

## PROFILE OF WOMEN LEADERS OF BUSINESS ORGANISATION IN MANIPUR

**Neha Moirangthem**

Research Scholar, Manipur Institute of Management Studies, Manipur University

**Prof. L. Jibonkumar Sharma**

Faculty, Manipur Institute of Management Studies, Manipur University

### **Abstract**

This study explores the profile of women-led business organizations in the valley districts of Manipur, India, providing a detailed analysis of demographic and business characteristics. Women leaders in these regions demonstrate resilience, adaptability, and a commitment to overcoming traditional gender roles. The research identifies key traits among Indian women leaders, such as confidence, assertiveness, and task orientation, while highlighting their balance between professional and personal responsibilities. The study used a cross-sectional design, collecting data from 431 female leaders through a semi-structured interview schedule. The findings reveal that most women leaders are middle-aged (31-50 years), married, and possess at least a high school education. A significant portion has up to 10 years of business experience, and a diverse range of parental business backgrounds further underscores the varied paths to leadership. Most women-led businesses are small to medium-sized enterprises, primarily sole proprietorships, concentrated in specific districts like Imphal East, Thoubal, and Imphal West. The study also identifies several research gaps, particularly regarding the specific leadership traits and socio-economic factors affecting women entrepreneurs in Manipur. The impact of socio-cultural barriers, policy interventions, and the role of technology in promoting women-led businesses are areas that require further investigation. The study calls for targeted research, policy interventions, and support programs to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for women leaders in Manipur. Addressing these gaps can drive economic growth, social development, and gender equality in the region. Future research should also consider the intersectionality of gender with other factors such as ethnicity, economic status, and educational background to design more inclusive policies and programs.

**Keywords-**Women Leaders, Business Organizations, Manipur, Leadership Traits

### **1. Introduction**

Women leaders in business organisations in India have gradually gained recognition and prominence over the years. The profile of these women is marked by a blend of resilience, adaptability, and a commitment to breaking through traditional gender roles. Their journey is often

laden with unique challenges and societal expectations, yet they demonstrate distinct leadership styles that significantly impact their organizations and the broader community. Research indicates that Indian women leaders exhibit traits such as confidence, assertiveness, and task orientation, albeit with lower flexibility and social presence. These leaders, often dominant and keen on making a positive impression, navigate their roles with a balance of rigidity and caution, reflecting a well-organized approach to leadership. This personality profile is consistent across various leadership fields, including administration, education, and social work, suggesting a universal set of traits among women leaders in India (Patwardhan, 2004). The leadership characteristics of women business founders highlight a strong orientation towards authenticity and servant leadership. These women often establish people-centred businesses, embodying attributes of compassionate love and authenticity. Themes such as agency, humility, trust, and stewardship emerge prominently in their leadership styles, which blend agentic and communal behaviors, making them effective in navigating the business environment and fostering inclusive work cultures (Sims & Morris, 2018).

In the corporate sector, factors affecting the career advancement of women managers in India are multifaceted. Researchers have identified intra-personal, interpersonal, and organizational factors as significant influencers. These factors include social-psychological dimensions such as career identity and the meaning attributed to career advancement, which are critical in understanding the dynamics of the women leadership pipeline in Indian organisations (Datta & Agarwal, 2017). Women entrepreneurs in regions like West Garo Hills Meghalaya show that socio-personal and economic profiles play a crucial role in their empowerment. Most of these women fall into medium-level socio-economic categories, with their empowerment significantly correlated with their income levels. This highlights the importance of economic independence in enhancing women entrepreneurs' social and political standing (Kukmari, 2009). The path taken by women leaders in work organizations involves navigating gender biases and balancing careers with familial responsibilities. It has been discussed how women leaders must balance personal and professional lives, often facing challenges like societal expectations and the need for constant self-development. Their leadership styles incorporate sensitivity, flexibility, and partnership, which are critical traits in managing diverse teams effectively (Canabarro & Salvagni, 2015). Likewise, Policies promoting female leadership can have profound impacts, as demonstrated in studies from West Bengal. Affirmative action policies reserving leadership positions for women in village councils have significantly narrowed the gender gap in aspirations and educational attainment for girls. This highlights the role of policy interventions in creating role models and changing societal attitudes towards female leadership (Beaman et al., 2012). Understanding the socio-economic status of women entrepreneurs in regions like Assam provides insights into the challenges and motivators for these women. It has been found that women entrepreneurs are primarily from the age group of 40-50 years, with a significant portion coming from business families. The motivation to start businesses often stems from financial necessity and the desire for economic independence (Hujuri, 2016).

In Kerala, the high representation of women in leadership roles within the health sector contrasts with national trends. Researchers have explored how women leaders in Kerala balance work and life, navigate gender norms and develop adaptive leadership styles. These women often rely on community and family support, which is crucial for their professional growth and leadership effectiveness (Benny et al., 2020). The legitimization of women school leaders in India is a new study area. It has been examined how women establish their legitimacy as school leaders through leadership-focused behaviors that interact with gender perspectives. This involves navigating passivity in the education system and building trust within the community (Mythili, 2018). Women's entrepreneurial empowerment in Gujarat is positively associated with firm revenues, highlighting the importance of perceived competence, self-determination, and resourcefulness. Studies emphasize the role of psychological capital and bricolage in enhancing the performance of women-owned SMEs (Digan et al., 2019). Women IT professionals in Bangalore face significant challenges in balancing work and family responsibilities. Research discusses how these women negotiate multi-role responsibilities and the impact of organizational policies and social support on their work-life balance (Valk & Srinivasan, 2011). Leadership attributes of women business leaders in Malaysia show similarities with their male counterparts, with unique traits like the motherly/sisterly approach being distinct. Identified leadership styles among women leaders include paternalistic, transformational, and participative, reflecting their ability to adapt to various business environments (Abdullah et al., 2020).

The socio-economic background of women entrepreneurs in Visakhapatnam reveals that many start businesses to gain financial independence. Studies note that housewives form the largest group of new entrepreneurs, often motivated by family support and a desire to improve their living standards (Rani & Venkatarattaiah, 2016). Charismatic leadership is found to be a significant predictor of organizational performance among Malaysian women entrepreneurs. Research highlights that while charismatic and transformational leadership styles are used, charismatic leadership has a stronger impact on organizational success (Kuppusamy et al., 2010). The effectiveness of women leaders in family versus non-family firms reveals differences in leadership styles and firm performance. Studies suggest that family firms provide a conducive environment for transformational leadership, making them more suitable for women in chair positions than CEO roles (Nekhili et al., 2018). Women entrepreneurs in Mangalore face significant work-life balance issues. Researchers identify factors influencing work-life balance, recommending strategies for HR professionals and policymakers to support women entrepreneurs (Sumitha & Dsouza, 2015). Female directors in management institutes face unique challenges balancing career aspirations with societal expectations. Studies explore these challenges and emphasize the need for further research to support effective leadership in educational institutes (Dhar, 2008).

Women's entrepreneurial contributions to family income have been crucial during the COVID-19 crisis. Research highlights the role of innovative technologies in promoting entrepreneurship among women, emphasizing the importance of supportive policies to enhance their economic impact (Ge et al., 2022). The resilience of women entrepreneurs in India during

crises is influenced by various factors. Identified factors include entrepreneurial characteristics, resourcefulness, and networking as key factors that enhance resilience and enable women entrepreneurs to overcome challenges (Matharu & Juneja, 2021). Despite the significant strides made by women leaders in business organizations across India, several research gaps remain, particularly in regions like Manipur. Manipur's unique socio-cultural dynamics and economic conditions present distinct challenges and opportunities for women leaders that are not adequately covered in existing literature. Firstly, there is limited research on the specific leadership traits and styles of women leaders in Manipur. Studies from other regions provide valuable insights into general leadership characteristics but do not address the regional nuances that may influence leadership in Manipur. Secondly, the impact of socio-economic factors on women entrepreneurs in Manipur remains underexplored. Research highlights the socio-economic backgrounds of women entrepreneurs in other regions, but similar studies are lacking for Manipur. Furthermore, the intersection of gender, leadership, and socio-cultural barriers in Manipur needs detailed investigation. Studies on women leaders in Kerala's health sector and balancing work and family in Brazil provide frameworks that could be adapted to the context of Manipur. Additionally, the role of policy interventions in promoting female leadership in Manipur is not well-documented. Research on affirmative action policies in West Bengal provides valuable insights but does not address how similar policies could be tailored to the specific needs of Manipur. Moreover, there is a need for comparative studies between women leaders in Manipur and other regions to identify unique challenges and best practices. Studies on school leaders and resilience during crises can provide comparative frameworks to explore these dynamics in Manipur. Thus, while there is a wealth of research on women leaders in business organizations across India, significant gaps remain in understanding the unique profiles, challenges, and opportunities for women leaders in Manipur. Addressing these gaps through targeted research could provide valuable insights and support for developing the region's effective leadership and entrepreneurial ecosystems. This paper will address these gaps through targeted research, providing valuable insights and support for developing the region's effective leadership and entrepreneurial ecosystems.

## 2. Review of the Literature

Women leaders in business organizations have increasingly garnered attention for their roles and contributions, highlighting their challenges and opportunities. Significant barriers remain deeply rooted in societal, organizational, and cultural norms despite progress. Research indicates that women leaders exhibit unique traits and leadership styles compared to their male counterparts. Women often adopt more transformational and participative leadership styles, emphasising collaboration, empathy, and inclusiveness (Gupta, 2019). This leadership style can effectively manage organisational diversity and promote inclusive environments. However, women leaders face significant challenges in ascending to top leadership positions, often encountering the "glass ceiling" and "glass cliff" phenomena. The glass ceiling refers to the invisible barriers that prevent women from reaching the highest levels of leadership, while the glass cliff describes the precarious positions women are often placed in when they do attain leadership roles (Haslam & Ryan, 2008).

Women are more likely to be appointed to leadership positions during times of crisis or organizational decline, which sets them up for potential failure and increased scrutiny. Studies have shown that women leaders are often judged by different standards than men. They are expected to balance traditionally masculine traits, such as assertiveness and decisiveness, with feminine traits like empathy and nurturing (Stanford et al., 1995). This double bind creates a challenging environment for women to navigate, as they must constantly adjust their behavior to meet conflicting expectations.

In family-owned businesses, women leaders often perform better than non-family firms, largely due to the supportive environment that emphasizes transformational leadership. Family firms tend to value leadership's relational and nurturing aspects, which align well with the leadership styles commonly adopted by women (Nekhili et al., 2018). The role of organizational culture is critical in facilitating or hindering women's advancement. Cultures that emphasize gender equity, humane orientation, and low power distance are more likely to see higher percentages of women in management roles (Bajdo & Dickson, 2001). Organizational support, such as mentorship programs and family-friendly policies, also plays a crucial role in enabling women to advance to leadership positions (Cho et al., 2019). Women in leadership positions often act as agents of change within their organizations, promoting gender equality and challenging traditional gender norms. Their presence in leadership can lead to less gender segregation at lower organizational levels, as they work to create more inclusive and equitable workplaces (Stainback et al., 2016). Despite these advances, significant barriers remain. Social, cultural, and religious factors continue to impede women's progress, particularly in regions with deeply entrenched gender norms. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, professional women face challenges related to social and organizational expectations, which limit their opportunities for advancement (Hodges, 2017). In the context of higher education, women leaders play a pivotal role in transforming university organizations. Their leadership styles, often characterized by flexibility and adaptability, enable them to navigate the complexities of academic institutions and drive organizational change (Yáñez & Moreno, 2008).

The effectiveness of women leaders is also evident in public health and community settings. Women who lead community change initiatives often possess a strong vision, persistence, and the ability to mobilize others. These qualities are crucial in addressing public health challenges and promoting social change (Folta et al., 2012). However, women leaders still face significant challenges regarding credibility and perceptions of their leadership abilities. Studies have shown that women often struggle to gain the same level of credibility as their male counterparts, which can hinder their advancement and effectiveness as leaders (Bell, 2005). Efforts to address these challenges must focus on changing organizational cultures, providing support systems, and promoting policies that foster gender equity. Organizations can harness the full potential of their diverse leadership talent by creating environments that value and support women leaders.

**2.1 Objectives:** To know the profile of women-led business organisations in valley districts of Manipur

### 3. Methodology

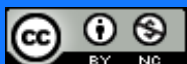
The research aims to understand the profile of women-led business organizations in the valley districts of Manipur. To achieve this, a cross-sectional study design was employed, focusing on collecting and analyzing data from women entrepreneurs in the region. The sample size for this study was determined to be 431 women leaders, selected using purposive sampling from six valley districts of Manipur. The selection process was designed to ensure that the sample adequately represented the diverse business sectors and demographic characteristics of women entrepreneurs in the area. Data collection was conducted between August 2023 and February 2024. A semi-structured interview schedule, which had been pre-tested for reliability and validity, was used to gather comprehensive information from the participants. This interview schedule included questions designed to capture detailed personal profiles, business practices, and leadership metrics (Elçi et al., 2012). Once collected, the data were meticulously checked for accuracy and then transferred to the SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software, Version 23, for analysis. By adopting a rigorous and systematic approach to data collection and analysis, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the profiles of women-led business organizations in Manipur. This methodology ensures that the findings are robust, reliable, and relevant, thereby contributing valuable insights to the existing body of knowledge on women entrepreneurship and leadership in this region.

**4. Data Analysis**

The profile of women-led business organizations in the valley districts of Manipur provides a comprehensive overview of various demographic and business characteristics, as discussed in table 1.

**Table 1 Profile of Women Leaders**

<b>Profile Variable</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>No. of Cases</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>Age</b>	20-30 years	35	8.1
	31-40 years	142	32.9
	41-50 years	161	37.4
	51 years & above	93	21.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>	Widow	17	3.9
	Unmarried	49	11.4
	Married	365	84.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.0</b>



<b>Educational Qualification</b>	High School	162	37.6
	Undergraduate Degree	91	21.1
	Diploma Degree	31	7.2
	Graduate Degree	125	29.0
	Post Graduate Degree	21	4.9
	PhD	1	0.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Prior Business Experience</b>	No experience	39	9.0
	Up to 5 years	191	44.3
	6-10 years	106	24.6
	11-20 years	81	18.8
	21 years & above	14	3.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Parental Business Background</b>	Business family background	109	25.3
	Government employee	59	13.7
	Private Organization employee	62	14.4
	Wage Earner	173	40.1
	Freelancer	28	6.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Duration of Own Business</b>	Up to 5 years	188	43.6
	6-10 years	149	34.6
	11-20 years	75	17.4
	21 years & above	19	4.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.0</b>

<b>Type of Organization</b>	Sole proprietorship	323	74.9
	Partnership	35	8.1
	Private Limited Company	33	7.7
	Others	40	9.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Number of Employees</b>	Up to 5	121	28.1
	6-10	236	54.8
	11-20	50	11.6
	21 & above	24	5.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>District</b>	Imphal East	187	43.4
	Imphal West	67	15.5
	Thoubal	105	24.4
	Kakching	19	4.4
	Bishnupur	50	11.6
	Jiribam	3	0.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The study included 431 women leaders, and the findings are summarized below.

*Age Distribution:* The age distribution of women leaders shows that the majority (71.9%) fall within the 31 to 50 years age range. Specifically, 32.9% are aged between 31-40 years, and 37.4% are between 41-50 years. Women leaders aged 51 years and above constitute 21.6%, while those aged 20-30 years make up only 8.1%. This indicates that middle-aged women are the predominant age group in leadership positions.

*Marital Status:* Regarding marital status, a significant proportion of women leaders (84.7%) are married. Unmarried women leaders account for 11.4%, and widows represent a smaller fraction of 3.9%. This distribution suggests that marital status may play a role in pursuing and attaining leadership roles.

*Educational Qualification:* The educational background of women leaders reveals that 37.6% have completed high school, and 21.1% hold an undergraduate degree. Women with graduate degrees



constitute 29.0%, while those with postgraduate degrees and PhDs comprise 4.9% and 0.2%, respectively. This indicates that many women leaders have attained higher education, with a notable proportion holding graduate degrees.

*Prior Business Experience:* Regarding prior business experience, 44.3% of women leaders have up to 5 years of experience, and 24.6% have 6-10 years of experience. Those with no prior experience represent 9.0% of the sample, women with more extensive experience (11-20 years) account for 18.8%, and those over 21 years constitute 3.2%. This shows that most women leaders have a moderate level of business experience before their current roles.

*Parental Business Background:* The parental business background of the women leaders is diverse. A significant portion (40.1%) come from wage-earner families, and 6.5% are from freelancer backgrounds. Those with a business family background represent 25.3%, while government and private organization employees comprise 13.7% and 14.4%, respectively. This suggests that women from various economic backgrounds are stepping into leadership roles.

*Duration of Own Business:* The duration of businesses owned by women leaders shows that 43.6% have been operating their businesses for up to 5 years, and 34.6% for 6-10 years. Businesses aged 11-20 years account for 17.4%, and those over 21 years represent 4.4%. This indicates that many women-led businesses are relatively young.

*Type of Organization:* The majority of women-led businesses are sole proprietorships (74.9%), followed by partnerships (8.1%), private limited companies (7.7%), and other types of organizations (9.3%). This distribution reflects women leaders' preference for independently owned and operated businesses.

*Number of Employees:* Most women-led businesses have a small number of employees, with 28.1% having up to 5 employees and 54.8% having 6-10 employees. Businesses with 11-20 employees account for 11.6%, and those with over 21 employees make up 5.6%. This suggests that women-led businesses tend to be small to medium-sized enterprises.

*District Distribution:* Geographically, the highest number of women-led businesses are located in Imphal East (43.4%), followed by Thoubal (24.4%) and Imphal West (15.5%). Other districts like Bishnupur (11.6%), Kakching (4.4%), and Jiribam (0.7%) have fewer women-led businesses. This indicates a concentration of women-led businesses in specific districts.

## 5.1 Discussion

The findings of this study provide a comprehensive overview of the profiles of women-led business organizations in the valley districts of Manipur, highlighting various demographic and business characteristics. The discussion delves into the implications of these findings, drawing comparisons with existing literature, and exploring the potential reasons behind observed trends. The age distribution indicates that the majority of women leaders (71.9%) fall within the 31-50 years age range. This aligns with global trends where middle-aged individuals often occupy leadership positions due to their accumulated experience and career stability (Patwardhan, 2004). The relatively lower percentage of young women (20-30 years) in leadership roles (8.1%) might reflect the societal and professional barriers young women face in gaining leadership positions. Young women may also be in the early stages of their careers, focusing on building experience

before moving into leadership roles. Conversely, the significant proportion of women aged 51 years and above (21.6%) in leadership suggests that women continue to hold influential positions well into their senior years, reflecting resilience and long-term career commitment. Similarly, the high percentage of married women leaders (84.7%) suggests that marriage does not deter women from pursuing leadership roles. This might indicate strong familial support systems that enable married women to balance professional and personal responsibilities effectively. However, the smaller percentages of unmarried (11.4%) and widowed (3.9%) women leaders highlight potential areas of concern. Unmarried women might face societal pressures to marry rather than pursue demanding careers, while widows might face additional challenges in managing businesses alone. These findings underscore the importance of supportive policies and social attitudes encouraging women to pursue leadership regardless of marital status.

Likewise, Education is a critical enabler of leadership, as evidenced by the significant proportion of women leaders with high school (37.6%) and undergraduate degrees (21.1%). This suggests that basic education is essential for leadership roles. However, the notable presence of graduate degree holders (29.0%) highlights the added advantage of higher education in attaining leadership positions. The relatively low percentages of postgraduate (4.9%) and PhD holders (0.2%) indicate that while advanced degrees may not be necessary for all leadership roles, they likely provide significant benefits in specific contexts or industries (Sims & Morris, 2018). This trend reflects the broader need for educational empowerment to prepare more women for leadership roles. Similarly, the data shows that most women leaders (68.9%) have up to 10 years of prior business experience, with a significant portion (44.3%) having up to 5 years. This indicates that many women ascend to leadership roles relatively early in their entrepreneurial journeys, suggesting a dynamic and rapidly evolving business environment in Manipur. The presence of women with no prior experience (9.0%) in leadership roles could reflect their capability to leverage other skills and resources effectively. On the other hand, the lower percentage of women with over 20 years of experience (3.2%) suggests potential challenges in sustaining long-term leadership, possibly due to burnout or shifting career priorities (Gupta, 2019). Likewise, A diverse parental business background among women leaders indicates the varied paths to leadership. The significant proportion of leaders from wage-earner families (40.1%) suggests that economic necessity may drive women to entrepreneurship. Those from business family backgrounds (25.3%) likely benefit from inherited business acumen and resources, while those from government (13.7%) and private organization (14.4%) employee families may bring valuable organizational skills to their ventures. The presence of freelancers (6.5%) further underscores the diverse skill sets and backgrounds women bring to their leadership roles. This diversity is crucial for fostering innovative and adaptive business practices (Datta & Agarwal, 2017). Similarly, The finding that 43.6% of women-led businesses have been operating for up to 5 years indicates a vibrant and emerging entrepreneurial scene among women in Manipur. The subsequent 34.6% operating for 6-10 years suggests sustained business ventures that have passed the initial survival phase. Businesses with longer durations (11-20 years at 17.4% and over 21 years at 4.4%) represent stability and resilience, essential for long-term economic contribution and job creation. This

distribution underscores the need for continuous support and development programs to help new businesses thrive and sustain long-term (Beaman et al., 2012).

The predominance of sole proprietorships (74.9%) reflects a preference for independent control and decision-making among women leaders. This could be due to the desire for autonomy and the ability to manage business operations flexibly. Partnerships (8.1%), private limited companies (7.7%), and other organizational forms (9.3%) suggest that while collaboration and formal business structures are present, they are less common. This trend may indicate the need for more awareness and support for diverse business structures that can provide additional growth opportunities and resource pooling (Hodges, 2017). Similarly, most women-led businesses have a small number of employees, with 28.1% having up to 5 employees and 54.8% having 6-10 employees. This indicates that women-led businesses in Manipur are predominantly small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). SMEs are crucial for economic development, job creation, and innovation. The presence of businesses with more employees (11-20 at 11.6% and over 21 at 5.6%) highlights the potential for growth and scaling. However, supporting these businesses in scaling up and managing larger teams effectively is essential for sustained economic impact (Cho et al., 2019). Likewise, the geographic concentration of women-led businesses in Imphal East (43.4%) and significant presence in Thoubal (24.4%) and Imphal West (15.5%) suggests that certain districts offer more conducive environments for entrepreneurship. Factors such as better infrastructure, market access, and supportive networks in these areas could drive this trend. Conversely, the lower representation in districts like Bishnupur (11.6%), Kakching (4.4%), and Jiribam (0.7%) indicates the need for targeted interventions to promote entrepreneurship in these regions. Policies aimed at equitable resource distribution and infrastructure development could help balance the entrepreneurial landscape across Manipur (Folta et al., 2012).

## 5.2 Conclusion

The study provides a detailed profile of women-led business organizations in the valley districts of Manipur, highlighting women leaders' demographic and business characteristics. The findings underscore the significant role of middle-aged women, married women, and those with higher education in leadership positions. The diverse parental business backgrounds and the predominance of sole proprietorships reflect the varied paths to leadership and the preference for independent control among women leaders. The analysis reveals that most women-led businesses are small to medium-sized enterprises, indicating the critical role of these businesses in the local economy. The geographic concentration of women-led businesses in specific districts suggests that certain areas offer more conducive environments for entrepreneurship, while others require targeted interventions to promote entrepreneurial activities.

The study also highlights women leaders' challenges, including balancing professional and personal responsibilities, accessing resources, and overcoming societal expectations. These challenges are similar to those faced by women leaders nationally, but the unique socio-cultural dynamics of Manipur add additional layers of complexity. In conclusion, while significant strides have been made by women leaders in Manipur, several gaps remain. Addressing these gaps through targeted research, policy interventions, and support programs can help create a more

inclusive and supportive environment for women leaders. This, in turn, can drive economic growth, social development, and gender equality in the region.

### 5.3 Limitations and Scope for Future Research

The study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. Firstly, the cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to draw causal inferences. Longitudinal studies are needed to track the progress of women-led businesses over time and understand the long-term impact of various factors on leadership success. Secondly, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce biases, such as social desirability bias, where respondents may present themselves in a more favourable light. Future studies could incorporate multiple data sources, such as interviews with employees and stakeholders, to triangulate the findings. Thirdly, the study focuses on six valley districts of Manipur, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different socio-economic and cultural contexts.

Future research should explore the specific socio-cultural dynamics of Manipur that influence women's leadership. Comparative studies between different regions within Manipur and with other states can provide deeper insights into the unique challenges and opportunities faced by women leaders in this region. Research can also explore the role of technology in promoting women-led businesses, especially in remote regions. Investigating the barriers to technology adoption and the effectiveness of digital literacy programs can help design interventions that enhance the digital capabilities of women entrepreneurs. Assessing the impact of existing policies and identifying gaps can inform the design of more effective interventions. Longitudinal studies that track the progress of women-led businesses over time can provide insights into the effectiveness of various support programs. Additionally, exploring the impact of specific policies, such as microfinance schemes, training programs, and affirmative action policies, can help refine these initiatives to support women leaders better. Future research should also consider the intersectionality of gender with other factors such as ethnicity, economic status, and educational background. Understanding how these intersecting identities influence leadership experiences can provide a more nuanced perspective. This approach can help design more inclusive policies and programs that address the diverse needs of women leaders in Manipur.

### References

- Abdullah, Z., Saad, N., Amran, N., & Ibrahim, M. (2020). Leadership Styles and Attributes of Prominent Women Business Leaders: A Case Study. Vol 10 No 1.
- Bajdo, L. M., & Dickson, M. (2001). Perceptions of Organizational Culture and Women's Advancement in Organizations: A Cross-Cultural Examination. *Sex Roles*, 45, 399-414.
- Beaman, L., Duflo, E., Pande, R., & Topalova, P. (2012). Female Leadership Raises Aspirations and Educational Attainment for Girls: A Policy Experiment in India. *Science*, 335, 582-586.

- Bell, R. A. (2005). A Theoretical Approach to Study the Perception of Women as Credible Leaders in Male-Dominated Organizations.
- Benny, G., Sankar, H., & Nambiar, D. (2020). Understanding women's leadership in health sector; findings of a qualitative study in Kerala, India. *European Journal of Public Health*, 30.
- Canabarro, J. R. S., & Salvagni, J. (2015). Women Leaders: the Gender Inequality, Career and Family in Work Organizations. *GeSec*, 6, 88-110.
- Cho, Y., Park, J., Han, S. J., & Ho, Y. (2019). "A woman CEO? You'd better think twice!" *Career Development International*.
- Datta, S., & Agarwal, U. A. (2017). Factors effecting career advancement of Indian women managers. *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*, 6, 314-336.
- Dhar, R. (2008). Leadership in the Management Institutes: An Exploration of the Experiences of Women Directors. *The Indo-Pacific Journal of Phenomenology*, 8, 1-15.
- Digan, S., Sahi, G., Mantok, S., & Patel, P. C. (2019). Women's Perceived Empowerment in Entrepreneurial Efforts: The Role of Bricolage and Psychological Capital. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 57, 206-229.
- Elçi, M., Aksoy, S., & Alpkın, L. (2012). The Impact of Ethical Leadership and Leadership Effectiveness on Employees' Turnover Intention: The Mediating Role of Work Related Stress. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 58, 289-297.
- Folta, S., Seguin, R., Ackerman, J., & Nelson, M. (2012). A qualitative study of leadership characteristics among women who catalyze positive community change. *BMC Public Health*, 12, 383.
- Ge, T., Abbas, J., Ullah, R., Abbas, A., Sadiq, I., & Zhang, R. (2022). Women's Entrepreneurial Contribution to Family Income: Innovative Technologies Promote Females' Entrepreneurship Amid COVID-19 Crisis. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13.
- Gupta, A. (2019). Women leaders and organizational diversity: their critical role in promoting diversity in organizations. *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*.
- Gupta, A. (2019). Women leaders and organizational diversity: their critical role in promoting diversity in organizations. *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*.
- Haslam, S., & Ryan, M. (2008). The road to the glass cliff: Differences in the perceived suitability of men and women for leadership positions in succeeding and failing organizations. *Leadership Quarterly*, 19, 530-546.

- Hodges, J. (2017). Cracking the walls of leadership: women in Saudi Arabia. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 32, 34-46.
- Hodges, J. (2017). Cracking the walls of leadership: women in Saudi Arabia. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 32, 34-46.
- Hujuri, A. (2016). Socio- economic status of women entrepreneurs in Assam with special reference to Kamrup District. *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences*, 6, 822-838.
- Kukmari, V. (2009). Profile of Women Entrepreneurs: Indicators of Empowerment. *Journal of Community Mobilization and Sustainable Development*, 4, 63-67.
- Kuppusamy, J., Ganesan, J., & Rosada, S. A. (2010). Leadership Styles and Management Techniques: An Analysis of Malaysian Women Entrepreneurs. *Communications of The IbIMA*, 1-10.
- Matharu, S., & Juneja, D. (2021). Factors Impacting Resilience of Women Entrepreneurs in India in the Face of COVID-19. *Vision: The Journal of Business Perspective*.
- Mythili, N. (2018). Legitimisation of Women School Leaders in India. *Contemporary Education Dialogue*, 16, 54-83.
- Nekhili, M., Chakroun, H., & Chtioui, T. (2018). Women's Leadership and Firm Performance: Family Versus Nonfamily Firms. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 153, 291-316.
- Patwardhan, V. (2004). Exploration into Personality of Indian Women Leaders. *Gender and Behaviour*, 2, 179-199.
- Rani, D. S., & Venkatarattaiah, K. (2016). Socio-Economic Background of Women Entrepreneurs in VisakhapatnamCity-ACase Study. *Sumedha Journal of Management*, 5, 4-18.
- Sims, C., & Morris, L. R. (2018). Are women business owners authentic servant leaders? *Gender in Management: An International Journal*.
- Stainback, K., Kleiner, S., & Skaggs, S. (2016). Women in Power. *Gender & Society*, 30, 109-135.
- Stanford, J., Oates, B. R., & Flores, D. (1995). Women's leadership styles: a heuristic analysis. *Women in Management Review*, 10, 9-16.
- Sumitha, P., & Dsouza, P. (2015). Exploring the Major Factors Influencing the WLB of Women Entrepreneurs Using Factor Analysis. *Journal of Management and Research*, 3, 1-18.

- Valk, R., & Srinivasan, V. (2011). Work–family balance of Indian women software professionals: A qualitative study. *IIMB Management Review*, 23, 39-50.
- Yáñez, J. L., & Moreno, M. S. (2008). Women leaders as agents of change in higher education organizations. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 23, 86-102.