



Gender Equality at the Top: Why Women Remain Underrepresented in Leadership in Mauritian Institutions

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Abstract

Women's underrepresentation in leadership remains a persistent global challenge despite improvements in women's education, labour-force participation and gender-equality policies. This challenge is particularly pronounced in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) due to their persistent socio-cultural and patriarchal norms and institutional constraints. The existing research in Mauritius, as in other SIDS remains hugely fragmented and sectoral. Thus, addressing this gap, Mauritius provides an important context for examining these dynamics as despite its gender parity in education women remain underrepresented in leadership positions. This study empirically examines interconnected structural and systemic barriers associated with women's progression into leadership positions in Mauritian institutions through a comprehensive literature review leading to nine theoretically derived hypotheses. A quantitative, cross-sectional, non-experimental survey design was employed using a structured five-point Likert-scale questionnaire that was administered to women professionals in Mauritian Institutions through convenience and snowball sampling. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics, one-sample t-tests, Pearson correlation analysis and multiple linear regression. The findings indicate that respondents significantly perceived all eight proposed structural and systemic barriers as constraints on women's leadership progression, with the stronger influence of systemic constraints such as male-dominated toxic organisational culture, gender bias and prejudice, sexual harassment, and structural impediments such as lack of flexible working arrangements and limited support from organizational decision makers receiving particularly strong agreement. Correlation findings also suggests that weak institutional support is not an isolated organisational issue, but is connected to prevailing broader patriarchal and socio-cultural structures. In, contrast, H8 'women lack leadership aspirations' was rejected, revealing a distinctive divergence from the

otherwise consistent pattern of empirical support across the proposed relationships. This formed a critical juncture of the study. Multiple linear regression and regression ANOVA regression were subsequently employed to investigate the rejected hypothesis. The systemic-barrier regression model was statistically significant, $F(4, 91) = 15.561$, $p < .001$, explaining 45.7% of the variance in responses to the aspiration-deficit outcome (adjusted $R^2 = .427$). However, the systemic predictors were more influential collectively than individually, with no isolated predictor demonstrating a statistically significant unique contribution. Therefore, suggesting that women's leadership aspirations are not a standalone deficit, but a complex perceptual variable shaped by the interconnected systemic and institutional environment in which they operate. Thus, the findings underscore the need to move towards holistic systemic, coordinated and institution-wide policy reforms that address gender bias, harassment, patriarchal attitudes, dismantle structural barriers, transform male-dominated organisational cultures, offer workplace flexibility, leadership sponsorship and create equitable pathways for women's progression into senior leadership roles. This study advances limited scholarship within Mauritius and comparable Small Island Developing States.

Keywords: women's leadership; structural and systemic barriers; leadership aspirations; Small Island Developing States; Mauritius

1 Introduction: Women in Leadership in Small Island States (SIDS) and Mauritius

The limited female representation in positions of leadership is a widespread worldwide phenomenon (Casad et al., 2021; Namuddu et al., 2024; Hanna et al., 2023). This lack of women in leadership is particularly pronounced in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Studies by the UN Women highlight that the root factor, stalling gender equality, is the lack of women in key decision-making positions (Hanna et al., 2023). This persistent underrepresentation is affirmed by the stark reality that women hold only 28.2% of management positions globally, reinforcing the lack of women in key decision-making roles as a critical factor stalling progress towards gender equality. In the same vein according to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2025, it will take 123 years to reach full global gender parity at the current pace and forecasts that the proportion of women in managerial positions will rise over time, but women will still be far from equal leadership by 2050 (WEF, 2025; Hanna et al., 2023; Grant Thornton, 2023).

These trends indicate that the UN SDG Agenda of eliminating all types of discrimination against women and girls by 2030 will be far from achieved, notwithstanding the recent increasing tertiary educational attainment of women and the growing participation of women in the labor force (Azcona et al., 2023; Jose & Sivaraman 2023). More than a decade ago, Michailidis et al. (2012) aptly put 'gender equality is still not achieved as women are not equally represented and treated equally in the workplace and have less responsibility, lower pay and limited opportunity to advance'. This assertion remains remarkably relevant today, as despite significant policy reforms and global commitments to gender equality women continue to face persistent inequalities in pay, opportunities, career progression and

workplace status and continue to lag behind men in leadership and decision making because of persistent structural and systemic barriers (OECD, 2025; UN Women & UN DESA, 2025). Mauritius situated in the southwest Indian Ocean, east of Madagascar is formally recognised as one of the Small Island States (SIDS), with other island states such as Seychelles, Maldives, Comoros, Cabo Verde, Barbados, Fiji and Samoa (UN DESA, 2024). The impediments that women in leadership face are particularly pronounced in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and they present a distinctive context for examining women's leadership due to their relatively small populations, close-knit social networks, gendered social expectations, restricted access to influential networks, occupational segregation, limited labour markets and deeply embedded patriarchal and cultural norms (UN Women, 2023a; Ramtohol 2020; UN Women, 2023b).

The corridors of power in SIDS remain disproportionately occupied by men, highlighting the enduring influence of structural and systemic barriers on women's leadership advancement with their representation in senior leadership and decision-making positions remaining disproportionately low (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2020). Consequently, enhancing women's leadership in SIDS is increasingly recognised not only as a gender equality imperative but also as a critical driver of inclusive governance, institutional effectiveness, and sustainable development (Ali & Shareefa, 2023; Ramtohol, 2020; United Nations, 2024). This lack of female leadership clearly resonates in Mauritius, despite its political stability, sustained economic and human development, and the achievement of gender parity in education, with women surpassing men in tertiary education enrolment. Mauritius consistent with patterns observed across other SIDS, continues to experience the legacy of historically male-dominated institutional structures, where deeply entrenched socio-cultural and institutional barriers reinforce gender inequality within leadership and decision-making positions, while entrenched patriarchal, religious, cultural norms and weak legal enforcement continue to sustain gender inequality (Ramtohol, 2020; Business Mauritius, 2025; Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2025; Ramguttty Wong, 2000).

Within the SIDS context, Mauritius ranked 111th globally on the 2025 Global Gender Gap Index an outcome that signals a concerningly weak situation, substantially trailing behind several SIDS, including Barbados (15th), Cabo Verde (30th) and Jamaica (44th), (World Economic Forum, 2025). This is attributed largely due to women's low representation in leadership (WEF, 2025). A significant paradox exists, as despite women comprising 50% of the population (Statistics Mauritius, 2026) and achieving gender parity in education, they hold only 9.5% of top business roles and 37% of senior government positions (MACOSS, 2025). Eagly and Carli's (2007, p.7) "labyrinth" metaphor provides a useful theoretical lens for understanding women's leadership progression.

Rather than depicting women's leadership advancement as being blocked by a single impenetrable barrier, the labyrinth conceptualises women's leadership journeys as involving multiple interconnected obstacles that may arise at different stages of a women's career. In this vein, studies highlight that gender inequality in organisations is multidimensional, with several interrelated, pervasive factors (OECD, 2025; Platania, 2025; Van den Brink & Stobbe, 2014). This perspective is particularly relevant to the present study because the proposed barriers in this study attribute the lack of women in leadership due to a myriad of

factors such as socio-cultural expectations, organisational support, workplace flexibility, sexual harassment, gender bias, male dominated toxic organisational culture and the glass ceiling. As such, scholarship on women's leadership in SIDS remains comparatively limited, fragmented and geographically uneven. Evidence from Mauritius and other SIDS also points to limitations in the availability of gender-disaggregated data, constraining the development of context-specific explanations of women's leadership experiences (Ramtohul, 2020; Hambleton, & Jeyaseelan, 2024). Such limitations restrict holistic and relative understanding of women's experiences and progression into leadership and reinforce the need for context-specific empirical research on women's leadership within SIDS. The limited available studies in Mauritius highlight the need for targeted structural and systemic interventions and policy level changes (Business Mauritius 2023; Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2023; Gokulsing & Ragoobur, 2014).

These conditions make Mauritius a valuable context for examining how structural and systemic barriers interact rather than treating women's underrepresentation as the result of a single factor. Thus, contributing towards providing a holistic perspective on women's leadership progression within the broader SIDS context. Drawing upon the global literature on barriers to women's leadership and relevant secondary evidence from SIDS, the study establishes a robust contextual lens through which to examine the structural and systemic factors constraining women's advancement to leadership positions within Mauritian institutions and comes up with actionable policy level recommendations that are directly relevant to Mauritius while offering transferable insights for other Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The paper is structured into five main sections comprising the literature review, methodology, empirical findings, discussion and recommendations

1.1 Research Aim

The aim of this study is to empirically examine perceived structural and systemic barriers associated with women's progression into senior leadership positions in Mauritian institutions. Specifically, the study seeks to (i) identify the barriers most strongly perceived by women professionals; (ii) examine associations among the structural and systemic barriers; and (iii) determine whether selected systemic barriers collectively explain variation in responses to the leadership-aspiration outcome. The study further develops evidence-based recommendations to support gender-inclusive leadership and strengthen women's representation in senior decision-making positions. The study is guided by three main research questions:

- **RQ1:** What structural and systemic barriers are perceived by women professionals as constraining leadership progression in Mauritian institutions?
- **RQ2:** How are these barriers interrelated?
- **RQ3:** Do systemic barriers collectively explain variation in the aspiration-related outcome?

1.1.1 Literature Review: Structural and Systemic Barriers to Women's Leadership in Mauritius and SIDS

The literature indicates that women's leadership underrepresentation is better understood as a multidimensional institutional phenomenon than as the consequence of a single barrier as

seen in (Table 1). Acker (2006) theory of inequality regimes highlights that barriers to women's leadership should not be viewed as isolated impediments, but as mutually reinforcing structural and systemic conditions embedded within organisational contexts. In this study, structural barriers refer primarily to socio-cultural expectations, patriarchal attitudes, organisational decision-maker support and workplace flexibility, whereas systemic barriers refer to sexual harassment, gender bias and prejudice, male-dominated toxic organisational culture and the glass ceiling (OECD, 2025; Platania, 2025; Van den Brink & Stobbe, 2014; Thelma & Loveness, 2024; Stamarski and Song Hing, 2015; Brukmuller et al., 2014). These barriers may overlap and reinforce one another across organisational and societal levels and may amplify their impact within institutional environments. The literature thus provides a basis for examining not only the perceived strength of individual barriers but also their interrelationships.

A further aspect concerns the proposition that women's underrepresentation may reflect a lack of leadership aspiration. Contemporary leadership research increasingly cautions against interpreting gender inequality through an individual-deficit lens and instead attributes institutional environments such as male dominated organisational climate, lack of sponsorship, discrimination, gender bias, work-family pressures and institutional practices (Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2025; Business Mauritius, 2025; Nosheen et al., 2025; Saleem et al., 2025; Lal et al., 2026; Fritz et al., 2017). This distinction is incorporated into the present framework by treating the aspiration-deficit proposition as an outcome to be examined rather than as another barrier.

Table 1 Summary of Literature Review Authors Compilation

Studies	Objective: Summary of the Main Barriers to Women's Leadership Identified in the Literature	Findings (with special reference to Small Island States like Mauritius)
(Amoak & Najjar, 2026; Ramtohul, 2025,2020; Setyaningrum & Juansih, 2024; Thelma & Ngulube,2024;Jayachandran, 2015; Mensah, 2023; Sultana, 2011; Kiamba, 2009; Shaistha & Shareefa, 2023)	Societal, Cultural and Patriarchal norms	Entrenched socio-cultural norms and patriarchal structures perpetuate traditional gender roles, limiting women's leadership opportunities, professional autonomy, and career progression
(Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2025; Ramguttty Wong, 2000; Dwivedi,et al., 2018; McKinsey & Company & LeanIn.Org, 2025)	Lack of support from the CEO and Top Management	A lack of active sponsorship from CEOs and decision-makers, rooted in patriarchal norms and old boys' network, significantly

Studies	Objective: Summary of the Main Barriers to Women's Leadership Identified in the Literature	Findings (with special reference to Small Island States like Mauritius)
		hinders the transition of women to leadership
(Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2025; United Nations Women, 2024; ILO, 2018; Alqahtani, et al, 2020 Hochschild & Machung, 2012; Ferrant et al., 2014; Klettner et al., 2016; ILO, 2018; UN Women, 2020).).	Lack of Flexible working/ work-life balance	Women's disproportionate domestic and childcare responsibilities intensify work–family conflict, particularly where flexible working and affordable childcare remain limited, potentially constraining career progression and leadership aspirations. Lack of flexible working arrangements and even if available are not implemented, particularly by male managers. This significantly impedes women's transition into leadership, particularly for mothers and caregivers.
(Haile et al., 2016; Joshi, 2014; Joshi & Misangyi, 2018; Moagi, 2023; Bondestam, & Lundqvist, 2020).	Sexual Harassment impeding women's transition to leadership in the workplace	Patriarchal norms in Small Island Developing States increase women's exposure to workplace sexual harassment, particularly in middle management, while fear of retaliation, reputational damage, and weak reporting mechanisms contribute to widespread underreporting.
(Gierke, et al., 2025; Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2025; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Das & Baruah, 2016; Ridgeway, 2001;	Gender bias and prejudice hinder women's advancement to	Role Congruity Theory explains prejudice arising from conflicting female and leadership role expectations.

Studies	Objective: Summary of the Main Barriers to Women's Leadership Identified in the Literature	Findings (with special reference to Small Island States like Mauritius)
Hu,2024; Ibarra, et al., 2013)	leadership positions	Persistent gender bias and prejudice exist in Small Island Developing States. Studies in Mauritius, highlight that masculine leadership norms are considered superior thus undermining women's competence, reinforcing stereotypes, limiting leadership opportunities, and constraining career progression.
(Business Mauritius, 2025; Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2025; Saifuddin et al., 2019; Berdahl et al., 2022)	A male-dominated toxic culture hinders women from leadership roles.	Recent Mauritian studies highlight male-dominated toxic cultures and second-generation bias reflecting masculine workplace values that discriminate against women. Male-dominated toxic workplace cultures perpetuate hostility, exclusion, and inadequate support, prompting women to leave the workplace. Male 'ideal worker' norms reinforce discriminatory recruitment, career advancement, and decision-making, leading to toxic discriminatory practices becoming embedded in the work culture.
(Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2025; Business Mauritius, 2025; Nosheen et al., 2025; Saleem et al., 2025; Lal et al., 2026; Fritz et al., 2017)	Women's aspirations for leadership are impacted by	Mauritian women's leadership aspirations get impacted by structural and systemic barriers, including

Studies	Objective: Summary of the Main Barriers to Women's Leadership Identified in the Literature	Findings (with special reference to Small Island States like Mauritius)
	various factors	discrimination, sexist practices exclusion, harassment, limited support, and work–family conflict, rather than personal ambition. They also experience self-doubt, underestimation of their skills and performance, the need for perfectionism that needs more hard work to prove themselves. Gender-biased promotion practices privileging confident male candidates. Studies also highlight inclusive cultures and supportive leadership practices by organizations, enable women to overcome these limitations and maintain high leadership aspirations
(Tandrayen-Ragoobur, & Pydayya, 2015; Khan et Khan,2022; Khan et al., 2025; Fairfax,2006; Taparia and Lenka, 2022; Fitzsimmons & Callan,2016; Bruckmüller et al., 2014; Dreher, 2003)	Glass ceiling and women's advancement to leadership	In Mauritius and other SIDS, the glass ceiling persists through small labour markets, limited advancement opportunities, promotion based on informal networks, and occupational segregation, and women remaining confined to low paying jobs. Empirical findings highlight that the apprehension of the glass ceiling lowers self-belief and confidence, thus decreasing career ambitions and reducing leadership aspirations

1.1.2 Conceptual Framework: Interconnected Structural and Systemic Barriers to Women's leadership Progression

The conceptual framework (as seen in Figure 1) was aligned with the theoretical propositions as ascertained from the literature review and the secondary data available on women's leaders in Mauritius (Business Mauritius, 2022; Munhurrun et al., 2023; Gokulsing, & Ragoobur, 2014; MACOSS, 2025; Bunwaree, 2024). The conceptual framework as seen in Table 1 represents the following: H1–H4 represent structural barriers and H5–H7 and H9 represent systemic barriers. H8 is treated as the barrier related to aspiration-deficit outcome. Structural barriers comprise patriarchal attitudes (H1), Patriarchal attitudes (H2) organisational decision-maker support, (H3), societal and cultural expectations, (H4) flexible working. While systemic barriers encompass (H5) sexual harassment (H6), gender bias and prejudice (H7), male-dominated toxic culture and (H9) glass ceiling. These being the independent variables and the dependent variable being a lack of women in leadership in Mauritian Institutions.

Importantly, H8 women's leadership aspiration is repositioned as an aspiration-deficit outcome rather than an independent barrier. This distinction strengthens the conceptual logic of the framework by separating the institutional and socio-cultural conditions surrounding women's leadership progression from the aspiration outcome itself. Accordingly, the conceptual framework moves beyond viewing barriers as isolated impediments and instead presents women's leadership progression as an outcome embedded within interrelated structural and systemic conditions, while treating leadership aspiration as a distinct empirical outcome requiring separate statistical analysis.

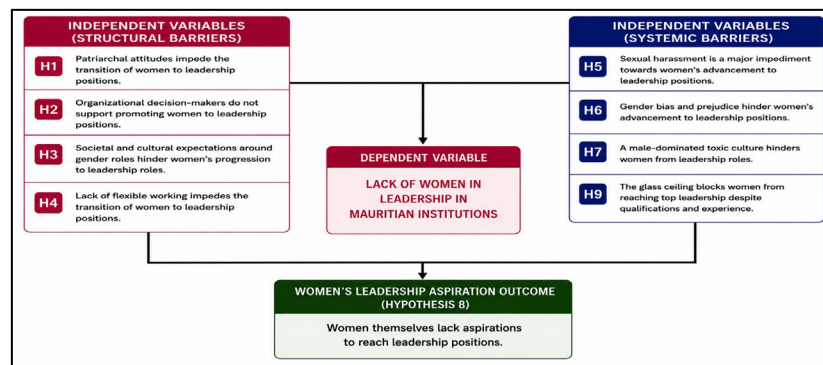


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Interconnected Structural and Systemic Barriers to Women's Leadership in Mauritius Source Authors Compilation

2 Research Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional, non-experimental survey design to examine perceived structural and systemic barriers associated with women's progression into leadership positions within Mauritian institutions. A descriptive ex-post facto approach was deemed appropriate as it enabled the investigation of existing social and organizational phenomena without manipulating the independent variables, thereby allowing relationships

among variables to be examined retrospectively within their natural settings (De Vos and Fouché, 1998; Mouton and Marais, 1990). A cross-sectional design was appropriate because data were collected at a single point in time and the study sought to examine respondents' perceptions and experiences without manipulating study variables. The cross-sectional design approach facilitated the estimation of perceived barriers and their statistical associations while recognising that cross-sectional data precludes definitive causal inference. Thereby enabling the study to capture prevailing perceptions, organisational experiences, systemic and structural barriers associated with women's progression to leadership positions. Respondents included women occupying, aspiring to, or progressing towards managerial, leadership and senior administrative roles.

2.1 Research Instrument, Reliability and Internal Consistency

The research instrument used for this study was a structured online Google Forms questionnaire and was carefully designed to align with the objectives of the study. The questionnaire items were adapted from well-established theoretical constructs identified through an extensive literature review and organised within a predefined conceptual framework. The questionnaire consisted of demographic questions and nine five-point Likert-scale items derived from the literature and the predefined conceptual framework. Responses ranged from 1 = Strongly Agree to 5 = Strongly Disagree. Eight items measured perceived structural and systemic barriers, while H8 measured the aspiration-deficit proposition (Jebb et al., 2021; Neuman, 1997). Content validity of the questionnaire items was established through well-established content validity measures such as comprehensive literature review where the main pertinent theoretical constructs were extracted and were then used in the development of the questionnaire items.

This was further validated through an expert review panel to assess if it sufficiently supported the study objectives (Hair et al., 2022). Subsequently after expert panel evaluation was carried out only pertinent items were retained, which was followed by pilot testing. To ensure methodological rigour, the questionnaire was pilot tested with 15 women MBA students. Feedback obtained strengthened clarity, content relevance, construct alignment and reliability, leading to minor refinements that improved comprehensibility and reduced ambiguity before full-scale administration. (Taherdoost, 2016; Lewis et al., 1995; Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005; Gudmundsdottir et al., 2010). The structured nature of the questionnaire ensured consistency in responses, facilitated statistical comparison, and enabled the systematic testing of the proposed hypotheses. Reliability analysis demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency across the nine barrier items, with an overall Cronbach's alpha of 0.794. The standardized Cronbach's alpha was 0.805, both exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70 (Table 2) and supporting the internal consistency and confirming the reliability of measurement instrument. (Adeniran, 2025; Dimitrov, 2002). In addition to the overall reliability assessment, separate Cronbach's alpha coefficients were computed for each construct to confirm that every dimension measuring barriers to women's leadership progression exhibited satisfactory internal consistency. Evaluating the reliability of individual constructs is recommended for multidimensional scales because it demonstrates the consistency of each construct independently of the overall instrument as seen in (Table 2: Reliability (Item-total Statistics Summary) (Hair et al., 2022; Diehl, 2020; Caciano da Silva et al., 2022)

Table 2: Reliability (Item-total Statistics Summary)

RELIABILITY (ITEM-TOTAL STATISTICS SUMMARY)			
BARRIER CONSTRUCT (9 ITEMS)	CORRECTED ITEM- TOTAL CORRELATION	SQUARED MULTIPLE CORRELATION	CRONBACH'S ALPHA IF ITEM DELETED
1. Patriarchal society does not view/accept women as leaders	.569	.553	.761
2. Decision-makers do not support women leaders	.551	.393	.764
3. Societal and cultural expectations hinder women's progression	.601	.539	.760
4. Lack of flexible working and work-life balance	.343	.188	.795
5. Sexual harassment creates a hostile workplace	.465	.423	.776
6. Gender bias and prejudice hinder advancement	.663	.656	.753
7. Male-dominated toxic culture hinders women	.612	.594	.758
8. Women themselves don't have aspirations to reach leadership positions	.141	.049	.822
9. The glass ceiling blocks women from top leadership despite qualifications and experience	.531	.408	.767
OVERALL CRONBACH'S ALPHA 0.794	STANDARDIZED ALPHA 0.805	NUMBER OF ITEMS 9	

Note: Corrected Item-Total Correlation > 0.30 is desirable. Leadership aspiration item retained for theoretical importance.

Thus, indicating that the items displayed an acceptable degree of consistency for subsequent statistical analysis (Hair et al., 2019). According to Hair et al. (2019), Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.70 indicate acceptable reliability, whereas values above 0.80 indicate good internal consistency. The obtained coefficient of 0.794 therefore demonstrates that the instrument possesses acceptable to good internal consistency, indicating that the nine constructs measuring a single underlying result that is lack of women in leadership in Mauritian Institutions as seen in the conceptual research framework is consistent and reliable. The slightly higher standardized alpha (0.805) further suggests relatively homogeneous item variances and marginally stronger reliability after standardization. The Corrected Item-Total Correlation values ranged from 0.141 to 0.663. All items exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.30, except the leadership aspiration item (0.141), indicating that the remaining items contributed satisfactorily to the overall construct (Hair et al., 2019).

Although deleting this item would increase Cronbach's Alpha from 0.794 to 0.822, it was retained because it represents a theoretically important construct within the research framework and directly addresses Hypothesis 8 concerning women's leadership aspirations. Retaining theoretically meaningful items despite lower statistical consistency is well established in social science research (Field, 2024, 2018; Hair et al., 2019). Overall, the findings confirm that the instrument demonstrates satisfactory internal consistency and is sufficiently reliable for the subsequent descriptive, correlational, and multiple regression analyses undertaken in this study. Exploratory Factor Analysis was not conducted because the objective of the study was not to develop or discover latent dimensions but to empirically test predefined hypotheses regarding the structural and systemic barriers to women's leadership. Furthermore, the influence of common method bias was minimised by procedural remedies such as voluntary participation, respondent anonymity, confidentiality, and carefully worded questionnaire items designed to reduce evaluation apprehension and elicit objective responses based on the barriers that women experience in their leadership transitions (Podsakoff et al., 2003). These measures were considered appropriate to support the reliability and consistency of the research instrument used for the study

2.1.1 Sampling, Biographical Profile, Data collection process and Ethics

The target population (Table 3) comprised women in leadership, managerial, and senior administrative positions across Mauritius's public and private sectors. Data collection was

done through online Google Forms questionnaires, an approach selected to enhance accessibility, geographical reach, response efficiency, and participant convenience. A non-probability convenience snowball sampling was used to reach this difficult-to-access population across diverse institutional and professional networks instead of using conventional sampling frames. The questionnaire was initially distributed to 150 women senior professionals across the public and private sectors who circulated the questionnaire to their contacts.

This referral-based process enabled the researcher to reach a wider pool of eligible participants with relevant leadership experience and organisational exposure. A total of 96 filled-in questionnaires were returned, achieving a 64% response rate despite several follow-up attempts. Studies show that the average online survey response rate is 44.1%, and sending the survey to a clearly defined and refined population targeting senior women leaders, a hard-to-reach population positively impacts the online survey response rate, thus the response rate of 64% confirms the robustness of the survey rate (Wu et al., 2022; Baruch & Holtom, 2008). Although snowball sampling limits population generalisability, it was highly effective in accessing a professionally interconnected and otherwise difficult-to-reach population.

The inclusion of respondents from diverse institutional and occupational backgrounds enhanced the breadth, diversity, and contextual richness of the dataset. The study adhered to international ethical standards, ensuring informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and the exclusive use of aggregated data for academic research. This ethical information accompanied the questionnaire throughout its distribution. Table 3 presents a summary of the demographic characteristics of respondents, including title, age group, number of children, educational qualifications, employment sector, income level, and years of professional experience. Overall, the profile reflects a highly educated and professionally established sample, providing a strong contextual basis for examining barriers to women's leadership progression. Educational attainment was particularly high, with 57.3% of respondents holding postgraduate qualifications and 31.3% possessing undergraduate degrees.

Thus, 88.6% were educated to degree level or above, indicating substantial educational capital within the sample. This is particularly pertinent to the study, as it suggests that women's leadership progression is being examined among respondents who largely possess the educational credentials conventionally associated with professional and leadership advancement. The age distribution similarly reflects considerable career maturity. The largest group comprised respondents aged 41–50 years (36%), followed by those aged 31–40 years (22%), 20–30 years (22%), and 51 years and above (20%). Notably, 56% were aged 41 years or above, representing a substantial proportion of women at career stages where progression into senior managerial and leadership positions may reasonably be anticipated. At the same time, the inclusion of younger respondents captures the perspectives of women at earlier stages of the leadership pipeline. Sectoral representation was broad, with 51.0% employed in the public sector, 33.3% in the private sector, 12.5% in parastatal organisations and 3.2% in semi-government institutions. This cross-sectoral composition strengthens the contextual

breadth of the study by capturing women's experiences across different institutional environments.

Economically, 74.0% reported monthly earnings of Rs 30,000 or above, further indicating a predominantly established workforce profile. Regarding organisational tenure, 49.8% had occupied their current position for two to five years, while substantial representation was also evident across longer tenure categories. Finally, 54.2% of respondents reported having no children, while 22.9% had one child and 22.9% had two or more children. Taken together, the demographic profile depicts a highly educated, economically active and professionally established group of women spanning different career stages and institutional sectors. Importantly, this profile provides a compelling context for interpreting the study's subsequent findings on structural and systemic barriers to women's leadership progression

Table 3: Demographic Profiles

Variable	Item-Percentage		Mrs	Miss	Ms	Dr				
Title	Mrs		53.1	37.5	3.1	6.3				
	Total		100%		100%					
	20-30 years		31-40 years		41-50 years		51 and above			
Age Group	22%		22%		36%		20%			
	Total		100%							
	None		One		Two & above					
Number of Children	54.2		22.9		22.9					
	Total		100%							
	Certificate		Degree		Postgraduate		Doctorate			
Qualifications	5.2		31.3		57.3		6.2			
	Total		100%							
	Public		Parastatal		Semi-Government		Private			
Sector Employed	51.0		12.5		3.2		33.3			
	Total		100%							
	2-5 years		6-10 years		11-15 Years		16-20 yrs	21-25 yrs	26-30 yrs	30 yrs above
Years Current position	49.8		18.5		8.5		8.5	3.4	7.4	4.1
	Total		100%							
	5000-10000		10000-20000		20000-30000		30000 & above		Keep Confidential	
Monthly Income	1.0		6.3		18.7		74.0		0.0	
	Total		100%							

2.1.2 Empirical Strategy and Data Analysis

Data was analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 32. Given the cross-sectional design, the findings are interpreted as associations and perceptions rather than causal effects. Descriptive statistics were used to summarise respondent characteristics and item-level responses. Because the Likert-scale responses were treated as approximately interval-level measures for the planned analyses, parametric procedures were employed (George and Mallery 2022; Norman, 2010; Sullivan & Artino, 2013). One-sample t-tests were conducted against the neutral midpoint of 3.00. Means below 3.00 were interpreted as stronger agreement such that the corresponding statement represented a barrier, whereas a mean above 3.00 for H8 was interpreted as disagreement with the proposition that women lack leadership aspirations.

Pearson's correlations were used to examine the direction and strength of associations among the barrier variables and the H8 aspiration-deficit outcome. Multiple linear regression was then used to examine whether four systemic barriers sexual harassment, gender bias and prejudice, male-dominated toxic organisational culture, and the glass ceiling collectively explained variation in responses to H8. Regression diagnostics included the Durbin-Watson statistic, tolerance and VIF. The overall model was evaluated using the regression ANOVA (Field, 2024; Hair et al., 2022). Collectively, this sequential analytical strategy enabled the study to move from identifying the perceived prominence of individual barriers, to examining their associations, and finally to assessing their combined predictive contribution, thereby

providing a rigorous empirical basis for testing the proposed hypotheses and strengthening the robustness of the findings (Field, 2018; Pallant, 2020). However, it is important to highlight that because the study is cross-sectional and based on a non-probability sample, all associations are interpreted as non-causal and the findings are not assumed to be statistically generalisable to the entire women population in Mauritius

3 One-Sample t-Tests and Mean Analysis

One-Sample t-tests (see Table 4) were conducted using 3.00 as the neutral midpoint of the five-point scale. Because lower scores indicate stronger agreement, means significantly below 3.00 were interpreted as evidence that respondents perceived the corresponding factor as a barrier.

Table 4: One-sample t-test results for structural barriers, systemic barriers and the aspiration-deficit proposition

Hypothesis (Structural barriers)	Mean	SD	P	Mean difference	95% CI	Analysis
H1 Patriarchal attitudes	2.57		< .001	-0.427	[-0.65, -0.20]	Supported
H2 Decision-maker support	2.68	1.110	.005	-0.323	[-0.55, -0.10]	Supported
H3 Societal/cultural expectations	2.28	0.937	< .001	-0.719	[-0.91, -0.53]	Supported
H4 Flexible working	2.09	1.188	< .001	-0.906	[-1.15, -0.67]	Supported
Hypothesis (Systemic barriers)	Mean	SD	P	Mean difference	95% CI	
H5 Sexual harassment	1.85	1.046	< .001	-1.146	[-1.36, -0.93]	Supported
H6 Gender bias/prejudice	1.84	0.933	< .001	-1.156	[-1.35, -0.97]	Supported
H7 Male-dominated	1.79	0.951	< .001	-1.208	[-1.40, -1.02]	Supported

toxic culture						
H8 Lack of leadership aspirations	3.83	1.073	< .001	+0.833	[0.62, 1.05]	Not supported
H9 Glass ceiling	2.42	1.130	< .001	-0.583	[-0.81, -0.35]	Supported

3.1 Mean Analysis of Structural Barriers

As seen in (Table 4), all four structural-barrier items produced means significantly below the neutral midpoint of 3.00, providing statistical support for H1–H4 such that respondents' mean ratings differed significantly from the neutral midpoint from the hypothesised direction. Patriarchal attitudes had a mean of 2.57 (SD = 1.112), lack of support from organisational decision-makers had a mean of 2.68 (SD = 1.110), societal and cultural expectations had a mean of 2.28 (SD = 0.937), and lack of flexible working had the lowest mean at 2.09 (SD = 1.188). Thus, flexible working was the most strongly endorsed structural barrier. These one-sample t-tests establish perceived differences from the neutral midpoint reflecting associations rather than causal effects.

These findings indicate that respondents generally perceived patriarchal attitudes, limited organisational support, gendered societal expectations and insufficient workplace flexibility as significant constraints on women's progression towards leadership. However, the findings should be interpreted as evidence of perceived barriers rather than corroboration that these factors independently cause women's underrepresentation in leadership.

3.1.1 Mean Analysis of Systemic Barriers and Leadership Aspirations

As seen in (Table 4 and 4.i) the four systemic-barrier items also produced means, significantly below the neutral midpoint. Male-dominated toxic organisational culture recorded the lowest mean (M = 1.79, SD = 0.951), followed by gender bias and prejudice (M = 1.84, SD = 0.933), sexual harassment (M = 1.85, SD = 1.046), and the glass ceiling (M = 2.42, SD = 1.130). H5, H6, H7 and H9 were therefore supported in the sense that respondents significantly endorsed the corresponding barrier statements. H8 (see Table 4.i) was rejected because the mean for the aspiration-deficit statement was significantly above the neutral midpoint (M = 3.83, SD = 1.073, $p < .001$). Respondents therefore disagreed with the proposition that women lack leadership aspirations. This finding shifts the explanatory focus away from an individual deficit in ambition and towards the organisational and institutional conditions within which leadership aspirations are pursued.

Table 4.i: Rejection of H 8 aspiration-deficit statement

hypothesis	statistical test	result	analysis
h1–h4	one-sample t-test	all means < 3.00; $p \leq .005$	supported
h5–h7, h9	one-sample t-test	all means < 3.00; p	supported

hypothesis	statistical test	result	analysis
		< .001	
h8	one-sample t-test	m = 3.83; p < .001; mean > 3.00	not supported

4 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation coefficients (Table 5) were used to examine the direction and strength of associations among the structural and systemic barriers and the H8 aspiration-deficit outcome. Statistical significance was assessed using two-tailed tests.

Table 5: Pearson correlations among structural and systemic barriers

Systemic variables	H5	H6	H7	H8	H9
H5 Sexual harassment	1.000	.692***	.552***	.174	.158
H6 Gender bias/prejudice	.692***	1.000	.483***	.207*	.124
H7 Male-dominated toxic culture	.552***	.483***	1.000	.190	.275**
H8 Aspiration-deficit outcome	.174	.207*	.190	1.000	.465***
H9 Glass ceiling	.158	.124	.275**	.465***	1.000
Structural barriers	H1	H2	H3	H4	
H1 Patriarchal attitudes	1.000	.692***	.552***	.278**	
H2 Societal/cultural expectations	.692***	1.000	.483***	.288**	
H3 Decision-maker support	.552***	.483***	1.000	.366***	
H4 Flexible working	.278**	.288**	.366***	1.000	

(Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed). Significance markers are based on $N = 96$)

4.1 Pearson Correlation of Structural Barriers

The structural-barrier correlations were positive and ranged from weak-to-moderate to strong. The strongest association was observed between patriarchal attitudes and societal and cultural

expectations ($r = .692, p < .001$), followed by patriarchal attitudes and lack of decision-maker support ($r = .552, p < .001$). Societal and cultural expectations were also associated with lack of decision-maker support ($r = .483, p < .001$). The association between lack of flexible working and decision-maker support was smaller but statistically significant ($r = .366, p < .001$). These findings provide strong evidence that structural barriers are interconnected and operate in tandem, revealing meaningful patterns of association, while recognising that correlation does not imply causality.

4.1.1 Pearson Correlation Systemic Barriers

The systemic-barrier correlations indicate that several workplace barriers are positively associated. Sexual harassment was strongly associated with gender bias and prejudice ($r = .692, p < .001$) and male-dominated toxic organisational culture ($r = .552, p < .001$), while gender bias and prejudice were also associated with toxic organisational culture ($r = .483, p < .001$). However, the smaller correlations involving H8 were not uniformly statistically significant. The glass ceiling showed a moderate positive association with the aspiration-deficit outcome ($r = .465, p < .001$). In particular, sexual harassment and the aspiration-deficit item ($r = .174, p = .090$), and the glass ceiling and sexual harassment ($r = .158, p = .124$), were not statistically significant. The significance reporting therefore supports the conclusion that several systemic barriers are interconnected, but not that every pair of variables is significantly correlated. These findings indicate that several discriminatory workplace practices and hostile organisational conditions are statistically associated. When considered alongside the rejection of H8 in the mean analysis, the findings are consistent with the interpretation that women's leadership progression should be examined within broader institutional conditions rather than attributed to an inherent deficit in women's ambition.

5 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis: Systemic Barriers and the Aspiration-Deficit Outcome

The correlation analysis indicated meaningful associations among systemic barriers that function as a confluence of factors rather than a single impediment. The one-sample t-test rejected H8, indicating that women do not inherently possess lower leadership aspirations, but their leadership aspirations are impacted by the confluence of systemic embedded institutional patterns. This has been affirmed in the review of literature highlighting inclusive cultures and supportive leadership practices by organizations, enable women to overcome these limitations and maintain high leadership aspirations (Ramseook-Munhurrin et al., 2025; Business Mauritius, 2025; Fritz & van Knippenberg, 2020; Khalid & Aftab, 2023; Rafiq et al., 2024; Latorre et al., 2025).

The rejection of H8 provides an important critical transition in the study and shifted the analytical focus from whether aspirations exist to identifying the systemic factors that constrain their realization. Thus, necessitating the use of multiple linear regression to determine whether systemic barriers significantly predict women's leadership aspirations after accounting for the simultaneous effects of multiple explanatory variables. Multiple linear

regression is particularly appropriate because it moves beyond bivariate relationships to estimate the independent contribution of each predictor while evaluating the overall explanatory power of the model. As already understood in the Pearson Correlation the systemic glass ceiling showed a moderate positive association with the aspiration-deficit outcome ($r = .465$, $p < .001$) highlighting that perceptions of the glass ceiling have an impact on women's leadership aspirations.

Multiple regression was selected because the study sought to evaluate the simultaneous contribution of several independent variables while controlling for the influence of the remaining predictors, thereby identifying the relative importance of each systemic barrier in explaining variation in leadership aspirations. Multiple regression was appropriate because it permits the simultaneous estimation of several predictors and the evaluation of the overall explanatory power of the model. Consequently, the analysis enables a more robust examination of whether systemic barriers, rather than deficiencies in women's aspirations, account for observed differences in leadership outcomes, thereby providing stronger evidence explanation of women's underrepresentation in leadership. (Field, 2018; Hair et al., 2022).

Table 6: Model Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis of Systemic Barriers Predicting Women's Leadership Aspirations

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.676 ^a	.457	.427	.812	2.211
a. Predictors: (Constant), 1 The glass ceiling blocks women from top leadership despite qualifications and experience, 2 Sexual harassment creates a hostile workplace, discouraging women from pursuing leadership roles., 3 A male-dominated toxic culture hinders women from leadership roles., 4 Gender bias and prejudice hinder women's advancement to leadership positions. b. Dependent Variable: Women don't have aspiration to reach leadership positions					

The multiple regression model (as seen in Table 6) produced $R = .676$, $R^2 = .457$ and adjusted $R^2 = .427$. Thus, the four systemic predictors such as the glass ceiling, sexual harassment, male-dominated toxic workplace culture, and gender bias and prejudice accounted for 45.7% of the observed variance in responses to the H8 aspiration-deficit item, with 42.7% retained after adjustment for the number of predictors. Importantly, this finding provides a more nuanced interpretation of H8. Rather than positioning a perceived lack of aspiration solely as an individual-level phenomenon, the model indicates that responses concerning leadership aspirations are substantially associated with the collective configuration of systemic workplace barriers. In this sense, aspirations for leadership should be understood within the institutional environment in which women encounter opportunities, constraints and experiences of advancement. The Durbin–Watson statistic was 2.211, providing no indication of a serious departure from residual independence, thus meeting multiple regression VIF values ranged from 1.579 to 2.836 and tolerance values from .353 to .633, indicating no evidence of problematic multicollinearity. These diagnostics support the statistical adequacy of the model and demonstrate the importance of examining women's leadership aspirations within their wider systemic context. However, the magnitude of R^2 should not be interpreted as evidence of causal influence.

5.1 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the Multiple Regression Model of Systemic Barriers Predicting Women's Leadership Aspirations

The regression ANOVA tests (seen in Table 6.i) assessed whether the set of four predictors collectively explains statistically significant variation in the H8 aspiration-deficit outcome. The ANOVA results confirmed that the overall multiple regression model was highly statistically significant, $F(4, 91) = 15.561$, $p < .001$.

Table 6.i: ANOVA Results for the Multiple Regression Model (Systemic Barriers)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	47.521	4	11.880	15.561	<.001 ^b
	Residual	61.812	91	.679		
	Total	109.333	95			

a. Dependent Variable: 3 Women don't have aspiration to reach leadership positions

b. Predictors: (Constant), 2 The glass ceiling blocks women from top leadership despite qualifications and experience., 2 Sexual harassment creates a hostile workplace, discouraging women from pursuing leadership roles., 2 A male-dominated toxic culture hinders women from leadership roles., 2 Gender bias and prejudice hinder women's advancement to leadership positions.

Thus, demonstrating that the four systemic predictors glass ceiling, sexual harassment, male-dominated toxic workplace culture, and gender bias and prejudice jointly provide significant explanatory power in accounting for variation in responses to the H8 aspiration-deficit item, compared with an intercept-only model. This finding is particularly significant to the study because it reinforces the interpretation of women's leadership aspirations within a broader systemic and institutional context. Although H8 was not supported when the aspiration-deficit proposition was examined independently, the significant overall regression model indicates that responses concerning women's leadership aspirations are meaningfully associated with the combined configuration of systemic workplace barriers.

Thus, the findings caution against interpreting an apparent aspiration deficit as simply an individual-level phenomenon detached from the organisational environment in which women pursue leadership progression. Importantly, the significant ANOVA establishes the statistical significance of the regression model as a whole. Its explanatory contribution is therefore most evident at the combined model level rather than as statistically significant unique effects of individual predictors after controlling for others. The findings thus provide compelling evidence of meaningful statistical relationships within the model, while appropriately avoiding causal inference. The results provide robust evidence that the systemic barriers, when considered collectively, are significantly associated with variation in the leadership-aspiration outcome. This reinforces a central insight of the study that women's leadership aspirations should be interpreted within the wider system of systemic institutional systems and conditions, constraints and opportunities that shape leadership progression.

6 Discussion and Analysis

Collectively, the findings indicate that respondents perceive multiple structural and systemic barriers to women's leadership progression in Mauritian institutions. The one-sample t-tests

provided support for H1–H7 and H9 in the specific sense that the corresponding mean ratings were significantly below the neutral midpoint. These results should be interpreted as evidence of perceived barriers rather than confirmation that the factors independently cause women's underrepresentation in leadership. Notably, the results revealed that systemic workplace barriers exerted a stronger influence than broader structural barriers. Among the systemic barriers, male-dominated toxic organisational culture, gender bias and prejudice, and sexual harassment received particularly strong endorsement. Among the structural barriers, lack of flexible working arrangements received the strongest endorsement, followed by societal and cultural expectations. The correlation analysis further indicates that several of these barriers are statistically associated, supporting a multidimensional interpretation of women's leadership inequality.

Subsequently the findings reveal that barriers to women's leadership are neither isolated nor organisationally confined but form a deeply interconnected system in which societal expectations, deeply embedded patriarchal attitudes permeate institutional structures, decision-making processes, and workplace cultures reproducing inequality regimes in organisations, thus acting as impediments to women's progression into senior leadership. Patriarchal attitudes and gendered societal expectations appear to generate limited organisational support especially from organisational decision makers who are mostly male, while simultaneously sustaining gender bias, male-dominated cultures and the glass ceiling. These are thus not isolated corporate anomalies but operate as a deeply integrated web of socio-cultural-patriarchal leading to institutional blockages. The findings reveal a second, interconnected structural impediment such that the confluence of limited workplace flexibility and insufficient organizational support intensify work–family pressures, suggesting that restricted advancement reflects structural constraints rather than any inherent lack of leadership aspiration among women.

Collectively, these findings expose a reinforcing nexus between gendered domestic expectations and inflexible organizational practices that constrain women's opportunities for senior leadership. The findings suggest that these barriers operate as an interconnected system of exclusion and are consistent with gendered organization, inequality regime and role congruity perspectives. One of the most interesting findings of this study, especially in the case of Small Island States like Mauritius concerns women lacking leadership aspirations H8 that was rejected with the dual multiple regression and ANOVA analysis in the study providing conclusive empirical evidence that women's aspirations to lead are driven by an interconnected ecosystem of structural and systemic barriers.

Thus, confirming that 'women want to lead and are ready to lead' thus rejecting the female aspiration deficit model. Thereby affirming that women's aspirations to leadership are real but is structurally dependent upon, and contaminated by, a hostile systemic institutional climate where toxic male dominated corporate subcultures, sexual harassment, patriarchal mindsets, glass ceiling perceptions and entrenched biases exert a compounding "chilling effect," forcing female professionals to internalize these rigid systemic boundaries as a secondary, adaptive reduction in ambition. H8 is rejected as an independent explanatory factor. Consequently, the narrative of an inherent motivation gap is empirically refuted, shifting the legislative and corporate mandate in Mauritius away from superficial initiatives

aimed at "fixing" women, and toward the aggressive deconstruction of the macro-level organizational frameworks that actively suppress female leadership. This finding challenges an individual-deficit explanation of women's underrepresentation and suggests that attention should instead be directed towards the institutional conditions under which women pursue leadership. The regression analysis adds an important qualification that the four systemic predictors collectively explained 45.7% of the variance in the H8 aspiration-deficit outcome, but none made a statistically significant unique contribution when entered simultaneously. The study therefore does not demonstrate that any single systemic barrier causes reduced leadership aspirations. Rather, the pattern is consistent with an institutional interpretation in which several related barriers coexist and may overlap in their explanatory content and reinforce one another and that impacts women's leadership aspirations.

This interpretation aligns with Acker's inequality-regimes perspective and Eagly and Carli's leadership-labyrinth framework, both of which conceptualise gender inequality as embedded within organisational structures and interconnected career obstacles. The study therefore contributes to the relatively limited empirical literature on women's leadership in Small Island Developing States by providing evidence from Mauritius. While the non-probability sample limits statistical generalisability, the findings provide context-specific evidence that may inform further research and institutional policy in Mauritius and comparable SIDS.

6.1 Recommendations

The findings suggest that improving women's representation in leadership requires coordinated organisational and institutional interventions rather than isolated initiatives directed at women themselves that are as follows: i) organisations should strengthen accountability for gender-inclusive promotion and succession planning by establishing transparent promotion criteria, monitoring gender representation across leadership pipelines, and incorporating measurable gender-equality indicators into organisational accountability systems. ii) flexible working arrangements should be institutionalised rather than treated as discretionary benefits.

Flexible scheduling, hybrid work where operationally feasible, family-friendly leave arrangements and access to childcare support can reduce work-family pressures that may affect women's career progression. iii) organisations should strengthen formal mechanisms for addressing gender bias and sexual harassment through clear reporting procedures, confidential complaint mechanisms, independent investigation processes and regular monitoring and implementation of the Equal Opportunities legislation iv) organisations should address male-dominated workplace cultures through inclusive mandatory leadership development programs that propel women in the pipeline for leadership positions, foster gender-equity competencies and accountability for discriminatory behaviour and focus on merit based leadership based on competencies and abilities rather than gender v) women should have equitable access to mentoring, sponsorship and networking such interventions should complement rather than replace structural reform. vi) Finally, policymakers should consider measurable gender-representation targets and transparent monitoring of mechanisms across sectors.

Any target should be evidence-based and sector-sensitive rather than based on an arbitrary quota. Collectively, these measures can help move gender-equality policy from formal commitment towards measurable institutional change. Such reforms are also relevant to other SIDS where small labour markets, concentrated organisational networks and persistent gender norms may create similar constraints on women's access to leadership.

6.1.1 Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, convenience and snowball sampling limit the statistical generalisability of the results to the wider population of women in Mauritius. Future research should employ larger and, where feasible, probability-based samples across a broader range of occupations, sectors and organisational levels. The sample consisted exclusively of women respondents. Forthcoming studies should incorporate male managers, senior executives, organisational decision-makers and human-resource professionals to examine how gender-related barriers are perceived and reproduced across different organisational groups. The cross-sectional research design of this study limits causal interpretation longitudinal research could examine whether perceived barriers are associated with changes in leadership aspirations, career progression and retention over time. This study relied on self-reported questionnaire data collected through a single survey instrument.

Mixed-methods research combining survey evidence with interviews, organisational records and qualitative case studies could provide deeper insight into the mechanisms through which barriers affect career progression. Finally, the regression model focused on four systemic predictors of the H8 aspiration-deficit outcome. Future research should develop theoretically integrated models incorporating organisational support, work–family conflict, sponsorship, perceived discrimination and objective leadership outcomes. Comparative research across Mauritius and other SIDS would also help determine whether the patterns identified here are context-specific or reflect broader characteristics of small-island labour markets and institutions.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The authors acknowledge the funding and support of the University of Technology Mauritius for the conduct of this study.

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