Examining Cultural Influences on Leadership Styles of Women Entrepreneurs in the MSME Sector: Insights from Cross-Cultural Management

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Abstract: *The economic growth of many nations across the world is led by numerous women entrepreneurs. They provide jobs for local people, thereby supporting the growth of small towns and contribute towards economic empowerment and innovations. Their leadership styles vary region wise and there is dearth of studies on factors that influence their leadership styles. This study, seeks to examine how cultural contexts have an influence on the leadership styles of women entrepreneurs functioning within the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector across different national and socio-cultural environments. This study aims to develop a culturally anchored conceptual model that explains the interaction between cultural dimensions and women entrepreneurs' leadership styles, thereby providing a nuanced understanding of leadership in culturally diverse MSME ecosystems. The study follows a method of systematically juxtaposing theoretical perspectives from cross-cultural leadership theories and studies on women entrepreneurship in MSME-sector studies across the nations. The conceptual model proposes that leadership styles among women entrepreneurs vary systematically with cultural context.*

This study theoretically highlights the cultural dimensions impacting leadership styles in MSME context and thereby throws light on the existing contextual gap of specific women leadership studies in this sector. Certain cultures encourage participative leadership while in some cultures transactional leadership is desired. The study states that among MSMEs which are locally owned and employing resources with limited education, having informal management structure and constantly face resource crunches, the cultural influences on leadership style is strongly evident. The proposed model also asserts that societal factors, policy support, and gender role expectations influence the strength of cultural effects on leadership practice.

The outcomes of this study highlights the need for culturally sensitive leadership development programs for women entrepreneurs and can be useful for policy makers and future entrepreneurs. The proposed model forms a basis for future empirical study on factors influencing entrepreneurial leadership among women in MSMEs across nations and a comparative study on the cultural influences facilitating deeper understanding of the socio-cultural factors.

Keywords: *Women Entrepreneurs; Cross-Cultural Leadership; MSMEs; Cultural Dimensions; Gender and Entrepreneurship*

I. Introduction

The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector is a supporting pillar of economic growth globally, with high contributions towards innovation, employment, and inclusive growth. MSMEs account for more than 90 percent of the total enterprises across the globe, serving as a major force in socio-economic transformation and regional development (Nawaz et al., 2020). MSMEs play a vital role in poverty reduction, women's empowerment, and industrialization in developing economies like India. Over the past decade, there has been a notable rise in women's participation within the MSME ecosystem, reflecting broader social and economic shifts toward gender equity and entrepreneurial inclusion. Women entrepreneurs are increasingly contributing to economic dynamism by fostering innovation, generating employment, and promoting sustainable development. Their enterprises not only enhance community welfare but also serve as vehicles for social change and empowerment. Here, leadership emerges as a determinant of performance driver of the business, affecting strategic direction, employee motivation, and organizational responsiveness. Leadership style, in terms of decision style, motivation, communication, and people orientation, is a determinant of MSME success and competitiveness.

Nevertheless, even with the growing numbers of women in business, there exists a gap in knowledge concerning the impact cultural contexts have on the leadership of women entrepreneurs. Leadership as a concept

remains rooted in institutions, society, and culture (Hofstede, 2001). How leaders wield power, communicate vision, and energize employees is not standard but rather is swayed by the culture in which they work. Cross-cultural management research emphasizes that leadership differs with differing cultural dimensions like power distance, collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance, all of which have an influence on the perception of power, teamwork, and innovation (House et al., 2004). But more of what has appeared to date in women entrepreneurship literature has been limited to structural barriers, access to capital, or gender bias, when compared to a study of the unobtrusive influence of culture on leadership style (Gupta et al., 2019). In MSMEs, which characteristically include informal organizational structures, local community focus, and limited resources, leadership is adaptive, relational, and culture-embedded. The lack of integrative conceptual models bridging gendered leadership and cultural variables is a foundational research gap that constrains theoretical innovation in entrepreneurship research and cross-cultural management studies (Nawaz et al., 2020). The present conceptual study aims to fill the aforementioned gap by investigating and contrasting women entrepreneurs' leadership styles in MSMEs across various cultures from a cross-cultural management point of view. The study's purpose is two-fold, namely, first, to conceptualize the adopted leadership styles by women entrepreneurs across various cultural contexts; and second, to suggest a theoretical framework connecting cultural dimensions and effective leadership. In alignment with this, the two research questions guiding this study are: (1) what effect do cultural values exert on the leadership style of women entrepreneurs in MSMEs? And, (2) what leadership trends exist among various socio-cultural contexts? The study is conceptual and theoretical in nature with more synthesis-focused than empirical testing. This study is expected to contribute to the scholarly research on women's entrepreneurship and cross-cultural leadership by offering a framework that can inform future empirical investigations and policy interventions. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of culturally responsive leadership development programs aimed at strengthening women-led MSMEs. Through this theoretical lens, the paper positions women entrepreneurs not merely as business owners but as cultural actors navigating complex socio-economic ecosystems. The resulting insights are intended to support academics, policymakers, and practitioners in cultivating inclusive, culturally sensitive entrepreneurial ecosystems that foster leadership effectiveness and enterprise sustainability across diverse cultural landscapes.

II.   Literature Review

Recent research emphasizes the increasing participation of women entrepreneurs in MSME development, particularly in emerging economies like India. According to Singh and Kumari (2024), women-led MSMEs have become major GDP contributors and employment generators and have shattered gender stereotypes in traditional male-dominated sectors. Structural and institutional barriers continue to exist. Sharma and Patel (2023) place restricted financial network and access to the formal credit system as central to not facilitating scalability and competitiveness. In the same vein, Verma (2023) cites entrenched gender norms and family expectations that still constrain women's autonomy of decision-making regarding enterprise management. In indigenous contexts like Jharkhand, Das and Roy (2024) depict how the policy initiatives and indigenous cultural heritage at the state level influence women's engagement in entrepreneurship while creating new possibilities and incorporating contextual constraints. Even with partial relief through digitalization, Gupta and Mehta (2023) identify that even as digital platforms increase visibility and networking chances for women entrepreneurs, inequalities in technological skills and infrastructure remain. To meet such imbalances, Rani (2024) recommends policy frameworks that are inclusive in meeting systemic biases and promoting equitable entrepreneurial ecosystems.

Literature on leadership also supports the fact that women entrepreneur success in MSMEs largely relies on their leadership competencies and adaptive abilities. Aparisi-Torrijo and Ribes-Giner (2022) discovers through bibliometric mapping that transformational and participative leadership orientations predominate successful women-owned businesses, which enhance empowerment, innovation, and harmony among employees. Oloko and Popoola (2023) highlight the significance of servant leadership in the building of trust networks fundamental to mobilizing resources and collaborative development. Based on institutional and resource-based theories, Munongo et al. (2025) conclude that women entrepreneurs utilize adaptive leadership approaches to counter institutional voids and gendered limitations in MSME environments. Singh and Kumari (2024) also argue that real leadership is accountable for building trust and credibility, especially in multicultural markets, while Sharma and Patel (2023) recognize that transactional leadership works best in maintaining accountability and operational discipline. Verma (2023) takes the discussion a step ahead by emphasizing that women entrepreneurs implement hybrid leadership styles—blending transformational, participative, and servant leadership styles—to counter societal and institutional barriers, emphasizing the adaptive and context-specific nature of female leadership.

Cultural frameworks are the impelling influences behind such leadership exhibits across MSMEs, as evidenced by increasing use of cross-cultural management frameworks in contemporary studies. Aparisi-Torrijo and Ribes-Giner (2022) observe that individualism–collectivism and power distance dimensions have a strong

impact on leadership behaviors in multicultural companies. Santanna (2024) contrasts Western and Asian leadership models and discovers how much ingrained cultural tenets establish the level of innovation and responsiveness in business practices. In the same vein, Oloko and Popoola (2023) use the GLOBE leadership model to show the role of gender egalitarianism and humane orientation of inclusive leadership across different MSME contexts. Sharma and Kumari (2023) use Trompenaars' model to show how MSME leaders balance universalism and particularism in overseeing cross-border ventures. Munongo et al. (2025) reveal that successful leaders in MSMEs are culturally robust, applying context-specific strategies in order to surpass structural and social barriers. These are complemented by Das and Roy (2024) and Verma (2023), with the former pointing out that women entrepreneurs from culturally conservative areas do redefine traditional gender roles through adaptive and community-based leadership, opening up space for even more entrepreneurial cultures in support of inclusivity.

III.   Theoretical Foundation

The leadership style of women entrepreneurs in the MSME cannot be viewed separately from the larger cultural, institutional, and societal frameworks that define their entrepreneurial context. The conceptual research sets out to take four interconnected theory foundations—Social Role Theory, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory, Transformational Leadership Theory, and Institutional Theory—to elicit a multidimensional framework for how leadership is shaped by culture among women entrepreneurs.

Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987) gives the main gender-based explanation of leadership behaviour. Social Role Theory assumes that there are socially constructed gender roles and their internalization through cultural expectations that structure patterns of behaviour, occupational roles, and leadership styles. Leadership traits like assertiveness, autonomy, and dominance are most typically linked with masculine roles within most societies, while communal traits like empathy, nurturing, and cooperation are linked with femininity. The women entrepreneurs are able to balance this perception of ambivalence by incorporating collective leanings into their leadership styles through a task-relational balance. This gender role compatibility influences how women adapt in the MSME industry, where relational and participative leadership styles are preferred in community-based or small-enterprise initiatives. Social Role Theory therefore explains why women business owners might exercise transformational or participative leadership that reflects stereotypically approved feminine behaviour yet remains a facilitator of business success. It also illustrates how social pressure limits or fosters the development of leadership, especially in patriarchal or collectivistic cultures where adherence to classical roles continues to have an impact on its formation.

In support, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory (1980) is a solid cross-cultural theory that is used in the research of the effect of societal value bearings on leadership behaviour. Hofstede's six dimensions of culture—power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint—are what constitute organizational behaviour, communication style, and leadership expectation in societies. For example, hierarchical leadership is commonly accepted and anticipated in high power-distance cultures, whereas participative decision-making is wished for in low power-distance societies. In the same way, collectivist cultures promote harmony, collaboration, and relational leadership, while individualist societies may appreciate autonomy and goal-driven leadership. For women entrepreneurs, these cultural dimensions ascertain the degree to which they are allowed to exercise power, relinquish duties, and practice transformational behavior. Hofstede's framework thereby offers the cultural prism by which gendered leadership can be understood in various MSME contexts and thus a platform for examining cross-cultural variations in women's leadership.

Transformational Leadership Theory, originally developed by Burns (1978) and later advanced by Bass (1985), emphasizes inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence as the supports of successful leadership. Transformational leaders motivate followers through the visionary articulation of a compelling picture, stimulating innovation, and infusing a shared sense of mission. For female entrepreneurs, transformational leadership is an act of agency that moves beyond gendered role prescriptions to create empowerment, empathy, and adaptability. Empirical investigations have stood witness to the fact that female leaders tend to be more transformational than transactional, utilizing emotional intelligence and group-centered communication to stimulate team commitment and innovation. In MSMEs, where human capital is the most valued asset and innovation drives survival, transformational leadership optimizes organizational performance as well as sustainability. Including this theory in the current framework allows for the discovery of how culturally influenced expressions of leadership turn into entrepreneurial outcomes such as innovation, growth, and resilience.

Lastly, Institutional Theory provides the background for understanding how structural, regulatory, and normative forces influence women entrepreneurs' behaviour. Institutional Theory provides that organizations are situated within institutional environments defined by formal rules (laws, policies, and regulations) and informal norms (social values and cultural expectations) that restrain and enable organizational behaviour (Scott, 2001).

In the MSME sector, institutional contexts differ significantly between regions and affect access to finance, access to technology, and access to networks. Institutional support systems—policy settings, government programs, and development programs—mediate the passage of women entrepreneurs' leadership independence and strategic selection. Informal institutional norms and gender based biases, on the other hand, can impact cultural limitations on the leadership practice. The theory therefore helps to account for the reason that similar cultural conditions yield varying leadership results based on institutional strength and inclusiveness.

Blending these four theory frameworks provides a grand conceptual framework. Social Role Theory accounts for the gendered aspects of leadership; Hofstede's model locates leadership within the cultures; Transformational Leadership Theory emphasizes behavioural processes that determine effectiveness; and Institutional Theory provides contextual enablers and restrictions that affect leadership style in MSMEs. Collectively, these theories account for how cultural and institutional forces intersect with gendered forms of leadership to impact entrepreneurial outcomes.

IV.   Conceptual Framework

Based on the above theoretical considerations, the conceptual model (Fig 1) is proposed with Cultural Context as the independent variable, Leadership Style as the mediator, Institutional Support, Gender Norms, and Entrepreneurial Orientation as the moderators, and Entrepreneurial Effectiveness or Business Sustainability as the dependent variable. The conceptual model posits the dynamic interactions among the constructs in accounting for how women entrepreneurs' leadership styles develop and impact MSME performance across cultural contexts.
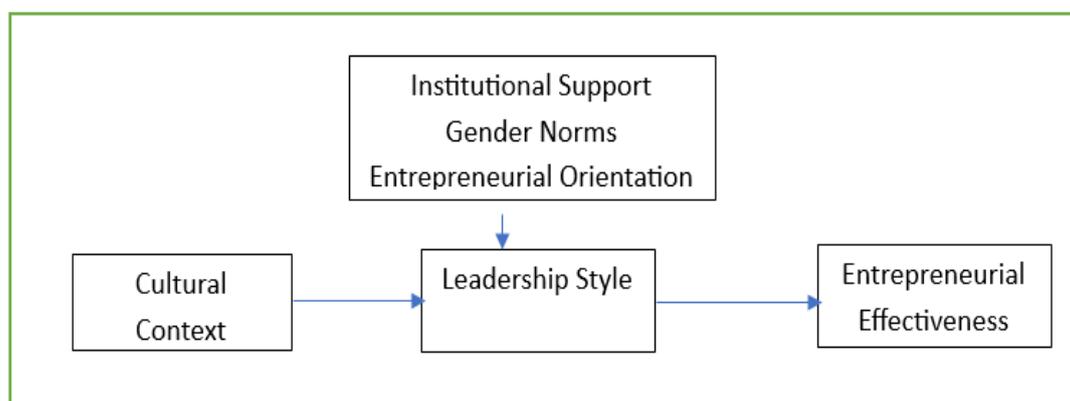

Fig 1: Conceptual model of Cultural influence on Leadership Style

Cultural Context (Independent Variable): Cultural context involves collective beliefs, values, and practices that define organizational and social acceptable behaviour. In Hofstede's and Trompenaars' cultural dimensions, culture influences leadership expectations, communication expectations, and the distribution of power in MSMEs. Leaders are relation-oriented and consensus-oriented in collectivist cultures, whereas they are results-oriented and assertive in individualist cultures. The influence of cultural norms therefore serves as the foundation through which leadership behaviour is enacted and comprehended.

Leadership Style (Mediating Variable): Leadership style is the behavioural expression of cultural and gender impacts. Female business owners are most likely to embrace transformational, participative, or servant leadership styles that reflect team and empowering orientations. They act as intermediaries of the interaction between entrepreneurial performance and cultural context by determining employee morale, innovation, and stakeholder trust. Transformational leadership, for instance, has been found to increase creativity and strategic flexibility in small businesses, thus ensuring long-term sustainability.

Institutional Support, Gender Norms, and Entrepreneurial Orientation (Moderating Variables): Institutional support can be through government policies, training programs, and funding mechanisms. These factors are observed to either strengthen or weaken the influence of cultural factors on leadership behaviour. Strong institutional support systems enable women to overcome cultural constraints by providing legitimacy and access to resources. Gender norms are factors that define socially acceptable behaviours for women in business and moderate the leadership style. It is seen that gender norms supress assertive or transformational leadership style in patriarchal societies while in egalitarian societies, gender norms support higher leadership autonomy. Entrepreneurial approach, including innovation, foresight, and risk-taking, also serves to mediate the link between leadership and performance by outlining how leadership style is translated into business strategy and performance.

Entrepreneurial Effectiveness/Business Sustainability (Dependent Variable): Entrepreneurial effectiveness is all about how well women-led small and medium enterprises can grow steadily, make profits, and create a positive impact on society. Good leadership, influenced by culture, gender, and the organizational environment, plays a key role in fostering creativity, adaptability, and keeping employees motivated. The survival and success of these enterprises depend not only on market conditions but also on how leadership fits in with the culture and institutions to gather resources, handle uncertainties, and gain a competitive edge.

V.   Discussion

The combination of existing research and theories reveals the complex interactions between culture, gender, and leadership in women-led MSMEs. Using Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987), Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions (1980), Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985), and Institutional Theory (Scott, 2001) as lenses, this research understands leadership as a socially constructed experience that is deeply influenced by different cultural and structural factors. The conceptual framework sees the cultural context as the source that determines the leadership style, which then affects the overall effectiveness of the entrepreneur.

Studies on women entrepreneurs (Aparisi-Torrijo&Ribes-Giner, 2022; Singh &Kumari, 2024) show that women leaders usually employ transformational and participative leadership that is based on relational intelligence and emotional competence. The incorporation of these theories gives a comprehensive insight into how female leaders in MSMEs use leadership to navigate socio-cultural restrictions. Social Role Theory helps to understand how gender-related stereotypes affect leadership behaviours while Hofstede's model describes the cultural setting that determines the nature of leadership norms. Transformational Leadership Theory links these socialized behaviours with the results of the enterprise, whereas Institutional Theory places these behaviours within the bigger ecosystem of policies, norms, and support structures which are the conditions for leadership expression and effectiveness.

The analysis of cultural and gendered factors in this case narrates women entrepreneurs as players who are at the crossroads of both tradition and transformation. In collectivist societies like India, Southeast Asia, and parts of Africa, cultural values that emphasize harmony, interdependence, and respect for hierarchy often lead to the dominance of participative and relationship-oriented leadership. These characteristics match perfectly with the feminine social roles that focus on empathy and collaboration, and hence women can lead effectively within the frameworks of culture that have been accepted (Das & Roy, 2024). Nevertheless, this kind of consensus can also have the effect of cultural reinforcing that limits the leadership which is assertive or visionary. On the other hand, women entrepreneurs living in more individualistic societies have shown that they are more independent and assertive, which is a reflection of the influence of egalitarian norms and low power distance. The transformational leadership, however, emerges as a common adaptive strategy in all the contexts, thus, making it possible for women leaders to mobilize followers through motivation, shared goals, and trust (Gupta & Mehta, 2023). The women leaders' practice of participative or transformational leadership is a reflection of both acceptance of and quiet opposition to the prevailing gender norms. The support given by the institution in the form of policy interventions, training programs, and digital inclusion initiatives can further change these relationships by giving women the leadership roles they deserve and increasing their strategic ability. Therefore, the leadership style of women entrepreneurs is the outcome of a contextual conciliation that is influenced by cultural conditioning, gender expectations, and institutional opportunities simultaneously.

The primary implication of this study is that it theoretically influences research in the areas of cross-cultural leadership and entrepreneurship. As far as the cross-cultural leadership theory is concerned, this research is an additional piece of evidence to the argument that leadership effectiveness should not be universal but rather locally interpreted in socio-cultural and institutional settings (House et al., 2004). The integration of Social Role Theory and Hofstede's model provides gender-related cultural influences as determinants of leadership expression. This combination offers a platform for the construction of culturally dependent models of female leaders, which takes into account variations in power distance, collectivism, and gender egalitarianism. For entrepreneurship theory, the research work acts as a bridge connecting behavioural micro-level perspectives with institutional macro-level influences. It suggests that entrepreneurial success in MSMEs depends on the interaction between the leadership style and the factors that facilitate the context—such as policy support, social capital, and ease of access to the market. Besides, it rejects the stereotypical model of a male entrepreneur, and promotes the relational and collaborative leadership styles as viable and effective alternatives within small enterprise ecosystems. Insights into leadership adaptability among women-led MSMEs highlight the dynamic and situational nature of entrepreneurial leadership. Women entrepreneurs demonstrate a unique capacity to adapt their leadership behaviours to cultural and institutional contingencies—a phenomenon that may be conceptualized as cultural agility. This adaptability is demonstrated through the ability to balance assertiveness with empathy, authority with inclusiveness, and strategic vision with communal values. Transformational leadership serves as the underlying behavioural anchor that enables such agility, allowing women to foster innovation, motivate teams, and sustain performance despite limited resources. In MSME environments—where

formal hierarchies are minimal and relational capital is paramount—adaptive leadership behaviours become critical to business sustainability. As institutional frameworks evolve toward inclusivity and digitalization, women entrepreneurs increasingly leverage cultural awareness and emotional intelligence to navigate diverse stakeholder expectations. This adaptability not only enhances enterprise resilience but also redefines the normative understanding of leadership by embedding empathy, collaboration, and social responsibility at its core.

To sum up, the discussion concerning the integration of cultural, gendered, and institutional perspectives sheds light on the complexity of leadership of women entrepreneurs in MSMEs.

VI.   Managerial And Policy Implications

The study highlights a crucial need for leadership development programs tailored to help women entrepreneurs tackle cultural challenges they often face. These programs should also focus on boosting their strategic and transformational skills. It's essential for leadership training to incorporate aspects like emotional intelligence, awareness of different cultures, and the ability to adapt to digital advancements, all aimed at building the confidence and resilience of women running micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

Policymakers need to take a gender-sensitive approach to address systemic barriers—such as limited access to finance, markets, and networks. This means making inclusivity a cornerstone of national MSME policies and institutional frameworks. Specific measures—like subsidized training programs, flexible credit options, and building community-based enterprise clusters—can promote sustained participation of women entrepreneurs, no matter their socio-cultural background. Moreover, capacity-building efforts must align with the local culture to ensure that the leadership skills taught are relevant to the social and institutional realities of the context and not just borrowed from Western models. To support this development, incubators, mentorship platforms, and business acceleration programs should provide a combination of technical and managerial assistance alongside psychosocial support. This dual focus can help women build their leadership confidence and progress in their careers.

Finally, a strong institutional framework powered by collaboration among the government, academic institutions, and the private sector is vital for promoting effective initiatives. This collaboration will be instrumental in fostering a supportive environment for women entrepreneurs.

VII.   Future Research Directions

While a growing number of articles have focused on women's entrepreneurship and leadership, a large research gap remains in the cross-cultural empirical investigation of leadership interaction in MSMEs. Most of the existing research works are conceptually inclined or region-specific and, hence, provide limited comparative knowledge on how cultural factors influence women's leadership behaviour and organizational outcomes. Specifically, the lack of empirical studies that quantitatively measure the linkages of culture, leadership styles, and entrepreneurial effectiveness within the MSME sector is very evident, where the sector is characterized by informal structures and cultural dependence. Therefore, the future research studies may focus on the empirical testing of the proposed conceptual framework in different cultural clusters i.e. collectivist vs. individualist societies, in order to pinpoint the context-specific leadership patterns and their influence on enterprise performance. Comparative case studies of women-led MSMEs in different socio-economic and cultural contexts will facilitate the understanding of adaptive leadership behaviours and resilience strategies. Additionally, longitudinal studies tracing the evolution of leadership styles over time could reveal how women entrepreneurs refine their approaches in response to shifting institutional, technological, and cultural landscapes. Such empirical explorations would not only validate theoretical propositions but also contribute to developing a globally nuanced, culturally embedded understanding of women's entrepreneurial leadership in the MSME ecosystem.

VIII.   Conclusion

This conceptual study contributes to research on leadership styles of entrepreneurial women by blending cultural, gender, and organizational perspectives in the MSME context. The framework, grounded in Social Role Theory, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions, Transformational Leadership Theory, and Institutional Theory, not only explains but also predicts how the cultural context impacts the leadership behaviours of women entrepreneurs, thus affecting enterprise growth, innovation, and sustainability. The proposed model contributes to theory-building by positioning leadership style as a mediating mechanism through which cultural and institutional factors interact to determine entrepreneurial effectiveness. It further highlights the moderating roles of institutional support, gender norms, and entrepreneurial orientation in strengthening or constraining women's leadership expression. By bridging insights from cross-cultural management and gendered leadership literature, the study extends conceptual boundaries and establishes a foundation for empirical study across diverse socio-economic and cultural landscapes.

The findings emphasize the intricate interrelationship between culture, gender, and leadership in MSME ecosystems, demonstrating that leadership is not a universal construct but a culturally dependent and gender-sensitive phenomenon. Thus, leadership exhibited by female entrepreneurs in collectivist cultures might be participative and community-oriented, whereas those from individualistic societies are usually transformational or achievement-oriented. These differences, which largely have an effect on leadership styles, also stress on the importance of contextually sensitive leadership models that take into consideration not only socio-cultural realities but also institutional dynamics. Theoretically, this study deepens theoretical understanding of women leadership as an evolutionary process of an adaptive response to structural and cultural constraints - it opens up endless possibilities for global entrepreneurship theory and practice. From a managerial standpoint, it reinforces the importance of nurturing inclusive ecosystems, culturally aware leadership development, and institutional mechanisms that empower women to lead effectively across cultural boundaries—thereby strengthening MSME resilience and contributing to sustainable economic development worldwide.

Originality/Value

This paper contributes to the growing body of research on cross-cultural leadership by offering a conceptual framework that highlights the intersection of gender, culture, and entrepreneurial leadership within the MSME context. It advances theoretical understanding by integrating cultural dimensions into the analysis of women entrepreneurs' leadership styles, thereby extending existing leadership theories into diverse socio-economic settings. The study provides value to both scholars and practitioners by offering insights relevant to global policy formulation and entrepreneurial development initiatives.

Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies

The authors affirm that Generative AI tools (specifically, ChatGPT and Grammarly) were employed solely for language refinement, structure enhancement, and reference formatting. All conceptualization, analysis, interpretation, and critical arguments presented are original intellectual contributions of the authors. The final content has been thoroughly reviewed and validated by the authors to ensure accuracy, academic integrity, and adherence to ethical research standards.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

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

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