SS	0.0999	0.2292	-0.1238	-0.2993	0.2076	0.8209 *

Note: * Square root of AVE. Square root of AVE (diagonal); Off diagonal are Pearson correlations; Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor’s support.

However, recently a new approach to assess discriminant validity has been proposed, which is able to achieve higher specificity and sensitivity than the two previously mentioned methods. This other measure for discriminant validity is the Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation (Henseler et al., 2015). HTMT “is the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators across constructs measuring different phenomena), relative to the average of the monotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators within the same construct)” (Henseler et al. 2015, p. 121). Thus, HTMT is used to estimate the correlation between constructs. If two constructs’ indicators have an HTMT value smaller than 1, then these constructs are different from each other because their true correlation is different from 1 (Henseler et al., 2015). Some authors propose a threshold value of 0.85 (Clark & Watson, 2016; Kline, 2011), while others propose a value of 0.90 (Gold et al., 2001; Teo et al., 2008). Table 6.6 shows that all HTMT values between constructs are below 0.85 and 0.9. Thus, based on HTMT.85 and HTMT.90 criteria, discriminant validity has been established.

Table 6.6 : Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

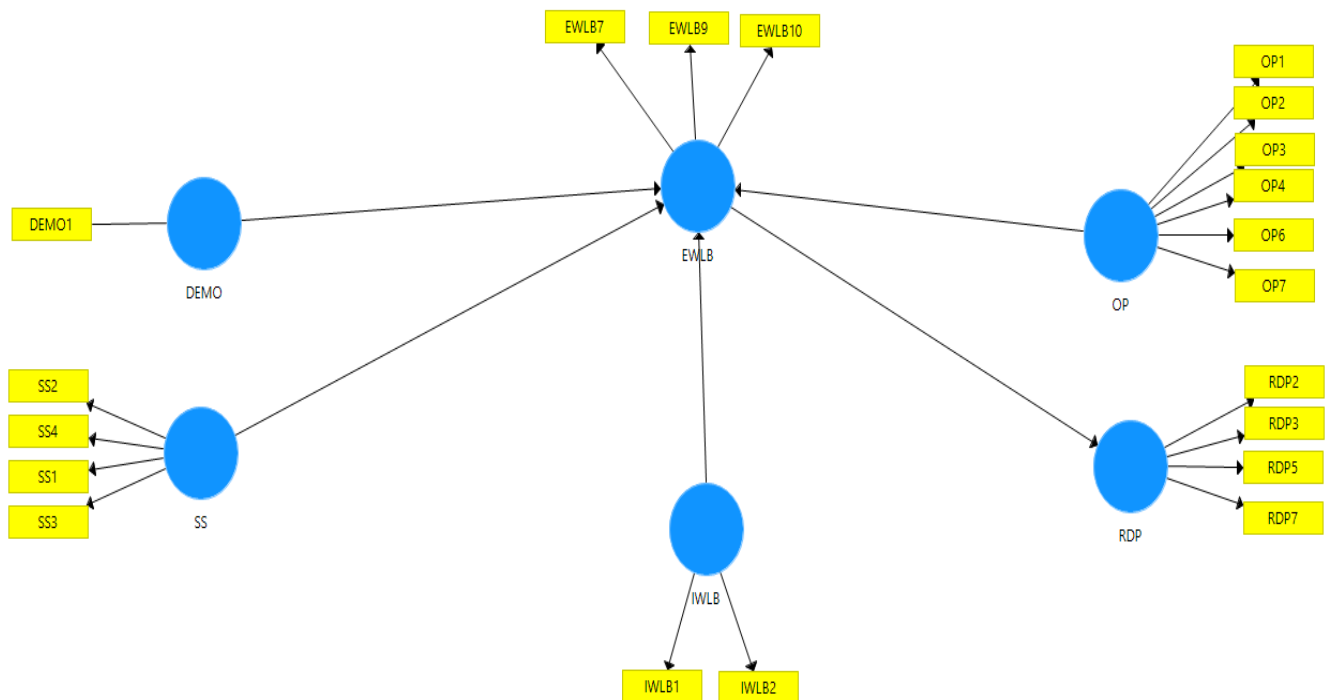
	DEMO	EWLB	IWLB	OP	RDP	SS
DEMO						
EWLB	0.0491					
IWLB	0.2062	0.5048				
OP	0.1637	0.5156	0.8421			
RDP	0.0248	0.1460	0.0808	0.0929		
SS	0.1109	0.2858	0.1771	0.3348	0.2444	

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor’s support.

6.3.1.2. Evaluation of the Structural Model

In order to measure the structural model, this paper adopts the coefficient of determination (R^2 values), effect size (f^2 values), blindfolding (Q^2 values), model fit indicators, and structural model path coefficients (Figure 6.1).

Figure 6.1: Structural model.



The details of each step involved in the evaluation of the structural model are listed below.

Step 1: Coefficient of determination— R square

In this step, we measure the R^2 value of the endogenous constructs, which is a measure of the model's explanatory power (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). Although acceptable R^2 values are subject to the research context, values of R^2 vary between 0 and 1, where higher values can be considered more substantial (Hair et al., 2014; Sarstedt et al.,

2014), i.e., R^2 values that are close to 1 indicate that there is an almost perfect relationship between the model and the data. Accordingly, Chin (1998) considers R^2 values of 0.670 to be substantial, values around 0.333 average and values of 0.190 and lower weak. Table 6.7 shows the values of R^2 where $EWLB = 0.218$ and $RDP = 0.014$. Thus, $EWLB$ explains 21 per cent of the variance in organizational research and development performance, which implies that $EWLB$ has an average impact on organizational research and development performance.

Table 6.7: R^2 matrix.

	R SQUARE	R SQUARE ADJUSTED
EWLB	0.2189	0.1959
RDP	0.0144	0.0073

Note. $EWLB$ = Employee work-life balance; RDP = Research and development performance.

Step 2: Effect size— F square

The effect size can be determined by calculating Cohen's f^2 . The effect size measures if an independent construct has a significant impact on the dependent construct (Cohen, 1988). The effect size f^2 of less than 0.02 shows that a predictor latent variable has no effect on an endogenous latent variable. However, values between 0.020 and 0.150, between 0.150 and 0.350 and above 0.350 represent small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively (Sarstedt et al., 2017). The results show that $IWLB$ has a small effect on $EWLB$ ($f^2 = 0.0264$), and OP has a small effect on $EWLB$ ($f^2 = 0.0505$). As for SS , it has no effect on $EWLB$ ($f^2 = 0.0165$). In addition, $EWLB$ has no effect on RDP ($f^2 = 0.0146$). Finally, $Demo$ has no effect on $EWLB$ ($f^2 = 0.0006$).

Step 3: Blindfolding— Q square

Q^2 values are constructed using the blindfolding method, which is an iterative process that provides an internal measure of consistency between the original and cross-validation predicted data. In general, Q^2 values should be greater than zero for a

particular endogenous construct to indicate predictive accuracy of the structural model for that construct. As a guideline, Q^2 values greater than 0, 0.25 and 0.50 represent small, medium and large predictive relevance of the PLS-path model. In blindfolding, the recommended omission distance (D) ranges between 5 and 7 (Hair et al., 2016). In this paper, blindfolding procedure was applied with $D = 7$. As demonstrated in Table 6.8, the construct cross-validated redundancy is greater than zero for all six endogenous variables, explicitly, DEMO, EWLB, IWLB, OP, RDP, and SS, indicating the path model's predictive accuracy.

Table 6.8: Construct cross-validated redundancy (Q^2).

CONSTRUCTS	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1 - SSE/SSO)$
DEMO	141	141	1
EWLB	423	367.3242	0.1316
IWLB	282	282	1
OP	846	846	1
RDP	564	559.3784	0.0082
SS	564	564	1

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support.

Step 4: Model fit indicators

The model fitness of this work was examined using the standardized-root-mean-square-residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), chi-square (χ^2) and RMS Theta values. The purpose of SRMR is to estimate the fitness of the model. According to Hu and Bentler (1998), if the values of SRMR are less than 0.08 ($SRMR \leq 0.08$), the model is adequate to fit. In this study, the values of SRMR were 0.07, which showed the model had good fit, whereas the values of NFI and Chi-Square were equal to 0.7 and 337, respectively (Table 6.9), with Chi-Square significance level of 0.001. The closer the NFI to 1, the better the fit. NFI values above 0.9 usually represent acceptable fit. Furthermore, the value of RMS theta was used to appraise the outer model residuals' correlation degree (Lohmöller, 1989). When the RMS theta value is closer to zero, the PLS-SEM model will be considered to have a good fit. RMS theta values below 0.12 indicate a well-fitting model, whereas higher values indicate a lack of fit (Hair et al., 2021). According

to Table 6.9, the RMS Theta value was around 0.1046, which means that in order to exhibit the global PLS model validity, the required goodness-of-fit for the PLS-SEM model is sufficient.

Table 6.9: Model Fit Summary.

MODEL	COMPLETE		
CRITERIA	SATURATED MODEL	ESTIMATED MODEL	p-VALUE
SRMR	0.0751	0.0922	
CHI-SQUARE	337.8954	346.6713	0.001
NFI	0.9035	0.8958	
RMS THETA		0.1046	

Step 5: Path coefficients

Bootstrapping was used to evaluate the path coefficients' significance and assess their values, which usually fall in the range of -1 and $+1$, where coefficients closer to $+1$ indicate a strong positive relationship and coefficients closer to -1 indicate a strong negative relationship (Hair et al. 2014; Sarstedt et al. 2014b). While taking into consideration the significance and relevance of the inner model relationships, the results showed (with sub samples 5000, no sign changes option, Bca bootstrap confidence interval and two-tailed sample test at 0.05 significance level) that only two structural relationships between variables are significant. Thus, it can be seen that, out of the six hypotheses, two are supported, since they have a critical t-value of more than 1.96 and p values less than 0.05 (refer to Table 6.10).

Table 6.10: Path Coefficients Matrix.

CONSTRUCTS	PATH COEFFICIENTS	t-STATISTIC (BOOTSTRAP)	p VALUES
SS → EWLB	0.2470 ***	2.7715	0.0058
IWLB → EWLB	-0.3876 ***	5.8018	0.0000
OP → EWLB	-0.4344 ***	7.3428	0.0000
EWLB → RDP	-0.1769	1.1817	0.2379
IWLB → RDP	0.1088	0.7985	0.4250
OP → RDP	-0.2224	0.9098	0.3634

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support. *** $p < .05$

6.3.1.3. Multigroup Analysis

Multigroup analysis (MGA) is a method to test predefined data groups to verify the presence of significant differences across group-specific parameter estimates (e.g., outer weights, outer loadings, and path coefficients) (Hair et al., 2017). In this study, MGA is used to test hypothesis 7 and find out if there are significant gender differences in the relationship between EWLB and organizational R&D performance. In addition, MGA is also used to find out if there are significant gender differences in the relationship between supervisor support and employee WLB, individual WLB and employee WLB, and individual WLB and RDP.

Table 6.11: Results of Multigroup Analysis (MGA).

	Path Coefficients Original (Female)	Path Coefficients Original (Male)	t-Statistic Female (Bootstrap)	t-Statistic, Male (Bootstrap)	Diff.	t-Parametric	t-Permutation	P-Henseler	Bias-Corrected 5-95% Confidence Intervals Female	Bias-Corrected 5-95% Confidence Intervals Male	Significance (Yes, No)
EWLB → RDP	-0.3114	-0.0982	1.2121	0.4989	-0.2132	0.6492	0.2510	0.5173	[-0.4712, 0.4606]	[-0.2616, 0.4007]	No
SS → EWLB	0.2746	0.2805	1.1411	2.3342	-0.0059	0.0221	0.9640	0.8256	[-0.5812, 0.4135]	[-0.4214, 0.4283]	No
IWLB → EWLB	-0.4912	-0.3087	6.0034	2.6155	-0.1825	1.2830	0.2060	0.2016	[-0.6114, -0.3023]	[-0.4793, -0.1769]	No
OP → EWLB	-0.4366	-0.4469	4.6444	5.7261	0.0102	0.0843	0.9480	0.9389	[-0.6001, -0.2501]	[-0.5732, -0.307]	No
IWLB → RDP	0.1611	-0.1886	1.1876	0.8037	0.3497	1.3040	0.2100	0.1944	[-0.3358, 0.3231]	[-0.5097, 0.2750]	No
OP → RDP	0.2607	-0.2078	1.2614	0.9702	0.4686	1.5856	0.4070	0.1151	[-0.4915, 0.3598]	[-0.3313, 0.4393]	No

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support.

6.3.2. Discussion

For the hypotheses reading, the predicted hypotheses of this study were (i) H1.1, supervisor's support of WLB is positively related to employee WLB, (ii) H1.2, individual's WLB is positively related to employee work-life balance, (iii) H1.3, organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to employee work-life balance, (iv) H1.4 employee work-life balance (EWLB) is positively related to organizational research and development performance, (v) H1.5, individual's WLB and

organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to organizational research and development performance, and (vi) H1.6, organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to organizational research and development performance.

Table 6.10 shows the results of the analysis where only H1.1, H1.2 and H1.3 are accepted which confirms that supervisor's support of WLB and individual's WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB strategies have significant relationship in affecting employee work-life balance with p values of 0.0058, 0.0000, and 0.0000, respectively. Consequently, evidence allows the acceptance of H1.1 with respect to supervisor's support of WLB is positively related to employee work-life balance. Supervisors play a vital role in helping employees deal with the organization's work-family policies, and are therefore considered a mediator between the organization and its employees. As a result, employees' work attitudes and their performance in the workplace are affected by their supervisor's support (Mills et al., 2014). Our study is consistent with the job-demands resources (JD-R) model, which suggests that the more supervisors support employees, the higher are their levels of work-life balance (Seiger & Wiese 2009). Our results also confirm Talukder and Galang (2021) findings, which indicate that employee performance not only depends on supervisor support but also on their WLB and this can either positively or negatively influence the relationship between supervisor support and employee performance.

H1.2 and H1.3 can also be accepted, as individual's WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB strategies are positively related to employee work-life balance. The results confirm Pienaar's (2008) finding that individuals can efficiently pay several roles in both life and work areas when they are capable of managing work/life interface, attaining an improved level of affective well-being (see also arguments by Culbertson et al., 2012; Warr, 1990; 2007). Our research is also in line with Zheng et al. (2016) finding, which states that employees' life coping strategies (LCS) were positively

related to their overall well-being. Their results show that organizational WLB policies have a direct impact on improving individual coping abilities, and an indirect effect on improving employee well-being. These results strongly suggest that both individuals and organizations are responsible for the employee well-being and WLB.

On the other hand, the results obtained do not allow the acceptance of H1.4 as they show that the employee WLB is not related to organizational research and development performance. This is because there are so many different factors that influence the organization's ability to innovate besides employees WLB such as technology, innovation process, corporate strategy, organizational structure, organizational culture, resources, knowledge management, and management style and leadership (Smith et al., 2019). In addition, H1.5 and H1.6 are not supported as the results show that the individual's WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB strategies are not related to organizational research and development performance. This is because organizational performance must take into consideration several perspectives, including career motivation, employee attendance, employee recruitment, employee retention, organizational commitment, and productivity (Wong et al., 2020).

The permutation test results in Table 6.11 confirm that there is no significant difference between Female and Male groups for the structural model, as the "Permutation p-value" is above the 0.05 cutoff. By examining the t-parametric column, we realize that the difference is not significant. Therefore, we may say that the same PLS structural path model applies to both Males and Females. In addition, the p-values show whether the path coefficient was significantly larger in the first group (i.e., Female) than in the second group (i.e., Male). The results indicate that the relationship between EWLBS and RDP does not have a significant p-value ($p > 0.05$), which implies that both male and female employees who adopt work-life balance strategies can help improve organizational innovativeness and R&D performance.

The multigroup analysis shows that the H1.7 cannot be accepted; with which evidence has been found of the non-existence of difference between men and women in terms of the impact that the employee WLB strategies have on the organizational R&D performance. As for gender and supervisor support, women may experience less support than their male counterparts do since most supervisors are male (European Commission, 2015), and research shows that men have a more masculine understanding of leadership than women do (Koenig et al., 2011). Consequently, female subordinates are less likely than men to be appointed to top roles by male supervisors. Therefore, male supervisors may provide less support to female subordinates. Since these gender differences in female subordinate support are caused by gender biases that men hold more intensely than women, it is anticipated that female supervisors are more supportive of female subordinates than male supervisors are. However, our research is not in line with previous research as it shows that there is no relationship between supervisor support and employee WLB based on employee gender.

As for gender differences in WLB, some studies that have observed both Western and Eastern cultures have concluded that there is no evidence of real or substantial gender differences (Milkie & Peltola, 1999; Sav & Harris, 2013). According to these studies, the experience of WLB is related to job and life satisfaction equally in both men and women. Our research is consistent with these studies as it shows that the effect of gender remains insignificant when balancing work and family responsibilities. Casper and Harris (2008) found that among women, the establishment of WLB is positively related to organizational commitment when this balance is mediated by organizational policies.

Regarding the organizational provisioning of work-life policies (WLPs) and its effect on male and female employees WLB, findings by Casper and Harris (2008) are supported by the suggestion by Allen (2001) which affirms that the existence of WLB in an organization mediates the relationship between WLPs, as well as affective commitment

and job satisfaction. In addition, research has revealed that WLB is related to organizational commitment (Lingard et al., 2007; Kim, 2014). Our research is in line with past studies as it demonstrates that the effect of WLPs is the same on both male and female employees. As far as the relationship between EWLBS and organizational R&D performance is concerned, researchers confirmed that female leaders who successfully balance work and family responsibilities are more innovative (Busaibe et al., 2017). The implementation of WLB practices will help male and female employees in finding a balance between work and family responsibilities, which contributes to improved employee productivity and considerable improvements in business outcomes. WLB policies, such as supporting employees with caregiving responsibilities, can minimize or eliminate levels of work-life conflict, and thereby increase employee productivity with innovation and organizational effectiveness (Beauregard & Henry, 2009). Our research is consistent with previous studies as it demonstrates that there are significant gender differences in the relationship between EWLBS and organizational R&D performance.

A growing number of employees are seeking flexible work arrangements as they aspire to find the right balance between their work and personal life. Therefore, companies are trying to accept this request for flexibility as it may lead to a number of performance benefits as well as better candidates. Systematic reviews on the topic of WLB show that women are more likely to face negative career consequences due to flexible working since they are the ones responsible for domestic work and thus, will not be able or willing to adhere to the ideal worker culture, where work obligations are above everything else (Chung, 2019). Thus, the findings of the study were in alignment with past research, demonstrating that females, as both employees and individuals, are more affected by WLB strategies than men are. Furthermore, organizations that implement gender diverse leadership and work-life balance strategies enjoy a variety of advantages such as enhanced performance, organizational branding, and perceptions regarding organizational desirability by internal and external stakeholders (Kalysh et al., 2016; Olsen et al., 2016).

According to researchers, work-life balance programs (WLBP) are considered among the set of quality and flexibility enhancement management practices that have the potential to provide organizations with competitive advantages. Therefore, this research is also in accordance with past research since it shows that employee WLB is positively related to the organization work-life balance practices. In previous research, supervisors' support was found to be directly related to employees' well-being, including life satisfaction, job satisfaction and family satisfaction (Achour et al., 2017). Our study is in line with previous research showing that there is a positive relationship between supervisor's support and employee WLB. We have also examined in this study the relationship between employees' WLB and organizational research and development performance and deduced that employee WLB and organizational R&D performance are not significantly related. This result is in line with Park and Rahmani (2020) finding, which indicates that in order for organizations to improve their innovation performance, they should not over-capitalize on employees' WLB. They should focus instead on improving employees' satisfaction with career opportunities.

6.4. Study 2: Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates

In order to test the hypotheses proposed for this research, data were collected using a survey questionnaire created in Google Forms, and the link to the online survey was sent via either email or instant messaging to male and female employees. All respondents were from public and private companies working in different sectors such as education, financial services, technology, telecommunications etc. To begin the survey, research participants had to give their permission to be part of the study by reading and approving an informed consent form. The survey consisted of 41 questions that included demographic questions in addition to questions related to leadership style, factors affecting subordinates' support of their boss, factors affecting subordinates' satisfaction and factors affecting subordinates' choice of leader's gender. Questions

within the survey used in this research (except for the demographics section) were measured using a 7-point Likert scale having the following response choices: 1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Somewhat Agree; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat disagree; 6= Disagree; and 7 = Strongly Disagree .

To measure internal consistency and reliability, researchers use Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient to check if surveys that use Likert scale are reliable. The value of Cronbach alpha was above the recommended level of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1975), and was equal to 0.879. Hence, the questionnaire was approved in terms of reliability. The survey was disseminated to 200 people out of whom 186 responded (response rate of 93%) of which 89 (48%) were men and 97 (52%) were women. The collected data was imported to and analyzed by SPSS (Version 20).

6.4.1. Descriptive results

The dataset used in analysis contained the entire 186 responses since no questions had any missing responses. Participants' ages varied between 25 and 64 years. The percentage of men and women participants was quite balanced (52% female participants and 48% male participants). As for the supervisor's gender, 52% of participants had male supervisors while 48% had female supervisors. Table 6.12 presents detailed descriptive statistics of the sample.

Table 6.12: Descriptive statistics of the sample (N = 186).

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	97	52
	Male	89	48
Age	18–24 Years	36	19
	25–34 Years	74	40
	35–44 Years	41	22
	45–54 Years	28	15
	55-64 Years	7	4
Supervisor’s gender	Female	89	48
	Male	97	52
Total		186	100

6.4.2. Hypothesis Testing

H2.1 of the research predicted that female leaders exhibit more transformational leadership qualities than male leaders do. The results presented in Table 6.13 of the descriptive analysis showed that leaders of both genders have obtained very close mean values in the categories of transformational leadership and authoritarian leadership. Moreover, it can be observed that male leaders have obtained higher mean values for almost all the categories of transformational leadership subscales, except for the subcategory "soliciting employee feedback". Accordingly, it can be argued that female leaders exhibit the same transformational leadership qualities as male leaders do. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 6.13: Supervisor Gender and Leadership Style.

	Overall			Female Supervisor			Male Supervisor			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages employee involvement	186	2.44	1.510	89	2.44	1.623	97	2.44	1.407	.982
Encourages participative decision-making	186	3.30	1.803	89	3.26	1.862	97	3.30	1.803	.758
Encourages decentralized authority	186	3.07	1.693	89	3.02	1.725	97	3.07	1.693	.715
Encourages task-delegation	186	2.55	1.303	89	2.52	1.207	97	2.55	1.303	.753
Believes in punishment	186	4.51	1.811	89	4.51	1.797	97	4.51	1.811	.999
Solicits employee feedback	186	2.82	1.627	89	2.84	1.616	97	2.82	1.627	.838
Ignores suggestions	186	5.26	1.624	89	5.27	1.594	97	5.26	1.624	.960

Nevertheless, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 6.14, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. This specifies the probability associated with a zero difference in the average value of the two groups. The two-tailed p-values for all items were greater than 0.05, which indicates a very high probability of there being no difference in the average response of male and female employees. Accordingly, our results showed that male and female employees demonstrate the same behavior towards transformational and authoritarian leadership styles.

Table 6.14: Comparison of Leadership Style Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages employee involvement	186	2.44	1.510	97	2.53	1.466	89	2.35	1.560	.425
Encourages participative decision-making	186	3.30	1.803	97	3.34	1.796	89	3.26	1.819	.758
Encourages decentralized authority	186	3.07	1.693	97	3.06	1.651	89	3.08	1.747	.946
Encourages task-delegation	186	2.55	1.303	97	2.45	1.164	89	2.65	1.439	.302
Believes in punishment	186	4.51	1.811	97	4.56	1.768	89	4.45	1.865	.688
Solicits employee feedback	186	2.82	1.627	97	2.97	1.591	89	2.65	1.659	.185
Ignores suggestions	186	5.26	1.624	97	5.23	1.571	89	5.3	1.688	.749

H2.2 predicted that female subordinates would be supportive of their female bosses because they help reduce gender differences in organizations. A two-way ANOVA analysis was conducted in order to rate the support that was attributed to male and female bosses by male and female employees. Levene's Test for the Equality of Error Variances had a significance value $p = .539$, which was $> .05$, confirmed that the homogeneity of variance in both groups (male and female employees) had equal error variances. A two-way Anova, having employee gender and supervisor gender as independent variables and support for boss as dependent variable, revealed that (a) employee's gender was significant, $F(1, 182) = 3.429$, $p = .018$, (b) supervisor's gender was significant, $F(1, 182) = 1.172$, $p = .280$, (c) the combination of employee gender and supervisor gender was significant, $F(1, 182) = .412$, $p = .522$. Table 6.15 provides a summary of these results. When testing the null hypothesis based on the subordinate gender, the null hypothesis was rejected. Furthermore, when testing the null hypothesis based on supervisor gender, the null hypothesis was also rejected. As for testing the null hypothesis based on the interaction between subordinate gender and supervisor gender, the null hypothesis was rejected as well.

Table 6.15: Employee and supervisor’s gender impact on supervisor’s support.

	SS	df	MS	F	p	partial η^2
Employee Gender	5.985	1	5.985	3.429	.066	.018
Supervisor Gender	2.045	1	2.045	1.172	.280	.006
Employee Gender *	.719	1	.719	.412	.522	.002
Supervisor Gender						
Error	317.655	182	1.745			

Note: N = 186

However, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 6.16, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that there is significant differences by gender at a 5% significance level (p-value 0.027) only when there is a need for employees to offer suggestions and help their boss when the need arises. In particular, the means in the sample for women is higher than that for men. Accordingly, our results showed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents supporting their boss with the exception of offering suggestions when necessary.

Table 6.16: Comparison of Subordinates’ Support of Supervisor Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Supports boss’s goals	186	2.31	1.397	97	2.47	1.284	89	2.13	1.358	.081
Offers suggestions	186	2.11	1.105	97	2.28	1.125	89	1.92	1.058	.027*
Anticipates boss’s needs	186	2.42	1.255	97	2.52	1.308	89	2.31	1.193	.277
Gets ahead of deadlines	186	1.99	1.088	97	1.99	1.132	89	2.00	1.044	.949
Approaches boss with concerns	186	3.06	1.621	97	3.01	1.571	89	3.11	1.682	.669
Protects boss from being blindsided	186	2.13	1.143	97	2.13	1.086	89	2.13	1.208	.996
Collaborates with boss on workplace goals	186	2.33	1.330	97	2.28	1.273	89	2.39	1.395	.558
Avoids unnecessary interruptions	186	1.94	.904	97	1.89	.815	89	1.99	.994	.443

Note: * p-value of less than or equal to 0.05, indicating statistically significant difference.

H2.3 predicted that the quality of the employee–supervisor relationship has a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction. A Spearman’s correlation test was conducted to measure the association between two variables (Krot & Lewicka, 2012; Binet, 1904), and it is used when at least one variable is measured on an ordinal scale (Pagano, 2012). The result ($Rho = 0.000$, $P < 0.05$) presented in Table 6.17 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between employee-supervisor relationship and employee job satisfaction. In view of this finding, the null hypothesis stating that: “the quality of the employee–supervisor relationship does not have a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction” is hereby rejected.

Table 6.17: Correlation Coefficients between employee Satisfaction and Employee-Supervisor Relationship.

	ESR²
EJS¹	r = .591 p value = .000

Note. 1 Employee job satisfaction. 2 Employee-supervisor relationship. N = 186.

Nonetheless, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 6.18, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that there is significant differences by gender at a 5% significance level (p-value 0.035) only when asked if management involves subordinates when taking leadership related decisions. In particular, means in the sample for women is higher than that for men. Hence, our results showed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents supporting their boss with the exception of being involved in decisions related to management and leadership.

Table 6.18: Comparison of Employee-Supervisor Relationship Impact on Employee Satisfaction Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages employees to take ownership	186	1.99	1.256	97	1.89	1.117	89	2.10	1.390	.246
Shows appreciation to employees	186	2.81	1.747	97	2.88	1.752	89	2.74	1.749	.601
Makes employees feel valued	186	2.45	1.478	97	2.62	1.454	89	2.27	1.491	.108
Improves employee development	186	2.67	1.533	97	2.74	1.536	89	2.60	1.535	.516
Involves employees with decision-making	186	3.47	1.819	97	3.74	1.827	89	3.18	1.775	.035*
Makes employees feel valued	186	2.44	1.459	97	2.49	1.339	89	2.38	1.585	.600

Note: * p-value of less than or equal to 0.05, indicating statistically significant difference.

H2.4 predicted that subordinates are more accepting of female leaders who have masculine traits. An independent samples t-test was carried out to test this hypothesis. The results presented in Table 6.19 showed that Levene's Test for the Equality of Error Variances had a significance value $p = .582$, which was $> .05$ and confirmed that the homogeneity of variance in both groups (male and female employees) had equal error variances. The results of the t-test were not significant ($t(184) = 1.433$, $p = .153$). Based on the results, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 6.19: Female Leaders Having Masculine Traits – Independent Samples t-Test

Employee Gender	Variances	Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference
Female leaders with masculine traits	Equal Variance assumed	3.04	.582	1.433	184	.153	.318	.222
	Equal Variance not assumed			1.433	182.4	.154	.318	.222

In order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 6.20, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that there is significant differences by gender at a 5% significance level (p-value 0.042) only when asked if women are ineffective in leadership roles because they are expected to be the primary caretakers of their family, and this affects their focus on work. In particular, the means in the sample for women is higher than that for men. Hence, our results showed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents assigning masculine traits to female leaders with the exception of considering women as being ineffective in leadership positions.

Table 6.20: Comparison of Female Bosses and Masculine Traits between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Accepts assertive female leaders	186	2.87	1.619	97	3.05	1.629	89	2.67	1.594	.112
Accepts female boss who provides direction to employees	186	3.18	1.739	97	3.36	1.634	89	2.98	1.834	.133
Accepts a risk-taker female boss	186	3.19	1.515	97	3.34	1.506	89	3.02	1.515	.153
Thinks women are ineffective in leadership roles	186	5.37	1.876	97	5.64	1.804	89	5.08	1.920	.042*
Thinks women have the same opportunities to advance as men	186	2.29	1.598	97	2.24	1.546	89	2.35	1.659	.637

Note: * p-value of less than or equal to 0.05, indicating statistically significant difference.

H2.5 predicted that female subordinates show a preference for male over female managers. An independent samples t-test was carried out to test this hypothesis. The results presented in Table 6.21 showed that Levene's Test for the Equality of Error Variances had a significance value $p = .584$, which was $> .05$ and confirmed that the homogeneity of variance in both groups (male and female employees) had equal error

variances. The results of the t-test were not significant ($t(184) = .069, p = .945$). Based on the results, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 6.21: Female Subordinates Prefer Male Leaders – Independent Samples t-Test.

Employee Gender	Variances	Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference
Female subordinates' preference for male leaders	Equal Variance assumed	3.01	.584	.069	184	.945	.017	.248
	Equal Variance not assumed			.069	180.973	.945	.017	.248

However, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 6.22, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that there is significant differences by gender at a 5% significance level (p-value 0.002 and 0.001) when asked if women should ne paid less for doing the same job as men and if having more women on the board of directors can bring new experiences and approaches to the decision-making process respectively. In particular, the means in the sample for women is higher than that for men with respect to the wage gap. However, the means in the sample for men is higher than that for women with regard to having more women on the board of directors. Hence, our results showed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents supporting their boss with the exception of items related to the wage gap and women representation on the board of directors.

Table 6.22: Comparison of Preference of Supervisor gender Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages gender diversity in organizations	186	3.30	1.685	97	3.31	1.654	89	3.29	1.727	.945
Encourages the gender wage gap	186	6.47	1.149	97	6.72	.875	89	6.20	1.341	.002*
Promotes diversity and inclusion	186	2.15	1.366	97	1.84	1.115	89	2.48	1.531	.001*
Promotes gender equality	186	1.56	1.109	97	1.45	.990	89	1.69	1.221	.155
Resents feedback from female boss	186	3.99	1.787	97	4.09	1.768	89	3.89	1.812	.436

Note: * p-value of less than or equal to 0.05, indicating statistically significant difference.

H2.6 predicted that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization results in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout. An independent samples t-test was carried out to test this hypothesis. The results presented in Table 6.23 showed that Levene’s Test for the Equality of Error Variances had a significance value $p = .080$, which was $> .05$ and confirmed that the homogeneity of variance in both groups (male and female employees) had equal error variances. The results of the t-test were not significant ($t(184) = -.124$, $p = .901$). Based on the results, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Table 6.23: Impact of Having More Female Leaders – Independent Samples t-Test.

Employee Gender	Variances	Levene’s Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig	Mean Difference	Standard Error Difference
Impact of female leaders	Equal Variance assumed	3.101	.080	-.124	184	.901	-.026	.206
	Equal Variance not assumed			-.123	168.721	.902	-.026	.208

Sources: Computed

Nonetheless, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 6.24, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that no difference in the average response of male and female employees. Accordingly, our results showed that male and female employees demonstrate the same behavior towards the impact of hiring more female leaders on employees.

Table 6.24: Comparison of the Impact of Female Leaders Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages organization to promote diversity	186	2.55	1.379	97	2.38	1.185	89	2.74	1.549	.079
Supports having more women in the workplace	186	2.67	1.401	97	2.66	1.249	89	2.69	1.556	.901
Encourages having more female leaders	186	2.46	1.312	97	2.31	1.185	89	2.63	1.425	.099
Believes female bosses support employees' career development	186	3.18	1.420	97	3.08	1.389	89	3.28	1.454	.343
Believes female leaders can ease workplace stress	186	3.19	1.381	97	3.05	1.278	89	3.35	1.478	.144
Believes female bosses are more likely to praise good work	186	3.06	1.403	97	3.04	1.391	89	3.08	1.424	.856
Believes female leaders influence without authority	186	2.95	1.357	97	2.90	1.365	89	3.01	1.353	.567

In summary, the research findings revealed that female leaders display the same transformational leadership qualities as male leaders do. Furthermore, results revealed that female employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses. As for the employee-supervisor relationship, the results showed that the quality of the employee-supervisor relationship has a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction. In addition, subordinates preferred working with for female leaders who exhibited masculine traits, such as assertiveness and risk-taking. When stating their

preference for managers in general, female subordinates showed a preference for male over female managers. Finally, employees agreed that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout.

6.4.3. Discussion

Research findings on gender difference in leadership styles have generated diverse results. While some studies have deduced that males and females tend to use similar leadership styles (Dappa et al., 2019), others indicated that there is a difference. Our study findings are in support of previous research demonstrating that there are no significant gender differences in leadership styles shown by leaders (Miranda, 2019). Furthermore, Igram et al. (2018) found that there was not a substantial difference in males showing more transactional leadership qualities and females showing mostly transformational leadership qualities. Our results are in line with previous studies indicating that female leaders display the same transformational leadership qualities as male leaders do.

Although women keep rising into leadership roles and continue to make inroads into managerial positions, negative attitudes toward female leaders persist. Previous research suggests that there is a continuing and negative relationship between women's job satisfaction and having female supervisors. The magnitude is considered significant since the proportion of women reporting the highest level of job satisfaction drops between 3.7 to 6.9 percent when supervised by a woman (Artz & Taengnoi, 2016). In line with previous research, our findings revealed that female employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses than female employees who had male bosses. Similarly, male employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses than male employees who had male bosses.

Since most organizations have a hierarchical structure, it is normal for relationships between supervisors and the employees they supervise to develop (Sias, 2009). When a manager tries their best to maintain a positive relationship with their subordinate, it is more likely that their subordinate will be satisfied with their job. Perceived supervisor support reflects “an attitudinal perception that is unique to each employee, such that each employee has an idiosyncratic reaction to the actual treatment he or she receives from the organization” (Frear et al., 2018). Job satisfaction and supervisor-subordinate relationship are positively linked to organizational commitment, with job satisfaction being the greatest contributor to organizational commitment more than the other exogenous variables (Babalola, 2016). As shown in prior studies, our research did find a significant and positive effect between the quality of the employee–supervisor relationship and employee job satisfaction.

The persistent gender stereotypes associates men with agentic qualities such as assertiveness and credibility. Contrariwise, women are usually associated with communal behaviors such as being collaborative and nurturing. However, RCT postulates that women are considered to be violating their gender role expectations when they behave in a less communal way and exhibit agentic behaviors (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Rudman & Glick, 1999, 2001). Thus, women leaders confront a double-bind dilemma; women can demonstrate communal behavior and be accepted in their role but not respected, or they can demonstrate agentic behaviors and be respected but not accepted in their role (Rudman and Glick, 2001). Consequently, women are evaluated against masculine standards and expected to display masculine traits that are commonly associated with leadership, such as assertiveness and striving for achievement. However, women are often penalized for not exhibiting nurturing and socially sensitive attributes (Eagly et al., 1992; Mathison, 1986; Rudman, 1998; Rudman and Glick, 2001; Rudman and Kilianski, 2000; Tinsley et al., 2009). Our results are in accordance with previous research and have revealed that both male and

female subordinates preferred working with female leaders who exhibited masculine traits such as assertiveness and risk-taking.

There has always been a debate about women and their performance in leadership. Women may adopt perceptions that men are more suitable for leadership positions than women are. Consequently, these conceptions and male leadership prototypes may lower women leadership aspirations and hinder their development at an intrapersonal level (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). Other research implies that women are rated better than men are on key leadership competences and that the benefits of hiring a female leader are conferred to the organizations in which they work (Dawson et al. 2014, Terjesen et al. 2009). Furthermore, a recent study demonstrated that 38 percent of employees prefer working for a female boss compared with 26 percent who prefer working for a man (Brower, 2021). Our findings are not consistent with this study as female respondents showed a preference for male over female managers.

Gender diversity is vital to any workplace. Research shows that in the presence of gender diversity, employees' perceptions of their working environments were better, and women experienced compatible demands between their work and family roles and less stigma consciousness at work, which implies improved overall mental, physical, emotional, and economic health of employees (Steffens et al., 2019). In addition, women in managerial positions are more likely to endorse women and reduce the gender wage gap, as compared to male managers. As a result, gender equalities should increase and gender bias should be reduced (Lucifora & Vigani, 2016). This is in line with our results since employees agreed that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout.

6.5. Study 3: An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy

The dataset used in analysis contained the entire 53 responses since no questions had any missing answers. Among the 53 respondents 31% were single, 55% married, 6% partnered, and 8% were divorced or separated. As for the way they started their business, 53% of respondents revealed that they self-started their business, 35% started with a partner/friend, and 12% inherited their business. 13% of respondents have been in business between 0-2 years, 36% between 2-5 years, 29% between 5-10 years, 11% between 10-15 years, and 11% have been in business for more than 15 years. As for the total number of employees working in their company, 41% employ between 1-5 employees, 35% between 6-10 employees, 12% between 11-20 employees, 8% between 25-50 employees, and 4% have more than 100 employees. When asked about their education qualifications, the majority of the respondents (59%) stated that they have a master's degree. 72% of respondents indicated that the reason for having started their own business was the need for achievement, while only 6% provided the glass ceiling or barriers to progression at workplace as reasons. Table 6.25 presents detailed descriptive statistics of the sample.

Table 6.25: Descriptive statistics of the sample (N = 53).

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Marital status	Single	17	31
	Married	29	55
	Partnered	3	6
	Divorced/Separated	4	8
	Widowed	0	0
How they started business	Self-started	29	53
	With partner/friend	18	35
	Inherited	6	12
	Buy out	0	0
Period in business	0 - < 2 years	7	13
	2 - < 5 years	19	36
	5 - < 10 years	15	29
	10 - < 15 years	6	11
	15 years plus	6	11
Number of employees	1 – 5	23	42
	6 – 10	18	34
	11 – 20	6	12
	21 – 50	4	8
	51 – 100	0	0
	100 plus	2	4
Highest qualification	No Schooling completed	2	4
	High School Graduate	0	0
	Bachelor's Degree	15	28
	Master's Degree	31	59
	PhD	5	9
Reason for starting business (may select several)	Material motivation	16	30
	Need for independence	28	53
	Need for achievement	38	72
	Preference for flexibility	19	36
	Glass ceiling	3	6
	Financial security	14	26
	Urge for risk taking	11	21
Total		53	100

6.5.1. Analytical Approach

Data was analyzed using structural equation modeling with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) in the latest release of the software application SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM is a technique that enables researchers to compute extremely complicated models with numerous constructs and indicator variables, especially when the analysis's goal is prediction. The measurement model's internal consistency (composite reliability), convergent validity (indicator reliability and average variance retrieved), and discriminant validity are all evaluated using partial least squares (PLS). Furthermore, the structural model is evaluated as well as the significance and relevance of hypothesized relationships using structural equation modeling (SEM).

6.5.5.1. Evaluation of Measurement Model

The full collinearity test was applied to avoid common method variance (CMV). It is suggested that the presence of a VIF greater than 3.3 indicates pathological collinearity and that a model may be tainted by common method bias. Our model can be said to be free of common method bias because all VIFs obtained from a comprehensive collinearity test were lower than 3.3 (Table 6.26). In addition, throughout the data collection phase, the confidentiality and anonymity of the responses have been reiterated.

Table 6.26: Full Collinearity Test (VIF).

	DEMO	MOTIV	OPP	OBST	EFF
DEMO					1.103
MOTIV					1.329
OPP					1.261
OBST					1.238
EFF					

Note. Demo = Demographics; MOTIV = Business start-up motivation; OPP = Opportunities for female entrepreneurs; OBST = Obstacles to female entrepreneurs; EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

Table 6.27 displays the factor loadings of items belonging to a common construct, Cronbach's alpha, rho A, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) for the latent variables. It is advised to employ loadings above 0.70 because they offer acceptable item reliability (Hair et al., 2019). Table 6.27's data show that not all indicators have a high enough level of reliability (i.e., values close to 0.70). As a result, all factor loadings with values lower than 0.5 were eliminated (Hair et al., 2019). Additionally, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were employed to assess the internal consistency of the constructs, with the findings displayed in Table 6.27. Cronbach Alpha is preferred by certain academics, however Composite Reliability (CR) "may be used as a conservative measure of internal consistency reliability" (Hair et al. 2021). An indication of a construct's internal consistency is when the values of Alpha

and CR are over 0.70. All of the CR values in Table 6.27 are acceptable. The average variance extracted (AVE) should have a value greater than the 0.5 minimum threshold. For all of the constructs in our case, the derived AVE value is more than 0.5. Therefore, it may be deduced that convergent validity was proved. Furthermore, the degree of differences between the overlapping constructs was measured using discriminant validity in addition to the aforementioned validity metrics (Hair et al., 2021). Cross-loadings, and Fornell and Larcker's (1981) are often the two primary criteria used to evaluate discriminant validity. Using the cross-loadings approach, “an indicator’s outer loading on the associated construct should be greater than all of its loadings on other constructs (i.e., the cross loadings)” (Hair et al., 2021).

Table 6.27: Evaluation of Measurement Model.

Construct	Item	Indicator	Loadings	t-Statistic (Bootstrap)	p-Value	Cronbach's Alpha	ρ_A	CR	AVE
Respondent's Demographic	Please indicate your marital status.	DEMO1	0.25	0.677	0.499	0.966	0.764	0.808	0.656
	Please indicate how you started your business.	DEMO2	0.66	1.008	0.314				
	Please indicate the period for which your company has been in business.	DEMO3	0.73	1.220	0.223				
	Please indicate the total number of employees employed in your company.	DEMO4	0.82	1.188	0.235				
	Please indicate your highest level of education achieved.	DEMO5	-0.74	1.101	0.271				
Motives	My firm was started with the purpose of making a significant improvement to an existing product or service.	MOTIV1	0.89	3.288	0.001	0.821	0.789	0.787	0.652
	I chose to go into my own business because of other women who inspired me.	MOTIV2	0.70	2.199	0.028				
	My firm was started with the purpose of developing and selling an entirely new product or service in my market or community.	MOTIV3	0.5	1.870	0.062				
	My firm was started with the purpose of exploiting a profitable area for business.	MOTIV4	0.53	2.743	0.006				
	My firm was started with the purpose of making more money.	MOTIV5	0.43	1.739	0.083				
	My firm was started with the purpose of gaining greater time flexibility.	MOTIV6	0.43	1.647	0.100				
	My firm was started with the purpose of fulfilling a dream.	MOTIV7	0.45	1.914	0.056				
Opportunities	As an entrepreneur, I benefited from government initiatives or policies that helped start or grow my business.	OPP1	0.7	2.245	0.025	0.713	0.863	0.748	0.704
	As an entrepreneur, I had mentors and role models that helped me improve my operational performance and avoid costly business mistakes.	OPP2	0.61	1.863	0.063				
	As an entrepreneur, I have access to local, regional, and international markets through supplier databases, meet-the-buyer events, training, export promotion events, and study tours.	OPP3	0.77	2.167	0.031				
	As an entrepreneur, I have access to training programs that enable me to learn new skills (such as financial skills, online marketing, and user experience).	OPP4	0.34	1.046	0.296				
	Help from the family is an essential condition to make entrepreneurial activity possible.	OPP5	0.35	1.115	0.265				
	Help from society is an essential condition to make entrepreneurial activity possible.	OPP6	0.42	1.255	0.210				
	Women-owned businesses benefit from government-led special tax breaks.	OPP7	.051	1.887	0.060				
Obstacles	Receiving access to finance was one of the primary challenges I faced when I first started my business.	OBST1	0.86	3.783	0.000	0.920	0.747	0.754	0.654
	Finding and keeping good employees is a key challenge for my business.	OBST2	0.27	0.990	0.323				
	The lack of access to support networks i.e. the lack of available advisors and mentors, is an impediment to my business.	OBST3	0.11	0.436	0.663				
	Information in my chosen field of endeavor was easily accessible.	OBST4	0.25	0.789	0.430				
	I feel that society encourages and supports women to take on the challenges of the business world.	OBST5	-0.02	0.086	0.931				
	I experienced personal barriers (e.g. lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, isolation) when I started my own business.	OBST6	0.39	1.338	0.181				
	I believe I have suffered gender discrimination by financial markets.	OBST7	0.60	2.226	0.026				
	I believe that women experience more barriers than men in making a success of their business.	OBST8	0.48	1.778	0.076				
	The views held by society on the traditional roles of women (e.g. wife, mother) impose negatively on women's entrepreneurial endeavors.	OBST9	0.48	1.527	0.127				
	As an entrepreneur, I find it challenging to establish a work-life balance.	OBST10	-0.05	0.222	0.824				
Effects	Women-owned businesses create employment opportunities in Lebanon.	EFF1	0.85	7.783	0.000	0.771	0.782	0.866	0.683
	Women-owned businesses help provide economic opportunities for women and youth in Lebanese rural areas.	EFF2	0.82	7.903	0.000				
	As an entrepreneur, I use my revenue to expand my business, which in turn promises further financial security, community involvement, and economic impact.	EFF3	0.8	6.254	0.000				

According to Table 6.28, all indicators load on their respective constructs more strongly than they do on other constructs. As a result, discriminant validity was proven.

Table 6.28: Cross Loadings.

	DEMO	EFF	MOTIV	OBST	OPP
DEMO2	0.665	-0.086	0.153	0.083	-0.039
DEMO3	0.737	-0.123	-0.059	0.183	-0.147
DEMO4	0.822	-0.162	0.048	0.096	0.082
EFF1	-0.266	0.864	0.272	0.311	0.269
EFF2	-0.027	0.820	0.118	0.438	0.188
EFF3	-0.120	0.796	0.424	0.426	0.096
MOTIV1	-0.064	0.332	0.899	0.164	0.178
MOTIV2	0.208	0.205	0.705	0.053	-0.006
OBST1	0.161	0.472	0.147	1.000	0.005
OPP1	0.010	0.120	0.095	0.024	0.637
OPP3	-0.043	0.209	0.110	-0.008	0.896

Note. Demo = Demographics; MOTIV = Business start-up motivation; OPP = Opportunities for female entrepreneurs; OBST = Obstacles to female entrepreneurs; EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

Regarding the Fornell-Larcker testing criterion, the square root of each construct's average variance extracted (AVE) is compared with its bivariate correlations with all opposing constructs in order to assess discriminant validity (Grégoire & Fisher, 2006). When each construct's AVE square root is greater than the values of its bivariate correlations, it can be said that discriminant validity is established (Ringle et al., 2010). For instance, Table 6.27 shows that the AVE for the research and development performance (RDP) construct is 0.85, and its square root is 0.92 as displayed in Table 6.29. This value is greater than RDP's bivariate correlations with all opposing constructs and demonstrates that discriminant validity has been established for the RDP construct.

Table 6.29: Fornell and Larcker's Criterion.

	DEMO	EFF	MOTIV	OBST	OPP
DEMO	0.809*				
EFF	-0.173	0.826*			
MOTIV	0.048	0.344	0.807*		
OBST	0.161	0.472	0.147	0.808*	
OPP	-0.029	0.220	0.130	0.005	0.839*

Note: * Square root of AVE. Square root of AVE (diagonal); Off diagonal are Pearson correlations; Demo = Demographics; MOTIV = Business start-up motivation; OPP = Opportunities for female entrepreneurs; OBST = Obstacles to female entrepreneurs; EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

However, a more recent method for evaluating discriminant validity has just been put out and is capable of achieving higher specificity and sensitivity than the two earlier methods. This method is known as the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation (Henseler et al., 2015). HTMT “is the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators across constructs measuring different phenomena), relative to the average of the monotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators within the same construct)” (Henseler et al. 2015, p. 121). Hence, in order to calculate the correlation between constructs, HTMT is used. Two constructs are dissimilar from one another if their indicators have HTMT values lower than 1, as this indicates that their true correlations are different from 1 (Henseler et al., 2015). While some publications recommend a threshold of 0.85 (Clark & Watson, 1995; Kline, 2011), others recommend a value of 0.90 (Gold et al., 2001; Teo et al., 2008). Table 6.30 demonstrates that all HTMT values between constructs are below 0.85 and 0.9. This means that discriminant validity has been established using the HTMT.85 and HTMT.90 criteria.

Table 6.30 : Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

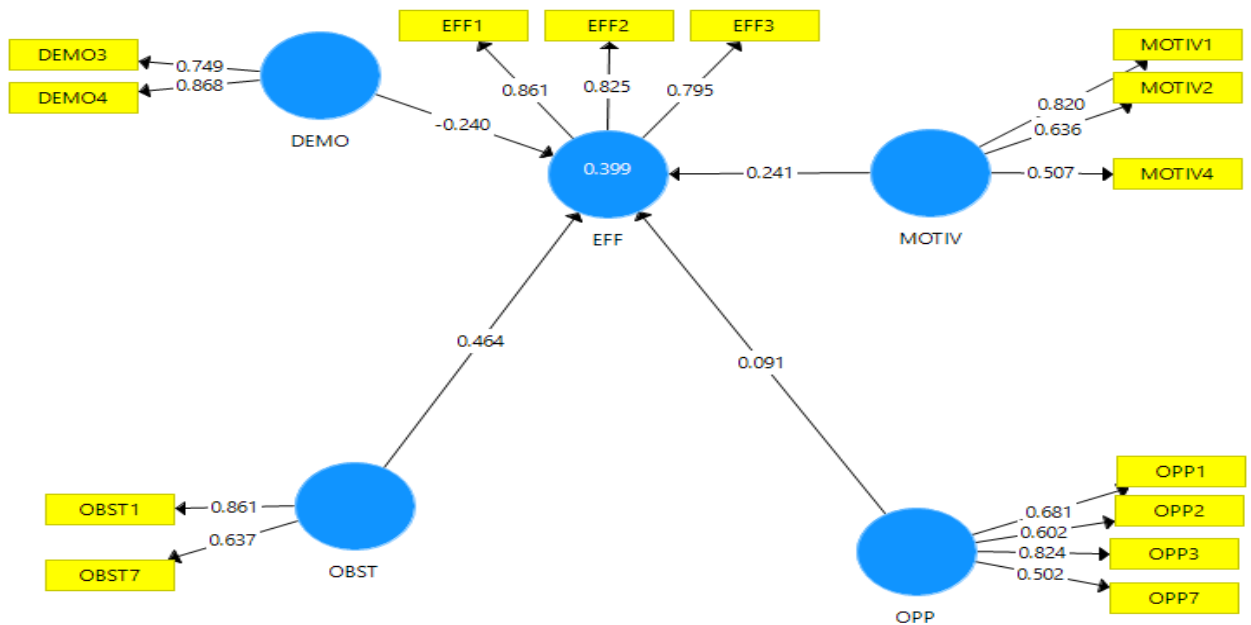
	DEMO	EFF	MOTIV	OBST	OPP
DEMO					
EFF	0.250				
MOTIV	0.355	0.516			
OBST	0.206	0.539	0.191		
OPP	0.253	0.415	0.323	0.033	

Note. Demo = Demographics; MOTIV = Business start-up motivation; OPP = Opportunities for female entrepreneurs; OBST = Obstacles to female entrepreneurs; EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

6.5.5.2. Evaluation of the Structural Model

This research uses the coefficient of determination (R² values), effect size (f² values), blindfolding (Q² values), model fit indicators, and structural model path coefficients to measure the structural model (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2: Structural model.



The following is a list of each step relating to the structural model evaluation process.

Step 1: Coefficient of determination—R square

In this step, the explanatory power of the model is assessed by calculating the R² value of the endogenous constructs (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). R² values range from 0 to 1, with higher values potentially indicating more substantial relationships between the model and the data (Hair et al., 2014b; Sarstedt et al., 2014a). R² values close to 1 signify an almost perfect relationship between the model and the data, though acceptable R² values depend on the research context. Chin (1998) therefore deems R²

values of 0.670 to be significant, values of 0.333 to be typical, and values around 0.190 to be weak.

Table 6.31: R² matrix.

	R SQUARE	R SQUARE ADJUSTED
EFF	0.429	0.381

Note. EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

In this step, we measure the R² value of the endogenous constructs, which is a measure of the model's explanatory power (Shmueli & Koppius 2011). Although acceptable R² values are subject to the research context, values of R² vary between 0 and 1, where higher values can be considered more substantial (Hair et al., 2014; Sarstedt et al., 2021), i.e., R² values that are close to 1 indicate that there is an almost perfect relationship between the model and the data. Accordingly, Chin (1998) considers R² values of 0.670 to be substantial, values around 0.333 average and values of 0.190 and lower weak. Table 6.31 shows that the main endogenous construct yielded moderate results (R² EFF = 0.429). Therefore, the evidence shows that this model is applicable in the context of Female Entrepreneurship and that it has a moderate explanatory capacity.

Step 2: Effect size—F square

The effect size can be identified by computing Cohen's f². The effect size gauges the degree to which a dependent construct is significantly impacted by an independent construct (Cohen, 2013). The effect size f² of less than 0.02 shows that a predictor latent variable has no effect on an endogenous latent variable. However, values between 0.020 and 0.150, between 0.150 and 0.350 and above 0.350 represent small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively (Sarstedt et al., 2021). The results show that DEMO has a small effect on EFF (f² = 0.109), and MOTIV has a small effect on EFF (f² = 0.117). As for OBST, it has a medium effect on EFF (f² = 0.341). In addition, OPP has a small effect on EFF (f² = 0.033).

Table 6.32: F² matrix.

	DEMO	EFF	MOTIV	OBST	OPP
DEMO		0.109			
EFF			0.117		
MOTIV				0.341	
OBST					0.033
OPP					

Step 4: Model fit indicators

The model fitness of this work was tested using the standardized-root-mean-square-residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), chi-square (χ^2) and RMS Theta values. Estimating the model's fitness is the purpose of SRMR. Hu and Bentler (1998) claim that the model is adequate to fit if the SRMR values are less than 0.08 ($SRMR \leq 0.08$). The results of SRMR in this study were 0.053, indicating that the model had good fit, whereas the values of NFI and Chi-Square were 0.7 and 337 respectively (Table 6.33), with a Chi-Square significance level of 0.001. The fit is better the closer the NFI is to 1. NFI values over 0.9 often indicate an acceptable fit. Additionally, the value of RMS theta was utilized to assess the correlation degree of the outer model residuals (Lohmöller, 1989). The PLS-SEM model will be regarded as having a good fit when the RMS theta value is nearer to zero. Higher values of RMS theta suggest a lack of fit, whilst values below 0.12 indicate a well-fitting model (Hair et al., 2021). Table 6.33 shows that the RMS Theta value was approximately 0.114, indicating that the PLS-SEM model has the necessary goodness-of-fit to demonstrate the validity of the global PLS model.

Table 6.33: Model Fit Summary.

CRITERIA	SATURATED MODEL	ESTIMATED MODEL	p-VALUE
SRMR	0.053	0.078	
CHI-SQUARE	848.268	857.106	0.001
NFI	0.827	0.796	
RMS THETA		0.114	

Step 5: Path coefficients

The significance of the path coefficients and their values, which typically lie between -1 and +1, where coefficients closer to +1 indicate a strong positive link and coefficients closer to -1 suggest a strong negative relationship, were assessed using bootstrapping (Hair et al., 2014b; Sarstedt et al., 2014b). The findings revealed that only two structural relationships between variables are significant when taking into account the significance and relevance of the relationships in the inner model (with sub samples of 5000, no sign changes option, Bca bootstrap confidence interval, and two-tailed sample test at 0.05 significance level). As a result, two of the six hypotheses can be found to be supported, having both a crucial t-value of greater than 1.96 and a p value of less than 0.05. (refer to Table 6.34). For the hypotheses reading, (i) H3.1, the business start-up motivations of Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development, (ii) H3.2, the opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development, (iii) H3.3, and the barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development. Table 6.33 shows the results of the analysis where only H3.1 and H3.3 are accepted which confirms that the business start-up motivations of Lebanese female entrepreneurs and the barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development with p values of 0.000 and 0.0000 respectively.

Table 6.34: Path Coefficients Matrix.

CONSTRUCTS	PATH COEFFICIENTS	t-STATISTIC (BOOTSTRAP)	p VALUES
MOTIV → EFF	0.417	4.289	0.000 ***
OPP → EFF	0.226	0.861	0.390
OBST → EFF	0.538	6.613	0.000 ***

Note. *** p<.05

6.5.2. Discussion

Evidence obtained from the analysis allows the acceptance of H3.1 with respect to business start-up motivations of Lebanese female entrepreneurs having significant impact on the economic development. It is commonly known that the motivations behind beginning a business are crucial for either starting or continuing business operations (Morris et al., 2006; Hasan & Almubarak, 2016). Consequently, in order to be effective, programs focused at fostering female entrepreneurs must have a full understanding of what drives women to launch their own businesses. This is significant because personal motivations are essential individual factors that have a significant impact on how well a business performs (Hasan & Almubarak, 2016). Our study is consistent with the findings of Meyer et al. (2022), which that male entrepreneurs placed a larger emphasis on external motivation—that is, motivation that has to do with earning money, demonstrating status, having influence in society, exhibiting achievement, and generally improving their position in society. This motivation can result in economic growth and wealth creation for a nation. Contrary to that, but just as significant, the internal motivation of female entrepreneurs is driven by the desire to develop and elevate their communities and society, as well as achieving work-life balance while contributing to the development of the economy. As a result, if efforts are made to capitalize on the distinctions between the motivations of male and female entrepreneurs, economies and societies stand to gain because both internal and external motivation can produce beneficial outcomes (Meyer et al., 2022).

H3.3 can also be accepted since the challenges faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs can have significant impact on the economic development. Many female entrepreneurs still encounter numerous challenges while starting their companies and in the early stages of their development. This is supported by Fernandes and Sanfilippo's research (2020), which states that the top obstacles for female entrepreneurs are a lack of finance, a lack of social support, a lack of trust, balancing personal and professional

obligations, and gaining access to the operational market. The results confirm Mashpure et al. (2022) finding that the absence of proper support from government programs, the patriarchal social structure, the lack of market information, the occurrence of disasters in the area, the conflict in roles to balance family demands are all factors that hinder women's entrepreneurship. Thus, in order to secure the long-term viability of women's entrepreneurship and promote economic growth, these issues needed to be addressed.

On the other hand, the results obtained do not allow the acceptance of H3.2 as they show that the opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs do not have a significant impact on the economic development. This is because women in less developed nations are not only less hindered by personal issues than their counterparts in more developed economies, but they also successfully use these challenges to their advantage and enhance their performance in the workplace. This is presumably because of the enhanced inner strength and resiliency they have developed while overcoming the challenging institutional circumstances of the country (Welsh, 2021).

It has been acknowledged that female entrepreneurs are a source of economic growth and development; nevertheless, they are limited by a variety of circumstances (Etim & Iwu, 2019). In fact, successful female business owners serve as role models for aspiring entrepreneurs worldwide (Al Mamun et al., 2019). According to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, establishing gender equality and fostering economic growth depend greatly on women's economic empowerment (UN WOMEN, 2018). By stimulating innovation, opening up new economic sectors, and generating employment possibilities, women entrepreneurs play a crucial part in boosting local economies and improving societal welfare (Jafari-Sadeghi, 2020). Thus, the findings of the study were consistent with past research, demonstrating that women entrepreneurs play a significant role in creating jobs, providing financial security, reducing poverty in rural areas and enhancing community involvement especially in developing countries.

However, despite the emergence of female entrepreneurs, there is still a sizable gender gap in business performance (Ladge et al., 2019). According to studies, female-owned businesses typically have a smaller workforce, lower revenue and earnings, and a higher probability of failure (Coleman & Robb, 2009; Meunier et al., 2017). Similarly, women have a harder time raising external financing (Coleman & Robb, 2009). Women frequently obtain less financing or have their businesses valued lower than those of males in comparable industries, especially if the industry in which they operate tends to be predominately male (Kanze et al., 2020).

This research is also in accordance with past research since it shows that the barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs may have a significant impact on the economic development. Considering the foregoing, it is imperative that the literature take into account the underappreciated and overlooked contribution that female entrepreneurs make to global economies, as this can have a positive impact on economic development. A strong entrepreneurial ecosystem is required in order to empower and inspire women to start their own businesses. A woman, her family, and the society may benefit greatly from access to seed funding and from supporting the establishment of incubators and accelerators not only in urban but also in rural areas. In addition, boot camps, mentoring programs, training facilities, and networking opportunities need to be more accessible to women (Caputo et al., 2016). However, our findings are not in accordance with previous findings as it shows that the opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs do not have a significant impact on the economic development. Consequently, Lebanese female entrepreneurs are carving out niches, conquering markets, and opening doors for themselves, their teams, and the communities they serve (Youness, 2007).

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS

7.1. General conclusion

Women have made substantial progress in improving their representation in the workforce since the second latter of the 20th century. Nevertheless, women attainment of leadership positions across numerous fields still has a significant achievement difference. Gender stereotypes and unconscious biases play a role in the lack of representation of women in leadership roles. Communality and agency are two major groups of gender stereotypes that have been studied in relation to how they affect assessments of female leaders. Women are thought of as being less agentic but more communal (warm, caring, nurturing, etc.) than men (i.e., aggressive, ambitious, dominant, independent, etc.). Leadership positions, however, call for agency. As a result, there is a perceived mismatch between the characteristics thought to be typical-stereotyped of women (including even female managers) and the characteristics needed for effective leaders. However, when women adopt stereotypically male traits, their performance will suffer because they will be criticized for defying prescriptive feminine gender norms since these behaviors are expected of males. Consequently, women tend to restrict their own behaviors out of a fear of backlash, which leads to maintaining and enforcing the social norms that govern gender (Rudman et al., 2012; Rudman & Phelan, 2008).

Berkery et al. (2013) found that there's been an alteration to female stereotypes as women were viewed as being androgynous by possessing both agentic and communal traits, contrary to men who continue to be characterized by agentic traits. Moreover, the close relationship between men and 'agentic' traits, and between women and 'communal' traits, has become feeble (Griffiths et al., 2019). In addition, research shows that leaders should have a combination of agentic and communal characteristics. Jian and Fairhust (2017) suggested that the prevailing preference is for leadership styles that encourage communication, collaborative decision-making, and contribute to organization change, rather than leadership styles that are characterized by masculine or

agentic traits. This preference is revealed in ‘transformational leadership’, which includes both agentic and communal traits (Bass, 1985), and is highly connected to leadership effectiveness (Lowe et al., 1996). Transformational leadership prefers the combination of traits that are frequently associated with women, than men. In a meta-analysis that included both employee and leader sample, women displayed more transformational leadership qualities than men (Eagly et al., 2003). Furthermore, female leaders were more likely to be rated as androgynous (i.e. both masculine and feminine qualities) than male leaders. Consequently, leaders who exhibited more ‘feminine’ than ‘masculine’ traits and androgynous leaders were rated higher by their employees on transformational leadership (Kark et al., 2012). This trend in preferred leadership style may give preferentiality to traits that are more associated with female leaders. Our results are in accordance with previous research and have revealed that both male and female subordinates preferred working with female leaders who exhibited masculine traits such as assertiveness and risk-taking.

Promoting more women into leadership roles goes beyond simply delivering on the promise of equal opportunity and increasing the representation of women in enterprises, institutions, and governments. It is abundantly obvious from the evidence that encouraging women's full involvement is crucial for establishing a thriving and civil society. However, despite considerable research demonstrating numerous beneficial outcomes associated with the inclusion of women in organizational leaderships, a variety of barriers impede the advancement and aspirations of potential women leaders. Such barriers include cultural biases and stereotypes, challenges involving work–life balance, and a lack of mentors and sponsors. To overcome these barriers, strategies including interventions to reduce gender bias, leadership development programs, access to mentors and sponsors, and changes to family-related policies should be addressed on the individual, institution/ employer, professional leadership/ organization, and societal levels.

Numerous research and books have addressed the question of whether leadership styles differ for men and women. Researchers have often concentrated on three areas concerning gender and leadership. First, researchers have focused on whether men and women have different leadership styles. Second, the focus has been on leadership effectiveness and gender (are men better leaders than women or vice versa). Third, the issue of the "glass ceiling," or the barriers standing in the way of women achieving top management positions in organizations, has received a lot of attention.

There are conflicting results about the differences between male and female leadership styles. There is evidence that there are gender variations in leadership styles, according to several research. Even though Eagly and Johnson (1990) found that there were only minor variations in leadership styles, they emphasize that women are more likely than males to be democratic and participative in their leadership styles, which skew more toward autocracy. Rosener (2011) also discovered that whereas women tended to favor "transformational" leadership styles, men embraced a more "transactional" leadership approach.

Silva and Mendis (2017) revealed in their research that female leaders demonstrate higher transformational leadership qualities than men. Female leaders may prefer a transformational style because it provides them with a means of overcoming the quandary of role incongruity: adhering to their leader role can hinder their ability to meet the requirements of their gender role and that adhering to their gender role can hinder their ability to meet the requirements of their leader role (Silva & Mendis, 2017). Our study found that female leaders display the same transformational leadership qualities as male leaders do. The counter-stereotypical behavior that is exhibited by men is seen as unanticipated and therefore more visible. Therefore, since transformational leaders were considered communicative, effective in leadership, and more promotable than autocratic leaders, organizations must develop their current approaches to leadership based on transformational leadership.

Women's underrepresentation in high-level leadership positions can be attributed, in part, to the underestimation of women's leadership effectiveness. This argument is backed by a number of theoretical perspectives, including the think manager-think male paradigm (Schein, 1973, 2007), expectation states theory (Berger et al., 1977; Ridgeway, 1997, 2001), RCT (Eagly & Karau, 2002) and the lack of fit theory (Heilman, 2001). According to some popular press publications, there may be a female gender advantage in contemporary organizations that call for a "feminine" type of leadership (Conlin, 2003; Williams, 2012), despite research suggesting that men may be perceived as better suited for and more effective as leaders than women (Carroll, 2006; Eagly et al., 1992).

Barriers to women's leadership are present at various levels within the organizational hierarchy, starting from the top leadership team down to supervisory levels. Furthermore, theories about women's underrepresentation also underline factors at different levels of analysis, varying from macro-level contextual reasons, such as societal cultural beliefs, to numerous organizational processes, with a particular emphasis on interpersonal processes, such as Eagly & Karau's (2002) RCT. Our study discovered that female employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses and showed a preference for male over female managers. This has important implications for the success of women in leadership because the negative perception towards female leaders would compel them to start applying less effective management strategies or become less interested in occupying leadership positions. Thus, organizations must promote a culture that controls employees' stereotypes and the way these stereotypes are dealt with.

In an effort to better comprehend the concept of gender bias in leadership, Hogue and Lord (2007) promoted a multilevel, complexity theory approach, which recognizes internal factors that contribute to gender bias (e.g. leader personal confidence) and external factors (e.g. leader perception by others). Ragins and Sundstrom (1989) have

also developed a model that describes the obstacles that hinder female leader empowerment. Their multilevel “path-to-power” model of obstacles suggests that women are less likely to occupy powerful organizational roles due to the absence of influential role models and the negative expectations about women's performance. Other obstacles have gender-related aspects of the societal (and organizational) context, such as gender stereotypes, that help to preserve internal organizational barriers to women's leadership, as well as various types of internal organizational barriers at various levels.

These theories and related empirical findings propose that women may face numerous gender-related obstacles that hamper their ability to occupy and retain leadership roles even at lower organizational levels. Therefore, women continue to be underrepresented in leadership positions, especially at top management levels, because of the increasing effects of these diverse barriers. Research suggests that females who aspire to be leaders face several interpersonal obstacles that may affect their self-confidence and delay their development of a leader identity. Furthermore, women are rated less legitimate as leaders than men and are given less authority, which makes it hard for women to become effective leaders since they have to deal with hesitation and lower approval ratings (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). However, as Eagly et al. (2003) pointed out that the challenges that women leaders face are complex and nuanced but not insurmountable. Women who fail to would not be able to retain leadership roles. However, those who do are likely to be better qualified and more effective than their male counterparts. Our study outcomes clearly indicate that employees agreed that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout. Thus, women's representation in leadership at all organizational levels must be increased, and women must fill the leadership pipeline, which starts with nurturing leadership ambitions and inspiring women to accept leadership positions.

Women are often subject to stereotypes and assumptions that lead to a glass ceiling effect in the workplace, where they are held to different standards than their male counterparts and are often denied opportunities based on their gender. Men are just considerably more likely than women to hold leadership positions in all settings, from corporate boardrooms to the halls of Congress, universities to the courts, and religious institutions to philanthropic organizations. As a result, the misleading glass ceiling, which prevents organizations and women from achieving their full potential and women from reaping the full rewards of gender diversity in leadership, is still in place and occasionally seems untouchable.

As for the various metaphors that have been invented to exemplify obstacles to women's advancement and undermine women's leadership opportunities, they are the glass ceiling, glass cliff, maternal wall, glass escalator and the sticky floor (Smith et al., 2012). For instance, the maternal wall (Crosby et al., 2004; Williams, 2005) and motherhood penalty (Budig & Hodges, 2010; Correll et al., 2007) refer to the distinctive challenges that working mothers go through. The glass escalator refers to men who are put on fast track to advanced positions mainly in female-dominated occupations (Maume, 1999; Williams, 1992), and the glass cliff refers to the promotion of women to leadership roles during an organization time of crisis, which sets them up for failure (Haslam and Ryan, 2008; Ryan et al., 2011). As for the career ladder, it refers to the process through which employees move into higher-level roles and jungle gym gives the flexibility of lateral and upward movement (Sandberg, 2013). However, one of the few that has been used to represent the countless challenges faced by women leaders and aspiring leaders is the glass ceiling. The glass ceiling is the most popular general metaphor used to describe the underrepresentation of women in senior leadership positions. The first use of the term was by Gay Bryant in print in 1984 in an Adweek interview (Boyd, 2008), but has earned widespread recognition after it was employed in a Wall Street Journal article by the authors Hymowitz and Schellhardt (1986), who considered the glass ceiling "an invisible barrier that blocks them [women]

from the top jobs". The metaphor became very popular and became synonymous with gender gaps in pay and promotion.

Even though extensive research has shown that having more women in organizational leadership positions has many positive effects, a number of obstacles stand in the way of potential female leaders' growth and goals. These obstacles include work-life balance issues, cultural biases and preconceptions, and a lack of mentors and sponsors.

Another obstacle preventing women from pursuing leadership positions is the difficulty of juggling work and family as the outdated idea of male and female home responsibilities is still used in the design of workplaces. Workplace misconduct, absenteeism, and burnout have all been linked to work-family conflicts (Soomro et al., 2018; Tziner & Shkoler, 2019). Additionally, it can result in a number of issues, including marital issues for both sexes, despair, anxiety, and mood disorders (Taghizadeh et al., 2021; Haar et al., 2014). Other negative effects of a work-life imbalance include decreased job satisfaction (Haar et al., 2014; Kasbuntoro et al., 2020) and diminished quality of parenting role (Uysal et al., 2020). Working women encounter higher levels of job-family stress and work-family conflicts than their male counterparts due to the social expectations and behavioral norms that they must adhere to when juggling both personal and professional responsibilities (Haar et al., 2014; Chung & Van der Lippe, 2020). In addition, women's caricatured domestic disputes are exaggerated by rising employment demands and professional positions. As a result of an unbalanced work-life schedule, working mothers frequently experience poor mental health, chronic headaches, high blood pressure, anxiety, and even guilt (Swathi & Reddy, 2016). The findings of our study were in alignment with past research, demonstrating that females, as both employees and individuals, are more affected by WLB strategies than men are. Furthermore, organizations that implement gender diverse leadership and work-life balance strategies enjoy a variety of advantages such as enhanced performance, organizational branding, and perceptions regarding

organizational desirability by internal and external stakeholders (Kalysh et al., 2016; Olsen et al., 2016).

Lack of internal and external networks, recognitions, opportunities, and resources is another significant obstacle to leadership. Women may have fewer opportunity to establish formal and informal networks both inside and outside of their institutions for a variety of reasons. These include but are not limited to concerns of gender prejudice within institutions, a lack of sponsors to introduce them to internal and external leaders and decision-makers, and certain women's limited availability to attend professional organization meetings (where networking frequently occurs). Women who are not part of the "good old boys network" are at a disadvantage since they frequently miss leadership possibilities and decision-making processes (Hannum et al., 2015). Our study shows that supervisors can improve their employees' WLB by understanding and supporting their family responsibilities, allowing them to use flextime to attend to family matters, and by accommodating when family matters pull them away from work. Organizations must keep in mind that non-work-related activities would allow employees to expand their networks, develop new skills and gain a greater sense of personal and professional purpose.

Strategies such as gender bias interventions, leadership development programs, access to mentors and sponsors, and changes to family-related policies should be addressed on the individual, institution/employer, professional leadership/organization, and societal levels in order to remove these obstacles.

Organizations at the institution/employer level must prioritize gender equity and be deliberate in their efforts to increase the number of leadership opportunities for women; this includes developing extensive programs and policies that address the barriers preventing women from pursuing leadership career paths. Organizations should aggressively seek out, encourage, and train women for leadership positions, put in place

formal mentorship and coaching programs, aid in finding sponsors, and establish work-life policies (for example, providing resources for childcare or eldercare and flexible work options).

At the individual level, women must take personal responsibility for advocating for themselves by establishing social capital, networking with others, finding sponsors and mentors, and promoting their own abilities and organizational contributions.

At the cultural level, the government should take into account a number of legal and regulatory adjustments to promote a climate that is more supportive of women in the workforce. For instance, expanding alternatives for managing work-life balance for both men and women may be made possible by legislation pertaining to parental leave, provisions for childcare and eldercare, and flexible work schedules. Therefore, the gender gap should continue to visibly close with increased stakeholder participation, and chances for women to reach their full potential should rise. The challenges that women leaders face are diverse and contextual. However, the only way for women to become successful and overcome the myriad of obstacles is to carefully draw a path through the barriers and riddles that they encounter in the labyrinth.

7.2. Conclusion and limitations of study 1: Impact of work-life balance on firm innovativeness: The different strategies used by male and female bosses

WLB is an important aspect of a healthy work environment. With an adequate work-life balance, employers can obtain a variety of benefits from higher productivity, to lower absenteeism, and higher commitment and motivation to work. Our study shows that organizations can promote WLB by offering flexible work arrangements such as health and wellness programs, childcare benefits or services and taking leaves as required. In addition, as women tend to take on more responsibility and workload in their private lives, when organizations improve their WLB policies, they can retain their women

talent and close the gap between the proportion of women in junior management and in senior management. Both men and women must have equal access to working flexibly, without negative judgements or consequences for career advancement.

According to a study conducted by Zurich Insurance Group in collaboration with the UK government's Behavioral Insight Team, when organizations offered flexible work arrangements, the number of female applicants to leadership roles increased by 20%. Thus, when organizations offer work benefits that fit flexibly around family life, women can advance into higher positions. In addition, supervisors must set an example to their subordinates on how to balance work and life. Our study shows that supervisors can improve their employees' WLB by understanding and supporting their family responsibilities, allowing them to use flextime to attend to family matters, and by accommodating when family matters pull them away from work. Organizations must keep in mind that non-work-related activities would allow employees to expand their networks, develop new skills and gain a greater sense of personal and professional purpose.

Furthermore, research shows that the competencies that employees possess usually power organizational R&D performance (Barney & Wright, 1998; Van Esch et al., 2018). However, there is a lack of empirical research on the impact of employees' WLB on organizational R&D performance. Our findings show that employee WLB is significantly related to organizational R&D performance. In addition, both male and female employees who adopt work-life balance strategies can help organizations improve their innovativeness and R&D performance. Therefore, in order for organizations to excel at R&D, their main concern should not only be how to recruit and retain individuals with outstanding research skills (Torbeck et al., 2013) and intensive experience in their fields (Thompson & Heron, 2006; Coccia, 2009). Nevertheless, they must ensure that their employees are not trapped in the work-life balance conflict and are provided with the adequate work life balance policies that go beyond traditional

practices such as health and wellness programs, childcare benefits and flexible work arrangement.

Although WLB can influence the lives of men and women differently, it is definitely a job necessity that goes beyond gender (Greenhaus et al., 2003; Evans et al., 2013). This is because the idea of the “traditional family” is disappearing, dual-earner couples are on the rise, and the number of single parent households has increased. Thus, employees must find a good balance between work and the growing household responsibilities (Lazar et al., 2010).

Limitations

This study has some limitations that insinuate avenues for new research. First, future research should evade the usual problem of selecting only one organization to conduct the study, and it should expand the analysis to several organizations. Furthermore, future research can also acknowledge the nature of positive spillovers between WLB, job satisfaction and organizational R&D performance. In addition, it is recommended that future studies use longitudinal analysis in order to examine if the implementation of work-life balance policies improve organizational R&D performance over time. Although this paper offers an original contribution to the existing literature, especially in Lebanon, we hope that organizations can revisit their work life balance policies to foster a healthy work environment and train their managers on how to detect problems such as burnout and providing support to their team members. In conclusion, our study empirically supports the relationship between employee WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB. Hence, the results from this study suggest that employee-friendly policies and practices are important tools that can help reach desirable outcomes within the workplace.

7.3. Conclusion and limitations of study 2: Women and Leadership: The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates

Both empirical and meta-analytic studies point to the correlation between perceptions of incongruence and beliefs that women are less qualified for leadership roles or less likely to perform well (Garcia-Retamero & López-Zafra, 2006; Johnson et al., 2008; Powell & Butterfield, 2015; Koch et al., 2015). It may be more difficult for women to function effectively as leaders because they may be seen by others as less legitimate leaders who have lower status than their male counterparts. These perceptions are linked to unfavorable outcomes, such as lower levels of cooperation and disrespectful subordinates who might try to undermine female leaders (Vial et al., 2016).

Women have worked hard towards overcoming gender inequality issues in the workplace. For over three decades, they have been obtaining more bachelor's degrees than men have. In addition, they are requesting promotions and negotiating for a raise as much as men are. Moreover, contrary to popular belief, the percentage of women who are staying in the workforce is the same as that of men (Krivkovich et al., 2017).

For female managers to play effective roles in the careers of female subordinates, they must obtain strong positions in organizations and later act on their motivation to advise and support female apprentices. However, still undetermined are questions about women's access to power and their motivation to aid female subordinates, leading to dissimilar views on the career impacts of having to work for a female boss (Maume, 2011). Thus, the proposed study aims to provide a more holistic understanding of the concept of female boss misogyny and the role women subordinates play in helping their female boss advance at work. In addition, it seeks to gather knowledge and information that can fill gaps in existing work or even make an original contribution to existing knowledge.

The study found that female leaders display the same transformational leadership qualities as male leaders do. The counter-stereotypical behavior that is exhibited by men is seen as unanticipated and therefore more visible. Therefore, since transformational leaders were considered communicative, effective in leadership, and more promotable than autocratic leaders, organizations must develop their current approaches to leadership based on transformational leadership.

The study also discovered that female employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses and showed a preference for male over female managers. This has important implications for the success of women in leadership because the negative perception towards female leaders would compel them to start applying less effective management strategies or become less interested in occupying leadership positions. Thus, organizations must promote a culture that controls employees' stereotypes and the way these stereotypes are dealt with.

It was also revealed that subordinates showed a preference for working with female leaders who exhibited masculine traits, such as assertiveness and risk-taking. Masculinity refers to characteristics that are stereotypically ascribed to men, and is exemplified by a strong, technically competent, motivated, autonomous and confident leader who has control of his emotions (Hofstede, 2001; Connell, 2013). Thus, women may deviate from exhibiting feminine personality traits toward more desirable masculine traits. Regardless of the leader's gender, leaders must develop their leadership skills to maximize their core strengths. Furthermore, organizations must remedy the gender disparity that still exists in their workforce in order to conquer the paradox that still hinders female leaders' advancement.

The study showed that the quality of the employee-supervisor relationship has a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction. When employees build strong relationships with their supervisors, they are more likely to be content with their

job and possibly perform better than they would if the relationship with their supervisor was undesirable. Thus, organizations must understand the factors that lead to high levels of employee job satisfaction by having the HR department pay particular attention on employee relations, which would help improve employee retention and increase productivity.

Our current study outcomes clearly indicate that employees agreed that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout. Thus, women's representation in leadership at all organizational levels must be increased, and women must fill the leadership pipeline, which starts with nurturing leadership ambitions and inspiring women to accept leadership positions.

Some believe that the queen bee phenomenon unintentionally supports gender stereotypes that are woefully out of date. Additionally, it is said that the word harms the standing of particular groups of women in the workplace and impairs their ability to advance professionally. The hypothesis is also criticized for allegedly encouraging a "blame the woman" narrative. Queen Bee Syndrome may be the result of specific cultural factors (Derks et al., 2011), particularly those connected to the modern workplace (Cooper, 1997; Sterk et al., 2018). According to research conducted in the Netherlands by Derks et al. (2011) , women who exhibited the most "queen bee" tendencies—including portraying "masculine" traits, excluding other women, and gender stereotyping—experienced the highest levels of gender-based discrimination earlier in their careers. This lends credence to the idea that the queen bee phenomenon results from gender-based discrimination against women who are attempting to advance in their employment (Mufti et al., 2021).

Finally, we conclude with the hope that female subordinates would become more accepting of their female leaders without asking them to act more like men keeping in

mind that it is unrealistic to expect women leaders to create comprehensive changes around gender roles alone.

Limitations

Previous research indicate that the leader's gender and/or leadership style have a variety of influences on their subordinates such as a manager's effectiveness, including communication style, persuasion ability, and trustworthiness. Findings also show that women leaders are more inclined to exhibit a democratic style and features of transformational leadership than their male peers do (Robbins, 2006). The recognized gender differences between men and women can influence, somewhat, the leadership styles implemented by each, because of the perceived role incongruity as well as the carryover of gender-based roles into the workplace and the internalization of gender-specific norms. Therefore, in order for women to overcome the dilemma of role incongruity, which proposes that the compliance of women to their role as leader can hamper their ability to meet the requirements of their perceived gender role and vice versa, they may prefer to implement a transformational style (Silva & Mendis, 2017). Consequently, leadership styles have a great influence on employees' job satisfaction and on their confidence and effectiveness in achieving organizational goals (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016; Randeree & Chaudhry, 2012). However, previous research shows that employees' job satisfaction may increase with promotion, reward and recognition, development of their skills, workplace safety, and the nature of the work that they perform (Josanov-Vrgovic & Pavlovic, 2014).

Leaders should not be solely concerned with their leadership style, but also with the workplace culture and try to build intercultural competence. For instance, in order for a leader to be in harmony with their employees' preferences, they must pay attention to differences between his or her leadership style and the leadership style preferred by his or her employees. In addition, promoting gender equality and raising awareness on

gender biases can accelerate the change in perception of how female and male leaders are evaluated (Taylor, 2017).

In conclusion, our study is a modest contribution to the developing theory of gender, leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction. We hope that our findings will pave the way for other researchers to explore the dynamics of leadership from a contextual perspective.

7.4. Conclusion and limitations of study 3: An analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon as a key factor to increase revenues and stimulate the local economy

It is commonly known that female entrepreneurs face difficulties in convincing investors of their abilities and attracting capital. Despite significant advances in female participation in other professional disciplines, high-growth entrepreneurship, in particular, continues to be predominately male (Gompers & Wang, 2017). Given the degree of uncertainty involved in evaluating entrepreneurial opportunities, stereotypes have an outsized impact on audience assessments in this field (Heilman, 1984; Gorman, 2006; Ridgeway, 2011). Success in entrepreneurship is typically associated with masculinity (Buttner & Rosen, 1988; Bird & Brush, 2002; Gupta et al., 2009), and this is a field in which stereotypes exert an outsized influence on audience assessments. Female entrepreneurs are held to a different set of standards than men, according to evidence from both field and experimental studies (Bigelow et al., 2014; Brooks et al., 2014; Balachandra et al., 2017; Malmstrom et al., 2017; Kanze et al., 2018; Guzman & Kacperczyk, 2019). Particularly, female business owners are frequently viewed as less capable than their male counterparts, which makes them less likely to be considered as promising investment prospects (Bigelow et al., 2014; Thébaud, 2015; Tinkler et al., 2015). However, women may be able to counteract stereotypes of poor competence by demonstrating their skills in additional ways.

Particularly in developing nations, women entrepreneurs contribute significantly to the creation of jobs, money, decrease of poverty, human development, education, health, and national development. Numerous successful examples of women business owners have been described in the literature along with examples of the major obstacles in their path (Byrne et al., 2019; Neumeyer et al., 2019). Without female entrepreneurs, economies would not be able to succeed fully and long-term. The ongoing economic and financial crisis that started in Lebanon in October 2019 has led to a substantial currency devaluation, triple-digit inflation, and a drop in average income all significantly reduced purchasing power. Thus, the promotion of female entrepreneurship may relieve the country from the economic and political pressures. In order to address the economic issues facing the Lebanese economy, numerous regulation changes to encourage the inclusion of women in the workforce as well as a top-down reorganization of some economic sectors that purposefully hinder women's participation in them would be necessary. Furthermore, when it comes to eschewing conventionally portrayed positions and tackling issues with a strong focus on women's empowerment, millennial women are breaking the mold. In addition to refocusing attention on women's issues like health, education, and basic human rights, millennial women act as a catalyst to advance gender equality in the workplace, keeping in mind that compared to previous generations, millennials are driven by different goals and encounter distinct difficulties. Therefore, policymakers, female business owners, and other stakeholders need to comprehend the driving forces and difficulties faced by millennial women in launching and operating their enterprises. To promote entrepreneurship, job development, and general economic growth, it is crucial to have this knowledge. Numerous themes and questions merit additional examination by academics given the novelty of millennial women entrepreneurs. Finally, Lebanese women entrepreneurs should take advantage of a range of financial and technical support services that are tailored to their needs, the needs of the industry or market segment they operate in, and their different goals. It may be more effective to provide

specialized assistance catered to each company's needs rather than using a general strategy that targets numerous organizations at once.

Limitations

Some limitations to this study suggest areas for future research. Future studies should include a sample of Lebanese male entrepreneurs to gain additional knowledge of their impact on the economic development. The research was limited to the exploration of female entrepreneurs in Lebanon. Further research might extend the geographical scope and study the motivations of female business owners and managers in different geographical areas. The geographic scope of future research could be widened in order to examine the driving forces behind female entrepreneurs across the globe. Another limitation of this study is in the small sample size and bias of the sample, which could of course have a skewing effect on the results. However, the sample does reflect the reality that the majority of female entrepreneurs in Lebanon suffer for the same obstacles that seem to hinder their entrepreneurial activities. Although this paper offers an original contribution to the existing literature, especially in Lebanon, we hope that governments in less economically developed nations pay more attention to initiatives that provide helpful assistance to female entrepreneurs, such as funding, organizational support, training, mentoring from successful businesspeople, and chances to observe successful enterprises firsthand. Furthermore, additional variables like the political environment in Lebanon may be investigated, and the model could then be expanded in line with the findings.

7.5. Future lines of research

Findings from papers suggest that female empowerment is driven by both internal and external factors, which include implementing work-life balance strategies, promoting positive role models, reforming laws and regulations, redistributing unpaid work, and

changing the workplace culture, practice and policies. And while role incongruity between gender and leadership roles is an obstacle that women encounter as they rise into leadership roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002), many other barriers continue to hinder women's rise to leadership positions, including discrimination, work-life conflict, differential hiring and promotion, and gender-based stereotyping. However, a variety of tools, methods and techniques can create an enabling environment for women to hone their leadership qualities such as recruitment methods, computational modeling and simulation techniques, government initiatives, leadership development training, diversity training, and inclusion of women (Reskin & McBrier, 2000; Samuelson et al., 2019; Debebe, 2017; Terjesen & Sealy, 2016; Duehr & Bono, 2006; Brescoll, 2016; Guillet et al., 2019; Chisholm-Burns et al., 2017).

To encourage research in the field of female leadership, leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction and to provide researchers and practitioners with a clear sense of what to research, we highlight some fields of interest for future research:

a) Gap 1: Relationship between leadership styles and gender roles.

Further analysis should be carried out to study the relationship between the leader's gender, leadership style and subordinates' performance. The study performed by Wang et al. (2013) shows that the negative relationship between authoritarian leadership and subordinates' performance is stronger for women than for male leaders. In addition, it demonstrates that the positive relationship between benevolent leadership and subordinates' performance is stronger for male leaders than females. This suggests a behavior that is congruent with leaders and their gender role; however, according to Rhee & Sigler (2015), female leaders who act contrary to their gender stereotype were perceived as less effective and less preferred than male leaders who exhibited the same leadership style. Thus, female leaders should develop their own leadership style instead of using the predominant styles developed by male leaders such as a transformational

and / or servant leadership style. Consequently, it is necessary to understand the female advantages in leadership (Eagly & Carli, 2003). Jogulu & Wood (2006) manifest themselves along the same lines, considering that female leaders are seen as participatory and democratic managers, with a more transformational leadership style than their male colleagues, and this is associated with effective leadership. The transformational qualities of leadership exhibited by women are required by the flatter organizational structures that companies implement today. This new perspective has been called the “feminization of management”, and is based on the recognition that women are equally capable of making a valuable contribution to the success of the organization (Omar & Davidson, 2001). However, more research is required to know if the use of effective and transformational leadership styles by female executives and their interaction with their subordinates and organizational results translates into an increase in the number of women appointed to leadership positions.

On the other hand, Brescoll (2016) points out that one of the strongest gender stereotypes is the belief that women are more emotional than men, being a fundamental barrier to the ability of women to advance and succeed in roles of leadership. Brescoll also suggests that gender and emotion stereotypes create two minefields that female leaders have to traverse in order to become successful: (1) identify how much emotions should be displayed, and (2) identify what kind of emotions must be displayed. Specifically, female leaders can be penalized for even moderate displays of emotion, especially when they convey dominance and power. But being emotionally inexpressive can also result in sanctions for women, because by not being emotional they are seen as not fulfilling their role of providing affection and warmth. In this sense, it must be empirically verified how gender-emotion stereotypes hinder the ability of women to succeed in leadership roles within organizations.

b) Gap 2: Valuation of female leaders by their female subordinates: breaking the "Queen Bee syndrome".

According to Marvin (2008), solidarity behavior among women has contributed to the rise of women in managerial positions. However, when female leaders do not collaborate positively with their subordinates, relationships between women break down and female leaders are labelled "Queen Bees." It is evident that the socially embedded gender systems in the organization have a strong impact on the behavior of subordinate women towards women in senior management, and vice versa. That can result in attitudes of female misogyny, that is, in negative relationships between women in the organization, which promotes dissociation, and division among women. When women leaders want to treat subordinate women as equals and try to change the center of power for their female colleagues, they are on shaky ground. Therefore, an area that requires more research is the way in which the privileged gender social order in organizations seems to perpetuate women leaders as "best enemies" to prevent the successes of their subordinates.

c) Gap 3: Intergenerational changes in the consideration of gender roles.

The study by Stoker et al. (2012) confirm that, although the general stereotype of a manager is male and although most employees prefer a male manager, female employees who are managed by females and employees who work in an organization with a high percentage of female managers have a stronger preference for female leadership characteristics and for female managers. That is, male employees begin to appreciate female leaders, especially if they are prestigious members in the workplace. Consequently, managerial stereotypes can vary as a result of personal experiences and changes in the organizational context, since increasing the proportion of female managers is an effective way to overcome managerial stereotypes. However, these results may be affected by the age of the employees and their educational level, which is

why longitudinal studies must be carried out to analyze the effects of male and female leaders, as well as intergenerational changes in stereotypes. It would also be interesting to study employees longitudinally, to examine employees who have a male manager at one point 1 and a female manager at another point (and vice versa) to determine if their preferences change accordingly.

d) Gap 4: Relationship between sociocultural factors and labor equality between men and women.

The study by Sczensy et al. (2004) analyses the cultural variations of managerial gender typification, that is, how executives (both male and female) are perceived, in three different countries and continents, as having people-oriented and / or people-oriented leadership traits to tasks. Several authors find that there is an intercultural-shared vision that female leaders have a greater orientation towards people than male executives do. Consequently, the perception of female leadership seems to be unrelated to cultural differences between countries. However, research should be extended to several other countries having various socio-cultural aspects, such as promotion opportunities, demand for professionals with higher education, the reconciliation options, etc., for the mental representations of the leadership of the perceivers in different cultures. Furthermore, there may be differences between the social perceptions of female leadership and its real implications in the management of organizations.

e) Gap 5: How female leadership affects the firm's culture.

According to Dezső & Ross (2012), female representation in senior management generates social and informative diversity, generates high benefits for the senior management team, enriches the behaviors exhibited by managers throughout the firm, and motivates women in middle managers. The result is a managerial improvement in the performance of the task and, therefore, better performance of the company.

However, this is only done to the extent that the company's strategy is focused on innovation, in which the context of the informational and social benefits of gender diversity and behaviors associated with women in managerial positions are likely to be especially important for the performance of managerial tasks. However, while scholars have advanced many arguments praising the benefits of gender diversity in top management, systematic and rigorous evidence is lacking on how and under what circumstances women in top management improve firm's performance. Barriers to advancement must be taken into account, including, but not limited to, overt discrimination, social pressure that leads to involuntary discrimination from colleagues, corporate culture, work routines, talent and quality managers (both men and women), and gender-neutral recruitment and promotion mechanisms. In addition, other factors that can moderate the impact of female representation in senior management on firm's performance should be considered. To name a few: 1) the size, structure and composition of a company's workforce can influence the effect of female representation in senior management; 2) the increased motivation of female managers can be especially beneficial for companies with a large percentage of female managers at lower levels in the hierarchy, and 3) companies without a large percentage of women at the managerial levels can benefit from recruitment of women for the lower levels.

The study by Roebuck et al. (2019) show that female supervisors were rated lower by their male subordinates than male supervisors were rated by their female subordinates. These results speak to the problems that female leaders have in breaking the glass ceiling. In addition, effectiveness ratings of leaders according to their gender affect the organizational culture, which acts as an important barrier to the negative effects on gender relations. Thus, in organizations with less effective participatory and missionary cultures, female subordinates value more their male supervisors than male subordinates who have female supervisors; but in organizations with more effective participatory and missionary cultures, male subordinates value their female supervisors more than female subordinates rate their male supervisors. By introducing organizational culture as a

context variable in the supervisor-subordinate relationship, it is observed that culture can mitigate some of the negative effects of the way women leaders are rated. Consequently, Roebuck et al. (2019) provide initial evidence that organizational culture is an important contextual variable that acts as a condition on how leaders are perceived in different supervisor-subordinate dyads: in general, the more effective the culture, the more favorably female supervisors are valued. However, future studies should better assess how various aspects of organizational culture affect the perception of leaders by employees. Among others, researchers could evaluate how various values affect male and female employees differently in the perceptions of the effectiveness of their leaders.

f) Gap 6: Effects of hiring women for managerial positions: the glass ceiling.

According to Masser & Abrams (2004), benevolent sexism is related to a negative evaluation of women candidates in traditionally male-occupied jobs, and especially for management positions. In contrast, greater hostile sexism is associated with higher recommendations from male candidates for employment as a manager. This reinforces the glass ceiling, since despite the advances women have made in organizations, they continue to be underrepresented in senior management positions (Baumgartner & Schneider, 2010; Jogulu & Wood, 2006). The study by Baumgartner & Schneider (2010) analyses various practices to overcome the glass ceiling, such as 1) having a good support network is key to reconciling a successful career and family management; 2) having a mentor in the organization and building a relationship of trust with that person; 3) women actively participating in professional / social activities with colleagues in the workplace; 4) although women in managerial positions tend to show more masculine characteristics, such as being goal-oriented and competitive, the management and leadership skills of women are oriented rather to interpersonal skills, team building, group work, empathy and collaboration, solidarity and compassion, and aspects that are considered as positive and effective skills; 5) breaking the “queen bee” syndrome, as barriers up to the glass ceiling decrease as women move up the

organization's hierarchy. Thus, women leaders often voluntarily help other women to advance their careers, although women must be careful not to rely solely on queen bees for career advancement and to acknowledge help when it is provided.

It is necessary to study more thoroughly the perceptions of women who have broken the glass ceiling in their organizations, since the views of family members and co-workers who know these women can reveal different perceptions about why these women were successful. In addition, the strategies to deal with the glass ceiling identified by Baumgartner & Schneider (2010) should be empirically verified with larger samples for various organizations and countries. It is also necessary to empirically check the degree to which organizations support the professional career and family conciliation, both for women and men, identifying effective strategies to achieve the necessary balance. More studies need to focus on mentoring research, since effective mentoring involves developing systems, where both participants are in the socio-professional relationship based on mutual choice, thus mentors are more likely to support subordinates when they are not required to do so. Finally, more research is needed to understand the 'queen bee syndrome', because research suggests that as women move up the organizational ladder, more barriers accumulate. On the other hand, some evidence suggests that barriers fade as women move up the organizational ladder; therefore, perceptions about how women in subordinate positions interpret this type of helping behavior should be examined. In other words, while queen bees may feel that they are being helpful, it would be useful to understand the perceptions of those receiving help.

g) Gap 7: Effects on the organizational performance of female leadership.

According to Kunze & Miller (2017), policies that lead to increase in female representation in leadership positions may have spillover benefits to women in lower positions, since a higher proportion of women working in the next higher level are associated with significantly smaller gender gaps in promotion. The effect may be

caused by increased competition within gender (either between men or women) between peers, either for promotions or for gender-specific mentoring and support. It also suggests that policies that promote greater female representation in business leadership have a positive impact on women in lower positions. However, to confirm these findings, the indicators of effectiveness and efficiency in the performance of women leaders must be refined compared to those used for men leaders. Flabbi et al. (2019) state that female leadership has a positive impact on the upper part of the female wage distribution, since it increases the variance of women's wages within companies. Furthermore, the higher the proportion of female workers, the better the performance of the company, since female executives better interpret the productivity signals of female workers. Thus, female CEOs taking over previously male-run businesses can reverse discrimination, paying women wages closer to their actual productivity and matching them with jobs that have better match with their skills. The conclusions of the study by Flabbi et al. (2019) suggest the existence of substantial costs for women in the case of their underrepresentation in executive positions and on firm's board of directors. Organizations with a substantial female presence are likely to benefit from assigning women to leadership positions. However, further research is needed to confirm the complementarity of gender and male and female leadership styles in their impact on business performance.

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COMPILATION OF ARTICLES

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Impact of Work-Life Balance on Firm Innovativeness: The Different Strategies Used by Male and Female Bosses

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Abstract: The idea of work–family balance has generated considerable interest for researchers who tried to focus mainly on the increased female engagement in the labor market, the rise in dual-income households, as well as the changing nature of organizations, work and the workplace. While some individuals prefer work-life balance (WLB) strategies that set fair and realistic limits between their professional and personal lives, others prefer initiatives that provide harmony between the different aspects of their lives. By surveying both Lebanese male and female employees, this research explored work-life strategies that can be implemented by men and women leaders to balance their work and non-work activities and promote their roles as leaders. In addition, it aims to explore if those work-life strategies enhance organizational performance by means of increased innovativeness, and research and development. The results reveal that there is no significant relationship between employee WLB and organizational performance, indicating that satisfied employees do not necessarily deliver increased or weakened performance. Our results also reveal that supervisor support is positively related to employee WLB. In addition, the study examines the effects of individual coping WLB strategies and organizational provision of WLB policies on employee affective well-being. The results indicate that Lebanese individuals who have positive attitudes and life coping strategies are more capable of achieving overall well-being.

Keywords: work-life balance (WLB); men and women leaders; organizational performance; supervisor support; WLB policies

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1. Introduction

The work-life balance (WLB) is a contemporary issue that has been recognized as an important aspect of a healthy work environment. This area of Human Resource Management (HRM) has always been an apprehension for individuals who are concerned with the quality of working and the way it affects the broader quality of life. Furthermore, it has attracted the attention

of organizations since WLB can influence organizational productivity and the welfare of employees in so many different ways.

One theoretical approach to comprehending the notion of WLB is the spillover theory, which helps in understanding the impact of work on family life, either positively or negatively (Lakshmypriya and Krishna 2016). For instance, if an employee has a stressful day at work, they may bring the negative thoughts home, thus affecting their private life. Consequently, employees either are expected, or personally need to devise healthy coping strategies and skills to meet the new needs of work and family (Pienaar 2008). Women, for instance, may find themselves giving up leadership positions due to family commitments and responsibilities. However, Cheung and Halpern (2010) noticed that female bosses have realized that they do not have to do it alone. "Instead of being superwomen who hold themselves to the highest standards for all the role-related tasks of being wives and mothers, they adopt different internal and external strategies to redefine their roles" (Cheung and Halpern 2010, p. 185). For many men, the desire to be more engaged in their personal and family life is met with incompatible professional and career expectations. Men may also experience such conflict. For some men, they try to find a balance between being more involved in their family life and the societal beliefs that classify men as the economic providers for their families (Halrynjo 2009). This could be the reason why men who have children actually put in more paid hours at work than men without children do (Lundberg and Rose 2002; Percheski and Wildeman 2008).

A number of researchers (Martín and Carrasquer 2005; Hughes and Bozionelos 2007) suggest that WLB practices assist employees in reducing the levels of workplace stress, improving their quality of life and enhancing their organizational performance and commitment. Consequently, the literature emphasizes that WLB practices can improve organizational performance including increased productivity and reduced turnover.

The research aims to examine how the organization's commitment to work-life balance leads to greater involvement of employees in achieving the organization's objectives. Thus, linking it to organizational performance and innovativeness. A healthy WLB positively affects the physical and psychological development of an individual as well as the sustainability of organizations. Thus, in order to foster and nurture employees' well-being and improve their performance, organizations must provide access to work-life balance arrangement (WLBA). Organizational performance can be assessed through different aspects, including career motivation, employee attendance, employee recruitment, employee retention, organizational commitment, and productivity (Beauregard and Henry 2009; Sheppard 2016). For instance, some studies have shown that workplace health programs have a positive effect on organizational performance (Shephard 1992; Täuber et al. 2018). When organizations provide adequate policies, employees will be motivated to contribute more, which leads to higher productivity, attendance, and retention (Berkery et al. 2017). The more

employees are productive at work, the better the organizational performance (Dobre 2013). Conversely, the organization's R&D intensity and R&D activities can improve employees' knowledge and skills and produce new knowledge, enhancing organizational performance (Chen et al. 2019).

The significance and relevance of work-life strategies of both male and female bosses and their impact on the organizational innovativeness have not been previously assessed. Therefore, the objective of this study is to determine the impact of the different WLB strategies of male and female bosses on the firm innovativeness. To achieve this objective, this paper presents a literature review and formulates the research hypotheses. Next, the hypotheses are tested in an empirical study developed using a survey of 141 Lebanese employees who work in a Lebanese private university. The implications for academics and recommendations for practitioners that are obtained from the research are provided in the closing section.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Work-Life Balance

The research directed at the concept of the work-life balance (WLB) has focused primarily on the work and family theories such as work-family conflict (Hill et al. 2001) and work-family balance (Kahn et al. 1964). The aim of these theories was to resolve any conflict that people face as they play different social roles in life. The notion investigates the interplay between work and non-work activities (Fisher 2001; Hobson et al. 2001; Zulch et al. 2012). WLB can be achieved when a person achieves equilibrium between one's career and all the remaining aspects of life (Kirchmeyer 2000). According to Greenblatt (2002), as people try to juggle a demanding career and non-job responsibilities, they might encounter an acceptable level of conflict.

Research on the WLB demonstrates that it falls within three categories: individual, organizational and society. On the individual level, people can achieve the WLB when they split their time and energy between work and other aspects of life such as spending time with their families and enjoying social activities (Reece et al. 2009). Thus, WLB can cause positive mental states such as contentment, happiness, confidence, and feeling at peace with oneself (Clarc 2000; Clarke et al. 2004). Maintaining equilibrium between work and the demands of one's personal life is the key to a healthy, happy more creative human being (McGee-Cooper 1983)—individuals feel more accomplished, more productive, and are more satisfied with their lives (Robak 2010). Arnett (2000) believes that in order for people to have an adequate mental growth and balance, they must sufficiently meet their family commitments, adequately perform their work responsibilities, and be actively involved in their local communities. Nevertheless, the way people balance those three areas differ from one individual to another, and finding harmony between organizational and life can be achieved through effective time management and a supportive network of family and friends (Arcimowicz 2008; Połaska et al. 2013).

At the organizational level, companies should promote WLB in the workplace by regularly reviewing their employees'

workloads and offering them flexible work arrangements (Tipping et al. 2012). Organizations must always develop tools and strategies in order to promote healthy work-life balance (Borkowska 2004). From an organizational perspective, greater employee productivity, higher organization profitability, and increased creativity (Naithani 2010). Organizations can support a better work-life balance for their employees by implementing a variety of strategies (Skarżyński 2007). This includes providing their employees with flexible work arrangements such as an alternative schedule that gives them a greater freedom in selecting his or her particular hours of work or the option to change their work schedule, and/or deviating from standard full-time employment. Organizations may also offer leave benefits that allow employees to take time off from work for various reasons including non-work family obligations. Employers may also provide some form of childcare support by adopting measures to help their employees with childcare such as a workplace nursery. Furthermore, organizations can offer their employees incentives to drive productivity and engagement such as bonuses, rewards, recognition and appreciation.

At a societal level, the balance between life and work is achieved when an organization has a simple hiring process and provides job security for its employees (Borkowska 2004). Furthermore, family policies that favor or encourage traditional family structures and values can help balance people's professional and personal life. In addition, the initiatives of the labor market institutions can also help promote WLB even for entrepreneurial firms. A good example of the work-family reconciliation policies is the European experience which promotes working options for high quality, reduced-hour, and part-time employment. Parents who live in European countries are managing work and family demands with significantly more help from government. Another approach focuses on employers who willingly encourage a healthy work life balance by adopting work-life initiatives also known as the American Model. This model uses different tools to attract and retain top talent as well as maintain a positive work environment where all employees feel valued and treated equally (Borkowska 2010).

Many studies have analyzed the undesirable outcomes of the disadvantages when there is a lack of WLB at either the individual, organizational or the societal levels. The repercussions at the individual level may result in employed workers leaving the labor force and becoming socially marginalized. As for the organizational level, companies would have a lack of a skilled workforce, higher wage rates, ineffective capacity utilization and would eventually lose their competitive advantage. The negative consequences for societies are manifested through public financial deficit, a slow economic growth and a reduced competitiveness at microeconomic level.

2.2. Work-Life Balance for Male and Female Leaders

Working men and women share different experiences on the subject of social support and work-family conflict (WFC) (Adame et al. 2016; van Daalen et al. 2006). Research suggests a relationship between WFC and work-life imbalance. This imbalance is not the same for both men and women. Women witness an absence of social support from their coworkers and bosses, whereas men receive remarkable and valuable support from their coworkers and bosses, which creates the foundations of WLB (Ferguson et al. 2016; French et al. 2018; van Daalen et al. 2006). van Daalen et al. (2006) stated that women provide more social support to their spouses than men do. On the other hand, men tend to receive less support from family and friends than female do. Regardless of the sources of social support that men and women receive, they both take advantage of this support in a way that helps them minimize work-life imbalance and conflict (McMullan et al. 2018; van Daalen et al. 2006). Some researchers (Eng et al. 2010; Julien et al. 2011) have deduced that the social support that women receive at home can minimize family-work conflict and that the social support from coworkers and bosses can minimize WFC. However, other researchers concluded that only social support obtained at home is capable of minimizing family-work conflict (Liao 2011; van Daalen et al. 2006).

Females have revealed the massive personal costs that are linked to occupying leadership positions (Loeffen 2016). Women face many challenges of balancing the competing demands of dual roles. Thus, they try to juggle conflicting priorities related to their careers, families and lifestyles. Loeffen (2016) implied that women could not attain successful leadership positions without making personal and family sacrifices nor without having a solid support system. Moreover, expectations can constrain women leadership behaviors. Consequently, they try to prove that they have good technological skills and a sufficient level of competence. In addition, women leaders try hard to be more productive than their male counterparts (Ely et al. 2011), possibly resulting in a greater demand for WLB.

Research shows that men benefit from an effective work-life balance. Work-life balance is an important aspect of a healthy work environment. In addition, men who maintain a healthy work-life balance tend to exhibit positive attitudes and increased productivity in the workplace (Perrone et al. 2009). Furthermore, and as part of this balance, men who contributed more to family life reported an improved overall enjoyment of life (Aumann et al. 2011; Greenhaus et al. 2003). In addition, men who work in organizations that support a better work-life, enjoy more their current jobs, are more satisfied with their jobs, and are more satisfied with the friendship relations and community commitment (Burke 2000). It is worth mentioning that the definitions and conceptualizations of work-life balance that men provide are different from the ones provided by women (Duckworth and Buzzanell 2009). The aim is not to spend equal time on professional and personal life, but to customize a balance that can be applied across the different roles in ways that make sense to them (APA 2004; Reiter 2007).

In their study on WLB, Allen and Russell (1999) deduced that using work-life balance programs (WLBP) in organizations have negative effects on employees' reward allocation such as being entitled to bonuses and raises in salaries and promotions. Furthermore, employees who use WLBP are perceived by their coworkers as having low levels of commitment towards their organization (Allen and Russell 1999). Judiesch and Lyness (1999) have also reported that managers suffer negative career consequences associated with family-related leaves of absence, which affects their career or organizational. Consequently, employees try to refrain from using WLBP because they have negative impact on employees' career paths development (Bailyn 1997; Whitehouse and Zetlin 1999). If employees feel that their organization does not encourage a healthy work-life balance, and that by using WLBP they will suffer career setbacks, employees may abstain from using the WLBP in order not to put their careers into a slump (Brenninkmeijer et al. 2010).

2.3. Work-Life Balance, Organization Commitment and Performance

Many research studies have analyzed the relationship between employees' emotional attachment and participation in the organization, also known as affective performance, and the levels of performance and effectiveness of both the individual and the organizational levels (Casper et al. 2002; Kim 2014). For instance, Casper et al. (2002) observed how both work-to-life and life-to-work could affect working mothers' commitment to their organizations. Their findings showed that a positive relationship exists between work-to-life and affective commitment. Furthermore, researchers Wood and de Menezes (2010) affirmed that when organizations implement WLB initiatives, affective commitment increases, and employees' turnover intentions decrease. Nevertheless, a number of researchers have reported that there is a negative correlation between work-to-life and employees' affective commitment (Thompson et al. 1999; Netemeyer et al. 1996). Nevertheless, the results of a research conducted by Kim (2014) suggested that employees' emotional attachment and participation in the organization increase when organizations implement WLB programs. As a result, employees feel more devoted to their organization.

A growing number of WLB studies across several industries have led to more indications that support the relationship between WLB programs and increased employee productivity and loyalty (Hyman and Summers 2007). This indicates that affective commitment increases when organizations implement WLB programs because they improve employee performance and commitment towards the organization. Thus, when employers implement work-life balance support programs, employees tend to always put their organizations' goals above their personal interests. This will increase their affective commitment and consequently the organizational performance (Allen and Meyer 1996). A large number of research studies have demonstrated the positive relationship between WLBP and employees' and organizational performance (Parkes and Langford 2008; Harrington and Ladge 2009). In their studies on topics related to work-life and work-family, Muse et al. (2008) and Casper et al.

(2011) affirmed that employees' affective commitment to their organizations is positively influenced by WLB, however other researchers believe that work-life conflict can negatively influence employees' performance (Beauregard 2006). A study conducted in the US by Perry-Smith and Blum (2000) which included a sample of 527 firms, shows that organization that encouraged WLB practices experienced a more recognizable market performance, an increase in sales and profit growth, and an improved organizational performance. In a study conducted by Tunji-Olayeni et al. (2017) in Lagos, Nigeria on work-life balance, the result shows that females who work in jobs that are dominated by males are more likely to have conflicts at home and at work. However, these women do not quit their jobs as they worry about not being able to find replacement. Moreover, other researchers such as Allen (2001), Schutte and Eaton (2004) realized that the area related to WLB practices and the way they influence employees' and organizational performance is not systematically investigated and remains ambiguous to scholars and practitioners in various industries.

Employees' commitment to their organizations greatly improves organizational performance, which is the key element on which organizations are founded (Prasetya and Kato 2011). In addition, higher levels of employees' commitment lead to lower levels of staff turnover, absenteeism and tardiness (Bandula and Lakmini 2016). When employees feel a strong sense of organizational commitment, they believe that they ought to continue working for their organization. They also feel that they can reach their full potential when their goals are aligned with organizational goals. This view has been supported by Kaplan and Kaplan (2018), Udu and Ameh (2016), as well as Ireferin and Mechanic (2014).

This leads to suggest the following hypotheses and to Figure 1 which shows our conceptual model:

H1. *Supervisor's support of WLB is positively related to employee work-life balance.*

H2. *Individual's WLB is positively related to employee work-life balance.*

H3. *Organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to employee work-life balance.*

H4. *Employee work-life balance (EWLB) is positively related to organizational research and development performance.*

H5. *Individual's WLB is positively related to organizational research and development performance.*

H6. *Organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to organizational research and development performance.*

H7. *There are significant gender differences in the relationship between EWLB and organizational R&D performance.*

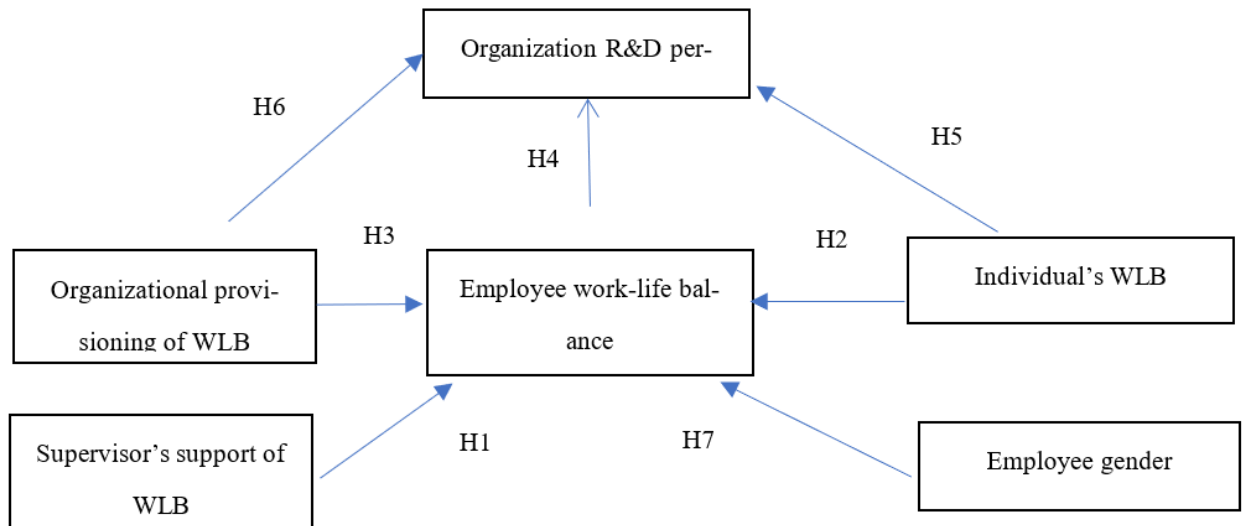


Figure 1. The conceptual model of the research.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Sample and Data Collection

As previously mentioned, the aim of this study is to explore whether the work-life strategies used by male and female bosses enhance organizational performance by means of increased innovativeness and research and development. Thus, an online survey created in Google Forms was distributed via email to male and female employees who work in a Lebanese private university. Participants held different types of positions such as teaching, admissions, academic advising, finance, computer and information technology, and registrar.

To begin the assessment, the research participants had to give their permission to be part of the study by reading and approving an informed consent form. The informed consent provided adequate information to the participants about the study and the approximate time required completing the survey. It also guaranteed participants of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses throughout the study process. The survey was disseminated to 148 people out of whom 141 responded (response rate of 95%) of which 70 (49.6%) were men and 71 (50.4%) were women.

The survey consisted of five major sections. The first section gathered demographic information about participants including their educational qualifications, experience, and years with current employer. The second section was designed to measure participants' work-life balance (See measures below). The third section of the survey assessed whether participants' supervisor was supportive of work-Life balance. The fourth section consisted of questions related to participants' work-Life balance strategies and their organizational provisioning of WLB. Moreover, the aim of the fifth section was to rate the participants' firm's overall performance during the past 3 years in comparison with competitors in the industry.

3.2. Measures

Employee work-life balance. Employee WLB was measured using 14 items, which assessed participants' work-life balance.

The 14-item scale has been adapted from a 19-item scale originally developed by Fisher-McAuley et al. (2003) that was designed to capture employee perceptions on WLB. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5).

Supervisor’s support of work-life balance. Supervisor’s support of employees’ WLB was measured using 4 items, which assessed the supervisor’s support of employee family responsibilities and flextime; adapted from an instrument reported by Carlson et al. (2013). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5).

Individual employee WLB strategies. This was measured using 6 items, which assessed the strategies that respondents use to maintain a healthy work-life balance; adapted from an instrument reported by Fisher-McAuley et al. (2003) These items were assessed on the basis of a five-point Likert scale, ranging from “not at all important” (1) to “extremely important” (5).

Organizational provisioning of WLB strategies. This was measured using 7 items, which assessed the WLB policies and strategies employed in organizations to advance a better quality of work and life of employees; adapted from an instrument reported by Zheng et al. (2015). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “not at all important” (1) to “extremely important” (5).

Organizational research and development performance. This was measured using 7 items, which assessed the respondents’ organizational research and development in the past 3 years in comparison with competitors in the industry; adapted from an instrument reported by Fey and Birkinshaw (2005). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale, ranging from “very poor” (1) to “excellent” (5).

4. Results

Prior studies on firm innovativeness have focused on the impact of technology adoption (Gil et al. 2012), organizational learning capability, managerial capability, R&D investment intensity, and integration of R&D and marketing (Akgün et al. 2007; Da Rocha et al. 1990; Lefebvre et al. 2000; Walsh et al. 2002; Ho et al. 2005; Chen et al. 2007; Hernandez 2006). However, no study has examined firm innovativeness by jointly studying firm innovativeness, supervisor support, employee WLB, individual WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB strategies.

The dataset used in analysis contained the entire 141 responses since no questions had any missing responses. The participants’ ages varied between 25 and 64 years, the percentage of men and women participants was quite balanced (50.4% female participants and 49.6% male participants). As for the number of years that participants have been working with their current employer, 38% of respondents revealed that they have been working in the same organization for more than 10 years. Among

the 141 respondents 28% were single, 66% married, 1% widowed and 5% were divorced or separated. 3% of the respondents had more than 5 children, 64% had between 1–4 children while 33% had no children. In addition, most of the respondents (56%) had a master’s degree. Table 1 presents detailed descriptive statistics of the sample.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the sample ($N = 141$).

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	71	50.4
	Male	70	49.6
Age	18–24 Years	6	4.3
	25–34 Years	32	22.7
	35–44 Years	51	36.2
	45–54 Years	37	26.2
	55–64 Years	15	10.6
Highest qualification	PhD	42	29.8
	Master’s Degree	79	56
	Bachelor’s Degree	19	13.5
	High School Graduate	1	0.7
Years with current employer	Less than a year	7	5
	2–5 Years	38	27
	6–10 Years	42	29.7
	Over 10 Years	54	38.3
Hours worked per week	Less than 34 h	50	35
	36–40 h	54	38.6
	More than 40 h	37	26.4
Marital status	Single	39	27.6
	Married	93	66
	Widowed	2	1.4
	Divorced/Separated	7	5
Number of children	No children	47	33.6
	1–4 Children	90	63.6
	More than 5 Children	4	2.8
Supervisor’s gender	Male	87	61.7
	Female	54	38.3
Total		141	100

It implies a sample power of 99.83%, with an effect size of 0.15 and an error of 0.05, obtained using G*Power software (Faul et al. 2009). Power indicates the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when it is false. In the social sciences, power levels above 80% are required (Cohen 1988).

4.1. Analytical Approach

Data was analyzed using structural equation modeling with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) in the latest release of the software application SmartPls 3.3.7 (Ringle et al. 2015). PLS-SEM is a method that allows researchers to calculate very complex models that have many constructs and indicator variables, particularly when the aim of the analysis is prediction. Partial least squares (PLS) is used to assess the measurement model which represents the relationships between the observed data and the latent

variables including internal consistency (composite reliability), convergent validity (indicator reliability and average variance extracted), and discriminant validity. In addition, structural equation modeling (SEM) is used for the evaluation of the structural model and assessing the significance and relevance of hypothesized relationships.

4.2. Evaluation of Measurement Model

In order to prevent the common method variance (CMV), the full collinearity test was administered. The occurrence of a VIF greater than 3.3 is proposed as an indication of pathological collinearity, and as an indication that a model may be contaminated by common method bias. In our model, all VIFs resulting from a full collinearity test were lower than 3.3 (Table 2), and the model can be considered free of common method bias. In addition, the anonymity of the response and confidentiality has been restated throughout the data collection stage.

Table 2. Full Collinearity Test.

	DEMO	EWLB	IWLB_	OP	RDP	SS
DEMO		1.0519				
EWLB					1	
IWLB_		1.9083				
OP		2.0105				
RDP						
SS		1.1213				

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support.

Table 3 displays the factor loadings of items belonging to a common construct, Cronbach's alpha, rho A, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) for the latent variables. It is recommended to use loadings having values above 0.70 since they provide acceptable item reliability (Hair et al. 2019). The values presented in Table 3 indicate that not all indicators exhibit a sufficient level of reliability (i.e., values close to 0.70). Therefore, all factor loadings having a value less than 0.65 were deleted. In addition, in order to measure the internal consistency of constructs, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were used and the results are shown in Table 3. Although some researchers prefer using Composite Reliability (CR) rather than Cronbach Alpha, "it may be used as a conservative measure of internal consistency reliability" (Hair et al. 2016, p. 101). When the values of Alpha and CR are above 0.70, this indicates a good measure of internal consistency of a construct. The CR values shown in Table 3 are all satisfactory. As for the average variance extracted (AVE), its value should be higher than the minimum threshold of 0.5. In our case, the obtained AVE value for all constructs is higher than 0.5. Therefore, it can be said that convergent validity was established.

In addition to the above validity measures, discriminant validity was used to measure the degree of differences between the overlapping constructs (Hair et al. 2014a). Discriminant validity is usually assessed using two main criteria: cross-loadings, and Fornell and Larcker's (1981). Using the cross-loadings approach, "an indicator's outer loading on the associated construct should be greater than all of its loadings on other constructs (i.e., the cross loadings)" (Hair et al. 2016, p. 105). Table 4 demonstrates that all indicators load more strongly on their corresponding constructs than they do on other constructs. Therefore, discriminant validity was established. As for the Fornell-Larcker testing criterion, in order to assess discriminant validity, the square root of each construct's average variance extracted (AVE) is compared with its bivariate correlations with all opposing constructs (Grégoire and Fisher 2006). Discriminant validity is established when the AVE square root for each construct is greater than the values of its bivariate correlations (Ringle et al. 2010). For instance, Table 3 shows that the AVE for the research and development performance (RDP) construct is 0.85, and its square root is 0.92 as displayed in Table 5. This value is greater than RDP's bivariate correlations with all opposing constructs and demonstrates that discriminant validity has been established for the RDP construct.

Table 3. Evaluation of Measurement Model.

Construct	Item	Indicator	Loadings	t-Statistic (Bootstrap)	p-Value	Cronbach's Alpha	qA	CRAVE
Employee's Demographic (Demo)	What is your gender	Demo1	1			1	1	1
	My personal life suffers because of work	EWLB1	0.63	5.8	0.0000			
Employee Work-life Balance (EWLB)	My job makes my personal life difficult	EWLB2	0.49	3.44	0.0006			
	I often neglect my personal needs because of work	EWLB3	0.51	3.39	0.0007			
	I often put my personal life on hold because of work	EWLB4	0.43	2.76	0.0059			
	I often struggle to balance between work and non-work	EWLB5	0.54	4.7	0.0000			
	I am satisfied with the amount of time I spend on non-work-related activities.	EWLB6	0.24	1.75	0.0800			
	My personal life is draining my energy which is affecting my work	EWLB7	0.67	7.47	0.0000	0.79	0.82	0.83
	I often feel too tired to be effective at work	EWLB8	0.57	5.32	0.0000			
	My work suffers because of my personal life	EWLB9	0.65	7.23	0.0000			
	I often find it hard to work due to personal matters	EWLB10	0.72	8.6	0.0000			
	My personal life gives me energy for work	EWLB11	0.43	3.71	0.0002			
	My job gives me energy to pursue my personal activities.	EWLB12	0.36	2.5	0.0126			
	My personal life boosts my mood at work	EWLB13	0.44	3.55	0.0004			
	My job boosts my mood	EWLB14	0.47	4.73	0.0000			
	Supervisor's Support of WLB (SS)	My supervisor understands and supports employees' family responsibilities	SS1	0.81	4.72	0.0000		
My supervisor allows employees to use flextime to attend to family matters		SS2	0.81	3.8	0.0002	0.84	0.84	0.89
My supervisor is understanding/accommodating when family matters pull me away from work		SS3	0.85	4.15	0.0000			
My supervisor facilitates work-life balance		SS4	0.80	4.14	0.0000			
Individual Work Life Balance (IWLB)	Maintaining a positive outlook	IWLB1	0.81	7.27	0.0000			
	Minimizing stressful situations	IWLB2	0.79	8.18	0.0000	0.72	0.73	0.87
	Arranging time to fit in others' work commitments	IWLB3	0.52	3.9	0.0001			
	Juggling with childcare responsibilities	IWLB4	0.54	4.49	0.0004			

	Meeting lifestyle commitments	IWLB5	0.47	3.6	0.0003		
	Meeting community commitments	IWLB6	0.43	2.87	0.0043		
Organizational provisioning of WLB strategies(OP)	A flexible working arrangement	OP1	0.75	8.61	0.0000		
	Health and wellness programs	OP2	0.78	9.91	0.0000		
	Health and wellness programs at work	OP3	0.71	9.15	0.0000		
	Childcare benefits or services	OP4	0.75	9.03	0.0000	0.86	0.870.89 0.58
	Taking leaves from work as required	OP5	0.60	5.37	0.0000		
	Organizational understanding and support	OP6	0.80	9.64	0.0000		
	Availability and usage of work-life balance policies	OP7	0.76	9.02	0.0000		
Research and Development Performance(RDP)	Getting new products or services to market quickly.	RDP1	-0.15	0.32	0.7433		
	Creating with radical/breakthrough technologies	RDP2	0.69	1.38	0.1674		
	Bringing breakthrough technologies to market	RDP3	0.89	1.50	0.1325		
	Attracting and enrolling more students	RDP4	-0.16	0.35	0.7206	0.94	1.010.95 0.85
	Gaining a higher market share	RDP5	0.69	1.38	0.1679		
	Increasing employee job satisfaction	RDP6	-0.14	0.31	0.7563		
	Improving university ranking	RDP7	0.89	1.50	0.1326		

Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support.

Table 4. Cross Loadings.

	DEMO	EVLB	IWLB_	OP	RDP	SS
DEMO1	1	-0.0428	0.1748	0.1562	0.0115	0.0999
EVLB7	-0.098	0.8203	-0.3751	-0.4047	-0.1052	0.1419
EVLB9	0.0054	0.832	-0.3092	-0.3113	-0.0027	0.2664
EVLB10	-0.0027	0.8175	-0.2499	-0.3438	-0.1839	0.1672
IWLB1	0.1448	-0.3615	0.9034	0.4916	0.112	-0.0969
IWLB2	0.167	-0.3126	0.8684	0.6796	0.0072	-0.1248
OP1	0.0778	-0.2314	0.5499	0.7383	-0.0044	-0.1651
OP2	0.1004	-0.3279	0.4732	0.7959	0.0085	-0.2341
OP3	0.071	-0.3964	0.3854	0.7311	0.1571	-0.2908
OP4	0.1413	-0.2948	0.4284	0.7456	0.0095	-0.1791
OP6	0.2612	-0.368	0.6089	0.7983	-0.0856	-0.2274
OP7	0.0437	-0.3132	0.5659	0.7681	-0.0755	-0.2391
RDP2	0.0425	-0.0725	0.0633	-0.0274	0.8831	0.2194
RDP3	-0.0082	-0.1276	0.0616	0.0211	0.965	0.1821
RDP5	0.0364	-0.0765	0.0673	-0.0234	0.8827	0.2129
RDP7	-0.0025	-0.1387	0.0733	0.03	0.964	0.1817
SS1	0.0961	0.2104	-0.1709	-0.301	0.1286	0.8097
SS2	0.1103	0.1446	0.042	-0.1767	0.211	0.8047
SS3	0.0734	0.1923	-0.0589	-0.2529	0.203	0.8588
SS4	0.0544	0.1927	-0.1766	-0.2303	0.1534	0.8092

Note. Demo = Demographics; EVLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies = OP; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support.

Table 5. Fornell and Larcker's Criterion.

	DEMO	EVLB	IWLB	OP	RDP	SS
DEMO	1 *					
EVLB	-0.0428	0.8233 *				
IWLB	0.1744	-0.3919	0.8861 *			
OP	0.1536	-0.4328	0.6524	0.7633 *		
RDP	0.0115	-0.1201	0.0715	0.0079	0.9246 *	
SS	0.0999	0.2292	-0.1238	-0.2993	0.2076	0.8209 *

Note: * Square root of AVE. Square root of AVE (diagonal); Off diagonal are Pearson correlations; Demo = Demographics; EVLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support.

However, recently a new approach to assess discriminant validity has been proposed, which is able to achieve higher specificity and sensitivity than the two previously mentioned methods. This other measure for discriminant validity is the Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation (Henseler et al. 2015). HTMT "is the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators across constructs measuring different phenomena), relative to the average of the monotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators within the same construct)" (Henseler et al. 2015, p. 121). Thus, HTMT is used to estimate the correlation between constructs. If two constructs' indicators have an HTMT value smaller than 1, then these constructs are different from each other because their true correlation is different from 1 (Henseler et al. 2015). Some authors propose a threshold value of 0.85 (Clark and Watson 1995; Kline 2011), while others propose a value of 0.90 (Gold et al. 2001; Teo et al. 2008). Table 6 shows that all HTMT values between constructs are below

0.85 and 0.9. Thus, based on HTMT.85 and HTMT.90 criteria, discriminant validity has been established.

Table 6. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

	DEMO	EVLB	IWLB	OP	RDP	SS
DEMO						
EVLB	0.0491					
IWLB	0.2062	0.5048				
OP	0.1637	0.5156	0.8421			
RDP	0.0248	0.1460	0.0808	0.0929		
SS	0.1109	0.2858	0.1771	0.3348	0.2444	

Note. Demo = Demographics; EVLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support.

4.3. Evaluation of the Structural Model

In order to measure the structural model, this paper adopts the coefficient of determination (R^2 values), effect size (f^2 values), blindfolding (Q^2 values), model fit indicators, and structural model path coefficients (Figure 2).

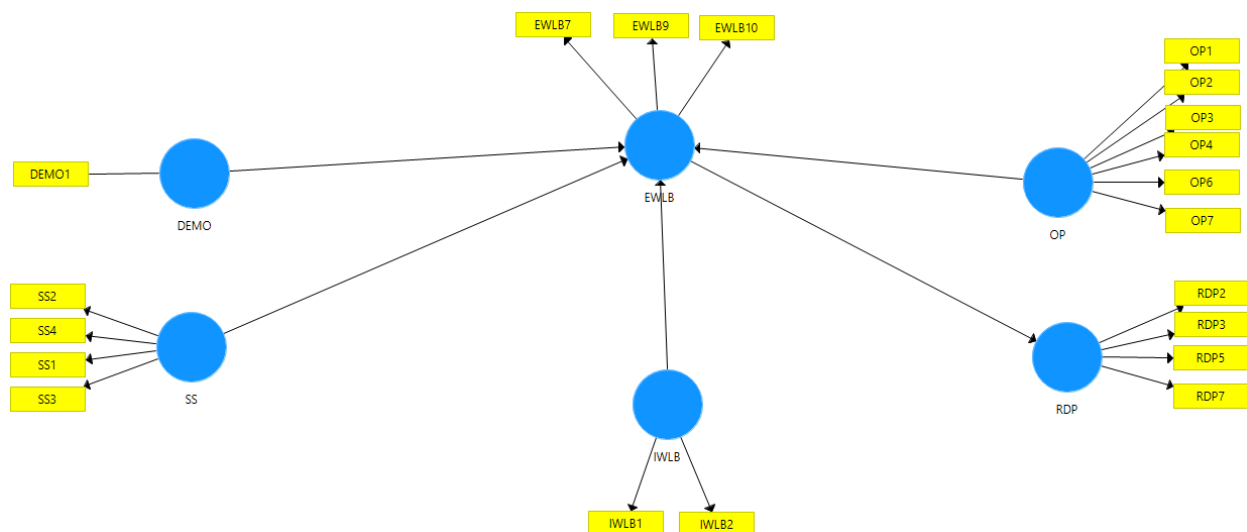


Figure 2. Structural model.

The details of each step involved in the evaluation of the structural model are listed below.

Step 1: Coefficient of determination – R square

In this step, we measure the R^2 value of the endogenous constructs, which is a measure of the model's explanatory power (Shmueli and Koppius 2011). Although acceptable R^2 values are subject to the research context, values of R^2 vary between 0 and 1, where higher values can be considered more substantial (Hair et al. 2014b; Sarstedt et al. 2014a), i.e., R^2 values that are close to 1 indicate that there is an almost perfect relationship between the model and the data. Accordingly, Chin (1998) considers R^2 values of 0.670 to be substantial, values around 0.333 average and values of 0.190 and lower weak. Table 7 shows the values of R^2 where $EVLB = 0.218$ and $RDP = 0.014$. Thus, EVLB explains 21 per cent of the variance in organizational research and development performance, which implies that EVLB has an average impact on organizational research and development performance.

Table 7. R² matrix.

	R SQUARE	R SQUARE ADJUSTED
EWLB	0.2189	0.1959
RDP	0.0144	0.0073

Note. EWLB = Employee work-life balance; RDP = Research and development performance.

Step 2: Effect size—F square

The effect size can be determined by calculating Cohen’s f^2 . The effect size measures if an independent construct has a significant impact on the dependent construct (Cohen 1988). The effect size f^2 of less than 0.02 shows that a predictor latent variable has no effect on an endogenous latent variable. However, values between 0.020 and 0.150, between 0.150 and 0.350 and above 0.350 represent small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively (Sarstedt et al. 2017). The results show that IWLB has a small effect on EWLB ($f^2 = 0.0264$), and OP has a small effect on EWLB ($f^2 = 0.0505$). As for SS, it has no effect on EWLB ($f^2 = 0.0165$). In addition, EWLB has no effect on RDP ($f^2 = 0.0146$). Finally, Demo has no effect on EWLB ($f^2 = 0.0006$).

Step 3: Blindfolding—Q square

Q² values are constructed using the blindfolding method, which is an iterative process that provides an internal measure of consistency between the original and cross-validation predicted data. In general, Q² values should be greater than zero for a particular endogenous construct to indicate predictive accuracy of the structural model for that construct. As a guideline, Q² values greater than 0, 0.25 and 0.50 represent small, medium and large predictive relevance of the PLS-path model. In blindfolding, the recommended omission distance (D) ranges between 5 and 7 (Hair et al. 2016). In this paper, blindfolding procedure was applied with D = 7. As demonstrated in Table 8, the construct cross-validated redundancy is greater than zero for all six endogenous variables, explicitly, DEMO, EWLB, IWLB, OP, RDP, and SS, indicating the path model’s predictive accuracy.

Table 8. Construct cross-validated redundancy (Q²).

CONSTRUCTS	SSO	SSE	Q ² (=1 – SSE/SSO)
DEMO	141	141	1
EWLB	423	367.3242	0.1316
IWLB	282	282	1
OP	846	846	1
RDP	564	559.3784	0.0082
SS	564	564	1

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor’s support.

Step 4: Model fit indicators

The model fitness of this work was examined using the standardized-root-mean-square-residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), chi-square (χ^2) and RMS Theta values. The purpose of SRMR is to estimate the fitness of the model. According to Hu and Bentler (1998), if the values of SRMR are less than 0.08 ($SRMR \leq 0.08$), the model is adequate to fit. In this study, the values of SRMR were 0.07, which showed the model had good fit, whereas the values of NFI and Chi-Square were equal to 0.7 and 337, respectively (Table 9), with Chi-Square significance level of 0.001. The closer the NFI to 1, the better the fit. NFI values above 0.9 usually represent acceptable fit. Furthermore, the value of RMS theta was used to appraise the outer model residuals’ correlation degree (Lohmöller 1989). When the RMS theta value is closer to zero, the PLS-SEM model will be considered to have a good fit. RMS theta values below 0.12 indicate a well-

fitting model, whereas higher values indicate a lack of fit (Hair et al. 2014a). According to Table 9, the RMS Theta value was around 0.1046, which means that in order to exhibit the global PLS model validity, the required goodness-of-fit for the PLS-SEM model is sufficient.

Table 9. Model Fit Summary.

MODEL CRITERIA	COMPLETE		
	SATURATED MODEL	ESTIMATED MODEL	p-VALUE
SRMR	0.0751	0.0922	
CHI-SQUARE	337.8954	346.6713	0.001
NFI	0.9035	0.8958	
RMS THETA	0.1046		

Step 5: Path coefficients

Bootstrapping was used to evaluate the path coefficients' significance and assess their values, which usually fall in the range of -1 and +1, where coefficients closer to +1 indicate a strong positive relationship and coefficients closer to -1 indicate a strong negative relationship (Hair et al. 2014b; Sarstedt et al. 2014b). While taking into consideration the significance and relevance of the inner model relationships, the results showed (with sub samples 5000, no sign changes option, Bca bootstrap confidence interval and two-tailed sample test at 0.05 significance level) that only two structural relationships between variables are significant. Thus, it can be seen that, out of the six hypotheses, two are supported, since they have a critical t-value of more than 1.96 and *p* values less than 0.05 (refer to Table 10). For the hypotheses reading, the predicted hypotheses of this study were (i) H1, supervisor's support of WLB is positively related to employee WLB, (ii) H2, individual's WLB is positively related to employee work-life balance, (iii) H3, organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to employee work-life balance, (iv) H4 employee work-life balance (EWLB) is positively related to organizational research and development performance, (v) H5, individual's WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to organizational research and development performance, and (vi) H6, organizational provisioning of WLB strategies is positively related to organizational research and development performance. Table 10 shows the results of the analysis where only H1, H2 and H3 are accepted which confirms that supervisor's support of WLB and individual's WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB strategies have significant relationship in affecting employee work-life balance with *p* values of 0.0058, 0.0000, and 0.0000, respectively.

Table 10. Path Coefficients Matrix.

CONSTRUCTS	PATH COEFFICIENTS	T-STATISTIC (BOOTSTRAP)	P VALUES ***
SS → EWLB	0.2470	2.7715	0.0058
IWLB → EWLB	-0.3876 ***	5.8018	0.0000
OP → EWLB	-0.4344	7.3428	0.0000
EWLB → RDP	-0.1769 ***	1.1817	0.2379
IWLB → RDP	0.1088 ***	0.7985	0.4250
OP → RDP	-0.2224	0.9098	0.3634

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor's support. *** *p*<.05

Consequently, evidence allows the acceptance of H1 with respect to supervisor's support of WLB is positively related to employee work-life balance. Supervisors play a vital role in helping employees deal with the organization's work-family policies, and are therefore considered a mediator between the organization and its employees. As a result, employees' work attitudes and their performance in the workplace are affected by their supervisor's support (Mills et al. 2014). Our study is consistent with the job-demands resources (JD-R) model, which suggests that the more supervisors support employees, the higher are their levels of work-life balance (Seiger and Wiese 2009). Our results also confirm Talukder and Galang (2021) findings, which indicate that employee performance not only depends on supervisor support but also on their WLB and this can either positively or negatively influence the relationship between supervisor support and employee performance.

H2 and H3 can also be accepted, as individual's WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB strategies are positively related to employee work-life balance. The results confirm Pienaar's (2008) finding that individuals can efficiently play several roles in both life and work areas when they are capable of managing work/life interface, attaining an improved level of affective well-being (see also arguments by Culbertson et al. 2012; Warr 1990, 2007). Our research is also in line with Zheng et al. (2016) finding, which states that employees' life coping strategies (LCS) were positively related to their overall well-being. Their results show that organizational WLB policies have a direct impact on improving individual coping abilities, and an indirect effect on improving employee well-being. These results strongly suggest that both individuals and organizations are responsible for the employee well-being and WLB.

On the other hand, the results obtained do not allow the acceptance of H4 as they show that the employee WLB is not related to organizational research and development performance. This is because there are so many different factors that influence the organization's ability to innovate besides employees WLB such as technology, innovation process, corporate strategy, organizational structure, organizational culture, resources, knowledge management, and management style and leadership (Smith et al. 2019). In addition, H5 and H6 are not supported as the results show that the individual's WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB strategies are not related to organizational research and development performance. This is because organizational performance must take into consideration several perspectives, including career motivation, employee attendance, employee recruitment, employee retention, organizational commitment, and productivity (Wong et al. 2020).

4.4. Multigroup Analysis

Multigroup analysis (MGA) is a method to test predefined data groups to verify the presence of significant differences across group-specific parameter estimates (e.g., outer weights, outer loadings, and path coefficients) (Hair et al. 2017). In this study, MGA is used to test hypothesis 7 and find out if there are significant gender differences in the relationship between EWLb and organizational R&D performance. In addition, MGA is also used to find out if there are significant gender differences in the relationship between supervisor support and employee WLB, individual WLB and employee WLB, and individual WLB and RDP. The permutation test results in Table 11 confirm that there is no significant difference between Female and Male groups for the structural model, as the "Permutation p -value" is above the 0.05 cutoff. By examining the t -parametric column, we realize that the difference is not significant. Therefore, we may say that the same PLS structural path model applies to both Males and Females. In addition, the p -values show whether the path coefficient was significantly larger in the first group (i.e., Female) than in the second group (i.e., Male). The results indicate that the relationship between EWLb and RDP does not have a significant p -value ($p > 0.05$), which implies that both male and female employees who adopt work-life balance strategies can help improve organizational innovativeness and R&D performance.

The multigroup analysis shows that the H7 cannot be accepted; with which evidence has been found of the non-existence of difference between men and women in terms of the impact that the employee WLB strategies have on the organizational R&D performance. As for gender and supervisor support, women may experience less support than their male counterparts do since most supervisors are male (European Commission 2015), and research shows that men have a more masculine understanding of leadership than women do (Koenig et al. 2011). Consequently, female subordinates are less likely than men to be appointed to top roles by male supervisors. Therefore, male supervisors may provide less support to female subordinates. Since these gender differences in female subordinate support are caused by gender biases that men hold more intensely than women, it is anticipated that female supervisors are more supportive of female subordinates than male supervisors are. However, our research is not in line with previous research as it shows that there is no relationship between supervisor support and employee WLB based on employee gender. As for gender differences in WLB, some studies that have observed both Western and Eastern cultures have concluded that there is no evidence of real or substantial gender differences (Milkie and Peltola 1999; Sav and Harris 2013). According to these studies, the experience of WLB is related to job and life satisfaction equally in both men and women. Our research is consistent with these studies as it shows that the effect of gender remains insignificant when balancing work and family responsibilities. Casper and Harris (2008) found that among women, the establishment of WLB is positively related to organizational commitment when this balance is mediated by organizational policies. Regarding the organizational provisioning of work-life policies (WLPs) and its effect on male and female employees WLB, findings by Casper and Harris (2008) are supported by the suggestion by Allen (2001) which affirms that the existence of WLB in an organization mediates the relationship between WLPs, as well as affective commitment and job satisfaction. In addition, research has revealed that WLB is related to organizational commitment (Lingard et al. 2007; Kim 2014). Our research is in line with past studies as it demonstrates that the effect of WLPs is the same on both male and female employees. As far as the relationship between EWLBS and organizational R&D performance is concerned, researchers confirmed that female leaders who successfully balance work and family responsibilities are more innovative (Busaibe et al. 2017). The implementation of WLB practices will help male and female employees in finding a balance between work and family responsibilities, which contributes to improved employee productivity and considerable improvements in business outcomes. WLB policies, such as supporting employees with caregiving responsibilities, can minimize or eliminate levels of work-life conflict, and thereby increase employee productivity with innovation and organizational effectiveness (Beauregard and Henry 2009). Our research is consistent with previous studies as it demonstrates that there are significant gender differences in the relationship between EWLBS and organizational R&D performance.

Table 11. Results of Multigroup Analysis (MGA).

	Path Coefficients Original (Female)	Path Coefficients Original (Male)	t-Statistic Female (Bootstrap)	t-Statistic, Male (Bootstrap)	Diff.	t-Parametric	t-Permutation	P-Henseler	Bias-Corrected 5–95% Confidence Intervals Female	Bias-Corrected 5–95% Confidence Intervals Male	Significance (Yes, No)
EWLB → RDP	-0.3114	-0.0982	1.2121	0.4989	-0.2132	0.6492	0.2510	0.5173	[-0.4712, 0.4606]	[-0.2616, 0.4007]	No
SS → EWLB	0.2746	0.2805	1.1411	2.3342	-0.0059	0.0221	0.9640	0.8256	[-0.5812, 0.4135]	[-0.4214, 0.4283]	No
IWLB → EWLB	-0.4912	-0.3087	6.0034	2.6155	-0.1825	1.2830	0.2060	0.2016	[-0.6114, -0.3023]	[-0.4793, -0.1769]	No
OP →EWLB	-0.4366	-0.4469	4.6444	5.7261	0.0102	0.0843	0.9480	0.9389	[-0.6001, -0.2501]	[-0.5732, -0.307]	No
IWLB → RDP	0.1611	-0.1886	1.1876	0.8037	0.3497	1.3040	0.2100	0.1944	[-0.3358, 0.3231]	[-0.5097, 0.2750]	No
OP → RDP	0.2607	-0.2078	1.2614	0.9702	0.4686	1.5856	0.4070	0.1151	[-0.4915, 0.3598]	[-0.3313, 0.4393]	No

Note. Demo = Demographics; EWLB = Employee work-life balance; IWLB = Individual work-life balance; OP = Organizational Provisioning of WLB Strategies; RDP = Research and development performance; SS = Supervisor’s support.

5. Discussion

A growing number of employees are seeking flexible work arrangements as they aspire to find the right balance between their work and personal life. Therefore, companies are trying to accept this request for flexibility as it may lead to a number of performance benefits as well as better candidates. Systematic reviews on the topic of WLB show that women are more likely to face negative career consequences due to flexible working since they are the ones responsible for domestic work and thus, will not be able or willing to adhere to the ideal worker culture, where work obligations are above everything else (Chung 2019). Thus, the findings of the study were in alignment with past research, demonstrating that females, as both employees and individuals, are more affected by WLB strategies than men are. Furthermore, organizations that implement gender diverse leadership and work-life balance strategies enjoy a variety of advantages such as enhanced performance, organizational branding, and perceptions regarding organizational desirability by internal and external stakeholders (Kalysh et al. 2016; Olsen et al. 2016). According to researchers, work-life balance programs (WLBP) are considered among the set of quality and flexibility enhancement management practices that have the potential to provide organizations with competitive advantages. Therefore, this research is also in accordance with past research since it shows that employee WLB is positively related to the organization work-life balance practices. In previous research, supervisors' support was found to be directly related to employees' well-being, including life satisfaction, job satisfaction and family satisfaction (Achour et al. 2017). Our study is in line with previous research showing that there is a positive relationship between supervisor's support and employee WLB. We have also examined in this study the relationship between employees' WLB and organizational research and development performance and deduced that employee WLB and organizational R&D performance are not significantly related. This result is in line with Park and Rahmani (2020) finding, which indicates that in order for organizations to improve their innovation performance, they should not over-capitalise on employees' WLB. They should focus instead on improving employees' satisfaction with career opportunities.

5.1. Theoretical and Managerial Implications

WLB is an important aspect of a healthy work environment. With an adequate work-life balance, employers can obtain a variety of benefits from higher productivity, to lower absenteeism, and higher commitment and motivation to work. Our study shows that organizations can promote WLB by offering flexible work arrangements such as health and wellness programs, childcare benefits or services and taking leaves as required. In addition, as women tend to take on more responsibility and workload in their private lives, when organizations improve their WLB policies, they can retain their women talent and close the gap between the proportion of women in junior management and in senior management. Both men and women must have equal access to working flexibly, without negative judgements or

consequences for career advancement. According to a study conducted by Zurich Insurance Group in collaboration with the UK government's Behavioral Insight Team, when organizations offered flexible work arrangements, the number of female applicants to leadership roles increased by 20%. Thus, when organizations offer work benefits that fit flexibly around family life, women can advance into higher positions. In addition, supervisors must set an example to their subordinates on how to balance work and life. Our study shows that supervisors can improve their employees' WLB by understanding and supporting their family responsibilities, allowing them to use flextime to attend to family matters, and by accommodating when family matters pull them away from work. Organizations must keep in mind that non-work-related activities would allow employees to expand their networks, develop new skills and gain a greater sense of personal and professional purpose.

Furthermore, research shows that the competencies that employees possess usually power organizational R&D performance (Barney and Wright 1998; Van Esch et al. 2016). However, there is a lack of empirical research on the impact of employees' WLB on organizational R&D performance. Our findings show that employee WLB is significantly related to organizational R&D performance. In addition, both male and female employees who adopt work-life balance strategies can help organizations improve their innovativeness and R&D performance. Therefore, in order for organizations to excel at R&D, their main concern should not only be how to recruit and retain individuals with outstanding research skills (Torbeck et al. 2013) and intensive experience in their fields (Thompson and Heron 2006; Coccia 2008). Nevertheless, they must ensure that their employees are not trapped in the work-life balance conflict and are provided with the adequate work life balance policies that go beyond traditional practices such as health and wellness programs, childcare benefits and flexible work arrangement.

Although WLB can influence the lives of men and women differently, it is definitely a job necessity that goes beyond gender (Greenhaus et al. 2003; Evans et al. 2013). This is because the idea of the "traditional family" is disappearing, dual-earner couples are on the rise, and the number of single parent households has increased. Thus, employees must find a good balance between work and the growing household responsibilities (Lazar et al. 2010)].

5.2. Limitations and Future Research

This study has some limitations that insinuate avenues for new research. First, future research should evade the usual problem of selecting only one organization to conduct the study, and it should expand the analysis to several organizations. Furthermore, future research can also acknowledge the nature of positive spillovers between WLB, job satisfaction and organizational R&D performance. In addition, it is recommended that future studies use longitudinal analysis in order to examine if the implementation of work-life balance policies improve

organizational R&D performance over time. Although this paper offers an original contribution to the existing literature, especially in Lebanon, we hope that organizations can revisit their work life balance policies to foster a healthy work environment and train their managers on how to detect problems such as burnout and providing support to their team members. In conclusion, our study empirically supports the relationship between employee WLB and organizational provisioning of WLB. Hence, the results from this study suggest that employee-friendly policies and practices are important tools that can help reach desirable outcomes within the workplace.

Author Contributions:

“Conceptualization, Lina Shouman; methodology, Lina Shouman.; software, Lina Shouman.; validation, Lina Shouman. and Antoni Vidal-Suñé.; formal analysis, Lina Shouman.; investigation, Lina Shouman.; resources, Lina Shouman.; data curation, Lina Shouman.; writing—original draft preparation, Lina Shouman.; writing—review and editing, Antoni Vidal-Suñé. And Amado Alarcón Alarcón; visualization, Antoni Vidal-Suñé.; supervision, Antoni Vidal-Suñé. And Amado Alarcón Alarcón.; project administration, Lina Shouman.; funding acquisition, not available. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.”

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ARTICLE 2

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Female bosses, leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction: A bibliometric review

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Abstract

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The aim of this paper is to review research available on gender and leadership styles as determinants of subordinates' satisfaction. While the noticeably inadequate representation of women in executive positions in organizations has been the topic of study for many years, the problem seems to be even more severe at board levels. Therefore, this paper aims to investigate the status of gender diversity in organizations and its implications to subordinates' performance. With this purpose, we analyzed numerous research papers and identified the barriers that can impede the inclusion of women on corporate boards of directors, as well as the drivers that might improve females' representation on boards. We also examined some of the factors that influence subordinates' satisfaction including satisfaction with their leader, their leader's performance, and their own performance.

Keywords: gender diversity, leadership style, subordinates' satisfaction, bibliometric review

1. Introduction

As women increasingly progress within management positions, how gender and leadership style affect subordinates' satisfaction remains an important concern. Accepting female and male behavior is influenced by the way people perceive gender stereotypes. The way people perceive gender stereotypes influences of acceptable female and male behavior (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Numerous descriptive norms or stereotypes are associated with men and women. For instance, "agentic" characteristics are strongly attributed to men such as affirmation, power, confidence, and being in control. Conversely, women are supposed to display "communal" characteristics which is concerned mainly with the wellbeing of others. These characteristics include affectionate, compassionate, sympathetic, and nurturing (Eckes, 1994).

These gender stereotypes are not only prominent in the society but spills over into the workplace (Gutek & Morasch, 1982). Females leaders are negatively influenced by the notion of incongruity between gender and leadership roles. The role congruity theory affirms that there exists a prejudice toward female leaders which stems from a discrepancy between her gender and the management roles appointed to her in the workplace (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Precisely, when female leaders show agentic leadership characteristics, they initiate incongruity between their gender and managerial tasks, which causes negative perceptions to their followers (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). Although female and male leaders might carry out the same leadership behaviors, it is essential to evaluate the effects of these behaviors in order to comprehend how the leader gender can change the associations between leadership behaviors and subordinate performance (Eagly, 2007).

Several articles have attempted to link between gender, leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction. However, a thorough review that analyzes the drivers, barriers, benefits, and conflicts does not exist. Thus, this paper attempts to use a bibliometric analysis on 185 studies to systematically collect available evidence and visualize the literature's conceptual, intellectual and social structure related to gender, leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction. Hence, four research questions are outlined to direct the study:

RQ1. What are the major drivers that empower female leaders in organizations and what impact do they have on the career advancement of women?

RQ2. What are the major barriers that hinder female leaders in organizations?

RQ3. What are the methods and techniques that influence women's rise to leadership positions?

RQ4. Is there a relationship between the leader's gender, their leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction?

RQ5. Considering the gaps in the structure and evolution of female leadership research, what are the theoretically and practically relevant future directions for research on female leadership?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Types of leadership styles

Giving leadership a definition that includes all the different properties or attributes of leadership might be challenging since the subject of leadership is considered manifold. Some people describe leadership as a series of actions or steps that are taken in order to motivate people. Consequently, motivation will make people want to attain desired aims (Pardey, 2007). Conversely, Arnold et al. (2005) think that the emphasis needs to be placed on the leader's power or ability to achieve goals as well as their distinctive attribute or characteristic. The field of organizational behavior has a predominant visualization of leadership and believes that the most prevailing leadership style is the charismatic/transformational style (Judge et al., 2008), a style that is frequently compared with a transactional style. Charismatic leadership is a leadership style that inspires subordinates to abandon the needs or desires of one's self while dedicating their time and power to help their leaders achieve their causes. Subordinates are inspired to act this way by their leader who expresses a stimulating vision of a desired future (Anderson & Sun, 2017). Charismatic leaders are excellent role models because they set personal examples. They believe that passion is the fuel to any idea, have a strong sense of self and are willing to take on risks for the benefits of their followers. In addition, charismatic leaders encourage a collective identity and promote group cohesiveness (House & Podsakoff, 1994). As for the transactional leadership

style, in his 'full-range' leadership model, Bass hypothesized that it is characterized by two factors: management by exception (MBE) and contingent reward (Bass, 1985). Contingent reward refers to how the leader utilizes constructive transactions to reinforce subordinates' positive performance: the degree to which the leader supports followers to identify with the leader and meet desired outcomes (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). On the other hand, management by exception is considered more corrective than constructive: the degree to which the leader corrects a follower for failure to perform as expected, and it is divided into two categories (active and passive) (Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

2.2 Leadership style and gender

Examining followers' relations with their leader and the leadership style they adopt has become normal practice in the last few years; thus, it was essential for researchers to explore the different leadership styles such as the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire (Bass, 1990). Transformational leaders encourage creativity among their followers, and inspire them to explore new ways to achieve their goals and learn. In addition, they boost team performance and create higher levels of commitment to organizational mission. Conversely, transactional leaders value order and structure, and they do not take their interactions with their followers flippantly (Bass, 1990). Conflict in leadership style is another behavioral difference between males and females (Brewer et al., 2002), as well as the organizational citizenship behaviors (Kidder, 2002), or the basic interpersonal communication styles that do not fall under the umbrella of formal leadership styles but do have an impact on how females are perceived as leaders. For instance, women are more likely than men to communicate with others by implementing core values such as respect and inclusiveness (Matthew et al., 2013), and contrary to their male counterparts, women tend to make unbiased decisions staying away from the dominant approach (Luxen, 2005). Women are less likely to self-promote than men do, less likely to initiate discussions in order to settle differences, and less likely to claim what is theirs (Bowles et al., 2007). It is also more probable that women choose positions that are lower down the career scale and tend to shy away from taking on the roles of leaders (Fletcher, 2001).

2.3 Leadership style and employees' job satisfaction

Research in the 1920s focused on leadership traits and emphasized that leadership style is an important factor since it may affect employee's satisfaction regarding their job. Studies that were conducted during the 1950s and 1960s investigated how the leadership style plays a vital role in influencing employee's job satisfaction (Northouse, 2021). One of the main contributors to overall employee high self-esteem and job satisfaction is the quality of the relationship between the leaders and their employees (De Cremer, 2003). When employees feel empowered and appreciated by their leaders, this leads to

stronger job performance, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization. Subsequently, employees' job satisfaction and commitment depend on the leadership style of their managers (Al-Ababneh, 2013). Yousef (2000) deduced that employee job satisfaction is correlated with their manager leadership style and hence managers need to implement the appropriate leadership behavior. An analysis of relevant material shows that by adopting transformational leadership which inspires change, managers increase employees' expectations and recognition of their work and enhance their job satisfaction (Omar, 2011). Research recommends that one of the effective ways that can help managers in increasing followers' satisfaction is thorough employing transformational leadership. Likewise, Mahmoud (2008) assumed that transformational leadership style has significantly positive effect on employees' job satisfaction.

3. Methodology

Bibliometric analysis is a quantitative tool/measure that analyzes scientific activities in a research field using mathematical and statistical techniques (Roemer & Borchardt, 2015). Bibliometrics provides researchers with knowledge on a particular area of research, which can be categorized by papers, authors, and journals (Merigo & Yang, 2017). Two commonly used approaches in bibliometric analysis are based on performance analysis and graphic mapping of science or bibliometric mapping (Noyons et al., 1999). Thus, this study conducted a review of female leadership research using bibliometric methods to show the originality and pertinence of the research questions (i.e. drawing conclusions from concretely empirical evidence related to female leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction in the workplace). Next, we discuss our search methods, inclusion and exclusion criteria, sample, and data analysis.

3.1 Selecting databases

Categorizing journals into research areas is a vital factor for bibliometric studies. A classification system can help with various issues. For instance, it can be utilized to determine research areas (Waltman & Van Eck, 2012), to assess and compare the effect of research across scientific fields (Bornmann & Leydesdorff, 2015), and to study the overlapping of research disciplines (Porter & Rafols, 2009). The two most significant multidisciplinary bibliographic databases, Web of Science (WOS) and Scopus, both provide a journal classification system.

In order to collect inclusive data from both databases, a two-step approach was implemented. First, the keywords that were relevant to the search were selected, and

second, performing a content analysis of the articles was necessary in order to ‘cross-check’ if the databases identified the right articles for our analysis.

3.2 Selecting keywords

The systematic search was carried out using the Boolean operators (AND and OR), and the keywords or descriptors: ‘female leaders’ or ‘female management styles’ or ‘gender quotas’ or ‘men management styles’ or ‘women glass ceiling’ or ‘women on boards’. It was necessary for these keywords to appear in the article title for both Scopus and WOS.

Since the latter half of the 20th century, women's representation in the workplace has greatly increased. However, a notable underrepresentation of females in leadership positions still exists. Thus, the keyword ‘female leaders’ was used because it provides insight into the issues surrounding women and leadership, leader–subordinate gender dyads, as well as the differences in gender, leadership style and leader effectiveness.

Previous research on professional management indicate that male leaders give preferentiality to a direct, task-oriented and authoritarian style, while female leaders favor a more indirect, people-oriented, democratic approach (Ladegaard, 2011). Thus, the keywords ‘female management styles’ or ‘male management styles’ were included in the search to examine the behavior of male and female leaders performing similar tasks and how male and female leaders’ management styles are interpreted and responded to by male and female employees.

Gender quotas are commonly recommended to address persistent gender differences in managerial roles. However, it is ambiguous how quotas for female managers affect organizations and whether quotas improve or damage relationships between bosses and their subordinates. For instance, a common form of quota used to remedy gender inequalities is female gender quotas. However, it might instigate hostility in the workplace if subordinates consider it to be promoting unqualified superiors (Ip et al., 2020). Based on this finding, the keyword ‘gender quotas’ was included to identify relevant research on female performance in leadership and hierarchical relationships.

Several metaphors are used to describe women's experience and the barriers they face in leadership. One of those metaphors is the glass ceiling, which was selected due to the substantial scientific production constructed on it and since it provides a better understanding gender inequalities in the workplace. When it comes to female obstacles

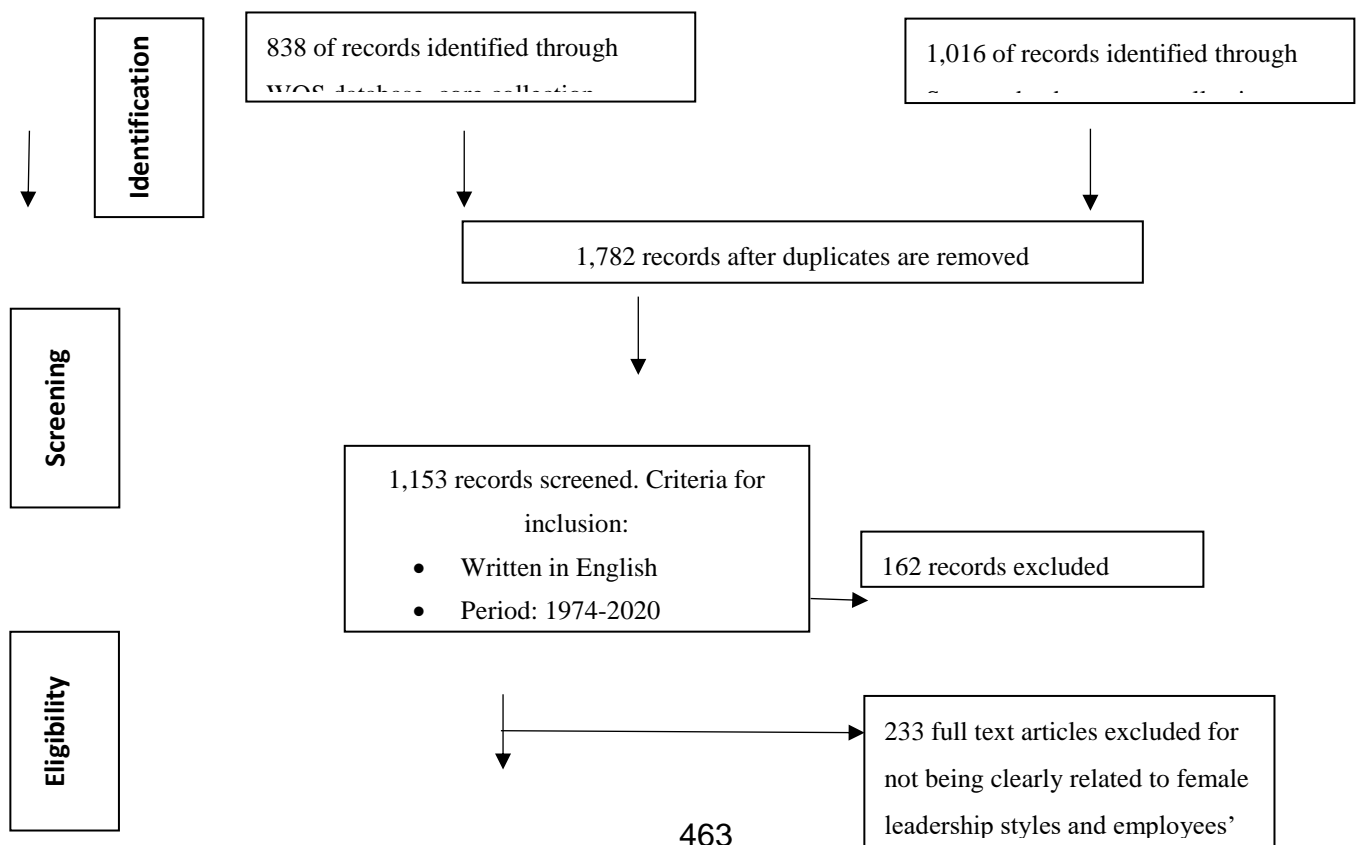
to leadership roles, the glass ceiling metaphor is the most tackled in scientific research (Sabharwal, 2015).

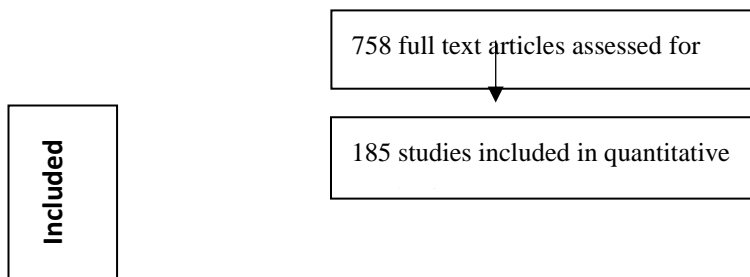
Traditionally, women continue to be underrepresented in senior corporate leadership roles, such as board of directors (Adams, 2016). Therefore, there is an important question that need to be addressed, which is, how diversity in the boardroom affects female workers. Thus, the keyword ‘women on boards’ was used in the search to find out if women on boards of directors inspire their subordinates, help them gain increased motivation, and becoming more effective themselves.

3.3 Selecting criteria for inclusion

This review is conducted using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) Statement (Moher et al., 2009). The PRISMA entails 27-item checklist and a four-phase flow diagram (see Figure 1) that determines how to identify, select, and critically assess relevant research, and how to combine and study data from the studies included in the review. It also offers a layout for presenting information, which has directed this article.

Figure 1. Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (PRISMA).





Source: Adapted of Moher et al. (2010).

The searches for published studies were carried out in an organized manner, following the order of the databases mentioned above. The identification phase resulted in 838 items in the WOS database and 1,016 in Scopus. After removing duplicates, the number of included items was equal to 1,782. The inclusion criteria were then implemented to only incorporate research articles that are written in English between 1974-2020. Thus, 162 articles were excluded and 991 remained eligible. Lastly, and after screening the research articles titles and abstracts, 233 articles were removed for not being exactly related to female leaders, female leadership styles and employees' satisfaction. The final sample consisted of 185 articles after eliminating the ones with no available data.

3.4 Selecting descriptors for analysis

Descriptors were identified in each article; these were used to classify the articles, and are then used as analysis variables in the following section. These descriptors are:

- *First authorship*
- *Keywords*
- *Research field*
- *Research methodology*
- *Year of publication*
- *Number of citations*
- *Journal articles*

Subsequently, a database was created in Excel to organize and classify all the relevant articles with the purpose of categorizing them according to where they best fit in the interrelationships found among female leaders, leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction. Different types of software were utilized for statistical and graphic processing. Graphs and tables were created using Excel, network analysis using VOSviewer (Van Eck & Waltman, 2010) and geographical analysis with mapchart.net. As for the geographical analysis, it was done with mapchart.net.

4. Findings and discussion

4.1 Initial data statistics: top journals, top authors

The first section aimed to analyze the journals and main authors with publications on female leadership. The total number of journals or proceedings with at least one article related to female leaders is 386. Since there is a wide range of sources, only those having five or more articles were displayed in Table 1. Using this selection, the list is reduced to 26 sources.

Table 1. List of journals and proceedings that provided at least five relevant articles (number of articles and citations).

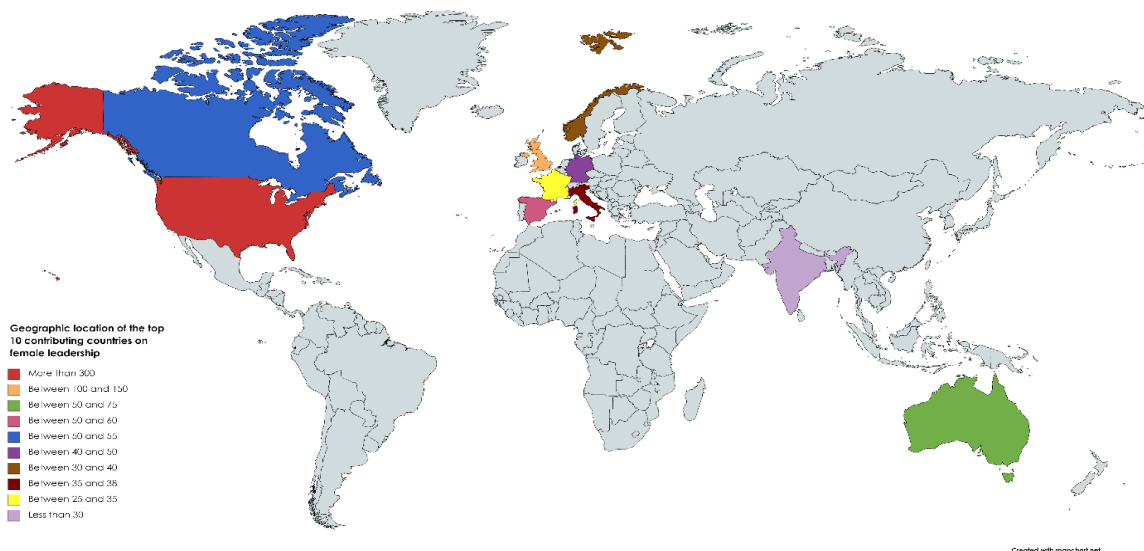
<i>Journal</i>	<i>Total Articles</i>	<i>Total Citations</i>	<i>Citing Articles</i>	<i>AVG*</i>
1 Sex Roles	49	1,629	1,442	33
2 Leadership Quarterly	42	4,023	3,233	95
3 Gender in Management	23	268	248	11
4 Leadership & Organization Development Journal	20	247	237	12
5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	18	104	101	5
6 Sustainability	18	49	49	2
7 Journal of Applied Psychology	16	2,333	1,841	145
8 Journal of Business Ethics	15	1,093	1,052	72
9 Gender Work and Organization	14	313	289	22
10 Psychology of Women Quarterly	14	776	736	55
11 Journal of Social Issues	11	1,006	1,507	145
12 Academy Of Management Journal	11	631	583	57
13 Current Psychology	10	13	13	1
14 Journal Of Organizational Behavior	10	497	496	49
15 British Journal of Management	7	645	609	92
16 Journal of Occupational And Organizational Psychology	7	322	317	46
17 Human Resource Management	6	160	154	26
18 Journal of Business Research	6	56	52	9
19 Journal of Management	5	343	329	68
20 Business Horizons	3	19	18	6
21 International Journal of Manpower	3	16	16	5
22 American Sociological Review	2	180	178	90
23 Strategic Management Journal	2	28	28	14
24 Career Development International	2	6	6	3
25 Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management	1	61	61	61
26 Journal of Corporate Finance	1	32	32	32

*Average (AVG) = Total number of papers/total number of citations

4.2 Geographic distribution

Taking into consideration the authors' country of affiliation, it is evident that the interest in studying the field of female leadership is worldwide because there are more than 82 countries that have published at least one article related to the topic. According to Figure 2, the United States is the country where the largest number of articles have been written (more than 350 articles), followed by United Kingdom (more than 100 article), Australia (more than 60 articles) and Spain (more than 50). The increase in the number of papers related to female leadership in India is remarkable since they did not have any published articles about this topic between the years 1970 and 2000. In this section, we also address multinational collaborations.

Figure 2. Geographic location of the top 10 contributing countries on female leadership.



Of the 73 countries obtained, 27 of them are connected in a way that they have coauthors from different countries of affiliation. In Figure 4, the size of the nodes signifies the number of papers published by a country and the arcs represent the links between countries. The normalization method implemented is the default option of association strength (Van Eck & Waltman, 2017). Based on this method, we were able to identify seven clusters. Our 27 countries form seven clusters meaning that they have many similar attributes to be grouped. They are broken down in Table 3 and displayed in Figure 3.

Co-authorship analysis is a strong tool that is used to evaluate collaboration trends. In this paper, it has demonstrated the importance of territorial similarities in the network analysis clusters. Cluster 1 (Austria, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland) and Cluster 4 (Belgium, Finland, Netherlands and Spain) might be explained by the countries proximity and historical relationship. However, it is noteworthy that co-authorship is of international nature. Countries from the first three Clusters 2, 5 and 7 belong to five different continents. In addition, those belonging to Clusters 1, 4 and 6 are from three different continents.

Figure 3. Country co-authorship network of female leadership related papers.

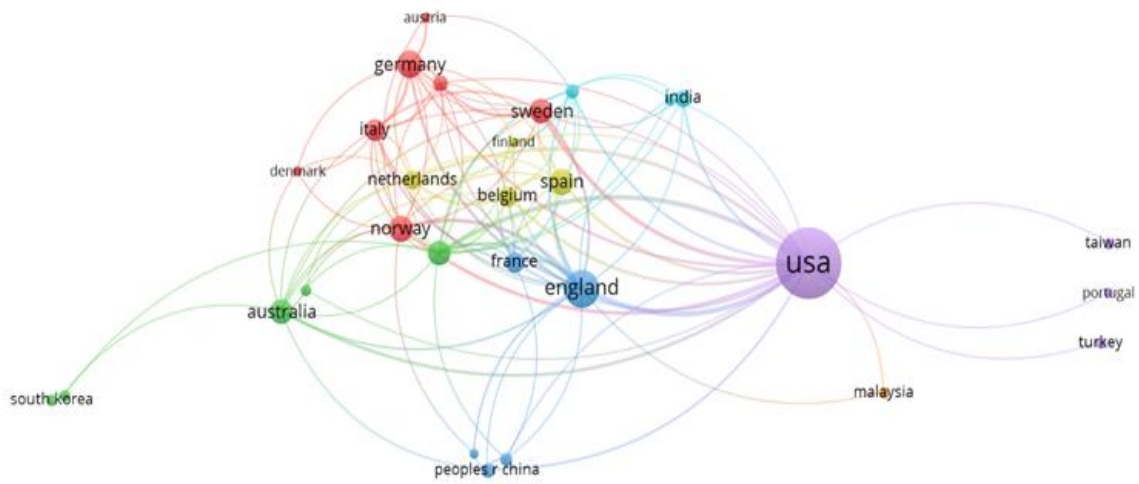


Table 3. Clusters of co-authorship by countries (clusters with more than 1 item).

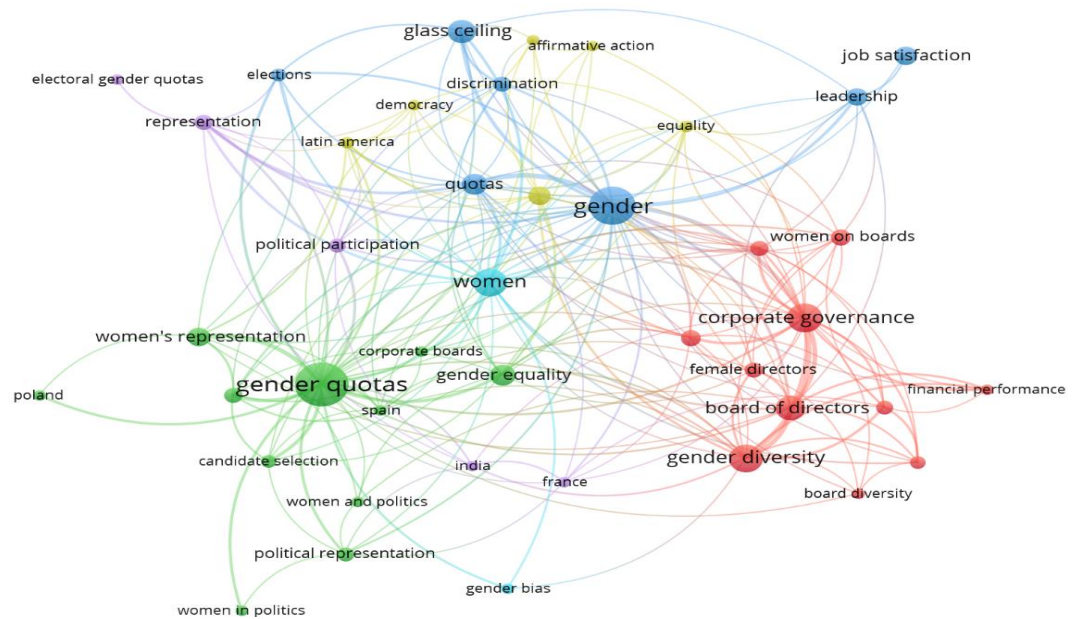
Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4	Cluster 5	Cluster 6	Cluster 7
Austria	Australia	England	Belgium	Portugal	Brazil	Malaysia
Denmark	Canada	France	Finland	Taiwan	India	
Germany	Japan	Pakistan	Netherlands	Turkey	Poland	
Italy	New Zealand	China	Spain	USA		
Norway	South Korea	Scotland				
Sweden						
Switzerland						

4.3 Keywords analysis of female leadership literature

The purpose of this subsection is to recognize the most common keywords that the authors have utilized to describe the paper. From this analysis, it is likely to detect the most frequently recurring topics in the field. The co-occurrence keywords network of female leadership created by VOSViewer is presented in Figure 4. The first cluster colored in red and labeled as corporate governance consists of 11 items, including board diversity, women directors, and gender diversity among others. The second cluster colored in green and labeled as gender quotas consists of 11 items and, their main

keywords are gender equality and women's representation. The third cluster colored in blue and labeled as gender comprises 7 items. Its biggest nodes are glass ceiling, quotas and job satisfaction. The main component of the fourth cluster colored in yellow is gender quota and includes equality and gender gap. The fifth purple cluster purple labeled as representation include five items. Among them there are keywords related to electoral gender quota or political participation. Finally, the sixth cluster colored in Turquoise and labeled as women includes only two items related to women and gender bias. Authors tend to identify their research with the field of study, so it is unsurprising that the highest frequency keyword is gender quotas (81 occurrences and 95 total link strength).

Figure 4. Co-occurrence keywords network.



4.4 Discussion

The main articles analyzed revealed that Eagly and Karau (2002) wrote the top cited document. The article outlines the unique challenges and obstacles that women encounter as they rise into leadership roles, such as role incongruity between gender and leadership roles, and unfavorably evaluating female leaders because of their gender role violation. One consequence is that female leaders may provoke negative reactions even when they are positively evaluated for fulfilling this role. Other consequences include women facing more impediments in attaining leadership roles and becoming effective in these roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Other top cited articles by Eagly et al (2003) on the different leadership styles implemented by men and women uncovered that female leaders displayed more transformational leadership qualities than male

leaders. They also realized that female leaders somewhat exhibited a more contingent reward behavior of transactional leadership. This combination may resolve some of the discrepancies between the requirements of leadership roles and the female gender role and therefore permit women to succeed as leaders (Eagly & Carli, 2003). As for the impact of leadership styles on subordinate job satisfaction, it is obvious that subordinates normally favor high-quality supervisor-subordinate relationships. However, gender may affect the explicit characteristics that subordinates use to make this decision, which may influence significant workplace processes and outcomes (Collins et al., 2014). However, studies revealed that employees enjoy greater job satisfaction when their leaders have elements of both task and relationship orientations (Madlock, 2008). In summary, varying leadership styles may influence employee job satisfaction differently. Nevertheless, an organization situational setting may determine which style replaces the other. Therefore, when organizations attempt to influence employee job satisfaction, they need to be aware of the different existing leadership styles (Loganathan, 2013).

5. Theoretical elements of our research paper

It is undeniable that women's rise to leadership positions has been increasing incrementally, although female leaders continue to be evaluated more negatively than their male counterparts, even when carrying out the same leadership roles (Eagly & Chin, 2010). Evidently, the advancement of women to leadership roles triggers a number of benefits to organizations. However, bias against women leaders, which goes against the prevalent concept of "female advantage" in leadership (Leslie et al., 2017), derives partially from the "think manager–think male" bias suggesting that men are perceived more qualified to occupy leadership positions than women (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Thus, the purpose of the current review is to attain a better understanding of the drivers and barriers that affect female progression into executive positions, as well as the methods and techniques that foster female leadership.

5.1 Drivers and barriers to female leadership in organizations

Since the advancement of women into executive roles is influenced by a variety of factors, it is essential to investigate the major drivers that empower female leadership in organizations. Female empowerment is driven by both internal and external factors, which include implementing work-life balance strategies, promoting positive role

models, reforming laws and regulations, redistributing unpaid work, and changing the workplace culture, practice and policies.

Work-life balance (WLB) has been a main point of interest in several research studies, which confirmed the correlation of work life balance with different variables relating to work (Oludayo, et al., 2015). New research on leadership has emphasized women's struggles with juggling work and family responsibilities, conforming to gender stereotypes, and being expected to adopt status quo leadership approaches (Martin al., 2018). When women are presented with opportunities to balance their various responsibilities and are endorsed by supportive environments, they can successfully assume their leadership duties and improve their unique leadership identity (Brue & Brue, 2018).

Research suggests that women's lack of participation in certain academic or high-status fields is partly related to the social psychological barriers created by gender stereotypes. For instance, the underrepresentation of females in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and executive positions may indicate to women that they lack the skills required to prosper in these domains (Eagly et al., 2000). Therefore, the exposure of women to female role models inspires them to participate in STEM and high-status positions where they are usually underrepresented and negatively stereotyped (Bagès and Martinot, 2011). Furthermore, women who hold senior leadership positions function as role models and indicate to women who work further down in the organizational pyramid that organizational career paths can be available to them as well (O'Neil & Hopkins, 2015).

It is evident that the position of women in boardrooms has progressed significantly following the implementation of laws that require corporations of a certain size to conform to quotas for women (Ouedraogo, 2018). Once organizations develop an environment that favors the diversity of thought, they will begin to benefit from the diversity of their boards. When boards are extremely cohesive, they are more inclined to overturn disagreeing opinions, and individuals are less likely to defy the norms that are already in place (Stahl et al., 2010).

Irrespective of the relationship that exists between gender and societal roles, there is still a disparity between how they perform in a business environment. There is a struggle to comprehend what traits women need to have and demonstrate to be successful leaders (Pafford, & Schaefer, 2017). The journey of female leaders is not easy and barriers are inevitably to be encountered. Gender discrimination against female leaders not only hurts women leaders: this discrimination also reduces the likelihood of women pursuing leadership positions in the first place. Women are cognizant of gender discrimination against female leaders and this understanding weakens their leadership ambitions (Fisk

& Overton, 2019). For decades, the compensations received by males have been bigger those of their female counterparts, bringing about a gender gap in pay. Authors such as Groshen (1991), Johnson & Solon (1986), and MacPherson & Hirsch (1995), among others, verified that men had higher salaries than women did, such as women were working in jobs where average remuneration was lower. Therefore, in those occupations having a high concentration of men, the gender gap in pay displayed will be greater. The underrepresentation of females in leadership positions and in STEM domains steers people to form stereotype-based justifications that males hold and females need the skills and qualities necessary to succeed in those domains (Koenig & Eagly, 2014). As a result, the matter of stereotypes provides practical explanations for group disproportions that exist in the ordinal attributes of groups, thus validating those outcomes as natural and unavoidable. (Davison & Burke, 2000).

5.2 Methods and techniques that foster female leadership in organizations

It is about high time that organizations acknowledge what is limiting the development of women professionals and take concrete and steady steps to promote a women-friendly environment. Only then can they benefit from the influence of gender diversity. A number of tools, methods and techniques can help nurture affinity for the growth of women. Table 4 shows a review of the literary contributions to exhibit the numerous ways in which the implemented techniques and methods can help foster female leadership.

Table 4. Methods and techniques that foster female leadership.

Methods and techniques	Benefits	References
Recruitment methods	Build a more gender diverse workforce	Reskin & McBrier (2000)
	Identify skills gaps	
	Enable higher quality selection	Kirton & Healy (2009)
	Offer organizations greater protection in a climate of increased equality regulations	Wolf & Jenkins (2006)
Computational modeling and simulation techniques	Improve the precision and transparency of organizational research	Wang et al. (2016)
	Facilitate efforts to examine the extent to which barriers in leadership development and organizational entry result in unique patterns and explanations for female leader underrepresentation	
	Provide patterns and explanations for female leader underrepresentation	Samuelson et al. (2019)
Government initiatives	Legislation generates the most substantial change to the representation of women on boards	Adams & Kirchmaier (2013)
	Reduce female political, social, and material disadvantages	Fine et al. (2020)
	Reduce barriers to women accessing the many	

	goods of paid work Give women greater influence in high-level decision-making	Meeussen et al. (2020)
Leadership development training	Improves women’s leadership effectiveness Helps hidden leaders to be brought into a state of becoming leaders Fosters greater self-awareness, expand learner’s perspective of context, and aid in formulating alternative strategies Helps attenuated leaders become aware of blind spots about themselves and their context Allows discouraged leaders to feel grounded in their values, interests, or talents Inspires discouraged leaders to persist despite the lack of support in their external environments	Debebe (2017)
Diversity programs	Decrease gender stereotypes and other prejudiced attitudes Increase awareness and appreciation of differences between individuals Identify stereotypes and promotes inclusion, rather than highlighting differences between men and women Reduce implicit stereotypes, which occur on an automatic, unconscious level	Duehr & Bono (2006) Jayne & Dipboye (2004) Greenwald & Banaji (1995)
Inclusion of women	Capitalizes on the full range of intellectual capital available to the firm Equips employees to recognize gendered structures from a critical perspective The business appears as a relevant and attractive place to work for young, well-educated potential leaders	Daily et al. (1999) Scholten & Witmer (2017)

5.3 Gender, leadership style and job satisfaction

Gender is a psychosocial construct that is shaped by a person’s experience of being male or female (Winter, 2015). In the workplace, gender plays a significant role in defining leadership roles and determining the relationships that leaders build with their employees. In addition, gender norms may endorse behaviors that result in leaders being excluded, included, marginalized or even rejected (Leitch & Stead, 2016). The leader-follower relationship is a key determinant to organizational effectiveness, employee wellbeing, overall job satisfaction, and commitment. A leader’s management approach may have a negative or positive impact on employee motivation within an organization. Therefore, leadership style is an important factor that may affect employee job satisfaction as well as their trust and support in achieving organizational goals (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016). According to Babalola (2016), “Adopting a leadership style that works best for an organization and its employees remains one of the most effective and efficient means by which organizations achieve their objectives and that of employees’ satisfaction”. Job satisfaction is an emotional state that depends

upon the leadership style of managers and can have a positive and significant effect on organizational commitment and performance (Alghamdi et al., 2018).

In conclusion, different leadership styles have different impacts on employee job satisfaction (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016). There is a significant difference between a leader's gender and their effectiveness, communication style, ability to persuade, trustworthiness. Gender can also influence certain characteristics that subordinates use to make judgments, which can have a significant impact on organizational processes and outcomes (Collins et al., 2014).

6. Research gaps and directions for future research

Research studies suggest that there are gender differences in leadership styles, behavior characteristics, and other features associated with leaders. To encourage research in the field of female leadership, leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction and to provide researchers and practitioners with a clear sense of what to research, we highlight some fields of interest for future research:

1. Relationship between leadership styles and gender roles.
2. Valuation of female leaders by their female subordinates: breaking the "Queen Bee syndrome".
3. Intergenerational changes in the consideration of gender roles.
4. Relationship between sociocultural factors and labor equality between men and women.
5. Effects of female leadership on the firm's culture.
6. Effects of hiring women for managerial positions: the glass ceiling.
7. Effects of female leadership on the organizational performance.

7. Conclusion

In this study, we carried out a bibliometric review on female leadership, leadership styles and subordinates' satisfaction. We identified 185 papers published between 1974 and January 2020 that were considered relevant to our review. The obtained results revealed that although the majority of countries have been showing interest in studying the field of female leadership, the United States is the country where the largest number of articles have been written. In addition, the analysis of the co-occurrence of author keywords revealed that the most common keyword that authors have utilized to describe their papers on female leadership is gender quotas, which often appeared together with the keywords women's representation, and gender equality. As for the findings from papers suggest that female empowerment is driven by both internal and external factors. And while role incongruity between gender and leadership roles is an obstacle that women encounter as they rise into leadership roles (Eagly & Karau, 2002), many other

barriers continue to hinder women's rise to leadership positions. However, a variety of tools, methods and techniques can create an enabling environment for women to hone their leadership.

As for the leader's gender, their leadership style and subordinates' satisfaction, previous research indicate that the leader's gender and/or leadership style have a variety of influences on their subordinates. Findings also show that women leaders are more inclined to exhibit a democratic style and features of transformational leadership than their male peers do (Langton & Robbins, 2007). The recognized gender differences between men and women can influence, somewhat, the leadership styles implemented by each, because of the perceived role incongruity as well as the carryover of gender-based roles into the workplace and the internalization of gender-specific norms. Consequently, leadership styles have a great influence on employees' job satisfaction and on their confidence and effectiveness in achieving organizational goals (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016). However, leaders should not be solely concerned with their leadership style, but also with the workplace culture and try to build intercultural competence.

This review provided us with the opportunity to determine the existing gaps and to open the research arena for future research in the area of female leadership. We identified seven major gaps that are appropriate for further research. Future research can examine how leadership development training and diversity programs can be used to help not only female leaders but female subordinates as well.

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ARTICLE 3

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Women and Leadership:

The Approbation of Female Bosses by Female Subordinates

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Abstract

The situation of professional women has changed dramatically over the last few decades. The career ambitions of women have greatly expanded and the way women have evolved in their careers is remarkable. Women are no longer restricted to traditional female jobs such as teachers or nurses. They are currently present in industries and occupations that were previously male dominated such as pharmacy, police officers, entrepreneurs, etc. However, despite all the efforts that have been exerted to reinvent the workplace for greater gender equality, the workplace still has not become more accepting of women. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to examine some of the challenges that continue to hinder women advancement to leadership roles, why some women do not accept having a female boss and whether female subordinates are always supportive of their female boss. Thus, a survey was distributed to male and female Lebanese employees working in different sectors such as education, financial services,

technology, and telecommunications. The study reports that female respondents showed a preference for male over female managers. In addition, male employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses than male employees who had male bosses. Similarly, both male and female subordinates preferred working with female leaders who exhibited masculine traits such as assertiveness and risk-taking. The study has suggested implications for researchers and practitioners in the field of human resource management and experts in the area of organizational development.

Keywords: gender equality, leadership roles, female boss, female subordinates

Introduction

“The connections between and among women are the most feared, the most problematic, and the most potentially transforming force on the planet.”

(Adrienne Rich, *Disloyal to Civilization: Feminism, Racism, Gynophobia*; Chrysalis, 1979).

Females can be strong allies at work for other females. However, the belief that women are supportive of other women may not be the actual reality and thus, the “ally” notion is substituted with the “queen bee”. Some even demonize women as evil stepmothers rather than idealize them as fairy godmothers. Consequently, they will be forever penalized for not playing the role of helping other women advance at work (Mavin, 2006, 2008).

Women who dissociate themselves from other women in male-dominated organizations are given the “queen bee” label. Such women often take on masculine traits in order to thrive in male-dominated work environments (Kanter, 1977, 1987; Staines et al., 1974). Over the last few decades, many researchers have emphasized the nature of women's negative intra-gender work relations. In workplace cultures that are more masculine, women refuse to help other women rise up the ranks. Instead of taking on responsibilities for championing other women in management, women tend to treat other women as being of little worth by disparaging derogatory comments about them (Nieva & Gutek, 1981).

In general, people presume that women bosses are more compassionate, more likely to attend to subordinates' needs, more tolerant and giving than their male counterparts (O'Leary & Ryan, 1994). However, when female leaders do not take on masculine traits that are attributed to success, they encounter difficulty in fulfilling their

managerial role (Mavin, 2006). Those gender-specific theories that perceive women as being less qualified for leadership roles may cause women to feel disconnected and estranged from other women. This may also result in a conflict because women cannot violate the gender role norms although the descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes indicate the characteristics that are desirable or appropriate for women and men (Eagly & Karau, 2002). In order to be promoted to leadership positions, women work hard to be viewed more competent than their female counterparts are. Therefore, when trying to modify their behavior to be more favorable to leadership (e.g. decisiveness, confidence, forcefulness, women tend to distance themselves from other women and have gender stereotypes against other women (Ellemers et al., 2004).

Some researchers have tried to explain this by stating that women tend to criticize and compete against each other more than men do, and that women will try to hinder the success of other women (Sheppard & Aquino, 2013). A recent study shows that female leaders believe they possess the masculine traits of leadership and are more work-committed than junior and that is why they tend to distance themselves from junior women. However, that they do not dissociate themselves from women who are at the same level (Faniko et al., 2015). Thus, this proposes that female leaders only stay away from women who are not as accomplished as they are and not from all women in general.

Many research papers have studied the effect of reporting to a female supervisor on female subordinates' career prospects. Yet, it is surprising that there is so little study of why women do not want a female boss and whether or not female subordinates are always supportive of female bosses. Therefore, our aim is to investigate whether the "queen bee" phenomenon stems from a general sense of competitiveness toward all women or only reveals a negative attitude toward more junior women who refuse to support their female leader.

Literature review

People tend to evaluate women leaders based on their gender and not their skills and capabilities (Eagly & Carli, 2003). Therefore, women may be perceived as not holding the required leadership qualities since "the traits commonly associated with traditional, heroic leadership are closely aligned with stereotypical images of masculinity" (Fletcher, 2002, p. 1). For instance, Mulvaney et al. (2007) argue that women are not able to advance in their careers because of the conflicts between their traditional social role of women (i.e. staying at home and taking care of the family) and the roles and responsibilities of being an employee (i.e. spending time away from home). Other researches focus on how male leaders have privileges over their female counterparts because they possess masculine capabilities (Muller-Kahle & Schiehl, 2013).

For female managers to play effective roles in the careers of female subordinates, they must obtain strong positions in organizations and later act on their motivation to advise and support female apprentices. However, still undetermined are questions about women's access to power and their motivation to aid female subordinates, leading to dissimilar views on the career impacts of having to work for a female boss (Maume, 2011).

Leadership style and gender

Examining followers' relations with their leader and the leadership style they adopt has become normal practice in the last few years; thus, it was essential for researchers to explore the different leadership styles such as the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire (Bass, 1990). Transformational leaders encourage creativity among their followers, and inspire them to explore new ways to achieve their goals and learn. In addition, they boost team performance and create higher levels of commitment to organizational mission. Conversely, transactional leaders value order and structure, and they do not take their interactions with their followers flippantly (Bass, 1990). Furthermore, the relationship between leaders and their followers has also been documented in other recent research on authentic leadership and servant leadership (Avolio et al., 2004; Greenleaf, 1977; Liden et al., 2014). The descriptive and prescriptive gender stereotypes in the workplace might lead to men and women demonstrating different behaviors in the workplace (Heilman, 1983; Eagly & Karau, 2002). It is also likely that those stereotypes might affect the daily behaviors of both men and women (ingrained in both the leader and his or her followers), and that the perceptions that people have towards a certain leadership style may be influenced by the gender of the leader endorsing those behaviors (Ayman et al., 2009).

Research that compared women and men on transformational leadership style found that women are more likely to exhibit a participative leadership style. Findings related to distinct leadership styles are still ambiguous and thus cannot be used to carry out an objective gender comparison. Notwithstanding the findings that are significant, as Eagly and Carli (2007) note "differences in men's and women's styles generally appear as mild shading, with considerable overlap" (p. 127) and some researchers who have studied gender differences believe that they have been altered beyond normal proportions (Hyde, 2005). In addition, while human behaviors, principles, and skills are important determinants of gender differences (Eagly, 2013), it is still unclear what the reason behind those differences are and whether there is a relationship between those differences and the leaders' style. The question that still awaits an answer is whether women in leadership positions are deemed as effective as men. The answer is relevant

to research pertaining to leadership as it helps them decide if equal representation of women in the workplace can have positive effects across the organization. If it becomes obvious that females lead in a style that is effective under existing conditions as some researchers believe (Eagly & Carli, 2003), there may be significant ramifications for the field of leadership studies.

In addition to studying the direct cause and effect relationship that male and female leaders have on the organizational performance, research should also take into consideration the gender differences in leadership performance. The preponderance of research investigating the impact of the leader's gender on the organizational performance reveals that the presence of female leaders on the corporate board has a significantly positive influence on the organizational performance (measured by ROA, ROE, and sales performance) (Jalbert et al., 2013; Khan & Vieito, 2013; Peni, 2014; Smith et al., 2006). However, it is worth noting that the majority of research is based on a large data set of companies operating in the United States. Thus, more research is required to reveal patterns in smaller organizations and covering more countries.

With respect to group/team processes and organizational practices, Nielsen & Huse (2010) realized that women directors are more probable to be associated with activities that improve the organization's internal processes, for example corporate governance programs and boardroom performance appraisal. The more gender-diverse the board is, the more women are likely to join monitoring committees. Female directors have fewer attendance problems at board meetings; diverse boards can be more effective than homogeneous boards when it comes to male directors' attendance to board meetings (Adams & Ferreira, 2009). Moreover, organizations with at least one female board member are less probable to remediate accounting and financial reporting. This suggests that a gender-balanced corporate board is more likely to pay attention to managing and controlling risk and is less likely to ignore alternatives to the dominant view when making decisions than all-male boards (Abbott et al., 2012; Kulik & Metz, 2015). However, Triana et al. (2014) learned that the relationship between a gender-balanced corporate board and amount of strategic change is the most negative. The authors propose that this may be the case since diverse groups have more intellectually diversity, and this might lead to having issue consenting to strategic change.

Despite the significant progresses in women's representation in management positions, women are still reluctant in accepting leadership roles. Grossman et al. (2015) and Li et al. (2020) realized that women are less enthusiastic about leading than men are. Furthermore, they feel most comfortable leading an all-female group and less at ease taking on a leadership role when group members are notified of the leader's gender. Likewise, Born et al. (2018) discovered that females are more prepared to lead a group consisting mainly of women. On the other hand, men like to occupy leadership

roles especially leading groups with consisting mainly of females. When compared to equally performing women, men rank higher as they are characterized as being assertive and having more influence. Chakraborty and Serra (2019) conducted an experiment that simulates corporate decision-making. The scenario was a replica of a real-world situation where subordinates communicate angry message to their leader. The experiment revealed women refrain from accepting leadership role due to “backlash aversion”.

Based on the above discussion, several hypotheses are presented below:

H1: Female leaders exhibit more transformational leadership qualities than male leaders.

H2: Female subordinates are supportive of their female bosses because they help reduce gender differences in organizations.

Bias against female leaders

Gender stereotypes play a significant role in defining the underrepresentation of women in leadership roles, which was highlighted in the most significant psychological theories of gender and power (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001; Heilman & Eagly, 2008; Ridgeway, 2001; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Rudman et al., 2012). For instance, three of the most eminent theories—Heilman's lack of fit model (1983), Rudman's status incongruity hypothesis (2012), and Eagly and Karau's role incongruity theory of prejudice against female leaders (2002)—all posit that since men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles, men outpace women in leadership roles. Furthermore, society has a set of ideas about how men and women behave and present themselves. Thus, women can be penalized for behaving contrary to gender stereotypes and are perceived as unlikable and unworthy of organizational rewards.

A research study conducted by Maume (1999) suggested that as the number of females increases in an organization, women are less likely than men to be appointed to leadership roles. However, another study proposes that the reason why men still greatly outnumber women in leadership positions is the persistent gender bias in organizations. When defining an effective leader, the attributes are linked to the male gender role. Consequently, female leaders suffer because inconsistencies exist between the characteristics associated with the female gender stereotype and those associated with effective leadership. Thus, because of this unconscious bias against female leaders, women often take on masculine traits (Schein, 1975). Accordingly, women struggle between keeping their traditional female social role and adopting masculine traits in

order to obtain the leadership position. If women adhere to the traditional view of the feminine gender role, they may be considered as failing to meet the requirements of their leader role. Nonetheless, if women do not behave in a feminine manner because of adopting the agentic traits of successful leaders, they risk being evaluated negatively by others. As women find themselves struggling between keeping their traditional gender role or sacrificing it for the leadership role, the role congruity theory expects female bosses to endure two types of prejudice: descriptive and prescriptive (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Johnson et al., 2008).

One type of bias is known as the implicit, or unconscious, bias that involves unconsciously giving a negative evaluation of a person based on irrelevant traits such as race or gender. Banaji and Greenwald (2013) think that implicit bias is often unnoticeable since it is manifested in people's tendency to favor members of one's own group over those in other groups. For instance, researchers discovered that male participants implicitly linked positive leadership traits (e.g. aggressive, assertive, and ambitious) to men, although they never revealed any explicit favoritism to female or male leaders. On the contrary, female participants linked females to positive leadership traits (Latu et al., 2011). Another study, aimed at examining implicit biases, used a simulated Initial Public Offering (IPO) based on a real one as an instrument to test the researcher's theory. In this scenario, researchers changed the gender of the IPO's top management team, which lead participants to consider female CEOs as less competent than their male counterparts. In addition, they regarded women's IPOs as less appealing than men's in spite of having similar firm finances and managerial traits (Bigelow et al., 2014). Likewise, a study conducted by Ratcliff et al. (2015) on the relinquishment of power revealed that both female and male leaders perceived male co-workers to be more competent than female co-workers, and were more likely to relinquish power to male co-workers than female co-workers (Ratcliff et al., 2015). Not only men are accused of biases against women in the workplace. Studies show that a significant barrier for women in the workplace is implicit bias that comes from women co-workers. For instance, the more positions a woman holds, the more likely she is to favor a man as her boss. Women have also age bias, specifically against female bosses. However, male participants were indifferent to the gender or age of their bosses (Buchanan et al., 2012). Erkal et al. (2020) observed whether gender causes a creation of biased belief about the leader's outcomes. They discovered that gender falsifies outcomes perceptions in dangerous surroundings. Similar to the unbiased Bayesian model of belief updating, when women display good outcomes their efforts are credit to luck. However, men's bad outcomes are attributed to effort. In situations in which leaders are penalized or rewarded for their performance, women receive a bonus payout lower than that of men. The authors detected the fundamental reasons behind bonus payments and realized that the outcome is important for both males and females; however, beliefs about intentions are only significant for men. Therefore, in order for women to receive a bonus they

must provide good outcomes. However, men will still receive a high bonus even if they show bad outcomes so long as evaluators regard them with a large amount of respect or admiration.

Women advancing into leadership roles is highly affected by gender stereotypes. For example, organizations do not expect women to be demanding, which affects whether they can negotiate a promotion. Negative stereotypes against women can therefore affect the career advancement of women to leadership roles (Eckel et al., 2021).

Based on the above discussion, further hypotheses are developed:

H3: Subordinates are more accepting of female leaders who have masculine traits.

H4: When stating their preference for managers in general, female subordinates will show a preference for male over female managers.

Leader's gender and subordinates' job satisfaction

The inspirational leader inspires followers by deploying several psychological techniques and employee motivation strategies to inspire teams and boost productivity. Similarly, leaders try to improve their followers' productivity by pushing them to try things that are of interest to them and giving them the opportunity to take a risk (Nicolaidis & Duho, 2019; Rao & Zaidi, 2020). Job satisfaction is a complicated phenomenon because employees may be pleased with one facet of their job but displeased with another. Thus, job satisfaction may affect employees' organizational commitment and turnover intentions, employees' participation, trust in their leader, attendance at work and productivity (Khan et al., 2018).

An effective leader creates an environment where employees can develop their independence at work, which leads to a greater workplace productivity. Conversely, ineffective leadership is linked to many negative outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, absence, mistrust in leader, corrupt and unethical behavior, and intention to quit. Trust is crucial for employee retention. Trusting that the leader has your best interest at heart enables organizations to prevent a high employee turnover rate thus increasing efficiency, performance and loyalty (Akhtar & Nazarudin, 2020).

If gender diversity leads to a workplace that promotes employee growth and goal attainment, then female supervisors should be able to enjoy more privileges and consequently, should become better at encouraging their subordinates' development and improving their engagement. Since mentorship contributes to the advancement of

individual's careers, women who hold leadership positions are expected to mentor their female subordinates, serve as an example to other women, and encourage women to pursue opportunities for career advancement (Kurtulus & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2012). One would expect that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less burnout; however, this is not the case. For instance, in her study on leadership, Applebaum (2013) talks about the chief operating officer of Facebook Sheryl Sandberg who although was present at the top of Facebook and Google, has not found a way to alter the corporate culture of either companies in a way that improves working women's lives. What is really happening? Based on several frameworks that explain intergroup behavior and intergroup communication, such as the social categorization, social identity and status characteristics theories, women's strong gender identifications may improve their support for other women but may also contribute to backlashes against women. The dynamics of social identity state that senior women are expected to help junior women resolve gender-related issues. Conversely, those same dynamics render female leaders unwilling to tackle gender-related issues. The same-sex supervisor-subordinate dyad is a source of dissatisfaction for female subordinates who keep raising standards and expectations, and for female supervisors who untiringly keep trying to escape the responsibilities of dealing with gender-related issues. Female bosses may promote gender equality policies in the workplace; however, they do not initiate them.

A study conducted by US Gallup found that employees, especially females, who work for a female boss, are more emotionally committed to the organization and its goals. Furthermore, employees who work for a female boss have improved skills and motivation (Fitch & Agrawal, 2015). When organizations have a good process that moves people through leadership channels at the right pace, they will increase the number of women in top executive roles. Previous research has shown that women's experiences are frequently under estimated by organizations who do not provide them with the appropriate leadership development skills (Clerkin & Wilson, 2017). When women support other women in the workplace, they would have enough power to become agents of change; when they work towards the common goal of reducing and eliminating gender discrimination in the workplace, they would be making a big social change impact (Cornwall, 2016). Therefore, it is posited that:

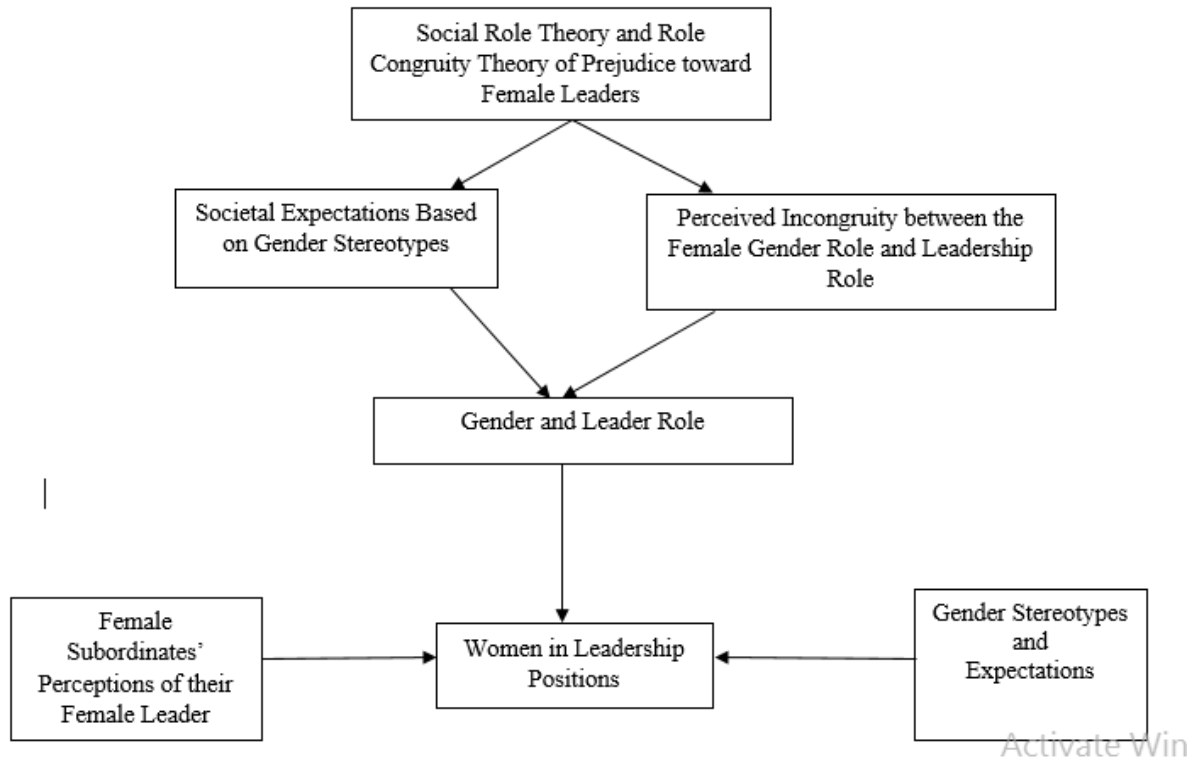
H5: The quality of the employee-supervisor relationship does not have a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction.

H6: Having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization results in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout.

An analytical framework outlining female subordinates' perceptions of their female leader is depicted in Figure 1. The focus of developing the analytical framework is not to exhaust variables, which could have contributed to subordinate satisfaction, but

determine if female subordinates' attitudes are less positive toward female than male leaders because their leadership characteristics are not aligning with their social roles; thus, female subordinates would refrain from supporting female leaders.

Figure 1: Theoretical framework.



Research methods

In order to test the hypotheses proposed for this research, data were collected using a survey questionnaire created in Google Forms, and the link to the online survey was sent via either email or instant messaging to male and female employees. All respondents were from public and private companies working in different sectors such as education, financial services, technology, telecommunications etc. To begin the survey, research participants had to give their permission to be part of the study by reading and approving an informed consent form. The survey consisted of 41 questions that included demographic questions in addition to questions related to leadership style, factors affecting subordinates' support of their boss, factors affecting subordinates' satisfaction and factors affecting subordinates' choice of leader's gender. Questions within the survey used in this research (except for the demographics section) were measured using a 7-point Likert scale having the following response choices: 1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Somewhat Agree; 4 = Neutral; 5 = Somewhat disagree; 6= Disagree; and 7 = Strongly Disagree.

To measure internal consistency and reliability, researchers use Cronbach's alpha (α) coefficient to check if surveys that use Likert scale are reliable. The value of Cronbach alpha was above the recommended level of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1975), and was equal to 0.879. Hence, the questionnaire was approved in terms of reliability. The survey was disseminated to 200 people out of whom 186 responded (response rate of 93%) of which 89 (48%) were men and 97 (52%) were women. The collected data was imported to and analyzed by SPSS (Version 20).

Measures

Leadership style and employee satisfaction through engagement was measured using 7 items, in order to examine the extent to which employee engagement moderates the explanatory relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction in the workplace. The instrument was adapted from Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, and Fette's (1990) Transformational Leadership Inventory (TLI) and their contingency reward measure of transactional leadership. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (7).

Subordinates' support of their boss was measured using 8 items, which assessed the way employees are supporting their supervisor's success. The instrument was adapted from Carson et al.'s (2007) voice scale. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (7).

Employee-supervisor relationship and employee satisfaction was measured using 6 items, which assessed the relationship between managers and employees, its effect on employees' job satisfaction. The instrument was adapted from Spector's (1985) Job Satisfaction Survey. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (7).

Female leaders having masculine traits was measured using 5 items, which assessed whether female leaders need stereotypically masculine traits such as assertiveness and competence in order to be considered successful. The instrument was adapted from Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) (1974). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" (1) to "strongly disagree" (7).

Subordinates show a preference for female managers was measured using 5 items, which assessed whether employees prefer working for a female boss. The instrument was adapted from the Women As Managers Scale (WAMS) (Peters et al., 1974). Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” (1) to “strongly disagree” (7).

Having more female leaders has a good impact on employees was measured using 7 items, which assessed whether female leaders tend to have more engaged teams and drive better job performance. The instrument was adapted from Sargent and Miller’s (1971) leader questionnaire. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given a 7-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly agree” (1) to “strongly disagree” (7).

Descriptive results

The dataset used in analysis contained the entire 186 responses since no questions had any missing responses. Participants’ ages varied between 25 and 64 years. The percentage of men and women participants was quite balanced (52% female participants and 48% male participants). As for the supervisor’s gender, 52% of participants had male supervisors while 48% had female supervisors. Table 1 presents detailed descriptive statistics of the sample.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of the sample (N = 186).

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	97	52
	Male	89	48
Age	18–24 Years	36	19
	25–34 Years	74	40
	35–44 Years	41	22
	45–54 Years	28	15
	55–64 Years	7	4
Supervisor’s gender	Female	89	48
	Male	97	52
Total		186	100

Hypothesis Testing

H1 of the research predicted that female leaders exhibit more transformational leadership qualities than male leaders do. The results presented in Table 2 of the descriptive analysis showed that leaders of both genders have obtained very close mean values in the categories of transformational leadership and authoritarian leadership. Moreover, it can be observed that male leaders have obtained higher mean values for almost all the categories of transformational leadership subscales, except for the sub-category "soliciting employee feedback". Accordingly, it can be argued that female leaders exhibit the same transformational leadership qualities as male leaders do. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Nevertheless, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 3, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. This specifies the probability associated with a zero difference in the average value of the two groups. The two-tailed p-values for all items were greater than 0.05, which indicates a very high probability of there being no difference in the average response of male and female employees. Accordingly, our results showed that male and female employees demonstrate the same behavior towards transformational and authoritarian leadership styles.

Table 2: Supervisor Gender and Leadership Style.

	Overall			Female Supervisor			Male Supervisor			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages employee involvement	186	2.44	1.510	89	2.44	1.623	97	2.44	1.407	.982
Encourages participative decision-making	186	3.30	1.803	89	3.26	1.862	97	3.30	1.803	.758
Encourages	186	3.07	1.693	89	3.02	1.725	97	3.07	1.693	.715

decentralized authority										
Encourages task-delegation	186	2.55	1.303	89	2.52	1.207	97	2.55	1.303	.753
Believes in punishment	186	4.51	1.811	89	4.51	1.797	97	4.51	1.811	.999
Solicits employee feedback	186	2.82	1.627	89	2.84	1.616	97	2.82	1.627	.838
Ignores suggestions	186	5.26	1.624	89	5.27	1.594	97	5.26	1.624	.960

Table 3: Comparison of Leadership Style Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages employee involvement	186	2.44	1.510	97	2.53	1.466	89	2.35	1.560	.425
Encourages participative decision-making	186	3.30	1.803	97	3.34	1.796	89	3.26	1.819	.758
Encourages decentralized authority	186	3.07	1.693	97	3.06	1.651	89	3.08	1.747	.946
Encourages task-delegation	186	2.55	1.303	97	2.45	1.164	89	2.65	1.439	.302
Believes in	186	4.51	1.811	97	4.56	1.768	89	4.45	1.865	.688

punishment										
Solicits employee feedback	186	2.82	1.627	97	2.97	1.591	89	2.65	1.659	.185
Ignores suggestions	186	5.26	1.624	97	5.23	1.571	89	5.3	1.688	.749

H2 predicted that female subordinates would be supportive of their female bosses because they help reduce gender differences in organizations. A two-way ANOVA analysis was conducted in order to rate the support that was attributed to male and female bosses by male and female employees. Levene’s Test for the Equality of Error Variances had a significance value $p = .539$, which was $> .05$, confirmed that the homogeneity of variance in both groups (male and female employees) had equal error variances. A two-way Anova, having employee gender and supervisor gender as independent variables and support for boss as dependent variable, revealed that (a) employee’s gender was significant, $F(1, 182) = 3.429$, $p = .018$, (b) supervisor’s gender was significant, $F(1, 182) = 1.172$, $p = .280$, (c) the combination of employee gender and supervisor gender was significant, $F(1, 182) = .412$, $p = .522$. Table 4 provides a summary of these results. When testing the null hypothesis based on the subordinate gender, the null hypothesis was rejected. Furthermore, when testing the null hypothesis based on supervisor gender, the null hypothesis was also rejected. As for testing the null hypothesis based on the interaction between subordinate gender and supervisor gender, the null hypothesis was rejected as well.

However, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 5, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that there is significant differences by gender at a 5% significance level (p-value 0.027) only when there is a need for employees to offer suggestions and help their boss when the need arises. In particular, the means in the sample for women is higher than that for men. Accordingly, our results showed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents supporting their boss with the exception of offering suggestions when necessary.

Table 4: Employee and supervisor’s gender impact on supervisor’s support.

	SS	df	MS	F	p	partial η^2
Employee Gender	5.985	1	5.985	3.429	.066	.018
Supervisor Gender	2.045	1	2.045	1.172	.280	.006

Employee Gender *	.719	1	.719	.412	.522	.002
Supervisor Gender						
Error	317.655	182	1.745			

Note: N = 186

Table 5: Comparison of Subordinates' Support of Supervisor Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Supports boss's goals	186	2.31	1.397	97	2.47	1.284	89	2.13	1.358	.081
Offers suggestions	186	2.11	1.105	97	2.28	1.125	89	1.92	1.058	.027*
Anticipates boss's needs	186	2.42	1.255	97	2.52	1.308	89	2.31	1.193	.277
Gets ahead of deadlines	186	1.99	1.088	97	1.99	1.132	89	2.00	1.044	.949
Approaches boss with concerns	186	3.06	1.621	97	3.01	1.571	89	3.11	1.682	.669
Protects boss from being blindsided	186	2.13	1.143	97	2.13	1.086	89	2.13	1.208	.996
Collaborates with boss on workplace goals	186	2.33	1.330	97	2.28	1.273	89	2.39	1.395	.558
Avoids unnecessary interruptions	186	1.94	.904	97	1.89	.815	89	1.99	.994	.443

Note: * p-value of less than or equal to 0.05, indicating statistically significant difference.

H3 predicted that the quality of the employee–supervisor relationship has a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction. A Spearman’s correlation test was conducted to measure the association between two variables (Krot & Lewicka, 2012; Binet, 1904), and it is used when at least one variable is measured on an ordinal scale (Pagano, 2012). The result (Rho = 0.000, P < 0.05) presented in table 6 shows that there is a significant positive relationship between employee-supervisor relationship and employee job satisfaction. In view of this finding, the null hypothesis stating that: “the quality of the employee–supervisor relationship does not have a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction” is hereby rejected.

Nonetheless, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 7, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that there is significant differences by gender at a 5% significance level (p-value 0.035) only when asked if management involves subordinates when taking leadership related decisions. In particular, means in the sample for women is higher than that for men. Hence, our results showed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents supporting their boss with the exception of being involved in decisions related to management and leadership.

Table 6: Correlation Coefficients between employee Satisfaction and Employee-Supervisor Relationship
ESR²

EJS¹	r = .591
	p value = .000

Note. ¹ Employee job satisfaction. ² Employee-supervisor relationship. N = 186.

Table 7: Comparison of Employee-Supervisor Relationship Impact on Employee Satisfaction Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages employees to take ownership	186	1.99	1.256	97	1.89	1.117	89	2.10	1.390	.246

Shows appreciation to employees	186	2.81	1.747	97	2.88	1.752	89	2.74	1.749	.601
Makes employees feel valued	186	2.45	1.478	97	2.62	1.454	89	2.27	1.491	.108
Improves employee development	186	2.67	1.533	97	2.74	1.536	89	2.60	1.535	.516
Involves employees with decision-making	186	3.47	1.819	97	3.74	1.827	89	3.18	1.775	.035*
Makes employees feel valued	186	2.44	1.459	97	2.49	1.339	89	2.38	1.585	.600

Note: * p-value of less than or equal to 0.05, indicating statistically significant difference.

H4 predicted that subordinates are more accepting of female leaders who have masculine traits. An independent samples t-test was carried out to test this hypothesis. The results presented in Table 8 showed that Levene's Test for the Equality of Error Variances had a significance value $p = .582$, which was $> .05$ and confirmed that the homogeneity of variance in both groups (male and female employees) had equal error variances. The results of the t-test were not significant ($t(184) = 1.433$, $p = .153$). Based on the results, the null hypothesis was accepted.

In order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 9, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that there is significant differences by gender at a 5% significance level (p-value 0.042) only when asked if women are ineffective in leadership roles because they are expected to be the primary caretakers of their family, and this affects their focus on work. In particular, the means in the sample for women is higher than that for men. Hence, our results showed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents assigning masculine traits to female leaders with the exception of considering women as being ineffective in leadership positions.

Table 8: Female Leaders Having Masculine Traits – Independent Samples t-Test

Employee Gender	Variances	Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig	Mean Difference	Standard Error
Female leaders with masculine traits	Equal Variance assumed	3.04	.582	1.433	184	.153	.318	.222
	Equal Variance not assumed			1.433	182.4	.154	.318	.222

Sources: Computed

Table 9: Comparison of Female Bosses and Masculine Traits between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Accepts assertive female leaders	186	2.87	1.619	97	3.05	1.629	89	2.67	1.594	.112
Accepts female boss who provides direction to	186	3.18	1.739	97	3.36	1.634	89	2.98	1.834	.133

employees										
Accepts a risk-taker female boss	186	3.19	1.515	97	3.34	1.506	89	3.02	1.515	.153
Thinks women are ineffective in leadership roles	186	5.37	1.876	97	5.64	1.804	89	5.08	1.920	.042*
Thinks women have the same opportunities to advance as men	186	2.29	1.598	97	2.24	1.546	89	2.35	1.659	.637

Note: * p-value of less than or equal to 0.05, indicating statistically significant difference.

H5 predicted that female subordinates show a preference for male over female managers. An independent samples t-test was carried out to test this hypothesis. The results presented in Table 10 showed that Levene's Test for the Equality of Error Variances had a significance value $p = .584$, which was $> .05$ and confirmed that the homogeneity of variance in both groups (male and female employees) had equal error variances. The results of the t-test were not significant ($t(184) = .069$, $p = .945$). Based on the results, the null hypothesis was accepted.

However, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 11, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that there is significant differences by gender at a 5% significance level (p-value 0.002 and 0.001) when asked if women should be paid less for doing the same job as men and if having more women on the board of directors can bring new experiences and approaches to the decision-making process respectively. In particular, the means in the sample for women is higher than that for men with respect to the wage gap. However, the means in the sample for men is higher than that for women with regard to having more women on the board of directors. Hence, our results showed that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents supporting their boss with the exception of items related to the wage gap and women representation on the board of directors.

Table 10: Female Subordinates Prefer Male Leaders – Independent Samples t-Test

Employee Gender	Variances	Levene's Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig	Mean Difference	Standard Error	
Female subordinates' preference for male leaders	Equal Variance assumed	3.01	.584	.069	184	.945	.017	.248	
	Equal Variance not assumed			.069	180.973	.945	.017	.248	

Sources: Computed

Table 11: Comparison of Preference of Supervisor gender Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages gender diversity in organizations	186	3.30	1.685	97	3.31	1.654	89	3.29	1.727	.945
Encourages the gender wage gap	186	6.47	1.149	97	6.72	.875	89	6.20	1.341	.002*
Promotes diversity and inclusion	186	2.15	1.366	97	1.84	1.115	89	2.48	1.531	.001*

Promotes gender equality	186	1.56	1.109	97	1.45	.990	89	1.69	1.221	.155
Resents feedback from female boss	186	3.99	1.787	97	4.09	1.768	89	3.89	1.812	.436

Note: * p-value of less than or equal to 0.05, indicating statistically significant difference.

H6 predicted that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization results in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout. An independent samples t-test was carried out to test this hypothesis. The results presented in Table 12 showed that Levene’s Test for the Equality of Error Variances had a significance value $p = .080$, which was $> .05$ and confirmed that the homogeneity of variance in both groups (male and female employees) had equal error variances. The results of the t-test were not significant ($t(184) = -.124$, $p = .901$). Based on the results, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Nonetheless, in order to determine whether any of these differences are significant by employee gender, additional analysis was carried out. As shown in Table 13, the answers of female and male employees were compared for each item to test whether they are significantly different by computing the two-tailed p-values. Results indicated that no difference in the average response of male and female employees. Accordingly, our results showed that male and female employees demonstrate the same behavior towards the impact of hiring more female leaders on employees.

Table 12: Impact of Having More Female Leaders – Independent Samples t-Test

Employee Gender	Variances	Levene’s Test for Equality of Variance		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig	t	df	Sig	Mean Difference	Standard Error
Impact	Equal Variance			-.124	184	.901	-.026	.206

of female leaders	assumed	3.101	.080					
	Equal Variance not assumed			-.123	168.721	.902	-.026	.208

Sources: Computed

Table 13: Comparison of the Impact of Female Leaders Items between Female & Male Subordinates.

	Overall			Female Subordinate			Male Subordinate			Two-tailed p-value
	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	N	M	SD	
Encourages organization to promote diversity	186	2.55	1.379	97	2.38	1.185	89	2.74	1.549	.079
Supports having more women in the workplace	186	2.67	1.401	97	2.66	1.249	89	2.69	1.556	.901
Encourages having more female leaders	186	2.46	1.312	97	2.31	1.185	89	2.63	1.425	.099
Believes female bosses support employees' career development	186	3.18	1.420	97	3.08	1.389	89	3.28	1.454	.343
Believes female leaders can ease workplace stress	186	3.19	1.381	97	3.05	1.278	89	3.35	1.478	.144
Believes female	186	3.06	1.403	97	3.04	1.391	89	3.08	1.424	.856

bosses are more likely to praise good work										
Believes female leaders influence without authority	186	2.95	1.357	97	2.90	1.365	89	3.01	1.353	.567

In summary, the research findings revealed that female leaders display the same transformational leadership qualities as male leaders do. Furthermore, results revealed that female employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses. As for the employee-supervisor relationship, the results showed that the quality of the employee-supervisor relationship has a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction. In addition, subordinates preferred working with for female leaders who exhibited masculine traits, such as assertiveness and risk-taking. When stating their preference for managers in general, female subordinates showed a preference for male over female managers. Finally, employees agreed that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout.

Discussion

Research findings on gender difference in leadership styles have generated diverse results. While some studies have deduced that males and females tend to use similar leadership styles (Dappa et al., 2019), others indicated that there is a difference. Our study findings are in support of previous research demonstrating that there are no significant gender differences in leadership styles shown by leaders (Miranda, 2019). Furthermore, Igram et al. (2018) found that there was not a substantial difference in males showing more transactional leadership qualities and females showing mostly transformational leadership qualities. Our results are in line with previous studies indicating that female leaders display the same transformational leadership qualities as male leaders do.

Although women keep rising into leadership roles and continue to make inroads into managerial positions, negative attitudes toward female leaders persist. Previous research suggests that there is a continuing and negative relationship between women's job satisfaction and having female supervisors. The magnitude is considered significant since the proportion of women reporting the highest level of job satisfaction drops between 3.7 to 6.9 percent when supervised by a woman (Artz & Taengnoi,

2016). In line with previous research, our findings revealed that female employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses than female employees who had male bosses. Similarly, male employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses than male employees who had male bosses.

Since most organizations have a hierarchical structure, it is normal for relationships between supervisors and the employees they supervise to develop (Sias, 2009). When a manager tries their best to maintain a positive relationship with their subordinate, it is more likely that their subordinate will be satisfied with their job. Perceived supervisor support reflects “an attitudinal perception that is unique to each employee, such that each employee has an idiosyncratic reaction to the actual treatment he or she receives from the organization” (Frear et al., 2018). Job satisfaction and supervisor-subordinate relationship are positively linked to organizational commitment, with job satisfaction being the greatest contributor to organizational commitment more than the other exogenous variables (Babalola, 2016). As shown in prior studies, our research did find a significant and positive effect between the quality of the employee–supervisor relationship and employee job satisfaction.

The persistent gender stereotypes associates men with agentic qualities such as assertiveness and credibility. Contrariwise, women are usually associated with communal behaviors such as being collaborative and nurturing. However, RCT postulates that women are considered to be violating their gender role expectations when they behave in a less communal way and exhibit agentic behaviors (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Rudman & Glick, 1999, 2001). Thus, women leaders confront a double-bind dilemma; women can demonstrate communal behavior and be accepted in their role but not respected, or they can demonstrate agentic behaviors and be respected but not accepted in their role (Rudman and Glick, 2001). Consequently, women are evaluated against masculine standards and expected to display masculine traits that are commonly associated with leadership, such as assertiveness and striving for achievement. However, women are often penalized for not exhibiting nurturing and socially sensitive attributes (Eagly et al., 1992; Mathison, 1986; Rudman, 1998; Rudman and Glick, 2001; Rudman and Kilianski, 2000; Tinsley et al., 2009). Our results are in accordance with previous research and have revealed that both male and female subordinates preferred working with female leaders who exhibited masculine traits such as assertiveness and risk-taking.

There has always been a debate about women and their performance in leadership. Women may adopt perceptions that men are more suitable for leadership positions than women are. Consequently, these conceptions and male leadership prototypes may lower women leadership aspirations and hinder their development at an intrapersonal level (Lyness & Grotto, 2018). Other research implies that women are

rated better than men are on key leadership competences and that the benefits of hiring a female leader are conferred to the organizations in which they work (Dawson et al. 2014, Terjesen et al. 2009). Furthermore, a recent study demonstrated that 38 percent of employees prefer working for a female boss compared with 26 percent who prefer working for a man (Brower, 2021). Our findings are not consistent with this study as female respondents showed a preference for male over female managers.

Gender diversity is vital to any workplace. Research shows that in the presence of gender diversity, employees' perceptions of their working environments were better, and women experienced compatible demands between their work and family roles and less stigma consciousness at work, which implies improved overall mental, physical, emotional, and economic health of employees (Steffens et al., 2019). In addition, women in managerial positions are more likely to endorse women and reduce the gender wage gap, as compared to male managers. As a result, gender equalities should increase and gender bias should be reduced (Lucifora & Vigani, 2016). This is in line with our results since employees agreed that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout.

Conclusion and recommendations

The study found that female leaders display the same transformational leadership qualities as male leaders do. The counter-stereotypical behavior that is exhibited by men is seen as unanticipated and therefore more visible. Therefore, since transformational leaders were considered communicative, effective in leadership, and more promotable than autocratic leaders, organizations must develop their current approaches to leadership based on transformational leadership.

The study also discovered that female employees who had female bosses were less supportive of their bosses and showed a preference for male over female managers. This has important implications for the success of women in leadership because the negative perception towards female leaders would compel them to start applying less effective management strategies or become less interested in occupying leadership positions. Thus, organizations must promote a culture that controls employees' stereotypes and the way these stereotypes are dealt with.

It was also revealed that subordinates showed a preference for working with female leaders who exhibited masculine traits, such as assertiveness and risk-taking. Masculinity refers to characteristics that are stereotypically ascribed to men, and is exemplified by a strong, technically competent, motivated, autonomous and confident leader who has control of his emotions (Hofstede, 2001; Connell, 2013). Thus, women may deviate from exhibiting feminine personality traits toward more desirable

masculine traits. Regardless of the leader's gender, leaders must develop their leadership skills to maximize their core strengths. Furthermore, organizations must remedy the gender disparity that still exists in their workforce in order to conquer the paradox that still hinders female leaders' advancement.

The study showed that the quality of the employee-supervisor relationship has a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction. When employees build strong relationships with their supervisors, they are more likely to be content with their job and possibly perform better than they would if the relationship with their supervisor was undesirable. Thus, organizations must understand the factors that lead to high levels of employee job satisfaction by having the HR department pay particular attention on employee relations, which would help improve employee retention and increase productivity.

Our current study outcomes clearly indicate that employees agreed that having a higher percentage of female leaders in an organization would result in women having more job satisfaction, more organizational dedication and less job burnout. Thus, women's representation in leadership at all organizational levels must be increased, and women must fill the leadership pipeline, which starts with nurturing leadership ambitions and inspiring women to accept leadership positions.

Finally, we conclude with the hope that female subordinates would become more accepting of their female leaders without asking them to act more like men keeping in mind that it is unrealistic to expect women leaders to create comprehensive changes around gender roles alone.

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ARTICLE 4

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WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES IN LEBANON: ENTREPRENEURS STIMULATING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

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Abstract

Over the last few years, the study of female entrepreneurship has attracted the attention of many researchers and academics, knowing that female entrepreneurship is considered the fastest growing type of entrepreneurship in the world. Furthermore, research shows that female business owners positively contribute to private sector employment as well as investment. However, many barriers still hinder the ability of women to pursue a business career and generate a genuine income. Women have difficulty obtaining support (institutional, family, and financial), maintaining a successful balance between personal and professional activities, as well as handling patriarchal societies and gender discrimination.

Lebanese businesses that meet the 51 percent female ownership threshold, and/or have a woman occupy a senior executive position are known as women-owned and/or women-led businesses (WOLBs). WOLBs' challenges, opportunities and their effect on the growth of the local economy is an understudied topic in Lebanon. In addition, there is a lack of research highlighting WOLBs' revenue contribution to the Lebanese economy. Therefore, this study attempts to address this knowledge gap by investigating women-led businesses challenges and opportunities. In addition, it aims to tackle those challenges and seize those opportunities in order to increase revenue and subsequently contribute to the growth of the local economy.

The study deduced that when WLOBs' challenges are mitigated and opportunities are identified, the reluctant participation of women in entrepreneurship would play a significant role in generating more revenue for the Lebanese economy leading to prosperous outputs.

Keywords: Female entrepreneurship, Women-led/women-owned business, Local economy, Revenue contribution, Challenges, Opportunities

Introduction

The interest in women or female entrepreneurship has increased worldwide since women play a significant role in the development and promotion of entrepreneurship (Fuller-Love, 2006). Recently, practitioners, policy makers and academics have all been interested in learning more about the growth of women entrepreneurship especially in developing countries. Moreover, women entrepreneurship has drawn attention as it continues to make great contributions to economic growth and to poverty reduction globally (Tambunan, 2008). In addition, encouraging women entrepreneurship is necessary since it promotes social upgrading and economic revival and growth (Jamali, 2009; Verheul et al., 2006). Forbes reports that more companies were founded and led by women than men. These statistics are evidence that females are effectively laying the foundations in order to be part of a male-dominated industry (Goorha, 2021).

While women continue to make a substantial contribution to entrepreneurial activity, funding and family support remain the major barriers for women starting their own

business. Nevertheless, the challenges that female entrepreneurs have to deal with in the 21st century are more significant than before, including but not limited to technology and innovation. Other challenges include access to information, inadequate skill training, gender issues, social environment issues, financial resources, and many more (Zainuddin et al., 2017). In Lebanon for instance, women entrepreneurs have to deal with a diversity of restrictions that makes it almost impossible to have physical access to markets to sell their goods or promote their products by joining international trade fairs. Some of these restrictions include access to finance, social norms, family care responsibilities, and transportation issues (World Bank Group, 2019).

On the other hand, women entrepreneurs can reap the rewards in new market opportunities. Having a career as a woman entrepreneur is positively perceived by the society (Sultan, 2016). In addition, women entrepreneurs have better work-family balance than women who work in organizations (Rembulan et al., 2016). The access to financial resources is not the only opportunity that women seek for the success of their business or any business in general. Intangible resources such as human and social capital are also of a great significance to women (Cardella et al., 2020).

The study makes two important contributions to entrepreneurship theory and practice in Lebanon: it extends the existing literature by stating the key obstacles that women entrepreneurs face, and it outlines the main opportunities that await them. Furthermore, the study also shows the vital socio-economic role that women entrepreneurs play since WLBOs are key to economic growth in developing economies. The paper proceeds as follows: the next section outlines the literature review followed by the research methodology. The next section includes a review of the constraints faced by women entrepreneurs in Lebanon. Then, there follows a section that highlights the opportunities that empower women entrepreneurs. Finally, in the last section, we draw the conclusions, limitations and recommendations.

Literature review

Female entrepreneurship

Female-owned businesses play a major role in the development of local economies of both developed and less developed nations, since they contribute to over 50 percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Ayogu & Agu, 2015), although less than half of women own businesses compared to their male counterparts (Hossain et al., 2018). For instance, American women offer substantial contributions to the US economy since they

have been joining the workforce at a faster rate than men i.e. women occupy 57 percent of the American workforce (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021). Female entrepreneurship represents a source of job creation and economic growth for local economies. Therefore, women's participation in the labor market should be encouraged especially in entrepreneurial activities since it promotes economic growth (Ismail et al., 2018). However, in order for female entrepreneurs to achieve independence, they must bear all the risks that are associated with fulfilling that dream (Nagarajan, 2016). Female entrepreneurs are described as "the ones who develop new businesses and actively participate in running their ventures which can either be in a formal way where businesses are registered or in an informal way where businesses are not formally registered" (Anwar, 2012). Women-owned small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) emerged as a way to alleviate poverty. Thus, the idea of women-owned businesses is not novel (Nasir et al., 2019). In addition, female entrepreneurship increases the living standards for other women by enhancing their job opportunities.

Over the past three decades, a growing number of scholars have shown interest in studying the effect that female entrepreneurs have on the global economy (Jennings & Brush, 2013), especially in Anglo-Saxon countries (Tlaiss, 2013; Al-Dajani & Marlow, 2010). However, more research is required in other regions in order to better comprehend the factors that have an effect on female entrepreneurship.

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region continue to witness the highest youth unemployment rates in the world reaching 30 percent in 2017 (International Labor Office, 2017), particularly among young women who contribute to 15 percent of the labor force (International Labor Organization, 2015). Therefore, as an effort to reduce the worrying unemployment numbers, the governments of the MENA region have reacted by trying to provide 100 million jobs by the year 2020 (Albawaba, 2015). The MENA region must create an entrepreneurial ecosystem that would accelerate job creation. Entrepreneurial firms can produce important spillovers that can serve as a significant source of economic growth. Once fostered into SMEs, they can turn into an important actor that increases employment and the GDP. These new businesses can significantly contribute to the increase of employment and consecutively to economic growth. Furthermore, WOLBs have increased export potentials and contributed to innovations (Tripathi & Singh, 2018), and developed a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem (Chamlou, 2008). Khyareh (2018) has also confirmed this statement by affirming that the main motive for economic growth in Iran was female entrepreneurship. Female entrepreneurs can create jobs for themselves and for others, can help solve business problems, and exploit new business opportunities (Khyareh, 2018).

When researching entrepreneurship, researchers address it from the gendered societies' context and frequently employ the pull-push model (Uhlener and Thurik, 2007). Pull factors propose that people are drawn to start their own businesses by a prospect of greater material or non-material benefits. On the other hand, push factors may arise from individuals' general dissatisfaction with their current situation (Verheul et al., 2006). In Lebanon for instance, Lebanese entrepreneurs were motivated by both factors especially that Lebanese women deal with issues of gender discrimination and challenges of being integrated into the labor market (Jamali, 2009). Other factors that pulled women into entrepreneurship were the opportunity to balance work and family, the possibility to generate double income for their families, and by challenge and creativity.

Feminism theories from entrepreneurship perspective

Over the years, researchers have proposed several theories to explain the field of entrepreneurship (Hurley, 1999). The entrepreneurship theories help scholars comprehend the entrepreneurial process, anticipate who will become an entrepreneur and understand the reasons why people become entrepreneurs. However, there does not exist an entrepreneurship theory that takes into consideration the feminist viewpoint, nor a feminist theory that covers the entrepreneurship discipline in its entirety (Hurley, 1999). A feminist theory might promise insights into the constitutional elements of entrepreneurship theories by inspecting the historical background in which these theories developed, the research methods on which the theories are based, and the postulations lying behind the theories (Hurley, 1999).

Bringing feminists' views into women entrepreneurship is important because it helps in discovering the root cause of the obstacles that female entrepreneurs encounter (Ahl, 2006; Ahl & Marlow, 2012). For instance, the liberal feminism theory tackles the various challenges that are created by stereotyping beliefs about gender norms which continue to hinder women business owners (Mitchell et al., 2002; Baskerville, 2003), although the legal, political, and economic systems offer the same privileges and advantages to both men and women. Thus, by not drawing on the feminist theories as an analytical framework, the scope of contemporary research on female entrepreneurs is limited, and women are regarded as unsuccessful and hesitant entrepreneurial subjects (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Therefore, entrepreneurial research must take into account gender theories to measure gender and entrepreneurship as culturally produced and reproduced in social practices (Bruni et al., 2004). Furthermore, sociological frameworks that embed theories from multiple areas help explain how, where, and why new ventures are founded (Thornton, 1999).

A variety of movements of feminist ideology has been developed over the years leading to different principles of feminist theories, each with minor changes in perspective. For example, while Marxist feminism accused capitalism of women's submission (Burr, 2002), the Africana feminism believed that feminist theories focused on issues of particular importance to women in developed countries, without taking into account women living in less developed economies (Giddens & Griffiths, 2006). Furthermore, although there are many differences within feminist theories, the principles of the liberal and social feminist theories offer a valuable dichotomy through which to study the main topics in the area of gender and work (Kearney, 2012). Applying the liberal feminist theory to entrepreneurship concentrates on the relative access to resources essential to found a successful venture. Liberal Feminists contend, "Women are disadvantaged relative to men due to overt discrimination and/or to systemic factors that deprive them of vital resources like business education and experience" (Fischer et al., 1993, p.151). Due to the aforementioned discrimination, it is assumed that women-owned businesses will have a lower success rate than their male-owned counterparts (Watson, 2002). Female entrepreneurs may face many barriers while trying to acquire the sought after resources such as accessing funding, obtaining the applicable work experience and gaining access to the necessary networks (Brindley, 2005). In contrast to the liberal feminist theory, the social feminist theory highlights the constant socialization of men and women instead of focusing on the different opportunities presented to men and women. Social feminists suggest, "due to differences in early and ongoing socialization, women and men do differ inherently. However, it also suggests that this does not mean women are inferior to men, as women may develop different but equally effective traits" (Fischer et al., 1993, p.152). As for their entrepreneurial skills, social feminists believe that female entrepreneurs may implement different approaches to business than male entrepreneurs (Watson, 2002). For instance, DeTienne and Chandler (2007) found that although men and women use their distinctly different stocks of human capital to detect opportunities, there was no difference in the innovativeness of the identified opportunities. Thus, although women and men use different approaches to discover opportunities, neither approach is essentially superior (DeTienne & Chandler, 2007). This finding is an example of the social feminist theory in practice, which states that men and women operate their businesses differently due to their socialization throughout life.

Challenges faced by women entrepreneurs in developing countries

Entrepreneurship is often portrayed as a masculine activity and its success is frequently contributed to men (Yunis et al., 2018). An increasing number of women has been progressively participating in entrepreneurship due to the support of the transformation

into a knowledge economy, although entrepreneurship is usually considered a male-dominated field. Activities and decisions related to entrepreneurship are often restricted by gender inequality, which hinders women's participation in the labor force. In addition, several other factors reduce women's contribution to economic activities such as the limited access to financial services, social and cultural factors, and the poor support from social networks, which are associated with women's confidence in their skills and greater fear of failure (Quiñones, 2016). Thus, women entrepreneurs continue to be restricted from starting and running economic enterprises due to many social and operational constraints (Tuyishime, Shukla, & Bajpai, 2015).

In the MENA region, the trends in entrepreneurship are characterized by prevalent gender ideologies that are stimulated by patriarchal socio-cultural norms. Several religious practices and common beliefs limit women's ability to start and develop their own businesses. For example, in the majority of the MENA countries, women suffer from inequality in the workplace (Danon & Collins, 2021), and their participation in the labor market is stagnating at a 24 percent (World Bank, 2015). What raises more concerns is that men's labor force participation is much higher than that for women (Sidani, 2016). Conversely, the labor market in the MENA region is greatly segregated by gender, where men occupy leadership roles, while women represent a large proportion of teachers, and social and health care workers (Metcalf, 2011; Sidani et al., 2015). Across many countries like Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan, Bahrain and the UAE, women are delayed in starting their own business because the support system is absent and they seldom have access to financial advisors (Weeks, 2009).

All female entrepreneurs have many challenges in common such as insufficient support for business, tough business climate, political instability, uncertain economy, limited access to resources, lack of business knowledge, work-family imbalance and internal fears and insecurities. All these obstacles pester women entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Turkey, Lebanon and Nigeria (Danish & Smith, 2012; Halkias et al., 2011; Itani et al., 2011; Jamali, 2009; Maden, 2015). Following are seven key obstacles that continue to hinder the advancement of female entrepreneurs in developing countries:

- **Work-family conflict:** Women often find themselves struggling to keep their traditional social roles and fulfill their dreams. Women entrepreneurs feel pressured and constantly exhausted from trying to find a good balance between work and family (Itani et al., 2011). In addition, the performance of women entrepreneurs is affected by lack of networking and mentoring, since they are

not capable of dedicating time to business-related activities (Brush et al., 2009; Panda & Dash, 2015).

- Financial constraints: Inadequate access to financial capital is one of the major barriers that women entrepreneurs face across developing countries (Jamali, 2009; Halkias et al., 2011; Maden, 2015; Ramadani et al., 2015; Naguib and Jamali, 2015). This is mainly encounter multiple risks such as bankruptcy, environmental risks, reputational risks, etc. (Thampy, 2010).
- Lack of access to business support/services: Women entrepreneurs suffer from lack of access to technology and ancillary business services. Furthermore, they are not able to assess and determine the viability of a certain project or execute a market research because they are restricted to access these necessary resources. In addition, women entrepreneurs have limited access to networking opportunities and consulting services, which negatively affects their firm's operation (Robb & Coleman, 2010).
- Unfavourable business, economic and political environments: Female entrepreneurs have to deal and cope with unfriendly business environments, economic recessions and political turbulence, which obstruct the development of any type of entrepreneurship (Panda and Dash, 2014). Other challenges that entrepreneurs face are complicated regulations, complex processes to register businesses, bureaucracy, bribery, unclear compliance policies, high tax rates and obstructive government policies and programs.
- Lack of entrepreneurship training and education: Lack of business knowledge, ineffective capital management, absence of marketing strategy that appeals to the customer, and recruitment and retaining of talent are major challenges that women entrepreneurs have to overcome (Panda, 2018).
- Personality characteristics and female entrepreneurs traits: Other factors that impede the performance of women entrepreneurs are lack of self-confidence and self-doubt (Shelton, 2006). In addition, women entrepreneurs have been found to have lower psychological support due to the absence of female role models who provide women with inspiration in their industries ((Danish & Smith, 2012). Women entrepreneurs do not enjoy their well-deserved success and downplay their achievements to avoid aggravating male family members and business counterparts (Panda, 2018).
- Networking: women 's lack of access to informal social networks puts them at a disadvantage and generates gender discrimination. Furthermore, when men

attend informal communication networks and women do not, they are more likely to achieve professional development and grow their businesses more than women do (Banihani, 2020).

Supporting female entrepreneurs in developing countries

According to the United Nations, economic growth and social development can be enhanced through female empowerment. In fact, a country economic growth rate increases as female labor force participation increases (Fund, 2018). However, women's economic empowerment does not necessarily achieve gender equality. Furthermore, gender-based discrimination has inflicted a loss of up to 12 trillion US dollars or 16% of global income (Cuberes & Teignier, 2016; Ferrant & Kolev, 2016).

By owning a business, female entrepreneurs break free from social constraints as they become financially independent and contribute to poverty reduction. Moreover, for the national economic to row, it is necessary to encourage privately owned small businesses (Chamlou, 2008; Pines et al., 2010; Mathew, 2010; Hattab, 2012; World Bank, 2013; De Vita et al., 2014; OECD, 2014; Fleck, 2015; Mbaruku & Mutalemwa, 2015; Mustapha, 2016; Tripathi & Singh, 2018). WOLBs are innovation-focused, export-oriented (Tripathi & Singh, 2018) and creators of a vigorous entrepreneurial environment (Chamlou, 2008). For instance, in Iran, female entrepreneurs have been playing an increasing role as drivers of growth for the Iranian economy (Khyareh, 2018). The reason behind this growth is that female entrepreneurs create job opportunities by hiring new workers, offering society solutions to a variety of business-related issues and capitalizing on entrepreneurial opportunities (Khyareh, 2018).

Based on the literature, it has become evident that WOLBs contribute considerably to the world economy, and their number has grown over time. However, how can women entrepreneurs be supported?

Following are six key opportunities that can help female entrepreneurs who operate in developing countries gain insight and advice on how to succeed in the world of entrepreneurship:

- Funding opportunities, physical infrastructure or entrepreneurial development programs are interrelated factors that describe a facilitating environment and can

contribute to the growth and sustainability of entrepreneurial enterprises (Meyer et al., 2016). In today's business environment, there are many common challenges every potential entrepreneur faces, especially in emerging countries, such as South Africa. Thus, helping small businesses grow and thrive must be the priority of governments (Banda et al., 2016).

- Some scholars have pointed out that the core fundamentals of entrepreneurship are not purely innate but can also be taught (Kuratko, 2005) and that the desire to own or to start a new business can be achieved through entrepreneurial education (Nabi et al., 2010; Ferreira & Trusko, 2018). Consequently, many developed and developing countries have been supporting entrepreneurship because it contributes to the economic growth. Governments implement a number of strategies that provide different types of entrepreneurial support ranging from education and training programs to procedural and financial assistance (Bhatti et al., 2021)
- Mentoring is a relationship between a more experienced person (mentor) and a less experienced person (mentee), with the purpose of guiding and supporting the mentee's personal and professional development (Ncube & Washburn, 2010). Being part of a mentoring relationship can help women embrace their unique individuality. The modeling strategies applied in mentoring provide women with guidance and give them the opportunity to implement what they have acquired in their own way (Aubert, 2014). Results show that mentoring is associated with a variety of favorable outcomes since it exposes mentees to role models, or reinforces relations among self-employed individuals (Jayachandran, 2021). This has been the case in rural Kenya, where inexperienced female entrepreneurs were paired with a mentor. The outcome of this dyadic relationship was a 20 percent increase in profit (Brooks et al., 218)
- Microenterprises that are owned by females who live in poverty are unable to adopt efficient marketing techniques. They do not swiftly adapt to changes in the marketplace and make product improvements, and they lack the marketing strategies that will allow them to effectively generate a market and promote their products. In India, the International Centre for Entrepreneurship and Career Development (ICECD; icecd.org) in India help impoverished women develop their marketing skills and assist in the selection of a customer-centered approach to product design. Women are provided with expert advice, meticulous market exposure, and a way to perform test marketing. Women entrepreneurs who were guided by the ICECD responded better to changes in the business market and adjusted rapidly to new work environments (Ruhi, 2016).

- Rural entrepreneurship can achieve sustainable growth for people who live in rural areas, as well as alleviate poverty and improve the livelihoods of rural communities (Elkafrawi & Refai, 2022). Despite the challenges of rural entrepreneurship, opportunities can still exist. Rural entrepreneurs can try a variety of economic activities (seasonal harvesting, selling home-baked bread, moving to the market with her livestock, renting a shop) due to the comparatively low cost of business premises and other related expenses. In addition, kinship ties among rural people allow for substituting loans from financial institutions and borrowing money from friends and family instead (Smith & McElwee, 2013). Furthermore, the physical proximity in rural areas accelerates the transportation of goods without adding much cost which can lead to the prosperity of rural businesses. This was the case of entrepreneurship in rural Pakistan, which witnessed success mainly from the interaction between numerous social, economic and religious contexts (Muhammad et al., 2017).
- Digital entrepreneurship: one of the distinctive features of the Internet is that the barrier to market entry is comparatively low, which offers a significant advantage to the people who weren't able to compete in the traditional brick-and-mortar entrepreneurship (Novo-Corti et al. 2014; Shirazi 2012; Aldrich 2014). Digital technology serves as an important “external enabler” supporting entrepreneurial activities, and helps in the reduction of the time and resources required to create disruptive innovations (von Briel et al. 2017). However, the offline gender disparities concerning access to resource will be reproduced in the online environment (Daniels, 2009). The theoretical framework that studies whether the online environment offers a “safe space” for females to engage in digital entrepreneurship in an unaccommodating socio-cultural context is known as cyberfeminism research (Daniels, 2009). In Saudi Arabia for instance, women relied on their experiences and access to digital resources and technologies to create products/ services which improved their lives (Nambisan 2017). For instance, in order to overcome the Saudi women challenges of not being allowed to drive, one Saudi female entrepreneur developed an online package delivery application (McAdam et al., 2020).

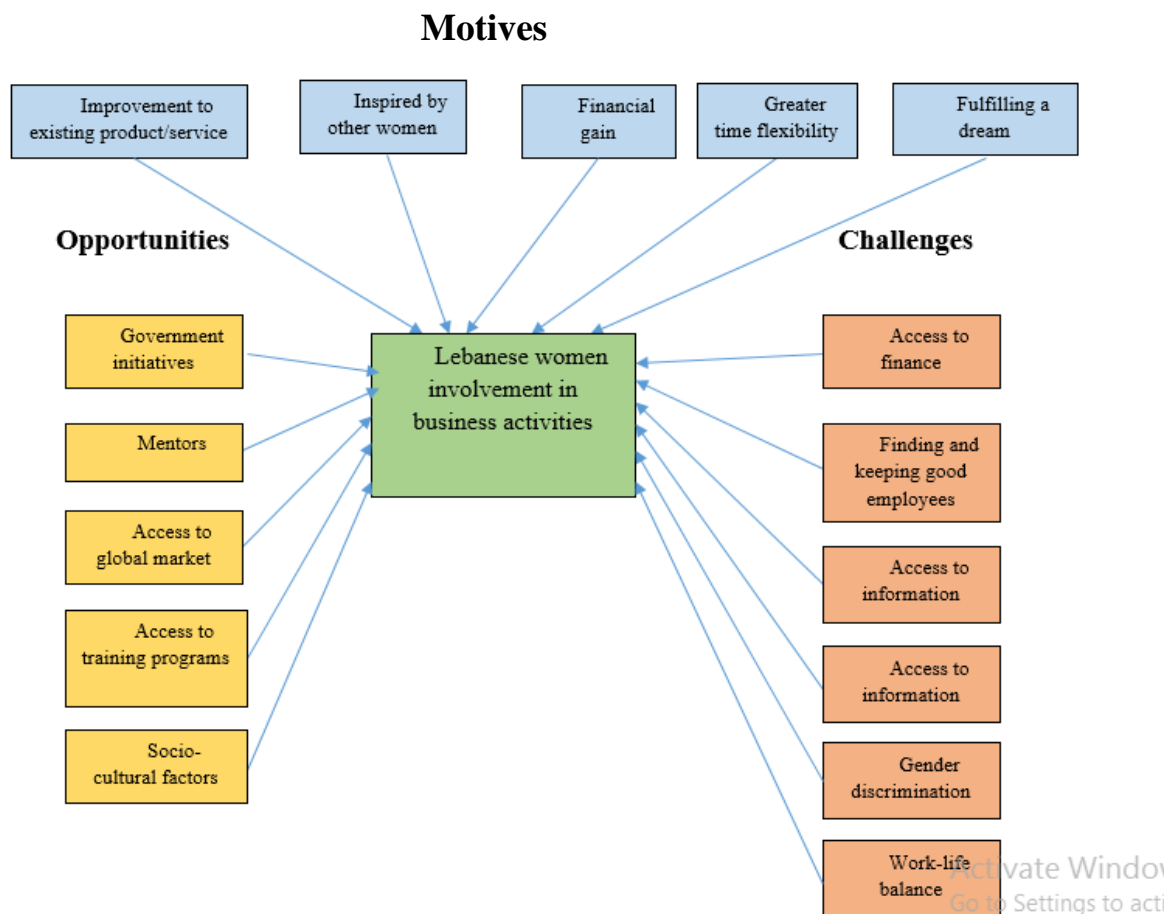
This leads to suggest the following hypotheses and to Figure 1, which shows our conceptual model:

H1. The business start-up motivations of Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development.

H2. The opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development.

H3. The barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development.

Figure 1. The conceptual model of the research.



Research Methodology

Sample and data collection

A secondary data analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon

It is no secret that gender bias manages to weasel its way into most, if not, all aspects of life. While it is true that a lot of effort has been put into alleviating this phenomenon, especially in academic and workplace settings, this cannot be said adamantly in the case of Lebanon and the MENA region in general. Most women can surely vouch for since

many have been subject to countless forms of gender bias and discrimination throughout their careers this statement. Statistics pertaining to the actual status of women in Lebanon reveal a substantial need for progress in terms of gender equality and women's rights. In fact, the country is knee-deep in structural gender inequalities, as Lebanon ranks 145 out of 153 in terms of overall gender gaps (World Economic Forum, 2020). Thus, examining the footing of Lebanese females in different aspects is of essence in order to understand how and where changes need to be implemented.

Moreover, when it comes to Lebanese women's economic status, Lebanon has one of the lowest global rates of women's participation in the labor market, 29%, whereas men compose 76% of the market (UN Women in Arab States, 2020).

Data is rather conflicting regarding Lebanese women's unemployment rate, but the UN Women Data Hub affirms that 14.4% of them are unemployed, as opposed to 10% of men being jobless (2021). This sheds light on the unequal distribution of decent work, prosperity, and inclusive development between males and females in the country (UN Women Data Hub, 2021). An upward trend in women's employment rate has been witnessed in recent years, reaching 31.8% in 2019. However, the rate for women living with children is significantly different compared to women who are not, with a noted difference of 14% in 2018-19 ([Sado & Daher, 2021](#)). The same cannot be said for men, whose employment displays a positive association with having children, because they are more likely to work to establish a household and be the main source of income ([Sado & Daher, 2021](#)).

This goes together with the fact that women often drop out of the workforce after getting married to fulfill the role that society expects from them (Torres Tailfer, 2010), which is to handle household and childcare responsibilities. These expectations influence women's employment decisions more than factors such as salaries and benefits (World Bank and UN Women, 2021). Indeed, Lebanese working women tend to be single and aged between 20 and 29 years old, after which they usually marry and bear children, which results in a decline in their contribution to the labor market (Hammad et al., 2020). However, if they do choose to go back to work after having children, it could prove very challenging to simultaneously handle a job and what is known as a second shift, whereby women are expected to perform certain labor at home. In fact, women handle a substantially disproportionate share of unpaid care work (UCW); women perform 76% of the total hours of global UCW, which equates to approximately 3.2 times as much as men (UNDP in the Arab States, 2021). This gender imbalance acts as a major factor in women's economic and social disempowerment, as

UCW does not contribute to economic activity, nor is it rewarded (Hammad et al., 2020).

In addition, despite being educated, women are concentrated in service sectors like education health care, and public administration, but a lot of them are low-skilled specialists and very few of them hold senior management positions. This correlates to fewer hours of work (32 weekly hours for women and 53 for men) influencing remuneration, as the wage gap is about 22%. Societal expectations about women's traditional roles contribute to gender biases in hiring and employers believe that men are more suited for management positions (World Bank & U.N Women, 2021).

According to the World Bank (2021), One in five businesses affected by the Beirut port explosion (in 4 August 2020) was woman-led, most of which closed due to the deteriorating situation caused by the economic crisis coupled with the pandemic, which didn't help women's already small share of the enterprise landscape, taking a toll on female entrepreneurship. Only 10% of Lebanese firms have women owners, half of the MENA average, and only 6% have women in top management, a third of the world's average. Women entrepreneurs provide better employment opportunities for women than men, as their employers are 49% female, compared to men's 22%, and they also offer more formal training to their employees. Moreover, securing finance for business operations is harder for female entrepreneurs as only 31% of them have loans or credit lines compared to 40% of men. More women managers also identify political instability, corruption, and limited infrastructure access as hurdles and obstacles to their establishment than men do. Depending on religious affiliations, there are restrictions on access to assets and inheritance. Access to financial services favors men as the percentage of men having accounts is almost double that of women, some of whom reported dependency on a male family member's account to be the reason, most of whom are in rural areas. Numbers seem to worsen though, due to the 2019 economic crisis preventing most dollar-dominated accounts from cash withdrawal.

WOLBs are confident that they can succeed in the entrepreneurial activity because they possess all the qualifications needed in the real business world such as the expertise, the persistence, the professional attitude, the hard work, the motivation, the dedication, the determination, the commitment and most importantly the innovation. However, all these qualities are internal factors in contrast to the unavailable environmental/ external factors such as gender equality, access to finance, culture, spouse encouragement, market demand, community support, and mentorship. Therefore, when asked about the difficulties and challenges, women explicitly

mentioned environmental factors, namely: the need of more support, masculine community, economic stability, parenthood, financing, and patriarchal family business.

A Primary Data analysis of the challenges and opportunities of Women-led businesses in Lebanon

This study was conducted to identify the challenges faced and opportunities available for Lebanese women entrepreneurs. Thus, an online survey created in Google Forms was distributed via email to Lebanese female entrepreneurs. Each research participant had to agree to taking part in the study by reading and signing an informed consent form. The informed consent gave the participants enough information about the study and the estimated amount of time needed to complete the survey. Additionally, it ensured participants' identity and confidentiality throughout the whole research process. The survey was disseminated to 70 people out of whom 53 responded (response rate of 88%).

The survey consisted of five major sections. The first section gathered demographic information about participants including their marital status, educational qualifications, reason for starting their business, and the total number of employees in their firm. The second section was designed to identify the primary purposes that led Lebanese female entrepreneurs to start their businesses. The third section of the survey assessed the forces that encourage women to achieve their entrepreneurial dreams. The fourth section consisted of the impediments holding women back from achieving their entrepreneurial dreams. Finally, the aim of the fifth section was to specify how the increasing number of women entrepreneurs is contributing to the Lebanese economy.

Measures

Business start-up motivation. The business start-up motives were measured using 7 items, which identified the motives that urge women to embrace entrepreneurial activities. The 7-item scale has been adapted from a 29-item scale originally developed by Gatewood et al. (1995) and was designed to learn about the *motives of females to start their own*. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7).

Opportunities for female entrepreneurs. The opportunities that drive women success as entrepreneurs were measured using 7 items, which determined the opportunities available for women who wish to start and run their own business. The 7-item scale has been adapted from the questionnaire developed by Lock and Smith (2016), which was designed to explore the opportunities that women participants felt they need in order to improve their businesses. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7).

Obstacles to female entrepreneurs. The major barriers in the way of female entrepreneurialism were measured using 7 items, which examined some of the obstacles that cause the exclusion of women from entrepreneurial activities. The 7-item scale has been adapted from the questionnaire developed by Dunn and Liang (2006) in their studies on entrepreneurial triggers. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7).

Female entrepreneurs and economic development. The contribution of women entrepreneurs to the economic development was measured using 3 items, which assessed the significant impact that female entrepreneurs have on the economic development. The 3-item scale has been adapted from the questionnaire developed by Hisrich et al. (2006) that was designed to capture the impact of female entrepreneurship on economic development. Respondents were asked to show their agreement or disagreement to each statement given on a Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (7).

Results

The dataset used in analysis contained the entire 53 responses since no questions had any missing answers. Among the 53 respondents 31% were single, 55% married, 6% partnered, and 8% were divorced or separated. As for the way they started their business, 53% of respondents revealed that they self-started their business, 35% started with a partner/friend, and 12% inherited their business. 13% of respondents have been in business between 0-2 years, 36% between 2-5 years, 29% between 5-10 years, 11% between 10-15 years, and 11% have been in business for more than 15 years. As for the total number of employees working in their company, 41% employ between 1-5

employees, 35% between 6-10 employees, 12% between 11-20 employees, 8% between 25-50 employees, and 4 % have more than 100 employees. When asked about their education qualifications, the majority of the respondents (59%) stated that they have a master's degree. 72% of respondents indicated that the reason for having started their own business was the need for achievement, while only 6% provided the glass ceiling or barriers to progression at workplace as reasons. Table 1 presents detailed descriptive statistics of the sample.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the sample (N = 53).

Variable	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Marital status	Single	17	31
	Married	29	55
	Partnered	3	6
	Divorced/Separated	4	8
	Widowed	0	0
How they started business	Self-started	29	53
	With partner/friend	18	35
	Inherited	6	12
	Buy out	0	0
Period in business	0 - < 2 years	7	13
	2 - < 5 years	19	36
	5 - < 10 years	15	29
	10 - < 15 years	6	11
	15 years plus	6	11
Number of employees	1 – 5	23	42
	6 – 10	18	34
	11 – 20	6	12
	21 – 50	4	8
	51 – 100	0	0
	100 plus	2	4
Highest qualification	No Schooling completed	2	4
	High School Graduate	0	0
	Bachelor's Degree	15	28
	Master's Degree	31	59
	PhD	5	9
Reason for starting business (may select several)	Material motivation	16	30
	Need for independence	28	53
	Need for achievement	38	72
	Preference for flexibility	19	36
	Glass ceiling	3	6
	Financial security	14	26
	Urge for risk taking	11	21
Total		53	100

Analytical Approach

Data was analyzed using structural equation modeling with partial least squares (PLS-SEM) in the latest release of the software application SmartPLS 4. PLS-SEM is a technique that enables researchers to compute extremely complicated models with numerous constructs and indicator variables, especially when the analysis's goal is prediction. The measurement model's internal consistency (composite reliability), convergent validity (indicator reliability and average variance retrieved), and discriminant validity are all evaluated using partial least squares (PLS). Furthermore, the structural model is evaluated as well as the significance and relevance of hypothesized relationships using structural equation modeling (SEM).

Evaluation of Measurement Model

The full collinearity test was applied to avoid common method variance (CMV). It is suggested that the presence of a VIF greater than 3.3 indicates pathological collinearity and that a model may be tainted by common method bias. Our model can be said to be free of common method bias because all VIFs obtained from a comprehensive collinearity test were lower than 3.3 (Table 2). In addition, throughout the data collection phase, the confidentiality and anonymity of the responses have been reiterated.

Table 2. Full Collinearity Test (VIF).

	DEMO	MOTIV	OPP	OBST	EFF
DEMO					1.103
MOTIV					1.329
OPP					1.261
OBST					1.238
EFF					

Note. Demo = Demographics; MOTIV = Business start-up motivation; OPP = Opportunities for female entrepreneurs;

OBST = Obstacles to female entrepreneurs; EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

Table 3 displays the factor loadings of items belonging to a common construct, Cronbach's alpha, rho A, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) for the latent variables. It is advised to employ loadings above 0.70 because they offer acceptable item reliability (Hair et al., 2019). Table 3's data show that not all

indicators have a high enough level of reliability (i.e., values close to 0.70). As a result, all factor loadings with values lower than 0.5 were eliminated (Hair et al., 2019). Additionally, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were employed to assess the internal consistency of the constructs, with the findings displayed in Table 3. Cronbach Alpha is preferred by certain academics, however Composite Reliability (CR) "may be used as a conservative measure of internal consistency reliability" (Hair et al. 2021). An indication of a construct's internal consistency is when the values of Alpha and CR are over 0.70. All of the CR values in Table 3 are acceptable. The average variance extracted (AVE) should have a value greater than the 0.5 minimum threshold. For all of the constructs in our case, the derived AVE value is more than 0.5. Therefore, it may be deduced that convergent validity was proved.

Furthermore, the degree of differences between the overlapping constructs was measured using discriminant validity in addition to the aforementioned validity metrics (Hair et al., 2021). Cross-loadings, and Fornell and Larcker's (1981) are often the two primary criteria used to evaluate discriminant validity. Using the cross-loadings approach, "an indicator's outer loading on the associated construct should be greater than all of its loadings on other constructs (i.e., the cross loadings)" (Hair et al., 2021). According to Table 4, all indicators load on their respective constructs more strongly than they do on other constructs. As a result, discriminant validity was proven. Regarding the Fornell-Larcker testing criterion, the square root of each construct's average variance extracted (AVE) is compared with its bivariate correlations with all opposing constructs in order to assess discriminant validity (Grégoire & Fisher, 2006). When each construct's AVE square root is greater than the values of its bivariate correlations, it can be said that discriminant validity is established (Ringle et al., 2010). For instance, Table 3 shows that the AVE for the research and development performance (RDP) construct is 0.85, and its square root is 0.92 as displayed in Table 5. This value is greater than RDP's bivariate correlations with all opposing constructs and demonstrates that discriminant validity has been established for the RDP construct.

Table 3. Evaluation of Measurement Model.

Construct	Item	Indicator	Loadings	t-Statistic (Bootstrap)	p-Value	Cronbach's Alpha	ρA	CR	AVE
Respondent's Demographic	Please indicate your marital status.	DEMO1	0.25	0.677	0.499	0.966	0.764	0.808	0.656
	Please indicate how you started your business.	DEMO2	0.66	1.008	0.314				
	Please indicate the period for which your company has been in business.	DEMO3	0.73	1.220	0.223				
	Please indicate the total number of employees employed in your company.	DEMO4	0.82	1.188	0.235				
	Please indicate your highest level of education achieved.	DEMO5	-0.74	1.101	0.271				
Motives	My firm was started with the purpose of making a significant improvement to an existing product or service. I chose to go into my own business because of other women	MOTIV1	0.89	3.288	0.001				

	who inspired me.	MOTIV2	0.70	2.199	0.028				
	My firm was started with the purpose of developing and selling an entirely new product or service in my market or community.								
	My firm was started with the purpose of exploiting a profitable area for business.	MOTIV3	0.5	1.870	0.062	0.821	0.789	0.787	0.652
	My firm was started with the purpose of making more money.	MOTIV4	0.53	2.743	0.006				
	My firm was started with the purpose of gaining greater time flexibility.	MOTIV5	0.43	1.739	0.083				
	My firm was started with the purpose of fulfilling a dream.								
		MOTIV6	0.43	1.647	0.100				
		MOTIV7	0.45	1.914	0.056				
Opportunities	As an entrepreneur, I benefited from government initiatives or policies that helped start or grow my business.	OPP1	0.7	2.245	0.025				
	As an entrepreneur, I had mentors and role models that helped me improve my operational performance and avoid costly business mistakes.	OPP2	0.61	1.863	0.063				
	As an entrepreneur, I have access to local, regional, and international markets through supplier databases, meet-the-buyer events, training, export promotion events, and study tours.	OPP3	0.77	2.167	0.031	0.713	0.863	0.748	0.704
	As an entrepreneur, I have access to training programs that enable me to learn new skills (such as financial skills, online marketing, and user experience).	OPP4	0.34	1.046	0.296				
	Help from the family is an essential condition to make entrepreneurial activity possible.	OPP5	0.35	1.115	0.265				
	Help from society is an essential condition to make entrepreneurial activity possible.	OPP6	0.42	1.255	0.210				
	Women-owned businesses benefit from government-led special tax breaks.	OPP7	.051	1.887	0.060				
Obstacles	Receiving access to finance was one of the primary challenges I faced when I first started my business.	OBST1	0.86	3.783	0.000				
	Finding and keeping good employees is a key challenge for my business.	OBST2	0.27	0.990	0.323				
	The lack of access to support networks i.e. the lack of available advisors and mentors, is an impediment to my business.								
	Information in my chosen field of endeavor was easily accessible.	OBST3	0.11	0.436	0.663				
	I feel that society encourages and supports women to take on the challenges of the business world.	OBST4	0.25	0.789	0.430				
	I experienced personal barriers (e.g. lack of self-confidence, low self-esteem, isolation) when I started my own business.	OBST5	-0.02	0.086	0.931	0.920	0.747	0.754	0.654
	I believe I have suffered gender discrimination by financial markets.	OBST6	0.39	1.338	0.181				
	I believe that women experience more barriers than men in making a success of their business.	OBST7	0.6	2.226	0.026				
	The views held by society on the traditional roles of women (e.g. wife, mother) impose negatively on women's entrepreneurial endeavors.	OBST8	0.48	1.778	0.076				
	As an entrepreneur, I find it challenging to establish a work-life balance.	OBST9	0.48	1.527	0.127				
		OBST10	-0.05	0.222	0.824				
Effects	Women-owned businesses create employment opportunities in Lebanon.	EFF1	0.85	7.783	0.000				
	Women-owned businesses help provide economic opportunities for women and youth in Lebanese rural areas.	EFF2	0.82	7.903	0.000	0.771	0.782	0.866	0.683
	As an entrepreneur, I use my revenue to expand my business, which in turn promises further financial security, community involvement, and economic impact.	EFF3	0.8	6.254	0.000				

Table 4. Cross Loadings.

	DEMO	EFF	MOTIV	OBST	OPP
DEMO2	0.665	-0.086	0.153	0.083	-0.039
DEMO3	0.737	-0.123	-0.059	0.183	-0.147
DEMO4	0.822	-0.162	0.048	0.096	0.082
EFF1	-0.266	0.864	0.272	0.311	0.269
EFF2	-0.027	0.820	0.118	0.438	0.188
EFF3	-0.120	0.796	0.424	0.426	0.096
MOTIV1	-0.064	0.332	0.899	0.164	0.178
MOTIV2	0.208	0.205	0.705	0.053	-0.006
OBST1	0.161	0.472	0.147	1.000	0.005
OPP1	0.010	0.120	0.095	0.024	0.637
OPP3	-0.043	0.209	0.110	-0.008	0.896

Note. Demo = Demographics; MOTIV = Business start-up motivation; OPP = Opportunities for female entrepreneurs;

OBST = Obstacles to female entrepreneurs; EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

Table 5. Fornell and Larcker's Criterion.

	DEMO	EFF	MOTIV	OBST	OPP
DEMO	0.809*				
EFF	-0.173	0.826*			
MOTIV	0.048	0.344	0.807*		
OBST	0.161	0.472	0.147	0.808*	
OPP	-0.029	0.220	0.130	0.005	0.839*

Note: * Square root of AVE. Square root of AVE (diagonal); Off diagonal are Pearson correlations; Demo = Demographics; MOTIV = Business start-up motivation; OPP = Opportunities for female entrepreneurs; OBST = Obstacles to female entrepreneurs; EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

However, a more recent method for evaluating discriminant validity has just been put out and is capable of achieving higher specificity and sensitivity than the two earlier methods. This method is known as the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation (Henseler et al., 2015). HTMT “is the average of the heterotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators across constructs measuring different phenomena), relative to the average of the monotrait-heteromethod correlations (i.e., the correlations of indicators within the same construct)” (Henseler et al. 2015, p. 121). Hence, in order to calculate the correlation between constructs, HTMT

is used. Two constructs are dissimilar from one another if their indicators have HTMT values lower than 1, as this indicates that their true correlations are different from 1 (Henseler et al., 2015). While some publications recommend a threshold of 0.85 (Clark & Watson, 1995; Kline, 2011), others recommend a value of 0.90 (Gold et al., 2001; Teo et al., 2008). Table 6 demonstrates that all HTMT values between constructs are below 0.85 and 0.9. This means that discriminant validity has been established using the HTMT.85 and HTMT.90 criteria.

Table 6. Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

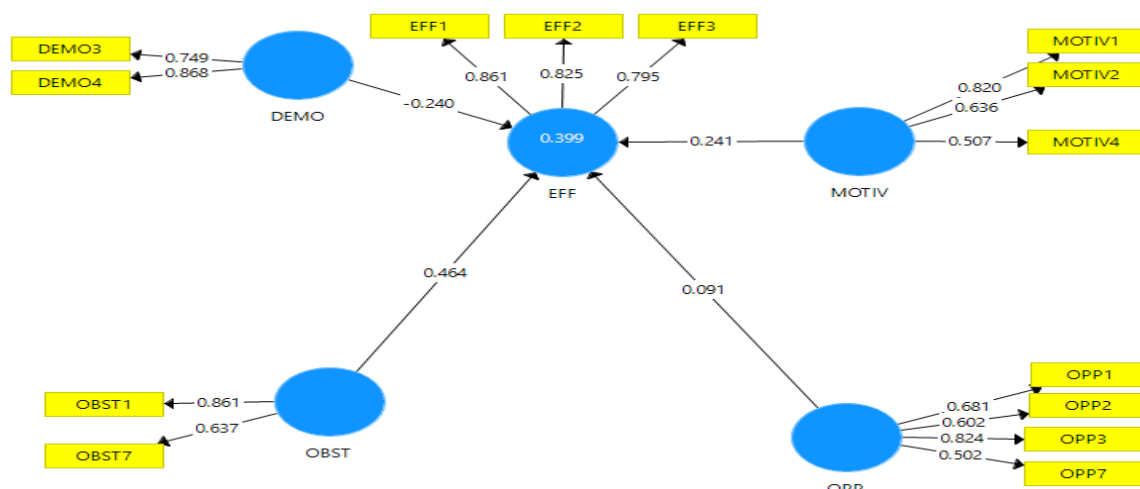
	DEMO	EFF	MOTIV	OBST	OPP
DEMO					
EFF	0.250				
MOTIV	0.355	0.516			
OBST	0.206	0.539	0.191		
OPP	0.253	0.415	0.323	0.033	

Note. Demo = Demographics; MOTIV = Business start-up motivation; OPP = Opportunities for female entrepreneurs; OBST = Obstacles to female entrepreneurs; EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

Evaluation of the Structural Model

This research uses the coefficient of determination (R² values), effect size (f² values), blindfolding (Q² values), model fit indicators, and structural model path coefficients to measure the structural model (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Structural model.



The following is a list of each step relating to the structural model evaluation process.

Step 1: Coefficient of determination—R square

In this step, the explanatory power of the model is assessed by calculating the R2 value of the endogenous constructs (Shmueli & Koppius, 2011). R2 values range from 0 to 1, with higher values potentially indicating more substantial relationships between the model and the data (Hair et al., 2014b; Sarstedt et al., 2014a). R2 values close to 1 signify an almost perfect relationship between the model and the data, though acceptable R2 values depend on the research context. Chin (1998) therefore deems R2 values of 0.670 to be significant, values of 0.333 to be typical, and values around 0.190 to be weak.

Table 7. R² matrix.

	R SQUARE	R SQUARE ADJUSTED
EFF	0.429	0.381

Note. EFF = Effect of female entrepreneurs on economic development.

In this step, we measure the R2 value of the endogenous constructs, which is a measure of the model’s explanatory power (Shmueli and Koppius 2011). Although acceptable R2 values are subject to the research context, values of R2 vary between 0 and 1, where higher values can be considered more substantial (Hair et al., 2014b; Sarstedt et al., 2021), i.e., R2 values that are close to 1 indicate that there is an almost perfect relationship between the model and the data. Accordingly, Chin (1998) considers R2 values of 0.670 to be substantial, values around 0.333 average and values of 0.190 and lower weak. Table 7 shows that the main endogenous construct yielded moderate results (R² EFF = 0.429). Therefore, the evidence shows that this model is applicable in the context of Female Entrepreneurship and that it has a moderate explanatory capacity.

Step 2: Effect size—F square

The effect size can be identified by computing Cohen’s f². The effect size gauges the degree to which a dependent construct is significantly impacted by an independent construct (Cohen, 2013). The effect size f² of less than 0.02 shows that a predictor latent variable has no effect on an endogenous latent variable. However, values between 0.020 and 0.150, between 0.150 and 0.350 and above 0.350 represent small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively (Sarstedt et al., 2021). The results show that DEMO has a small effect on EFF (f² = 0.109), and MOTIV has a small effect on EFF (f² = 0.117). As

for OBST, it has a medium effect on EFF ($f^2 = 0.341$). In addition, OPP has a small effect on EFF ($f^2 = 0.033$).

Table 8. F^2 matrix.

	DEMO	EFF	MOTIV	OBST	OPP
DEMO		0.109			
EFF					
MOTIV		0.117			
OBST		0.341			
OPP		0.033			

Step 3: Blindfolding—Q square

The blindfolding method, which is an iterative process that offers an internal measure of consistency between the original and cross-validation predicted data, is used to create Q^2 values. To demonstrate the structural model's ability to predict an endogenous construct, Q^2 values for that construct should, in general, be greater than zero. A general rule of thumb is that the PLS-path model has minor, medium, and large predictive importance when Q^2 values are more than 0, 0.25, and 0.50 respectively. In blindfolding, the recommended omission distance (D) ranges between 5 and 7 (Hair et al., 2016). In this paper, blindfolding procedure was applied with $D = 7$. As demonstrated in Table 8, the construct cross-validated redundancy is greater than zero for all five endogenous variables, explicitly, DEMO, EFF, MOTIV, OBST and OPP, indicating the path model's predictive accuracy.

Table 8. Construct cross-validated redundancy (Q^2).

CONSTRUCTS	SSO	SSE	$Q^2 (=1 - SSE/SSO)$
DEMO	159	159	1
EFF	159	126.965	0.201
MOTIV	106	106	1
OBST	53	53	1
OPP	106	106	1

Step 4: Model fit indicators

The model fitness of this work was tested using the standardized-root-mean-square-residual (SRMR), normed fit index (NFI), chi-square (χ^2) and RMS Theta values. Estimating the model's fitness is the purpose of SRMR. Hu and Bentler (1998) claim that the model is adequate to fit if the SRMR values are less than 0.08 ($SRMR \leq 0.08$). The results of SRMR in this study were 0.053, indicating that the model had good fit, whereas the values of NFI and Chi-Square were 0.7 and 337 respectively (Table 9), with a Chi-Square significance level of 0.001. The fit is better the closer the NFI is to 1. NFI values over 0.9 often indicate an acceptable fit. Additionally, the value of RMS theta

was utilized to assess the correlation degree of the outer model residuals (Lohmöller, 1989). The PLS-SEM model will be regarded as having a good fit when the RMS theta value is nearer to zero. Higher values of RMS theta suggest a lack of fit, whilst values below 0.12 indicate a well-fitting model (Hair et al., 2014a). Table 9 shows that the RMS Theta value was approximately 0.114, indicating that the PLS-SEM model has the necessary goodness-of-fit to demonstrate the validity of the global PLS model.

Table 9. Model Fit Summary.

CRITERIA	SATURATED MODEL	ESTIMATED MODEL	p-VALUE
SRMR	0.053	0.078	
CHI-SQUARE	848.268	857.106	0.001
NFI	0.827	0.796	
RMS THETA		0.114	

Step 5: Path coefficients

The significance of the path coefficients and their values, which typically lie between -1 and +1, where coefficients closer to +1 indicate a strong positive link and coefficients closer to -1 suggest a strong negative relationship, were assessed using bootstrapping (Hair et al., 2014b; Sarstedt et al., 2014b). The findings revealed that only two structural relationships between variables are significant when taking into account the significance and relevance of the relationships in the inner model (with sub samples of 5000, no sign changes option, Bca bootstrap confidence interval, and two-tailed sample test at 0.05 significance level). As a result, two of the six hypotheses can be found to be supported, having both a crucial t-value of greater than 1.96 and a p value of less than 0.05. (refer to Table 10). For the hypotheses reading, (i) H1, the business start-up motivations of Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development, (ii) H2, the opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development, (iii) H3, and the barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development. Table 10 shows the results of the analysis where only H1 and H3 are accepted which confirms that the business start-up motivations of Lebanese female entrepreneurs and the barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs have significant impact on the economic development with p values of 0.000 and 0.0000 respectively.

Table 10. Path Coefficients Matrix.

CONSTRUCTS	PATH COEFFICIENTS	t-STATISTIC (BOOTSTRAP)	p VALUES
MOTIV → EFF	0.417	4.289	0.000 ***
OPP → EFF	0.226	0.861	0.390
OBST → EFF	0.538	6.613	0.000 ***

Note. *** p<.05

Consequently, evidence allows the acceptance of H1 with respect to business start-up motivations of Lebanese female entrepreneurs having significant impact on the economic development. It is commonly known that the motivations behind beginning a business are crucial for either starting or continuing business operations (Morris et al., 2006; Hasan & Almubarak, 2016). Consequently, in order to be effective, programs focused at fostering female entrepreneurs must have a full understanding of what drives women to launch their own businesses. This is significant because personal motivations are essential individual factors that have a significant impact on how well a business performs (Hasan & Almubarak, 2016). Our study is consistent with the findings of Meyer et al. (2022), which that male entrepreneurs placed a larger emphasis on external motivation—that is, motivation that has to do with earning money, demonstrating status, having influence in society, exhibiting achievement, and generally improving their position in society. This motivation can result in economic growth and wealth creation for a nation. Contrary to that, but just as significant, the internal motivation of female entrepreneurs is driven by the desire to develop and elevate their communities and society, as well as achieving work-life balance while contributing to the development of the economy. As a result, if efforts are made to capitalize on the distinctions between the motivations of male and female entrepreneurs, economies and societies stand to gain because both internal and external motivation can produce beneficial outcomes (Meyer et al., 2022).

H3 can also be accepted since the challenges faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs can have significant impact on the economic development. Many female entrepreneurs still encounter numerous challenges while starting their companies and in the early stages of their development. This is supported by Fernandes and Sanfilippo’s research (2020), which states that the top obstacles for female entrepreneurs are a lack of finance, a lack of social support, a lack of trust, balancing personal and professional obligations, and gaining access to the operational market. The results confirm Mashapure et al. (2008) finding that the absence of proper support from government programs, the patriarchal social structure, the lack of market information, the occurrence of disasters in the area, the conflict in roles to balance family demands are all factors that hinder women's entrepreneurship. Thus, in order to secure the long-term viability of

women's entrepreneurship and promote economic growth, these issues needed to be addressed.

On the other hand, the results obtained do not allow the acceptance of H2 as they show that the opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs do not have a significant impact on the economic development. This is because women in less developed nations are not only less hindered by personal issues than their counterparts in more developed economies, but they also successfully use these challenges to their advantage and enhance their performance in the workplace. This is presumably because of the enhanced inner strength and resiliency they have developed while overcoming the challenging institutional circumstances of the country (Welsh, 2021).

Discussion & Conclusions

It has been acknowledged that female entrepreneurs are a source of economic growth and development; nevertheless, they are limited by a variety of circumstances (Etim & Iwu, 2019). In fact, successful female business owners serve as role models for aspiring entrepreneurs worldwide (Al Mamun et al., 2019). According to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, establishing gender equality and fostering economic growth depend greatly on women's economic empowerment (UN WOMEN, 2018). By stimulating innovation, opening up new economic sectors, and generating employment possibilities, women entrepreneurs play a crucial part in boosting local economies and improving societal welfare (Jafari-Sadeghi, 2020). Thus, the findings of the study were consistent with past research, demonstrating that women entrepreneurs play a significant role in creating jobs, providing financial security, reducing poverty in rural areas and enhancing community involvement especially in developing countries. However, despite the emergence of female entrepreneurs, there is still a sizable gender gap in business performance (Ladge et al., 2019). According to studies, female-owned businesses typically have a smaller workforce, lower revenue and earnings, and a higher probability of failure (Coleman & Robb, 2009; Meunier et al., 2017). Similarly, women have a harder time raising external financing (Coleman & Robb, 2009). Women frequently obtain less financing or have their businesses valued lower than those of males in comparable industries, especially if the industry in which they operate tends to be predominately male (Kanze et al., 2020). This research is also in accordance with past research since it shows that the barriers faced by the Lebanese female entrepreneurs may have a significant impact on the economic development. Considering the foregoing, it is imperative that the literature take into account the underappreciated and overlooked contribution that female entrepreneurs make to global economies, as this can have a positive impact on economic development. A strong entrepreneurial ecosystem is required in order to empower and inspire women to start their own businesses. A woman, her family, and the society may benefit greatly from access to seed funding and from supporting the establishment of incubators and accelerators not only in urban but

also in rural areas. In addition, boot camps, mentoring programs, training facilities, and networking opportunities need to be more accessible to women (Caputo et al., 2016). However, our findings are not in accordance with previous findings as it shows that the opportunities offered to Lebanese female entrepreneurs do not have a significant impact on the economic development. Consequently, Lebanese female entrepreneurs are carving out niches, conquering markets, and opening doors for themselves, their teams, and the communities they serve (Youness, 2007).

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

The ongoing economic and financial crisis that started in Lebanon in October 2019 has led to a substantial currency devaluation, triple-digit inflation, and a drop in average income all significantly reduced purchasing power. Thus, the promotion of female entrepreneurship may relieve the country from the economic and political pressures. In order to address the economic issues facing the Lebanese economy, numerous regulation changes to encourage the inclusion of women in the workforce as well as a top-down reorganization of some economic sectors that purposefully hinder women's participation in them would be necessary. Furthermore, when it comes to eschewing conventionally portrayed positions and tackling issues with a strong focus on women's empowerment, millennial women are breaking the mold. In addition to refocusing attention on women's issues like health, education, and basic human rights, millennial women act as a catalyst to advance gender equality in the workplace, keeping in mind that compared to previous generations, millennials are driven by different goals and encounter distinct difficulties. Therefore, policymakers, female business owners, and other stakeholders need to comprehend the driving forces and difficulties faced by millennial women in launching and operating their enterprises. To promote entrepreneurship, job development, and general economic growth, it is crucial to have this knowledge. Numerous themes and questions merit additional examination by academics given the novelty of millennial women entrepreneurs. Finally, Lebanese women entrepreneurs should take advantage of a range of financial and technical support services that are tailored to their needs, the needs of the industry or market segment they operate in, and their different goals. It may be more effective to provide specialized assistance catered to each company's needs rather than using a general strategy that targets numerous organizations at once.

Limitations and Future Research

Some limitations to this study suggest areas for future research. Future studies should include a sample of Lebanese male entrepreneurs to gain additional knowledge of their impact on the economic development. The research was limited to the exploration of female entrepreneurs in Lebanon. Further research might extend the geographical scope and study the motivations of female business owners and managers in different geographical areas. The geographic scope of future research could be widened in order to examine the driving forces behind female entrepreneurs across the globe. Another limitation of this study is in the small sample size and bias of the sample, which could of course have a skewing effect on the results. However, the sample does reflect the reality that the majority of female entrepreneurs in Lebanon suffer for the same obstacles that seem to hinder their entrepreneurial activities. Although this paper offers an original contribution to the existing literature, especially in Lebanon, we hope that governments in less economically developed nations pay more attention to initiatives that provide helpful assistance to female entrepreneurs, such as funding, organizational support, training, mentoring from successful businesspeople, and chances to observe successful enterprises firsthand. Furthermore, additional variables like the political environment in Lebanon may be investigated, and the model could then be expanded in line with the findings.

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