

**Leadership Experiences of Young Women in Taiwan:
Exploring the Challenges and Resolving Strategies**

by
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ABSTRACT

Gender diversity is increasingly discussed in academic literature and organizations as more women join the labor force. Despite Taiwan has made progress in promoting gender equality in education and employment, women continue to face significant gaps in leadership positions. There is a need to discover young women's leadership journey since they will become future leader. Thus, this study explores the leadership journeys of young women leaders in Taiwan. The purpose of this study is to discover the challenges they face and resolving strategies for young women, human resources, and senior management to consider and implement. This study adopted qualitative methods such as observations, interviews, and document reviews, to gain insights from their personal experiences across various industries within Taiwan. In this study, young women leaders aged between 25 and 44 in Taiwan were selected through purposeful sampling, with 20 participants chosen for their leadership experience in workplaces or university student associations. The analysis involved transcribing interviews, coding data, and categorizing themes through open and axial coding by using Atlas.ti software. The researcher ensured validity and reliability through triangulation, multiple data sources, peer and participant reviews, and thick descriptions. The research identifies four main challenges: leadership resilience and well-being, team dynamics and integration, organizational effectiveness, and gender bias in professional growth and leadership. To overcome these challenges, the study proposes three resolving strategies: advancing personal growth and communication excellence, facilitating organizational support and cultural adaptation, and implementing systemic changes for equality and fair recognition. This research aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5) to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”. These strategies are purposed for young women themselves, human resources, and senior management to consider and implement, ultimately creating an inclusive and supportive environment.

Keywords: women leadership, young women leaders, women leadership challenges, women leadership resolving strategies



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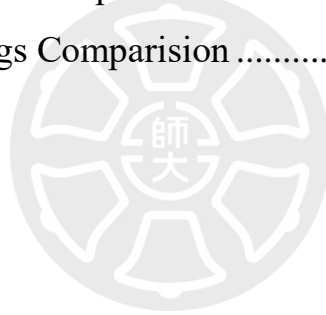
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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of the research, including its background, the problems being addressed, purpose, and questions of the study, its importance, scope, limitations, and key term definitions.

Background of the Study

Gender is a widely discussed aspect of diversity in academic literature. In recent years, it has become one of the priorities in organizational diversity management due to the increase in female workforce participation. Gender diversity increases corporate value and may generate more economic gains (Brieger et al., 2019). Besides, the Global Gender Gap in 2022 has reached a closure level of 68.1%, which improved slightly in gender parity compared to previous year. Between 2021 and 2022, the global gender parity index progressed from a score of 67.9% to 68.1%. (World Economic Forum [WEF], 2022). Although the gender gap has been narrowed, global gender equality hasn't been achieved yet.

Taiwan has made progress in promoting gender equality in education and employment in recent years. More and more women have entered the labor force, contributing to the growth of their share in the workplace. According to the latest available data in April 2023, the population of females are 11,814,928; while in Taiwan, the female labor force participation rate stands at 59.2% (Ministry of Labour, 2023). Women have made significant advancements in higher education, particularly in the university sector in Taiwan. In 2022, out of a total of 856,467 individuals pursuing bachelor's degrees and females occupied the proportion of 49.48%. These data emphasize their increasing presence and success in obtaining higher education qualifications in universities and remarkable progress in Taiwan's labor workforce.

While progress has been made, there are still areas that require further improvement to attain complete gender equality in Taiwan. Based on the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Gender Gap Index (GGI) in 2022, it revealed that Taiwan ranked 36th globally, with a score of 0.751 out of 1. This index measures gender-based gaps in various areas, including educational attainment, economic participation and opportunity, political empowerment, and health and survival. Despite Taiwan's relatively high score on the Global Gender Gap Index, there is still a gender gap.

In various sectors like politics, business, and academia, women in Taiwan continue to be underrepresented in leadership roles. Specifically, there is a gender disparity in leadership positions, with women facing unique challenges in advancing their careers and taking on leadership roles (Eagly & Carli, 2018). This phenomenon is often due to a variety of challenges and barriers, including structural, governmental, and societal barriers (Johns, 2013) that limit women's career opportunities and advancement (Glass & Cook, 2016).

In conclusion, identifying and understanding these challenges enables us to create a more inclusive and equitable workplace. This fosters an environment where young female leaders can successfully flourish. This provides opportunities for human resources and senior management personnel to identify the obstacles for young women leaders. Ultimately, implementing the suggested strategies will benefit young women leaders themselves and contribute to long-term organizational success (Eagly et al., 2003). Therefore, this study aims to address the challenges encountered by young women leaders in Taiwan and propose resolving strategies for human resources and senior management personnel to contemplate and endorse.

Statement of Problem

The main problem of this research is the lack of studies about young women leaders. Firstly, we lack sufficient data of young women leaders because fewer women could take on leadership roles in the workforce. Less research has been conducted about young women leaders since there are fewer young women in leadership positions. Therefore, more studies are required for a deeper insight into the experiences of young female leaders. Specifically, further research and studies are necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges that young women leaders encountered, how they overcame it, and the strategies they have employed. In this case, young women leaders could have a role model and guidance to study and follow.

Secondly, women's presence in prominent leadership roles remains limited. Young women leaders could hardly find a role model for reference or even discover any available resources to solve the problem. Based on the 2022 White Paper on Small and Medium Enterprises in Taiwan, there were more than 1.59 million SMEs, making up over 98 percent of all businesses. This was the highest percentage ever recorded. Unfortunately, in small and medium enterprises, women hold only 37.2% of principal roles. This highlights the need for increasing female representation in top decision-making positions (Small and Medium Enterprise Administration, Ministry of Economic Affairs, 2022). By doing this research, the challenges for women leaders and the resolving strategies would be proposed for giving more related data about the issue.

Thirdly, there is a gender gap in the education workplace, particularly among higher education presidents, principals and preschool educators that leave room for improvement (Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, 2023). Gender disparities in the education sector vary based on the level of education. In 2020, women occupied 95.0% of preschool

director positions. However, the proportion of female senior administrators in colleges and universities was the lowest at 27.74%. As the education level increases, the representation of female principals and presidents decreases. The number of women in Taiwan holding the position of college or university president has fallen to 7.2%, reflecting a 2.3 percentage point decrease since 2016. These gender gaps indicate the need for further improvement and efforts to address gender disparities. More research is needed to uncover the challenges and resolutions for young women leaders.

These statistics reflect the persistent challenges in fostering young women's leadership development and achieving gender equality in Taiwan. To create a more inclusive society, it is crucial to address the challenges they experienced in their leadership roles. It can be achieved through research that explores these challenges and identifies strategies to support their leadership development and promote gender equality within the workforce. By including the obstacles of women leaders in management positions, we can gain valuable insights into the causes of issues, to create a diverse workplace. Consequently, it has the potential to enhance the overall performance of organizations (Hopkins & O'Neil, 2015).

Research Purposes and Questions

The purpose of this research is to examine the challenges faced by young women leaders, both in student and employee contexts, as they assume leadership roles in team settings. Specifically, the study will focus on the workforce and university student associations contexts to gain insights into the difficulties young women leaders encountered and how they resolved them. The study aims to explore the resolving strategies employed by young women leaders to overcome these challenges and shed light on their leadership experiences. Consequently, the following research questions are formulated within this focus.

1. What challenges do young women leaders face when leading a team?
2. How do young women leaders use different resolving strategies to overcome these challenges?

Significance of the Study

To begin with, the problem of gender equality will become increasingly important in the foreseeable future. The United Nations (UN) defined the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 to address various social, economic, and environmental challenges for 2030. Among all the goals, SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality by ending all forms of violence, discrimination, and harmful behaviors against girls and women. In order to follow SDG5, women should have chances to fully participate and have equal opportunity to hold leadership positions across every level of decision-making. Consequently, this study is significant in understanding the challenges by young women leaders in achieving gender equality in the workplace, which could lead to increased productivity, innovation, and economic growth (UN, 2018).

Secondly, in the coming decades, the importance of diversity and gender equality will continue to grow. The European Union (EU) has established targets for achieving a gender balance in executive roles within corporations, with companies required to have a minimum of 40% underrepresented gender among non-executive directors or 33% among all directors by 2026. Global regulations are evolving; therefore, it is necessary to align with global trends. Thus, this study plays a vital role in promoting gender equality and diversity in young women's leadership positions. In summary, exploring the challenges and resolving strategies for young women leaders in Taiwan is an important research area for gender equality and creating a more inclusive society for all (Hopkins & O'Neil, 2015).

Research Scope

The study's scope enlists young women with leadership experiences in various industries, sectors, and school university student associations within Taiwan. Young women begin their journey towards leadership early, even during school time. This extends the research lens to the university. By taking on leadership roles in student groups, they start developing the skills needed to become leaders in the workplace. Therefore, this study covered their early learning experience within their leadership development process. In addition, this research specifically focused on young women leaders within the 25 to 44 age range, representing a key demographic within the study's participant group. The research participants included top management, senior, mid-level, and entry-level positions in the workforce, as well as young women leaders' leadership experience as presidents and vice presidents in school university student associations.

Definition of Key Terms

Women Leadership

Women leadership refers to women taking on roles that guide, influence, and make decisions within organizations or communities, contributing their perspectives and skills to drive progress. According to Eagly and Carli (2018), women leadership encompasses “the process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 125).

Young Women Leaders

Young women leaders are women in the early stages of their careers who take on leadership roles. Based on Lin et al. (2022), “Young adults aged 25-44 years are in their most productive period.” (p. 583) Thus, in this study, young women refer to the age range of 25 to 44.

Women Leadership Challenges

Women leadership challenges are obstacles women face in leadership roles. Women leaders encounter diverse challenges including personal barriers, organizational constraints like insufficient family-friendly policies and gender biases, and the impact of cultural stereotypes and societal norms on gender roles, hindering career advancement (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015).

Women Leadership Resolving Strategies

Women leadership resolving strategies are approaches used to overcome challenges. Women take personal actions and efforts to overcome leadership barriers (Sandberg, 2015).

Meanwhile, institutional reforms and practices designed to promote gender equality can create a positive climate for diversity (Stamarski & Son Hing, 2015). Broader societal and cultural initiatives are crucial for resolving gender inequalities. (Eagly & Carli, 2007).



CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to provide theoretical foundation on the issue of women leaders including its background, and challenges in their leadership positions. The theoretical foundation has been separated into major themes derived from current academic literature and open data. This literature review aims to provide an overview of women leaders, including key leadership theories, challenges and barriers.

Women Leadership

According to scholars, there are four types of leadership styles that women tended to display: democratic leadership, transformational leadership transactional leadership, and interactive leadership (Burke & Collins, 2001; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Eagly et al., 1992; Eagly et al., 2003; Mashele & Alagidede, 2022; Rosener, 2011; Van Engen & Willemsen, 2004)

Democratic Leadership

In 2004, Van Engen and Willemsen conducted a meta-analysis by reviewing existing empirical studies on the differences in leadership styles between genders. They reviewed studies published between 1987 and 2000 in peer-reviewed journals. The meta-analysis revealed that women's leadership styles are often more transformational and democratic, characterized by involving subordinates in decision-making processes. According to Mashele and Alagidede (2022), women typically adopt a democratic, collaborative, and inclusive approach in their leadership, while men often lean towards a more authoritative leadership style. When female leaders demonstrate authoritative or autocratic behavior, they are often judged more critically

than male leaders who display similar behaviors (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). This highlights the problem of gender bias while evaluating leadership styles (Van Engen & Willemsen, 2004).

Transformational Leadership

Van Engen and Willemsen (2004) focused on studies published in the 1990s about gender differences in leadership styles and discovered mixed evidence for gender differences in leadership behavior. The research suggests that compared to their male counterparts, female leaders are more likely to engage in transformational leadership. This style is characterized by leaders who motivate and inspire their teams to foster personal and professional development and achieve exceptional outcomes (Eagly et al., 2003).

Moreover, Burke and Collins (2001) surveyed 1,031 American Certified Public Accountants (CPAs), including 711 women and 320 men, to analyze gender-specific leadership styles and management skills. Employing statistical analysis to assess gender differences in these areas, they found that female participants rated themselves higher in management skills. Its findings offer crucial insights into how male and female leadership approaches differ in professional environments, particularly highlighting variations in transformational leadership and skills such as communication and coaching.

Transactional Leadership

In 2003, Eagly et al. conducted a meta-analysis of 45 studies to examine gender differences across three distinct leadership styles: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire. This paper involved a comprehensive statistical analysis to compare how frequently women and men engage in these three leadership behaviors. It was observed that female leaders

tend to exhibit more transformational leadership qualities compared to their male counterparts. It is a style that includes providing rewards for satisfactory performance by followers. Specifically, female leaders often reward team members based on performance or achievements, aligning with transactional leadership. On the contrary, male leaders typically exhibit transactional leadership through management by exception, focusing on monitoring and correcting deviations from standards. This highlights a tendency for female leaders to emphasize transformational aspects like inspiration and intellectual stimulation, while male leaders lean more towards transactional elements such as ensuring compliance and control.

These gender differences in leadership styles have implications for organizational effectiveness. The leadership styles in which women are typically more proficient or skilled are said to have a positive relationship with leadership effectiveness. Gender roles could shape different leadership styles and might impact women's success in leadership roles.

Interactive Leadership

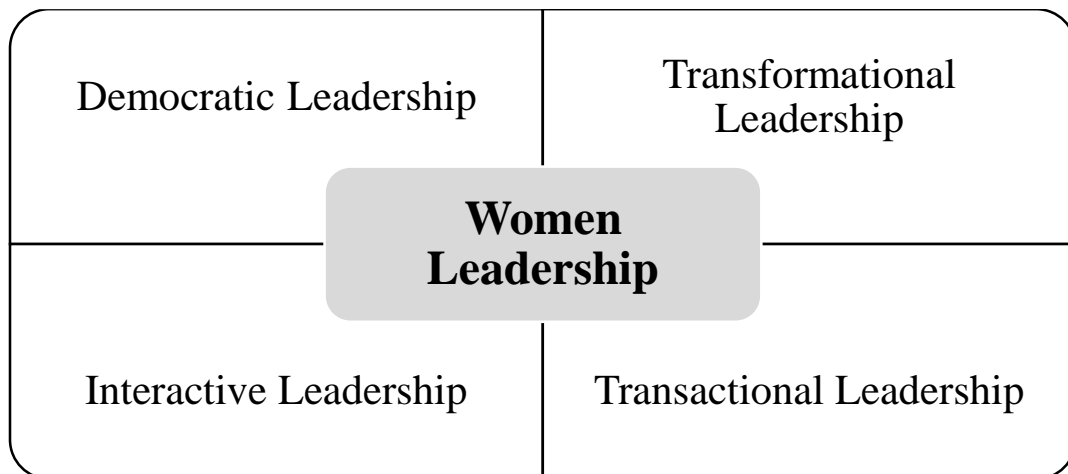
Traditionally, women have been expected to be cooperative and supportive, often without holding positions of formal authority. This may be the reason why women leaders today often prefer more engaging and collaborative leadership approaches (Eagly et al., 1992). According to Rosener's (2011) research, by using interviews, he provides comprehensive research into women's leadership styles, emphasizing interactive leadership and the influence of demographic and cultural diversity. He found out that women leaders frequently adopt interactive leadership. In this approach, women aim to make every interaction with their team members positive by encouraging them to participate in discussions and decisions, by distributing power and sharing important information, and by making individuals feel valued and important. Women leaders

often exhibit this style, fostering a work environment where communication, teamwork, and collective problem-solving are prioritized. This type of leadership is effective in creating inclusive and dynamic work environments, enabling diverse ideas and perspectives to be heard and considered.

Women's leadership, as illustrated in the literature is presented in Figure 2.1. Their leadership styles include democratic, transformational, transactional, and interactive styles (Burke & Collins, 2001; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Eagly et al., 1992; Eagly et al., 2003; Mashele & Alagidede, 2022; Rosener, 2011; Van Engen & Willemsen, 2004). These styles demonstrate a significant shift towards more inclusive, motivational, and collaborative approaches in leadership. Female leaders with varying leadership styles will approach tasks and obstacles in diverse ways. Despite their effectiveness, women leaders face gender biases and critical evaluations, particularly when displaying authoritative behaviors. This section underscores the need for organizations to recognize and support these diverse leadership styles to enhance workplace effectiveness and equity.

Figure 2.1

Types of Women Leadership



Young Women Leaders

Gender Inequality Index

The Gender Inequality Index (GII) was released by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and is a measuring tool for gender inequality between different countries. This index evaluates disparities through three aspects: empowerment, reproductive health, and labor market participation. The Gender Inequality Index (GII) for our country is calculated and ranked according to the formula provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Taiwan's GII score for the year 2021 was 0.036. The score decreased from 0.045 in 2019 to 0.036 in 2021, suggesting that progress has been made in reducing gender inequality during this period. Globally, Taiwan ranked 7th out of 171 nations and held first place in Asia (Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, 2023).

As of October 2023, the total number of young women aged 25-44 in Taiwan for the year 2022 is 3,830,065 (National Statistics, Republic of China, Taiwan, 2023). This group represents approximately 16.46% of the total population, which is 23,264,640. These figures reflect the population of young women across the four age groups from 25 to 44 years old, showcasing a significant and vital demographic segment in Taiwan's population structure. Regarding reproductive health, Taiwan's maternal mortality ratio stood at 10 per 100,000 live births in 2021. It is lower than China's but higher compared to Japan and Singapore. However, Taiwan's adolescent birth rate was higher than that of Japan, Singapore, and South Korea.

Women have a strong presence in education, the labor market, and political empowerment, which are critical foundations for female leadership. A significant percentage of Taiwanese women had secondary education, comparable to South Korea and surpassing Singapore. In Taiwan, women have high education rate of 83.7%, which provides them with the skills and qualifications necessary for leadership roles. Furthermore, the significant labor force participation (59.2%) indicates that women are active in the workforce and the gender gap was less than Singapore, Japan, and South Korea. This indicates that over 50% of Taiwanese women are engaged in the labor market, emphasizing their increasing presence in the workforce and their contributions to the country's economy (Yu, 2015). Furthermore, women's representation in parliament occupied 42.5%, exceeding other Asian nations. It is a sign of existing and potential growth in female political leadership and their involvement in governance.

Table 1.1

Gender Inequality Index – Taiwan's Indicators

Dimension	Indicator	Data year	Value
Reproductive Health	Maternal mortality rate (deaths per 100,000 live births)	2021	10.0 (0.01%)
	Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women aged 15–19) (‰)	2023	3.0 (0.3%)
Empowerment	Share of seats in parliament (%)	2022	Female: 42.5% Male: 57.5%
	Population with at least some secondary education (aged 25 and above) (%)	2021	Female: 83.7% Male: 91.7%
Labor Market	Labor force participation rate of persons aged 15 and above (%)	2023	Female: 59.2% Male: 67.3%

Source: Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, 2023

Gender Gap Index, GGI

According to the evaluation standards presented by the 2022 Gender Gap Index (GGI) from the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2022), the Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan in Taiwan calculated Taiwan's score in 2022. The data has indicated that Taiwan holds the 36th position worldwide with a score of 0.751. This index evaluates disparities in economic participation, educational achievements, health, and political representation. Despite Taiwan's position on the GGI, it highlights the need for focused efforts in certain areas. For instance, increasing women's participation in leadership roles and addressing wage gaps in the workforce are crucial for diminishing these gender- based gaps (Seguino, 2000).

In various sectors like politics, business, and academia, women in Taiwan are still not adequately represented in leadership roles. Similar to other nations, there exists a gender gap in leadership roles, where women encounter obstacles in progressing their careers and assuming leadership positions (Eagly & Carli, 2018). Moreover, a Taipei Times article from 2023 mentioned that the gender wage gap in Taiwan had been steadily declining over the past decade, but it increased from 14.8% in 2020 to 15.8% in 2021. This unexpected increase highlights the persistent issue of wage inequality in Taiwan. Furthermore, women face additional challenges related to pension disparities and issues with parental leave. These factors highlighted the needs for strong policies and changes at the societal level in Taiwan to address gender inequalities effectively.

Table 1.2*Gender Gap Index - Taiwan's Indices*

Dimensions	Calculation results
Economic Participation and Opportunity	0.732
Educational Attainment	0.997
Health and Survival	0.969
Political Empowerment	0.307
In average (GGI score)	0.751

Source: Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, 2023

Female Labor Participants

In Taiwan, the distribution of female labor participants across various industries is changing over time. However, based on available data, the following information provides an overview of the industries in which female labor participants are predominantly engaged (Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, 2023). The distribution of female labor participants indicates that a significant proportion, approximately 72.3%, are employed in the service industry, with sales and service staff comprising 24.28% of female workers, followed by technicians (20.21%) and clerical support staffers (19.82%). Regarding labor force participation, women in Taiwan have a slightly lower participation rate (59.2%) compared to men (67.3%). This disparity could be attributed to a range of factors, including cultural norms, societal expectations, and gender stereotypes in Taiwan (Chou et al., 2005; Eagly & Carli, 2018; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007).

Further breaking down women's labor force participation by age, the labor force population within the 25-44 age range totals 6,017,000, accounting for approximately 50.41% of the total labor force (National Statistics Republic of China Taiwan, 2023). It constitutes a significant portion of the total female labor force, which has a participation rate of 59.2%. This can be divided into 1,383,000 individuals aged 25-29, 1,435,000 individuals aged 30-34, 1,471,000 individuals aged 35-39, and 1,728,000 individuals aged 40-44. These figures underscore the active engagement of the Taiwanese population in the labor market, particularly among women aged 25 to 44 years, with a slight increase in the 40-44 age group. The significant proportion of women in this age group participating in the workforce suggests not only that they are highly active during their prime working years but also that they have greater access to employment opportunities. This may reflect advancements in gender equality in the workplace, enabling women to maintain and progress in their careers.

Female Education Participants

The significant growth of educational options for women during the postwar era is commonly seen as providing a substantial contribution to women's empowerment in Taiwan (Clark & Clark, 2008). Firstly, based on the latest statistical data provided by the National Statistics Republic of China Taiwan in 2023, it is evident that women in Taiwan have achieved significant advancements in higher education, especially within the academic field. The data indicates that in 2022, a total of 856,467 individuals pursued bachelor's degrees, with an impressive proportion of 49.48% being females. These figures underscore the remarkable progress made by women in Taiwan's educational landscape, highlighting their growing presence and success in attaining

higher education qualifications at the university level (National Statistics Republic of China Taiwan, 2023).

Specifically, the figures reveal that 174,926 females, accounting for 47.3% of the total, have pursued master's degrees, while 28,672 females, comprising 36.5%, have pursued doctorate degrees (National Statistics Republic of China Taiwan, 2023). These statistics demonstrate a significant proportion of women in Taiwan who have successfully attained higher education qualifications and further highlighting the importance of addressing any potential disparities in educational opportunities and ensuring equitable access to education for both genders.

In more detail, the data revealed that 21,019 Taiwanese women between the ages of 25 and 44 hold doctoral degrees and 288,255 hold master's degree in 2022. When considering both doctoral and master's degrees, the number increases to 432,819. These figures respectively represent approximately 0.09% and 1.86% of the overall population. Young Women in Taiwan are making significant educational progress, as nearly 2% of the total population consists of women who have obtained advanced degrees. This reflects substantial educational progress among young women in Taiwan. Their increasing educational attainment plays a significant role in shaping the country's workforce, contributing to potential economic growth and innovation.

This section on young women leaders reveals the complex progress and challenges that have had in Taiwan (Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, 2023). The decrease in the Gender Inequality Index score and improvements in educational attainment and political representation mark significant advancement towards gender equality (WEF, 2022; National Statistics Republic of China Taiwan, 2023). However, women still face a notable gender gap in leadership roles and wage equality (Chou et al., 2005; Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Yu, 2015). Women continue to confront challenges related to gender disparities in leadership roles (Manzi &

Heilman, 2021). The section highlights the need for focused efforts to increase female representation in leadership roles and address systemic inequalities in the workforce.

Underrepresentation of Women Leaders in Taiwan

Women in Taiwan are underrepresented in leadership positions across different areas, such as government, business, academia, and civil society compared to men. According to the 2023 White Paper on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Taiwan, there is a significant underrepresentation of young women leaders in SMEs. Female SME owners account for only 37.31% of all SME owners in Taiwan, while male SME owners represent about 76.85%. Furthermore, the percentage of newly established female-owned SMEs is 39.89%, compared to 60.11% for male-owned SMEs. This indicates a substantial gender gap in leadership positions, especially in top management roles, where males hold a higher percentage of these positions. Hanlon and Taylor (2022) also emphasize that despite the increasing number of women in organizational leadership positions, the problems of underrepresentation and gender inequality continue to persist. The underrepresentation of young women leaders in Taiwan is a significant issue, reflecting broader global trends. Although Taiwan's advancements in achieving gender equality in the workplace, the country has not yet achieved the status of a gender-equal society (Rahman & Hosen, 2024).

The main reason of underrepresented are gender stereotype which includes gender status beliefs that create a network of restrictive expectations and interpersonal reactions. These perceptions shape the way employers view and evaluate employees' work performance, their impact, and their potential to rise to leadership roles (Tabassum & Nayak, 2021). Secondly, traditional cultural norms and societal expectations often place women in more traditional roles,

emphasizing family and domestic responsibilities (Chou et al., 2005). For example, women may be expected to prioritize family responsibilities over their careers or face social pressure to conform to traditional gender roles that discourage them from pursuing leadership positions. These cultural influences may present challenges for women in attaining leadership roles, contributing to their underrepresentation. The persistence of gender stereotypes and biases also hinders women's advancement in leadership roles (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007). Deshpande et al. (2021) acknowledges that although strides have been made globally in empowering women, they continue to encounter obstacles due to gender role stereotypes, which have impacted their leadership approach and their ability to inspire future generations of female leaders.

Today's young female leaders face numerous challenges that they believe diminish their effectiveness in leadership roles (McEldowney et al., 2009). These challenges, identified as various forms of discrimination, range from experiences of domination, disrespect, biases, and negative stereotypes. Besides, there has been a notable change in how these young female leaders respond to discrimination. Research indicates that they do not see discrimination as an overwhelming barrier or a major obstacle to their leadership skills. Instead, they view discrimination as an issue that needs to be addressed and overcome to become effective leaders and take on leadership positions.

Addressing the underrepresentation of young women leaders in Taiwan requires concerted efforts from various stakeholders, including the government, employers, and civil society. Initiatives to promote gender equality, such as implementing policies and programs to address gender bias, providing leadership development opportunities for women, and promoting work-life balance, can help improve women's representation in leadership positions. Additionally,

promoting cultural and societal shifts that challenge gender stereotypes and promote gender equality can create a more inclusive environment for young women to thrive as leaders in Taiwan.

Women Leadership Challenges

Diehl and Dzubinski (2016) identified 27 barriers to gender-based leadership in their examination of the education and religion sectors. These barriers are categorized according to three societal levels: micro (individual), meso (organizational), and macro (societal), offering a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by women in leadership.

Micro Barriers

Micro barriers refer to individual-level barriers that mainly involve woman herself to place an additional burden beyond those typically expected of her male counterparts in leadership roles. These barriers stem from cultural and organizational expectations regarding women's behavior. (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016). There are five barriers regarding micro level: communication style constraints, conscious unconsciousness personalizing, psychological glass ceiling, and work-life conflict.

Communication Style Constraints

Female leaders would hardly use directive communication style because it did not follow gender norms. Instead, they are more cautious when they speak (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016). Moreover, they frequently encounter difficulties in effectively conveying their achievements and leadership qualities. They generally communicate less about their performance and successes, which can be a major obstacle to their career advancement (Grant & Taylor, 2014). This issue may lead to perceptions of a lack of leadership presence, attributable to their communication approach.

Work-life Conflict

Balancing work duties with personal or family obligations has been a longstanding issue for women (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016). According to the role conflict theory developed by Greenhaus and Beutell (2006), there are three kinds of work-life conflicts: time-based, strain-based, and behavior-based. Additionally, Gutek et al. (1991) expanded on this by differentiating the conflict into two directions: family-to-work conflict (where family obligations affect work) and work-to-family conflict (where work impacts family life).

Besides, it is recognized as a stress factor that may negatively impact job performance and overall well-being, and this effect is particularly among women. This is supported by research from Blithe and Elliott (2019), Long et al. (2018), Wolf-Wendel and Ward (2006), which highlights the specific challenges women face in balancing work and personal life.

Meso Barriers

These are barriers occur within groups and organizations (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016). For an in-depth analysis of meso-level barriers, the researcher distinctly classified into team-level and organizational-level categories in this study. At the team level, barriers include exclusion from informal networks, devaluing of communal practices, lack of mentoring and support, male gatekeeping, the queen bee effect, and tokenism. On the organizational level, the barriers encompass discrimination, the glass cliff phenomenon, workplace harassment, lack of sponsorship, a male-dominated organizational culture, salary inequality, organizational ambivalence, the two-person career structure, and unequal standards. This categorization aids in identifying and addressing women's specific challenges within organizations.

Team Level: Lack of Mentoring

There is a scarcity of mentors for women, often due to biases in mentor selection (Heilman, 2001). A significant obstacle for women in the workplace is the inadequate support and mentoring they receive, particularly in comparison to their male colleagues, who often receive more mentoring (Gunes & Chang, 2023). The lack of mentoring can significantly impact female managers' careers, particularly in global management roles (Linehan & Scullion, 2008). Effective mentoring is crucial for women's advancement, as it helps overcome organizational barriers and facilitates career development (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016; McDonald & Westphal, 2013).

Organizational Level: Discrimination

Despite the existence of legal measures intended to safeguard women from transparent and open prejudice, women's advancement in the workplace is still hindered by discrimination that can be either indirect and subtle or very obvious and unconcealed (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016). According to Bilan et al. (2020), gender discrimination is often intertwined with age discrimination. This particularly affects women under the age of 35, who are the most common victims of gender discrimination.

Macro Barriers

It is defined as “Barriers operating in society as a whole prevent women from advancing or succeeding in leadership” (Diehl and Dzubinski, 2016, p. 191). Macro barriers are described as societal barriers that influence women leaders during their leadership process. Six macro barriers have been identified: control of women’s voices, cultural constraints on Women’s own choices, gender stereotypes, gender unconsciousness, leadership perceptions and scrutiny.

Gender Stereotypes

Gender role stereotyping happens when men are favored for business leadership positions due to the belief that they inherently have masculine traits considered crucial for effective leadership. Men are frequently associated with high-growth business ventures, while women are typically perceived as being linked with low-growth enterprises. (Eagly & Mitchell, 2004). Another stereotype about women, is the notion that they are a "potentially distracted gender", implying that they might become preoccupied with issues such as marriage or pregnancy at any moment. (Gunes & Chang, 2023). In societal gender roles, men are responsible for earning money while women needed to take care children and their house.

Based on the theory of prejudice, it's more challenging for women to obtain leadership positions, as they are often viewed less favorably as potential leaders compared to men (Eagly & Karau, 2002). People are less positive about women's leadership behaviors when they are evaluated. These biases lead to negative attitudes towards female leaders and increase hurdles for women to reach leadership roles. It takes longer time for women leaders to be acknowledged as competent and effective. These prejudiced beliefs not only affect how female leaders are perceived but can also impact the behaviors and approaches of female leaders themselves. This could result in variations in leadership styles adopted by women compared to men.

Leadership Perceptions

Leadership is often associated with masculinity, affecting women's leadership and advancement (Gunes & Chang, 2023). Studies indicate that women are frequently perceived as embodying traits like femininity, community focus, and compassion. In contrast to men, they are often described as assertive, dominant, and independent. Often, people consider leaders as being

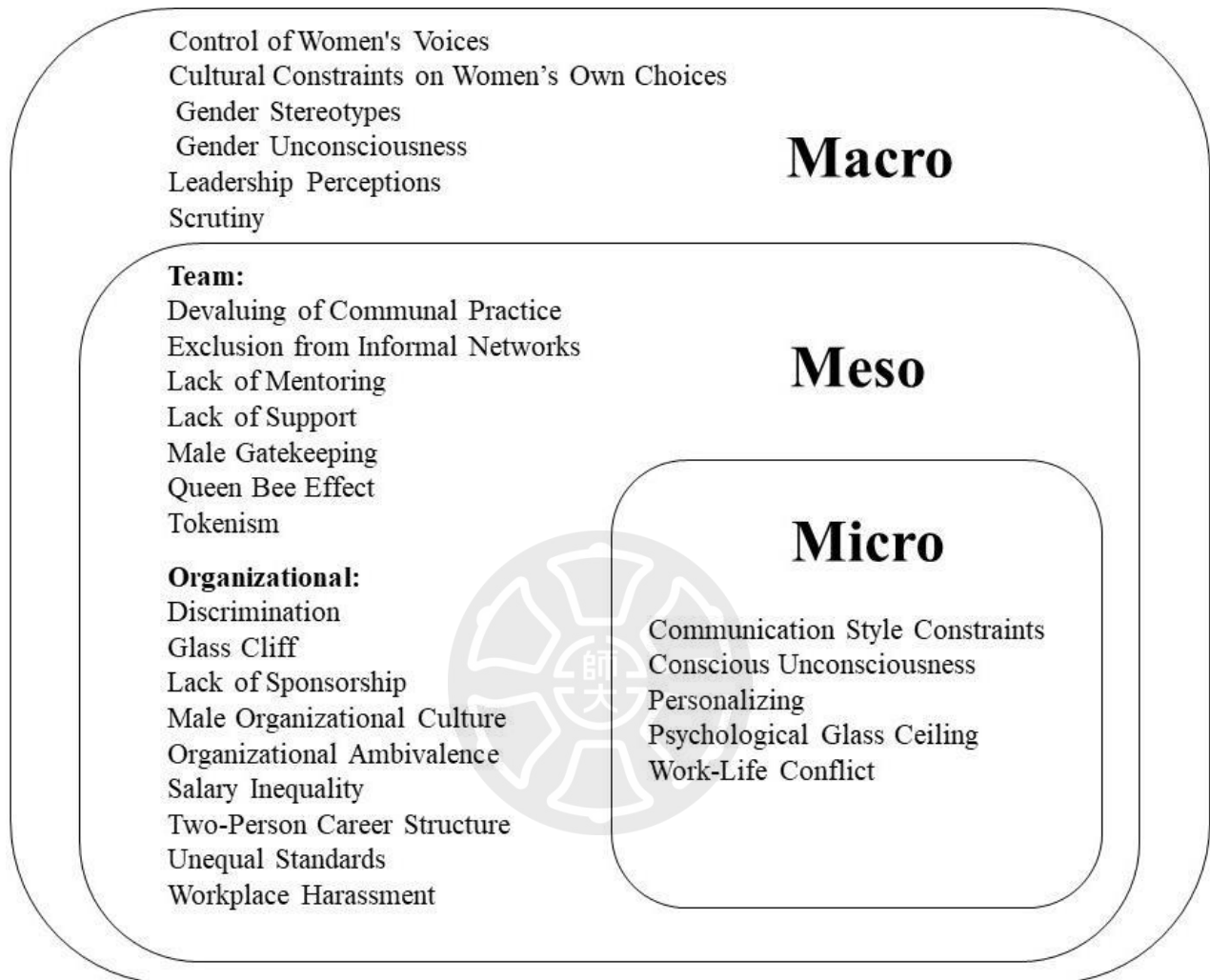
bold, forceful, and self-reliant. However, women are usually expected to be caring and supportive, which are different traits. This difference can create challenges for women to be seen as leaders because people might not think they act like typical leaders should. This situation can be challenging for women who want to lead, as they might not match these common leadership expectations. (Eagly & Mitchell 2004; Gupta et al., 2019; Powell et al., 2002).

Cultural Constraints on Women's Own Choices

Culture is described as the "values, beliefs, norms, and behavioral patterns of a national group" (Leung et al., 2005, p. 357). Culture within an ecosystem is commonly viewed as a complex network of shared meanings, beliefs, symbols, norms, and values that are prevalent among individuals in a society (Schwartz, 2006). It is also seen as the fundamental system of values that are unique and characteristic to a specific group or society (Pinillos & Reyes, 2011). Therefore, societal factors may limit women's options in choosing their field of study and career path (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016).

Figure 2.2

Leadership Challenges by Level of Society



Note. Adapted from "Gender-based leadership barriers by level of society" in *Making the Invisible Visible: A Cross-Sector Analysis of Gender-Based Leadership Barriers* by A. Diehl and L. Dzubinski, 2016, *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 27(2), p. 187.

The exploration of gender-based leadership barriers at macro, meso, and micro levels presents a comprehensive view, an in-depth perspective on the challenges encountered by women in leadership positions. In this study, the researcher has strategically categorized meso-level barriers into two key classifications: team-level barriers and organizational-level barriers, enabling a comprehensive and detailed examination. These barriers range from societal gender stereotypes to organizational discrimination, team barriers such as mentoring and individual challenges like work-life balance. This section emphasizes the importance of a multi-layered approach in addressing these barriers, including initiatives at societal, organizational, and individual levels to support women leaders and organizations (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016).

Therefore, this research adapted Diehl and Dzubinski's (2016) model of Gender-based leadership barriers by societal level to examine at the macro, meso, and micro levels. To thoroughly examine meso-level barriers, this study specifically categorizes them into team-level and organizational level. The research will utilize gender as a macro-level factor, while team and organization dynamics will be explored at the meso level, and individual factors at the micro level, to thoroughly explore leadership challenges and resolving strategies of young women.

Summary

This chapter provides a review of the theoretical background and current academic literature on women in leadership, young women leaders, the underrepresentation of women leaders in Taiwan, and the challenges faced by women in leadership. The literature identifies four primary leadership styles displayed by women leaders: democratic, transformational, transactional, and interactive leadership (Burke & Collins, 2001; Eagly & Johnson, 1990; Eagly et al., 1992; Eagly et al., 2003; Mashele & Alagidede, 2022; Rosener, 2011; Van Engen &

Willemsen, 2004). The Gender Inequality Index (GII) and Gender Gap Index (GGI) data for Taiwan show progress in reducing gender inequality (Gender Equality Committee of the Executive Yuan, 2023). There has also been a considerable increase in women's educational and labor market participation (National Statistics, Republic of China, Taiwan, 2023).

However, women are underrepresented in leadership positions across various sectors, including SMEs, where female ownership and leadership are significantly lower than those of males. Gender stereotypes, traditional cultural norms, and societal expectations contribute to this underrepresentation (Chou et al., 2005; York et al., 2008). This requires continued efforts to address these issues and promote gender equality in leadership positions. The review also examines the specific barriers to women's leadership, categorized into macro, meso, and micro levels (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016). Despite these challenges, young women in Taiwan are making significant progress in education and labor force participation, reflecting substantial advancement toward gender equality. However, overcoming the persistent underrepresentation addressing their leadership challenges, and resolving strategies are still necessary for achieving a more supportive and equitable environment for women leaders.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODS

The following chapter introduces how this study was conducted and explains the process of the study. This includes the research approach, framework, procedure, participants and sampling strategies, data collection, data analysis, and research quality.

Research Approach

In this research, data was gathered through a qualitative method, focusing not on establishing cause and effect, but rather on gaining a deeper understanding of the main challenges that young women encountered in their leadership positions. According to Braun and Clarke (2013), the primary difference between quantitative study is that qualitative research utilizes textual data, which is gathered and examined through diverse methods. Qualitative researchers are more concerned with understanding the subjective human experience, the meanings people create, and the way they interpret and understand their own lives and the world around them (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The qualitative approach employed in this study aligned with its aim to delve into individuals' experiences and the importance of these experiences, as outlined by Mertens (2014). The interview questions were categorized into four key levels: individual, team, organizational, and gender, drawing upon Diehl and Dzubinski's (2016) research on gender-related leadership barriers at various levels. Their research offers a theoretical framework for comprehending the difficulties encountered by women in leadership roles at the macro, meso, and micro levels.

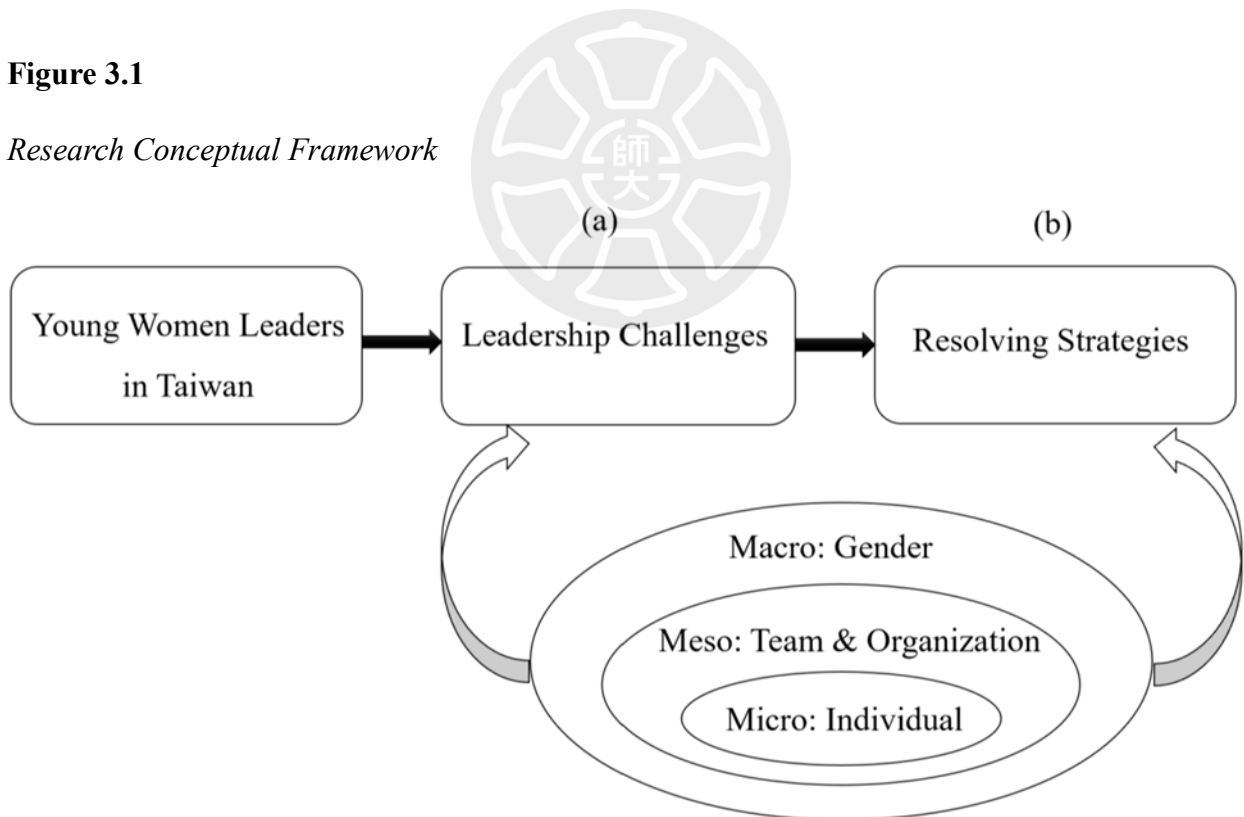
Research Conceptual Framework

The aim of this research is to discover the challenges that young women leaders faced when leading a team and how they utilized resolution strategies to overcome the challenges. The research framework is presented in Figure 3.1.

In Figure 3.1, the research framework is described using alphabetic points; this study focuses on young women leaders in Taiwan, especially their leadership challenges (a) which were adapted from Diedl and Dzubinski's gender-based leadership barriers model (2016) and were created into four levels: macro (gender), meso (team & organization), and miso (individual) levels. In the final stage, resolving strategies were presented (b).

Figure 3.1

Research Conceptual Framework



Research Procedure

Research procedure shows the whole research process for this study. In Figure 3.2, each step is introduced and discussed clearly here below.

Phase 1: ***Identified research topic:***

In the first step, the researcher began by brainstorming research directions, drawing on past experiences in leadership roles during school. The researcher was interested in understanding the challenges women leaders faced in their leadership process. After reviewing various literature and government data, the researcher consulted with the advisor and subsequently identified the topic of discovering young women leaders' challenges and resolving strategies.

Phase 2: ***Designed research questions and purpose:***

After identifying the topic of exploring challenges encountered by young women leaders and their strategies for resolving them, the research questions were created. Meanwhile, reviewing literature, listening to podcasts, and discussing the topic with the advisor helped to clarify my research purpose.

Phase 3: ***Determined research methods:***

To enhance comprehension of their leadership challenges and resolution strategies, qualitative research was chosen. This approach was intended to provide a better insight into their leadership processes.

Phase 4: ***Reviewed the literature:***

After obtaining the idea from observations, a board literature review was conducted to collect more data on the challenges of young women's leadership and the strategies they applied to overcome these challenges. The researcher identified a gap in the literature on young women leaders and, therefore, decided to narrow down the focus of the topic specifically to young women.

Phase 5: ***Set research framework:***

After reviewing the literature and finalizing the research questions, purpose, and method, the research framework was established.

Phase 6: ***Conducted peer review, expert review, and pilot test:***

After discussing the interview questions with the advisor, they were sent to two peers who have a human resource professional background. Then, they were sent to two male experts in the practical field to double-check the questions. Lastly, the pilot test was conducted by two individuals who have similar backgrounds as the participants.

Phase 7: ***Modified interview questions:***

After conducting reviews and tests, the researcher revised the interview questions and created an online survey to be completed by participants before the interview.

Phase 8: ***Conducted observations, interviews, and reviewed document:***

After finalizing the interview questions, the study proceeded to conduct semi-structured interviews with the participants. Secondly, the researcher participated in two on-site observations. Lastly, the researcher reviewed the documents from websites, social media accounts, videos online, and notes from the participants.

Phase 9: ***Analyzed data:***

The researcher transcribed and analyzed the interview records, verbatim transcripts, and relevant documents. Open coding techniques were used to categorize the themes. Additionally, the qualitative research software, Atlas.ti, has been employed to organize and categorize the codes.

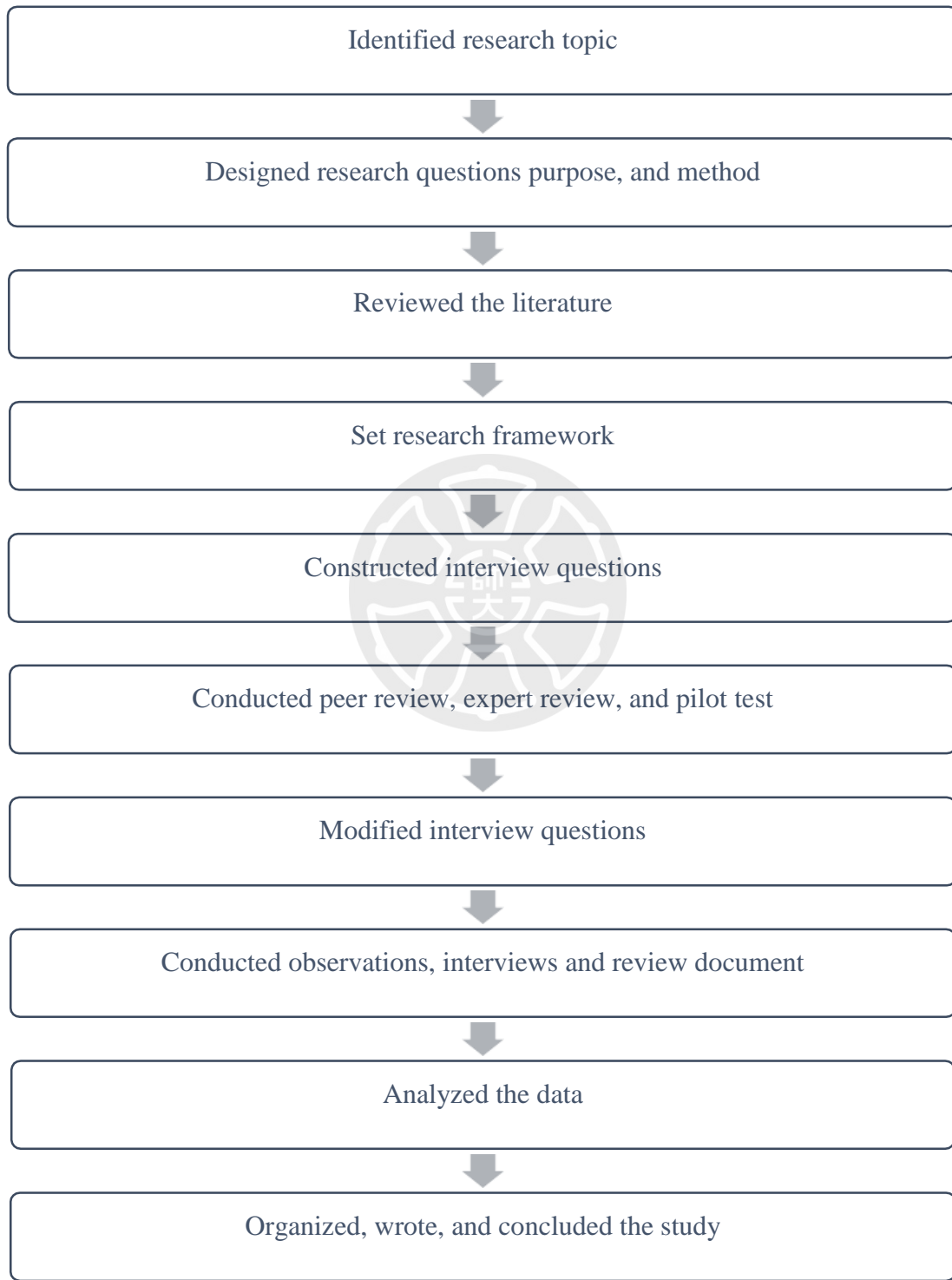
Phase 10: ***Organized, wrote and concluded the study:***

In the final step, the researcher applied previously reviewed literature and organized the findings to offer recommendations for future research studies.



Figure 3.2

Research Procedure



Research Participants and Criteria

Purposeful sampling was used to enlist participants who could provide the necessary information for this research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). In accordance with Patton (2015), “The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry, thus the term purposeful sampling.” (p. 230). Therefore, every participant engaged in the in-depth interviews for this research was intentionally chosen to obtain information-rich cases.

The researcher selected 20 participants, all young women leaders with managerial experience in the workplace or university student associations. In Tables 3.1 and 3.2, the description of the participants is presented. The criteria for selecting participants in this study are presented. The interviewees must be young women leaders in Taiwan, specifically between the ages of 25 and 44. There are two stages for the selection. Participants meeting the first stage requirements will proceed to the second stage of screening.

Stage 1. The interviewees must be young women leaders in Taiwan, specifically between the ages of 25 and 44.

Stage 2. The interviewees must meet at least one of the following criteria:

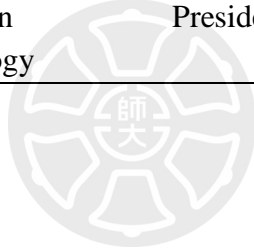
- Have a minimum of six months of full-time leadership experience in the workplace or have served as a project leader
- Have held senior positions such as president or vice president in university student associations

Table 3.1*The Description of Interview Participants in the Workplace*

Number	Participants	Age	Education	Marital status	Industry	Job Title	Leadership Experience (Year)	Size of Team (People)	Interview Date	Interview Location
1	P2	27	Master	Married	Mass Media	Manager	2.5	4	2023/10/31	Café
2	P3	27	Master	Single	Social Welfare	Supervisor	1	2	2023/11/01	Café
3	P4	31	Master	Married	Textile	Section Chief	0.5	1	2023/11/01	Online
4	P7	41	Bachelor	Married	Social Welfare	Senior Manager	10	6	2024/02/22	Café
5	P8	41	Bachelor	Married	Electronics	Manager	2.5	8	2024/02/23	Online
6	P9	32	Master	Married	Non-Profit Education	Associate Manager	2	4	2024/03/06	Café
7	P11	36	Master	Single	Electronics	Supervisor	3	4	2024/03/09	Online
8	P12	40	Bachelor	Married	Social Welfare	Supervisor	2	5	2024/03/10	Café
9	P13	38	Bachelor	Married	Electronics	Manager	3	6	2024/03/11	Online
10	P14	30	Master	Married	Finance	Assistant Manager	1.5	3	2024/03/13	Café
11	P15	40	Bachelor	Married	Food and Beverage	Store Manager	2	3	2024/03/15	Online
12	P17	36	Bachelor	Single	Social Welfare	Supervisor	5	4	2024/03/20	Online
13	P18	32	Bachelor	Single	Technology	Supervisor	0.5	4	2024/03/22	Online
14	P19	35	Master	Married	Electronics	Manager	2	5	2024/03/25	Online
15	P20	30	Master	Single	Funeral	Manager	3	6	2024/03/29	Café

Table 3.2*The Description of Interview Participants in University Student Associations*

Number	Participants	Age	Education	Marital status	Type of Team	Job Title	Leadership Experience (Year)	Size of Team	Interview Date	Interview Location
1	P1	25	Bachelor	Single	Volleyball Team	President	1	9	2023/10/25	Online
2	P5	25	Bachelor	Single	Mountaineering	Vice President	1	15	2023/11/02	Online
3	P6	25	Master	Single	Basketball Team	Vice President	1	6	2023/11/02	Online
4	P10	27	Master	Single	International Affairs	President	6	25	2024/03/08	Café
5	P16	27	Master	Single	Western Astrology	President	1	12	2024/03/19	Café



Data Collection

Within the qualitative research approach, multiple methods are available for data collection. Creswell (2012) identified four main techniques in qualitative research: observation, interviews, document analysis, and the study of visual materials. This research focused on understanding the process of the challenges and strategies of young women leaders. Therefore, three main research methods were utilized: observation, document analysis, and interviews. Research triangulation could be enhanced by using different data collection methods. Patton (2015) mentioned the significance of triangulation in enhancing the credibility and overall quality of research. He highlighted that triangulation serves to mitigate concerns or criticisms that a study's findings might merely result from relying on a singular method, source, or the potential biases of a single researcher. Thus, this study combined three different data collective methods with multiple sources of evidence to improve the clarity and comprehensiveness of the research findings.

Observation

Observations occur in a natural setting of the studied phenomenon and provide direct, firsthand experiences, unlike interviews which offer indirect, secondhand accounts (Patton, 2015). The researcher had the opportunity to observe the interactions between young women leaders and their subordinates in the workplace. The researcher participated in two events: a press conference for presenting the company's product and a routine daily workplace observation in a public restaurant. This provides opportunities to observe the real work situation between young women leaders, their subordinates, and their superiors. In this case, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of the participants' leadership. All data was recorded in notes, which were

then be transformed into detailed field notes. These notes were sufficiently descriptive to give readers the impression of being present, seeing what the observer saw, as described by Merriam and Tisdell (2016). It helped the researcher understand the potential challenges young women leaders would have during their interaction with team members. Before conducting interviews, observations and document analysis were used for triangulation to strengthen findings, provide context, and offer specific examples for reference in later interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Survey

For this study, a survey was designed to collect demographic information from the participants and to verify they met the required criteria for this study before the interview. The survey was provided in both Chinese and English in the contexts of university associations and workplaces. The first part collected demographic information about the respondents, including their name, age, gender, educational status, marital status, and number of children. The second part focused on their leadership experience, covering the type of club, work field, current position, job responsibilities, how they became a leader, team composition, and duration of leadership. Participants were asked to answer the questions by selecting options and providing written responses. There were 40 people who filled out the survey, and the researcher then began selecting suitable participants based on the research criteria. After the selection, 20 young women leaders were chosen as participants. Following the survey, the researcher started to conduct interviews.

Interview

During the data-gathering process of this research, semi-structured interviews were conducted. In qualitative research, interviews are a primary method for data collection, as noted by Merriam and Tisdell (2016). DeMarrais (2004) described the research interview as an interactive conversation between the researcher and the participant and focused on questions related to the research study. The primary objective of this study was to thoroughly understand the experiences and perceptions of young women leaders in the workplace context and student university associations context, which the researcher intended to examine. Semi-structured interviews in this research facilitated deeper exploration, allowing researchers to follow up on responses for more detailed information (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995). In this approach, questions were considered as guidelines rather than strict boundaries, enabling a more flexible and in-depth examination of the topic.

In this study, the interview questions were created based on the established research framework and objectives. The interviews were structured to follow the key themes of the study, ensuring a thorough exploration of all relevant areas. At the beginning of the interview, the researcher introduced the research topic and purpose and briefly explained the interview questions, which were divided into four parts. A total of 14 questions were asked during the interview. Then, the researcher sought participants' consent to record the complete conversation through the utilization of a digital voice recorder. Throughout the interview process, detailed notes were transcribed onto a laptop. The total duration of each interview ranged from 40 to 60 minutes. The interviews were conducted both online and in person. Table 3.3 provides an

overview of the data collection methods, detailing the use of surveys, interview data, direct observations, and the documents reviewed by the researcher.

Document Reviews

In qualitative research, document review is one of the methods. This category covers a range of materials, from official public records and individual personal documents to content reflecting popular culture, various forms of visual media, and physical materials and artifacts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this study, the data was collected online to collect more relevant information for this study. The researcher browsed academic writings, research papers, publications, websites, blogs, and podcasts about young women leaders' challenges and strategies to obtain more insights. Other resources were provided by the interviewees, including their personal social media accounts, business documents, and regulations or event documents from student university associations.

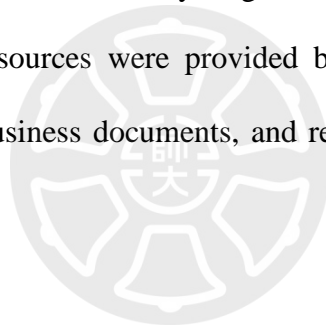


Table 3.3

Collected Data

Questionnaire		Interviews		Direct Observations		Document Review
Type (number)	Data	Type (number)	Date, Duration	Type (number)	Date, Duration	Type (number), Length
Participant 1	2023/10/25	Interview 1	2023/10/25, 70 mins	Workplace Observation 1	2024/03/25, 2 hours	Women leadership reports, publications, and academic reports (15), over 300 pages, Podcast of leadership management and women leadership (6), 5 hours; Websites and personal social media accounts (15); Business documents (5), over 10 pages, Documents and regulations from student associations (10), over 100 pages
Participant 2	2023/10/31	Interview 2	2023/10/31, 60 mins	Press Conference 1	2024/05/09, 2 hours	
Participant 3	2023/10/31	Interview 3	2023/11/01, 60 mins			
Participant 4	2023/11/01	Interview 4	2023/11/01, 60 mins			
Participant 5	2023/11/02	Interview 5	2023/11/02, 70 mins			
Participant 6	2023/11/02	Interview 6	2023/11/02, 70 mins			
Participant 7	2024/02/21	Interview 7	2024/02/22, 60 mins			
Participant 8	2024/02/23	Interview 8	2024/02/23, 50 mins			
Participant 9	2024/02/28	Interview 9	2024/03/06, 70 mins			
Participant 10	2024/03/08	Interview 10	2024/03/08, 70 mins			
Participant 11	2024/03/05	Interview 11	2024/03/09, 60 mins			
Participant 12	2024/03/10	Interview 12	2024/03/10, 70 mins			
Participant 13	2024/03/10	Interview 13	2024/03/11, 40 mins			
Participant 14	2024/03/06	Interview 14	2024/03/13, 40 mins			
Participant 15	2024/03/15	Interview 15	2024/03/15, 40 mins			
Participant 16	2024/03/18	Interview 16	2024/03/19, 40 mins			
Participant 17	2024/03/19	Interview 17	2024/03/20, 40 mins			
Participant 18	2024/02/26	Interview 18	2024/03/22, 50 mins			
Participant 19	2024/02/26	Interview 19	2024/03/25, 40 mins			
Participant 20	2024/03/20	Interview 20	2024/03/29, 50 mins			

Figure 3.3

First Example of a Data Analysis Process by Atlas.ti 8.0

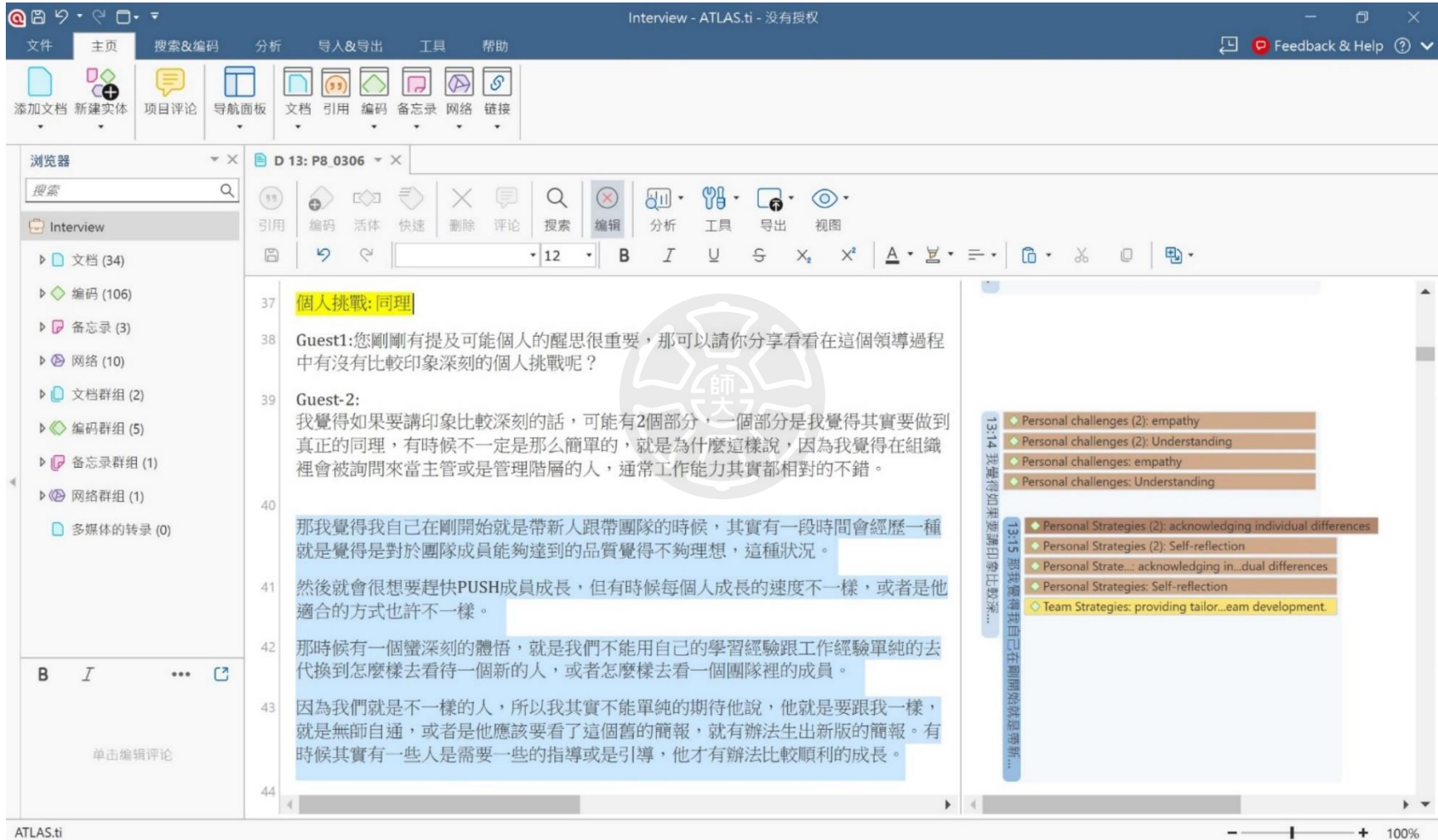
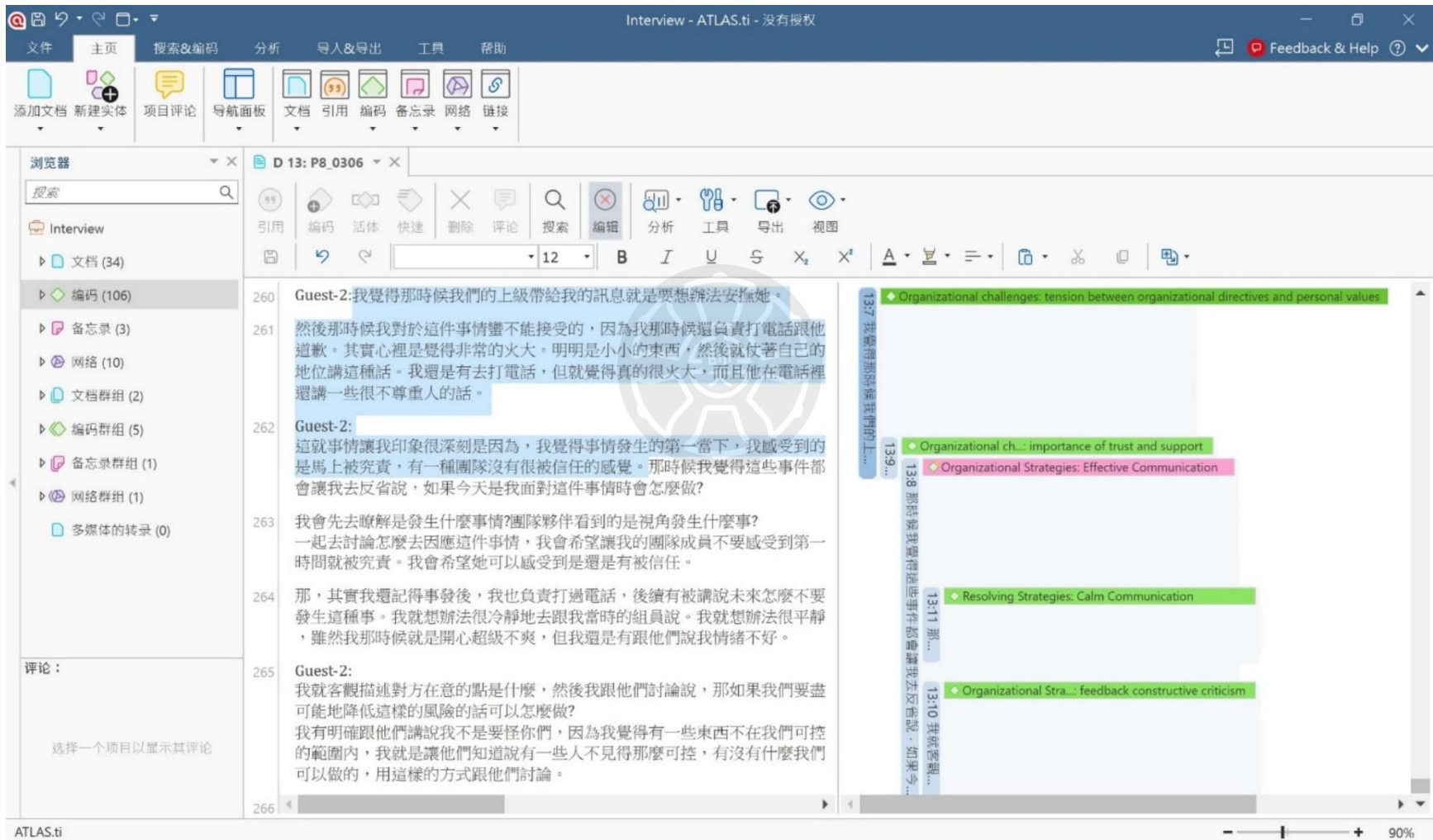


Figure 3.4

Second Example of a Data Analysis Process by Atlas.ti 8.0



Data Analysis

In this study, every interview was documented through a digital voice recorder and the researcher's notes. After collecting the data through semi-structured interviews, all the interview content was transcribed and reviewed with notes taken during the interview. The following process is data analysis, where the data was systematically analyzed into findings (Patton, 2015). Data analysis for this study was carried out in three phases: open coding, axial coding, and constant comparison between theoretical foundation and emerging categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1997). Atlas.ti, a qualitative data analysis software, was utilized to organize, reassemble, and manage codes, facilitating the interpretation of data.

The first step was open coding, in which the researcher read through the interview transcripts and began to label segments with codes that represent a concept or category. The aim was to open up the text to expose the thoughts, ideas, and meanings of the conversation. The result from open coding was the first-level categories. After the initial open coding, axial coding was used to reassemble the data created during open coding. It is about finding connections between categories and subcategories and understanding their relationships (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The final step was constant comparison, where each data item was compared with all others to develop and refine theoretically relevant categories. The researcher constantly compared data to data, data to category, and category to category to ensure that these categories reflected the full range of data.

Research Quality

This section explores the quality of qualitative research and the strategies employed by the researcher to enhance the research's quality. Lincoln and Guba (1985) proposed criteria, including reliability, confirmability, internal validity, and external validity, to enhance the quality of qualitative research. This research incorporated three key criteria — credibility, reliability, and transferability.

Credibility (Internal Validity)

Credibility pertains to the degree to which the findings of a study accurately represent real-world phenomena or situations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The researcher adopted several methods from different sources to enhance credibility. Firstly, triangulation refers to using multiple data sources or methods to study a single phenomenon to enhance the validity and credibility of the research findings (Busetto et al., 2020). The researcher utilized three collection methods: observation, interview, and document review. Secondly, member checks were another method to decrease the misinterpretation of participants' words (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). They assisted the researcher in discovering and defining their own biases and misunderstandings (Maxwell, 2013). Therefore, the researcher provided a summary to the participants after the interview to allow them to check if any information had been wrongly interpreted or misunderstood. Thirdly, peer review helped to identify any potential biases, methodological weaknesses, or areas of improvement. The researcher discussed the study process, the interview questions, and the initial interpretation with peers.

Transferability (External Validity)

In research, transferability pertains to the degree to which the outcomes of a study can be transferred or applied to different situations or contexts (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). To achieve transferability, the findings should be transferred to different contexts based on the detailed descriptions provided by the original researchers. These detailed descriptions, often called thick descriptions, include in-depth information about the participants, research setting, data collection, and analysis processes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

To achieve better transferability, the researcher provided thick descriptions of the research context and participants' experiences in the research background, literature review, research method, and findings. Moreover, the researcher provided a comprehensive description of the research design, data collection methods, and analysis processes. This facilitates other researchers in comprehending the study's methodology and enables them to make informed assessments regarding the potential applicability of the findings.

Dependability (Reliability or Consistency)

In 1985, Lincoln and Guba initially defined reliability in qualitative research as dependability or consistency, and later, in 1989, they redefined this concept. They suggested that in postpositivist research, reliability means consistent results over time, but constructivist research acknowledges inevitable changes and requires thorough monitoring and scrutiny. Traditionally, reliability refers to replicating the same results in repeated studies. However, qualitative research seeks to comprehend complexities and variations in human behavior which are not fixed.

Therefore, the focus is to achieve consistency between the results and the gathered data rather than replication (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

To ensure the reliability of the research, the researcher implemented several methods. Firstly, the interview sessions, whether conducted in-person or online, were recorded using a digital voice recorder. Secondly, the researcher kept detailed records of all aspects of the research process, including data collection and analysis methods. Thirdly, an audit trail of the procedures was maintained. Fourthly, this study engaged the researcher's peers and professionals to review and discuss the research process and findings. Lastly, the researcher ensured participants have enough time to discuss their experiences during the interviews. The research's overall reliability was strengthened through these methods.



CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

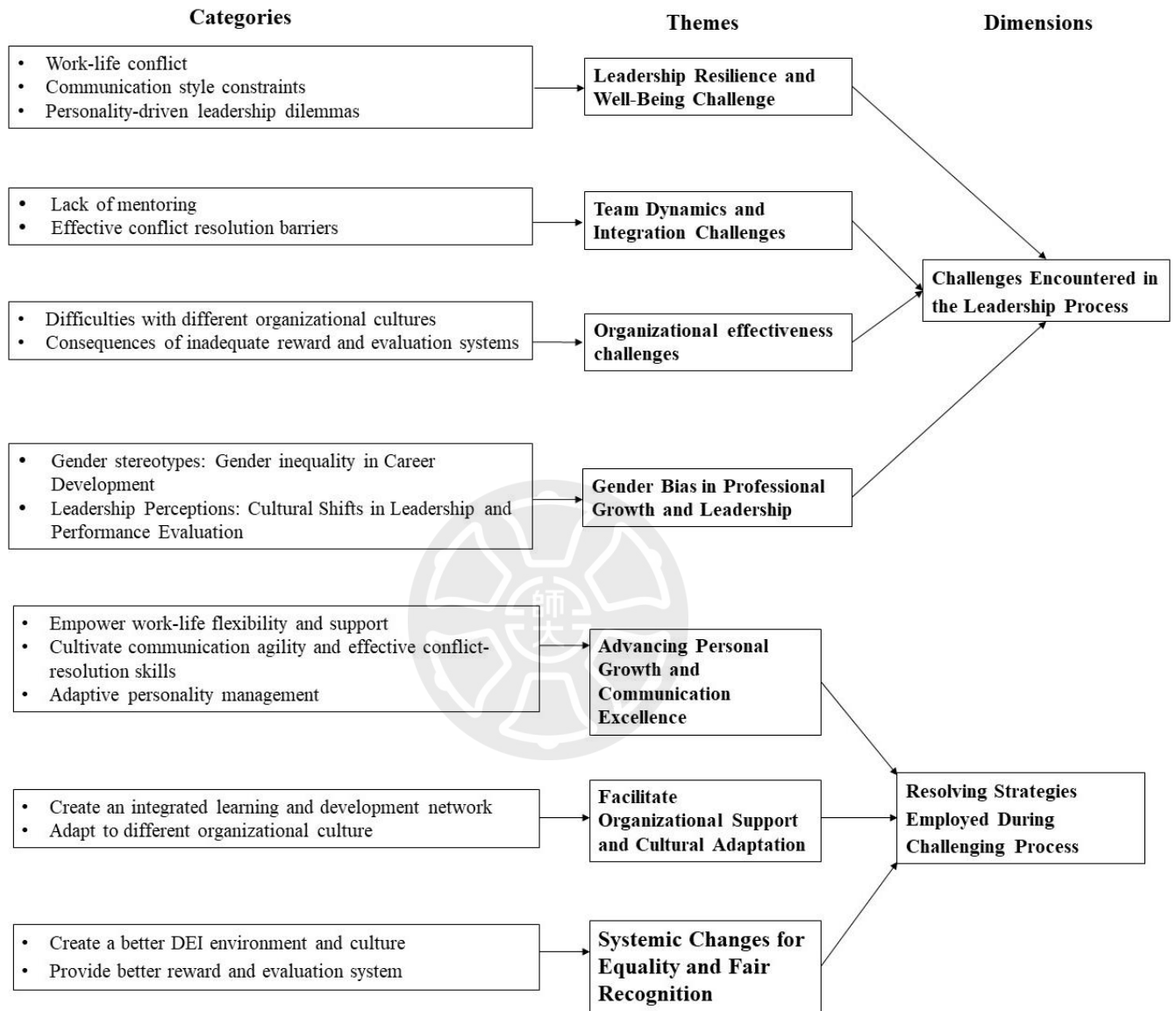
This chapter presents the main findings of the research in the following three sections: encountered leading challenges, resolving strategies, and discussion. The purpose of the first two sections is to address the study's research questions. Furthermore, the third section provides further discussion of the research findings.

1. What challenges do young women leaders face when leading a team?
2. How do young women leaders use different resolving strategies to overcome these challenges?

The interconnections between the research questions, dimensions, themes, and categories of the thesis are derived from interviews and presented in Figure 4.1. The first dimension explains the challenges young women leaders encounter throughout their leadership journey, focusing on different levels. Another dimension addresses the resolving strategies young women leaders employ during challenging situations. Participants' exact words were frequently quoted to maintain the results' authenticity and enhance the readers' comprehension.

Figure 4.1

Dimensions of the Findings



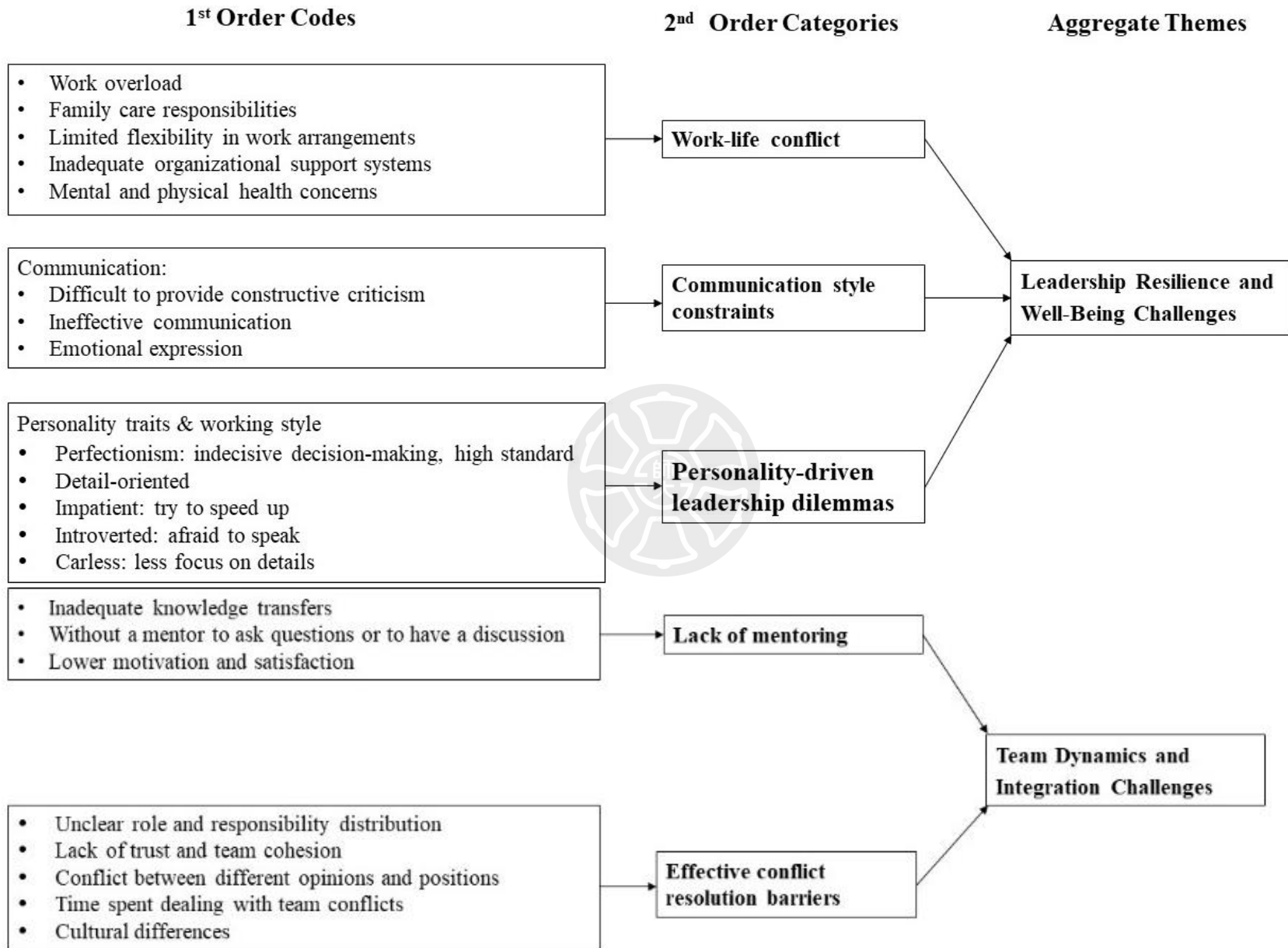
Young Women Leaders' Challenges in the Leadership Process

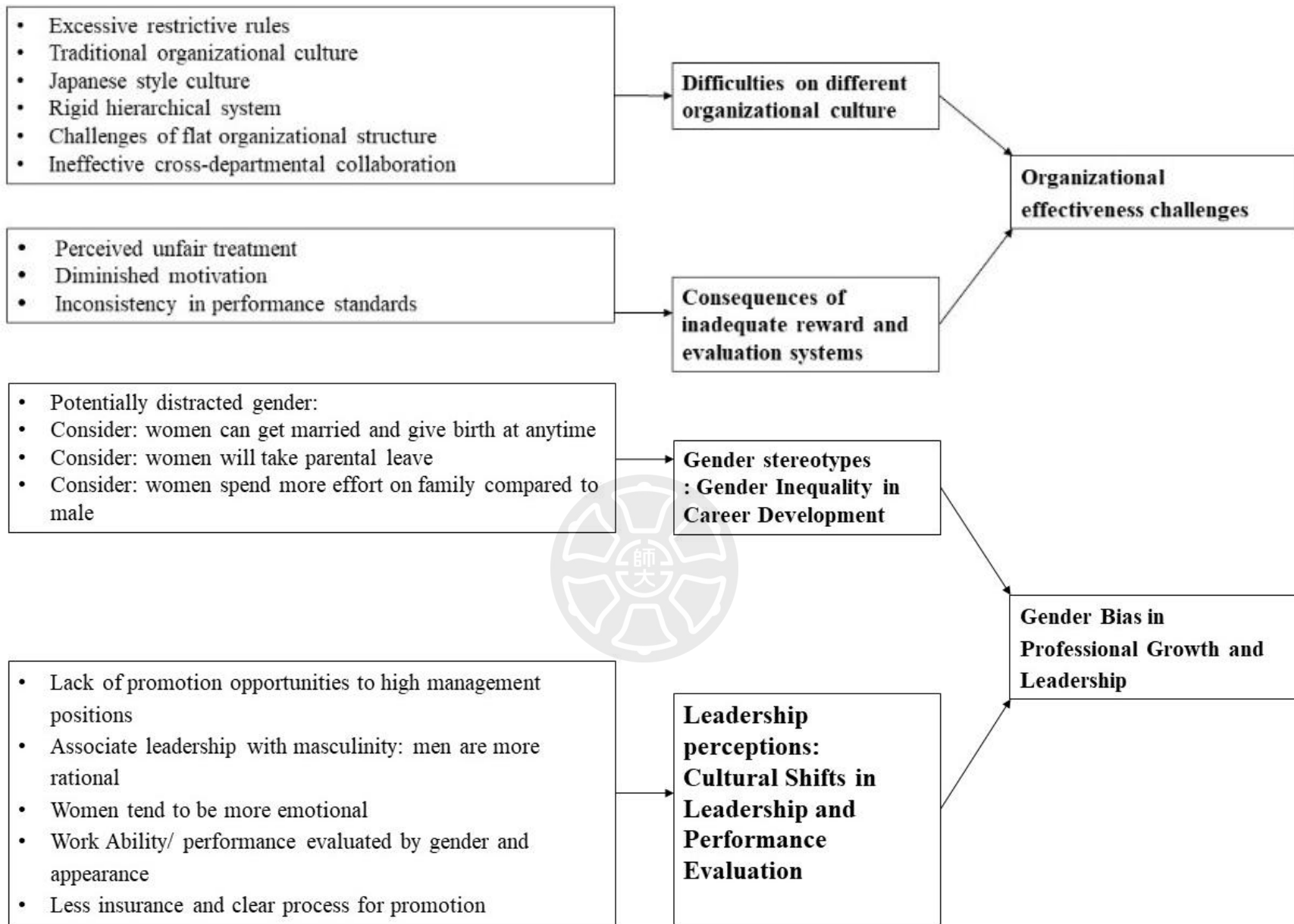
The first theme identified from the data collection addresses young women's challenges while leading groups. There are four main themes: Leadership Resilience and Well-being Challenges, Team Dynamics and Integration Challenges, Organizational Effectiveness Challenges, and Gender Bias in Professional Growth and Leadership. These themes are categorized according to four societal levels—micro-individual, meso-team, meso-organizational, and macro-gender to understand the findings better. Figure 4.2 presents the data structure, illustrating the analysis process from 1st order codes through 2nd order categories to aggregate themes.



Figure 4.2

Data Structure: Leadership Challenges





Leadership Resilience and Well-being Challenges

Exploring the theme of Leadership Resilience and Well-Being Challenges reveals complex aspects of challenges that participants face in leadership roles. This theme is broken down into three main categories: communication style constraints, personality-driven leadership dilemmas, and work-life conflict. Participants face challenges in communication styles, where finding the right balance between being assertive and receptive can be tricky in different workplace environments. Additionally, personality-driven leadership dilemmas involve adjusting their personality in the workplace. Lastly, they often struggle to balance their professional duties with their personal lives, dealing with issues like work overload and a lack of support. Understanding and addressing these categories is crucial for supporting young women leaders, enhancing their ability to cope with challenges, and fostering their overall well-being and leadership effectiveness.

Work-life Conflict

Participants in the study pointed out that work-life conflict is a significant barrier to leadership resilience and well-being, particularly for young women in leadership roles. They identified several key factors contributing to this conflict: work overload, family care responsibilities, limited flexibility in work arrangements, inadequate organizational support systems, and mental and physical health concerns. These elements often combine to create a challenging environment where conflicts between professional and personal roles become more noticeable. This imbalance not only affects leaders' effectiveness but also impacts their overall

health and job satisfaction. It is essential to address these issues to cultivate a supportive and balanced work environment.

Family Care Responsibilities. Family care responsibilities refer to the obligations that individuals have to manage and provide for the needs of family members. Balancing these responsibilities with demanding work schedules can be particularly challenging for professionals, especially women in leadership roles. This scenario highlights the family care responsibilities of a participant who must navigate career and family dual pressures.

I feel that female managers may find it particularly challenging to balance work and family commitments. Our work is actually very demanding. ... So, I really don't have much time to help my child with their studies. This is an aspect where I think female managers really face greater difficulties. (P11)

Work Overload. Work overload is when an individual is burdened with more tasks and responsibilities than they can reasonably handle within the allotted working hours. This condition can lead to physical and mental exhaustion, commonly known as burnout, which negatively impacts an individual's efficiency and well-being. The stress and strain from continuous work can also affect interpersonal dynamics within a team. This is what the participant shared for her personal experience,

Eventually, I really felt burned out. I was physically and mentally exhausted from dealing with these issues. ... I was working every weekend. I realized this was also affecting the team. They were probably worried about overburdening me or causing me additional stress. Upon reflection, I understood this was not the team dynamic I wanted. (P9)

Communication Style Constraints

Most participants indicated that it is difficult to communicate clearly and effectively with their team members. Most participants said they were making huge efforts to communicate effectively with superiors, colleagues, and subordinates. A participant reflected on her experience

I think the most challenging part is how to fully convey opinions from higher-ups without damaging their self-esteem, especially considering everyone's age and different educational backgrounds. ...You need to let your team understand that the issue is indeed serious and requires caution, but also reassure them that it is not irreparable. (P14)

Another participant encountered a similar situation with her boss, which put a lot of pressure on her communication. This situation placed significant pressure on her ability to communicate effectively.

When I faced my superior today, they told me, 'Hey, but as a middle manager, your responsibility is to fully convince or help the people below understand the decisions from above, right?' I find this extremely challenging, and the pressure is really overwhelming. (P9)

One of the participants shared her experiences about the communication challenges she faced early in her career, emphasizing her initial struggles with professional interactions. She explained,

When I started out, I really didn't have much experience. This meant figuring out how to talk to people, how to write messages, how to nicely ask for changes, or even how to gently say no to something. A lot of times, the topics were really sensitive, so I had to learn how to either turn things down or suggest changes without causing any upset. (P2)

Personality-Driven Leadership Dilemmas

Personality-driven leadership dilemmas arise when a leader's inherent personality traits, such as perfectionism, detailed orientation, and impatience, directly influence their management style. These traits can lead to challenges such as inefficient decision-making, strained team dynamics, and misaligned leadership approaches that may affect team progress and effectiveness.

Perfectionism. Perfectionism in leadership can lead to high, often unrealistic expectations that pressure team members excessively. While striving for excellence is valuable in leadership, perfectionism can become a barrier to personal well-being and team productivity if not managed appropriately. For participants, balancing high standards with realistic expectations is crucial for maintaining team morale and effective leadership. One leader shared,

When I first started training newcomers and leading teams, there was a period when I felt that the quality achieved by the team members was not ideal. This made me want to quickly push the members to grow. However, sometimes, each person's growth rate is different. We cannot simply substitute our own learning and work experiences when evaluating a new person or assessing a member within a team. (P9).

Detail-Oriented. Being detail-oriented is generally seen as a positive trait; however, it can also present challenges in leadership. Leaders who focus extensively on details may struggle with delegating tasks and might end up micromanaging. This could limit team members' creative freedom and independence. One participant mentioned her challenges with a detail-oriented personality.

To be honest, I think I still have a bit of perfectionism in me. In the past, I would give feedback and ask for changes, but I found that my colleagues might not always understand the direction I wanted to change. I think previously, people were sometimes afraid to tell their superiors that something really couldn't be done, worrying that they would be judged as someone unwilling to embrace challenges. (P8)

Impatience in Leadership Roles. Impatience can drive individuals to seek faster resolutions and progress, which can be beneficial in dynamic, fast-paced work environments. However, this trait can also lead to rushing through tasks without adequate deliberation, possibly overlooking better solutions or making hasty decisions that may not be well thought out. One participant shared how her emotional evolution has impacted her approach to leadership and training.

I think I've changed a lot emotionally. In the past, when I first started training newcomers, I might have wondered why it took them so long. Later, I realized that everyone learns at their own pace, so I adjusted my speed accordingly. I used to get impatient very quickly, but now I give myself a bit more time to breathe and also give others more time to learn. (P15)

Team Dynamics and Integration Challenges

The theme of Team Dynamics and Integration Challenges is divided into two main categories: barriers to effective conflict resolution and the lack of mentoring. Young women leaders often encounter obstacles in resolving team conflicts due to unclear role and responsibility distribution, lack of trust and team cohesion, and cultural misunderstandings. Additionally, the lack of mentoring leaves these leaders without the guidance and support to navigate complex organizational structures and build confidence. Addressing these issues is crucial for fostering a cohesive and productive team environment.

Lack of Mentoring

Participants identified the lack of mentoring as a major team challenge during their leadership journey. When young women assumed leadership roles, they lacked a practical mentor to provide necessary instruction or answer questions, making it difficult to lead. One of the participants elaborated her thoughts about her supervisor. In her situation, the problems still existed, and she often needed to resolve problems independently without having actual support from her supervisors.

Whenever I encountered problems, my supervisor always told me to be calm and just let it go. I always had to fix the problem by myself, and it took me more time to deal with those team assignments and administrative tasks. I'm so envious that others have such a supportive supervisor. In the end, I choose to solve the problem directly, without asking for my supervisor's help. (P3)

The following quote captures the frustration of a participant who feels unsupported and alone when dealing with team conflicts and problems.

The supervisors only give you the responsibility, but they don't care about what's going on within the team. ... I have to solve it by myself. They don't ask me how everything is going. They just care about the result and the task, that's all. (P2)

In addition, mentors often facilitate introductions to influential networks, which can open doors to new opportunities, collaborations, and pathways for career advancement. Without a mentor, young women leaders lose opportunities for networking that can advance their careers and expand their perspectives.

Since our department is divided into two teams, it will be difficult when it comes to promotion issues. If only one person can be nominated for promotion at a time, the two team leaders often debate which candidate is more suitable for promotion and propose the appropriate nominee. ... Unfortunately, the manager of my department is not very supportive of team members. (P13)

Effective Conflict Resolution Barriers

The first category underscores the difficulties teams face in resolving conflicts efficiently, which can disrupt team unity and impede progress. Without mechanisms to manage disagreements constructively, teams can struggle with internal tensions and decreased productivity.

In team settings, conflict resolution barriers are the main challenges in young women's leading process. These include conflicts arising from differing opinions and positions, the considerable amount of time required to address these disagreements, and the lack of clear role and responsibility distribution among team members. It is challenging to successfully resolve conflicts within the team, especially those related to personality clashes or resistance to leadership. One of the participants mentioned her experience with an older team member.

We have two colleagues who often disagree with each other. ... I usually ask them privately about their thoughts and try to facilitate communication to clear up any misunderstandings. I often play the role of a mediator. This role is challenging because it requires saying the right thing at the right time, otherwise, it might lead Colleague A to question my leadership abilities. ... Sometimes, these situations affect my work progress and may even require me to work overtime to manage their emotions and opinions (P18).

Additionally, a fundamental lack of trust and cohesion within the team can severely hinder the resolution process. Two of the participants shared their experiences,

When everyone interacts and communicates their ideas with Colleague A, you strongly feel that every small point you raise leads to a big reaction from her. Her past experiences with former supervisors have left a deep impression on her, making it difficult for you to persuade her to trust you. (P7)

They are not very accustomed to expressing their true thoughts during conflicts. I feel that it took some time to build trust with this first partner and to gradually get them accustomed to the idea that they can indeed express their feelings. (P9)

In team conflict resolution, unclear roles and responsibilities can cause major problems, especially for young women leaders. This confusion can lead to overlapping duties and uncertain authority, making conflicts harder to manage and resolve. This situation affects overall team cohesion and productivity, making it difficult for the leader to keep the team unified. The participant stated about this,

The challenge I faced is dealing with role conflicts between the store manager and staff. For example, some employees only accept instructions from the store manager. Even when I directly assign tasks, it is difficult to gain their acceptance. These conflicts, stemming from unclear roles, increase leadership challenges. (P12)

Organizational Effectiveness Challenges

According to the research results, participants have encountered several challenges at the organizational level. There are two main challenges at this level: difficulties related to different organizational cultures and the consequences of inadequate reward and evaluation systems. These challenges directly impact the participants' leadership roles and their ability to enhance organizational effectiveness. Addressing these challenges is essential for enhancing organizational effectiveness and creating a more productive and equitable work environment.

Difficulties on Different Organizational Culture

Organizational culture refers to the collective values, beliefs, and behaviors that shape how work gets done within an organization. Differences in language and culture can create significant challenges in organizational settings (Egitim, 2022). For participants, when their team members struggle to adapt to an organizational culture, it can create challenges to effective leadership and

diminish employee engagement. This challenge happened in various structural frameworks, such as rigid hierarchical systems and environments characterized by excessively restrictive rules. One participant shared her experience with Japanese cultural cooperation, highlighting the difficulties encountered in a rigid and restrictive organization.

Our company leans towards a Japanese style, particularly strict about employee attendance. This culture affects how I manage my team since young employees place a lot of importance on leave. Personally, I don't like this approach either, but I've gradually become accustomed to it. (P14)

Another challenge is adapting to traditional organizational cultures. In traditional organizational cultures, particularly within industries that have long-established practices, navigating the workplace can be challenging for those advocating for innovation and change. The participant delves into her experiences when trying to introduce fresh ideas within rigid and traditional frameworks.

In traditional industries, the workplace culture is often conservative, where new ideas are typically rejected in favor of maintaining traditional practices. As a team leader, when a team member proposes an innovative idea, I try to support their initiative. However, I also let them know that I had tried before, but the higher-ups did not allow it. (P2)

Not all organizational cultures are universally acceptable. During work, participants must follow the organizational culture, which can make them uncomfortable. This is what she shared,

I feel that our work often requires us to consider external interactions. In this regard, we try to mitigate risks to avoid negative feedback and maintain the organization's image.

When issues arise, my immediate feeling is that I'm being held accountable, which leads to a feeling that they do not trust my team. (P9)

Consequences of Inadequate Reward and Evaluation Systems

An organization's reward and evaluation system are important in motivating employees, shaping their behavior, and aligning their efforts with organizational goals. An inadequate system can lead to a lack of motivation and poor performance. (Tshukudu, 2020). Employees may not be willing to make additional effort beyond the normal required if their efforts are not suitably rewarded or recognized. This is how the participant felt,

While we do have a reward system in place, promotions are still determined by the preferences of supervisors rather than the established rules. My boss always promises that I will be promoted soon, but in reality, I don't know when that will happen. I feel really disappointed and demotivated. Why should I need to take on a manager role for just an additional 1000 NTD? This is really unfair. (P3)

Talented employees should have the opportunity to be promoted, which encourages them to work hard. However, participants mentioned that an inadequate system often fails to provide clear and attainable incentives for employees. One of the participants thinks that they do not have adequate reward and evaluation systems, which lowers her team members' working motivation.

I feel that our internal promotion system is somewhat strange. If someone is truly capable, has strong comprehension skills, and consistently delivers high-quality work, I don't think we need to wait two years to promote them. Many capable employees might aspire to

advance to better positions. If we restrict promotions based solely on seniority, we are likely to lose these talents. I believe there should be more flexibility in this system. (P8)

Gender Bias in Professional Growth and Leadership

Gender bias in the evaluation of leadership frequently results in substantial obstacles for women, influencing their career advancement and leadership opportunities (Hogue, 2016). These barriers, described as "operating as a whole to prevent women from advancing or succeeding in leadership" (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016, p. 191), hinder young women from advancing in leadership roles and sharing their professional skills. Interviewees discussed the theme of Gender Bias in Professional Growth and Leadership, highlighting two main areas: gender stereotypes in career development and shifting leadership perceptions.

Gender Stereotypes: Gender Inequality in Career Development

Several participants stated that women's actions are labeled as emotional rather than professional. People tend to evaluate young women based on their appearance, voice, and gender. This double standard creates a challenging environment for young women, as their actions are judged differently based on gender.

I've noticed that if a male team member raises his voice at me in front of everyone, it's seen as acceptable. However, if I raise my voice in response, I'm labeled emotional. Yet, if you are often shouted at by him, it becomes a stereotype that women are weak and incapable of handling situations. No matter how you handle it, it's never right (P11).

Additionally, many participants expressed a prevalent stereotype that women are a potentially distracted gender, implying they can get married and give birth at any time. This stereotype reinforces the belief that married women or those with children cannot fully concentrate on their work and are less effective than their male or single female colleagues. This belief stems from traditional views of gender roles in society, where men are expected to be the breadwinners and women are tasked with domestic management and caregiving responsibilities. A female manager implied the situation,

There is an assumption that you might soon marry and have children which could potentially interrupt your career. ... After having children, you may need to leave work on time to pick them up. Sometimes, leaving on time might lead your supervisor to question your commitment, as if you are not fully dedicated to your work but only focused on your family responsibilities. (P14)

Leadership Perceptions: Cultural Shifts in Leadership and Performance Evaluation

Another societal challenge raised by participants is the association of leadership with masculine traits. This leadership perception fosters the belief that men are better suited for leadership roles. Traditionally, women are often seen as more emotional and sentimental, while men are considered more rational (P8, P15). This bias deeply influences how young women leaders are viewed within their organizations. One participant described how a male team member openly doubted her leadership ability because of her gender.

'Why should my leader be a young lady? This lady has no confidence because she is a woman. Her personality is too gentle, and she cannot be a good leader. Whenever she asks me to do anything, she will start with please, can you? She won't tell me directly to do the thing'. But what if I respect his age, as he is 30 years older than me? So, I say 'please' or 'can you'? I don't want to say 'Change this' or 'do this' (P2)

Young women continue to encounter difficulties in the recruitment and promotion processes. Based on participants' sharing, their performance evaluation criteria are not consistently applied between male and female employees. Instead of assessing their working performance, evaluators often judge young women based on gender, voice, and appearance. Despite excellent performance, women may still be subjected to higher standards than their male counterparts (P11). This causes difficulties for young women leaders in attaining high managerial positions. One of the young women mentioned the conversation between her colleagues and her boss, stating that women have less opportunity to climb to high managerial positions.

A manager told my colleague that women generally face more difficulties in getting promoted....They believe that women are more problematic, frequently have health issues, and often need leave for reasons such as marriage and having children (P11).

Another participant shared her experiences with the impact of appearance on perceptions in the workplace.

I believe that for women, appearance can significantly impact perceptions. When I first started at the company, it took time to prove that I was more than just a young girl. When you first graduate, people might see you as a young woman who hasn't

accomplished much. However, as you gain experience and begin to display professional capabilities, they start to recognize your skills. At the same time, there may be expectations for you to enter marriage and start a family. (P14)

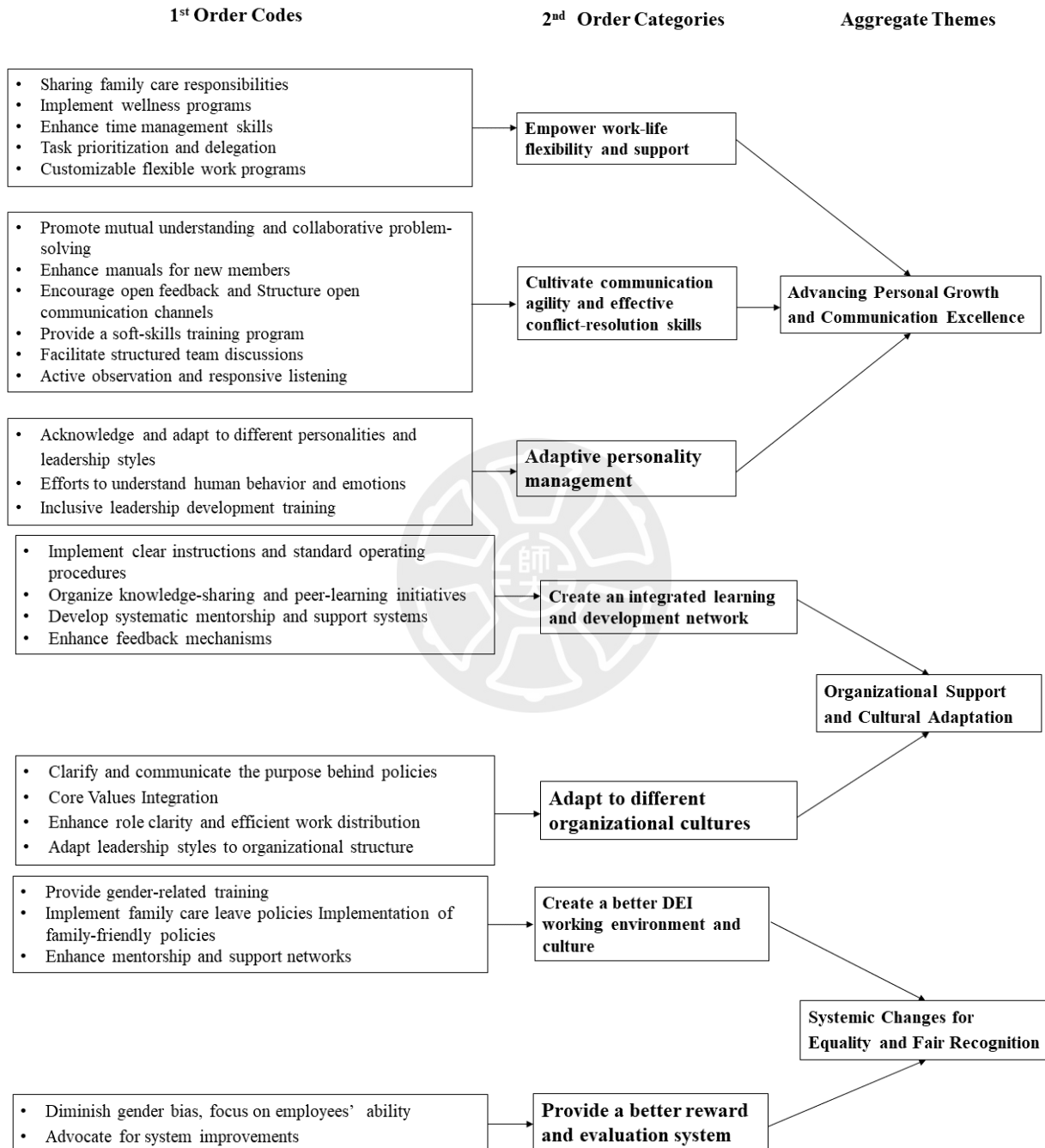
In conclusion, young women leaders encounter numerous challenges that affect their leadership capabilities. By identifying key themes such as Leadership Resilience and Well-being Challenges, Team Dynamics and Integration Challenges, Organizational Effectiveness Challenges, and Gender Bias in Professional Growth, we gain a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted challenges participants faced. Consequently, examining these challenges is crucial for understanding the complex landscape young women leaders navigate and for developing effective resolving strategies.

Young Women Leaders' Resolving Strategies for Leadership Challenges

Young women leaders face several challenges that impact their leadership. To address these challenges, it is crucial to focus on the resolving strategies participants utilized during their leadership journeys. The analysis structure for participants' resolving strategies, including interview codes, categories, and themes, is provided in Figure 4.3. This section explores three key strategies: Advancing Personal Growth and Communication Excellence, Facilitating Organizational Support and Cultural Adaptation, and Implementing Systemic Changes for Equality and Fair Recognition. These strategies collectively aim to enhance the leadership effectiveness and well-being of young women leaders.

Figure 4.3

Data Structure: Resolving Strategies



Advancing Personal Growth and Communication Excellence

Young women leaders particularly face challenges in leadership resilience and well-being. According to participants, challenges ranging from balancing work and personal life, navigating through different communication methods, to overcoming personality-driven conflicts can significantly impact their effectiveness and mental health. To deal with these issues, it's essential to focus on personal growth and mastering communication. In this section, the theme is divided into three categories: empower work-life flexibility and support, cultivate communication agility and effective conflict resolution skills, and adaptive personality management.

Empower Work-Life Flexibility and Support

The participants mentioned the first resolving strategies to address work-life conflict. For them, family care responsibilities, role conflict between professional and personal life, and work overload are the three main personal challenges. Fortunately, the resolving strategies they mentioned could enhance their work-life flexibility and support. One participant achieved this by sharing family care responsibilities, which allowed her to focus more on her work. She shared her experience:

Sharing Family Care Responsibilities. The strategy of sharing family care responsibilities revolves around effectively distributing tasks among family members to balance work and personal life. This approach not only ensures that each family member contributes but also allows each parent to focus on their professional responsibilities without worrying about family duties, thus supporting work-life balance. This scenario shared by the participant,

The division of housework within the family is very important. Since my husband works for a foreign company, he has more flexibility to work from home. In our arrangement, I leave for work in the morning and take the kids to school. After school, my husband picks them up. ... I'm grateful that the kids also participate in the division of labor. This arrangement allows me to focus fully on my work. (P8)

Implement Wellness Programs. Several interviewees mentioned that the company offers the opportunity to apply for annual leave if needed. Additionally, "if you have children, you can apply for remote work with the company." (P19) The company's customizable, flexible work programs allow interviewees to achieve a better work-life balance. One participant illustrated her experiences with taking leave,

At that time, I felt like I was on the verge of breaking down from all the pressure. ... I took a six-month leave of absence to adjust my mindset, which made a huge difference. I read many books on management, being a supervisor, and dealing with stress. ... I realized that by pushing myself so hard, I was impacting the team. My anxiety could indirectly put pressure on them as well. (P9)

Cultivate Communication Agility and Effective Conflict-Resolution Skills

One effective resolving strategy participants identified for developing communication agility and resolving conflicts is the promotion of mutual understanding and collaborative problem-solving. By fostering a culture of open communication and trust, team members feel valued and respected, enhancing their ability to work together effectively.

Promote Mutual Understanding and Collaborative Problem-Solving. When challenges arise, it becomes crucial to understand each team member's perspective and address issues collectively rather than assigning blame. One participant illustrated this scenario,

I start by understanding what happened. ... We discuss together how to address the situation. I want to ensure that my team members do not feel blamed right away and still feel trusted.... Afterward, I objectively describe what the other people care about and then discuss with them how we might minimize such risks. I clearly tell them that I am not blaming them because I recognize that some things are beyond our control. We discuss what we can possibly do to handle such situations. (P9)

Encourage Open Feedback and Structure Open Communication Channels. Participants highlighted that maintaining continuous and open dialogue is a resolving strategy to build trust and deepen interactions, which can ultimately lead to more effective conflict resolution within the team. This method fosters a supportive environment that encourages open expression of thoughts and feelings. The dialogue underscores the statement,

When supervisees are in a contradictory state ..., it can be difficult to communicate and guide them effectively. I use alternative methods like cards or self-exploration games to understand their feelings, self-perception, and capabilities better, encouraging them to share more. This not only facilitates expression and discussion but also builds a continuous dialogue, enhancing our mutual understanding. Consequently, the depth of their later conversations changes. (P17)

Adaptive Personality Management

Adaptive personality management involves recognizing and adjusting one's inherent traits to better align with the needs of the team and the situation. Personality-driven leadership dilemmas occur when a leader's inherent traits, such as perfectionism or impatience, significantly shape their approach to management. These characteristics can ultimately affect team effectiveness and progress. According to participants, by adjusting their style and behavior, leaders can better meet the diverse needs of their team members, enhancing team cohesion and productivity.

From Hesitation to Decisiveness (Transformational Leadership). Transformational leadership features the journey from hesitation to decisiveness. One participant described how her leadership style evolved from hesitancy to decisiveness to lead her team better when team members had different opinions.

At first, the team had different opinions, and some people weren't happy. I started off a bit hesitant and indecisive, but I've become much more decisive and assertive. ... I shifted from being gentle to being firmer, which seems to have made the team more open to my direction. Now, I always take the time to weigh the pros and cons before making decisions, convincing everyone that this way of doing things will lead us in the right direction. (P18)

Encouraging Autonomy (Participative Leadership). Furthermore, participants describe key methods for implementing adaptive personality management strategies, such as self-reflection and self-adaptation. Following a period of self-reflection, participants emphasized the importance of encouraging autonomy and actively engaged in making self-adaptations.

I've realized that my impatience wasn't helping; it caused emotional ups and downs hurting our team dynamics. Slowing down helps us make better decisions and avoid misunderstandings, Afterwards, I encourage my team to solve problems on their own and seek help only when necessary. Now, I'm focusing on giving us all more time to breathe and learn at our own pace. (P15)

Facilitate Organizational Support and Cultural Adaptation

To facilitate organizational support and cultural adaptation, it is crucial to create an integrated learning and development network and to adapt to different organizational cultures. This involves organizing knowledge-sharing and peer learning initiatives to ensure smooth transitions and effective use of resources. The resolving strategies are separated into two parts: Create an integrated learning and development network and Adapt to different organizational cultures.

Create an Integrated Learning and Development Network

This network acts as a foundational structure that supports continuous learning and growth, ensuring that all employees have continuous access to the resources, training, and support they need to excel in their leadership roles.

Organize Knowledge-Sharing and Peer Learning Initiatives. This approach enables new leaders and team members to utilize existing materials, such as data and promotional resources, to efficiently perform their tasks without starting from scratch. By fostering an environment where knowledge is shared, and peer learning is encouraged, organizations can facilitate faster learning and development for all participants. This is what the participant experienced,

Initially, the former president provided me with data and prepared cloud-based information, which I found very helpful for reference during club evaluations. The information also included promotional materials, allowing me to conduct activities using existing resources. Basically, I am the primary decision-maker, while the former president only provides reminders about administrative matters. (P16)

Implement Clear Instructions and Standard Operating Procedures. Additionally, implementing clear instructions and standard operating procedures is vital for consistent and efficient operations. Establishing well-defined guidelines and protocols helps in maintaining uniformity across various functions and roles within the organization.

As the HR manager, I made extensive preparations for hiring new employees. I applied my usual training methods and created a structured onboarding process, including first-week reading materials, one-on-one meetings, and weekly discussions for the first month. I also developed documentation for their tasks and responsibilities Our team started recording our business procedures, key priorities, and quality check methods. (P9)

Adapt to Different Organizational Cultures

When encountering organizational challenges, it is crucial to adopt strategies that promote alignment within diverse organizational cultures. Participants resolve these challenges by clarifying and communicating the purpose behind policies and helping employees understand the rationale behind organizational decisions. An example shared by the participants,

Clarify and communicate the Purpose Behind Policies. Clarifying and communicating the purpose behind policies involves openly discussing the reasons for specific organizational rules and guidelines. This approach helps team members understand the necessity and benefits of adhering to these policies, fostering a more cohesive and compliant work environment. The participant led her team through organizational culture challenges by clarifying the purpose behind policies.

I openly tell my team that if they can't get used to these rules, it might be difficult to adapt to this work environment. I make it clear that there are certain rules here that must be followed to prevent being unfairly labeled. Therefore, I think they eventually came to accept the company's culture. (P12)

Core Values Integration. Another key resolving strategy mentioned by the participant is core values integration. This involves integrating the organization's core values into daily practices to align actions with the organization's mission. This approach fosters a cohesive and adaptable work environment, effectively addressing organizational culture challenges.

I believe core values are like unwritten rules and part of our culture. We often discuss these values in detail, expecting them to be clearly demonstrated. As a result, everyone identifies with these values and incorporates them into their work. I guide my team to understand the reasons behind our actions rather than just following existing methods.

(P9)

Systemic Changes for Equality and Fair Recognition

Participants discussed the theme of Systemic Changes for Equality and Fair Recognition, focusing on creating a more inclusive and equitable working environment. This theme includes two main categories: enhancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in workplace culture and improving reward and evaluation systems. They emphasized the need for systemic changes to foster a better DEI environment that supports all employees regardless of their backgrounds. Addressing these categories is crucial for promoting equality and ensuring that all employees are recognized and rewarded fairly in the workforce.

Create a Better DEI Working Environment and Culture

Support Shared Family Care Responsibilities. Encourage a culture that supports sharing family care duties among all family members. This could include providing resources and workshops on how family responsibilities can be more evenly distributed.

I think our department tends to be more understanding because most of us are women. For instance, a colleague who started at the company around the same time I did was up for promotion, just like me. But she ended up taking two months of maternity leave, so I

got promoted first. She did get promoted six months later though—it was a bit delayed, but she still got her chance. (P8)

Implement Family Care Leave Policies. According to participants, their companies implement Family Care Leave Policies to provide an inclusive working environment. These policies allow employees to take leave for family care responsibilities without penalty, which makes participants feel supported by their companies. Having access to family care leave helps them manage personal commitments without compromising their professional responsibilities.

I think one aspect is that more people in our organization are having children. I feel this might also be related to age; there are likely more people over 30 in the organization now than in previous years. Therefore, I think everyone is becoming more aware of what 'family' really involves, which includes the need to care for relatives or children. We are aware of this issue and have made some improvements in the policies. (P9)

Provide Gender-Related Training. According to participants, gender-related training is crucial for fostering an inclusive workplace. This training educates employees about gender diversity and sensitivity, aiming to raise awareness of unconscious biases and promote understanding of different gender identities. The goal is to reduce discrimination and harassment, enhance team collaboration, and cultivate a workplace culture that values and respects gender diversity. One of the HR participants mentioned this,

The government requires large companies to provide courses related to sexual harassment. After the lawyer's training, we have a better understanding of gender-related issues and are more equipped to handle similar situations in the future. (P4)

Provide a Better Reward and Evaluation System

Based on participants' experiences, it is essential to implement a better reward and evaluation system to foster a fair and effective work environment. This concept change would diminish gender bias by focusing on employees' abilities and contributions rather than gender, ensuring that all employees are fairly assessed and rewarded.

Diminish Gender Bias and Focus on Employees' Abilities. Diminishing gender bias and focusing on employees' abilities involves evaluating team members based on their performance and skills rather than personal traits or gender. The participant illustrated that, while changing company policies may be challenging, adjustments can be made at the team level to support inclusivity. This was her personal experience,

In my team, I evaluate work performance rather than personality traits or gender. I observe who is frequently asked for help and whose answers are accurate. I believe a manager should provide direction, so I prioritize promoting those with these qualities. The promoted individual can then handle the educational aspect. (P11)

Similarly, another participant shared that their supervisor emphasized the importance of skills over gender or age.

My supervisor said now we are in a time when gender is not important. What is more important is the skills. We don't care how old you are or whether you are a man or a woman; we care what you are doing. (P2)

To sum up, through participants' interview responses, they addressed their leading challenges through several resolving strategies — advancing personal growth and communication excellence, facilitating organizational support and cultural adaptation, and implementing systemic changes for equality and fair recognition. These resolving strategies can significantly assist them with challenges and enhance their leadership effectiveness. By focusing on these areas, young women leaders can better manage future challenges.



Discussions

This section summarizes the findings of the study. The findings provide a detailed examination of the challenges faced by young women leaders and the strategies they employed to overcome these challenges. Therefore, the further discussion will include two parts: "Young Women Leaders' Challenges in the Leadership Process" and "Young Women Leaders' Resolving Strategies for Leadership Challenges".

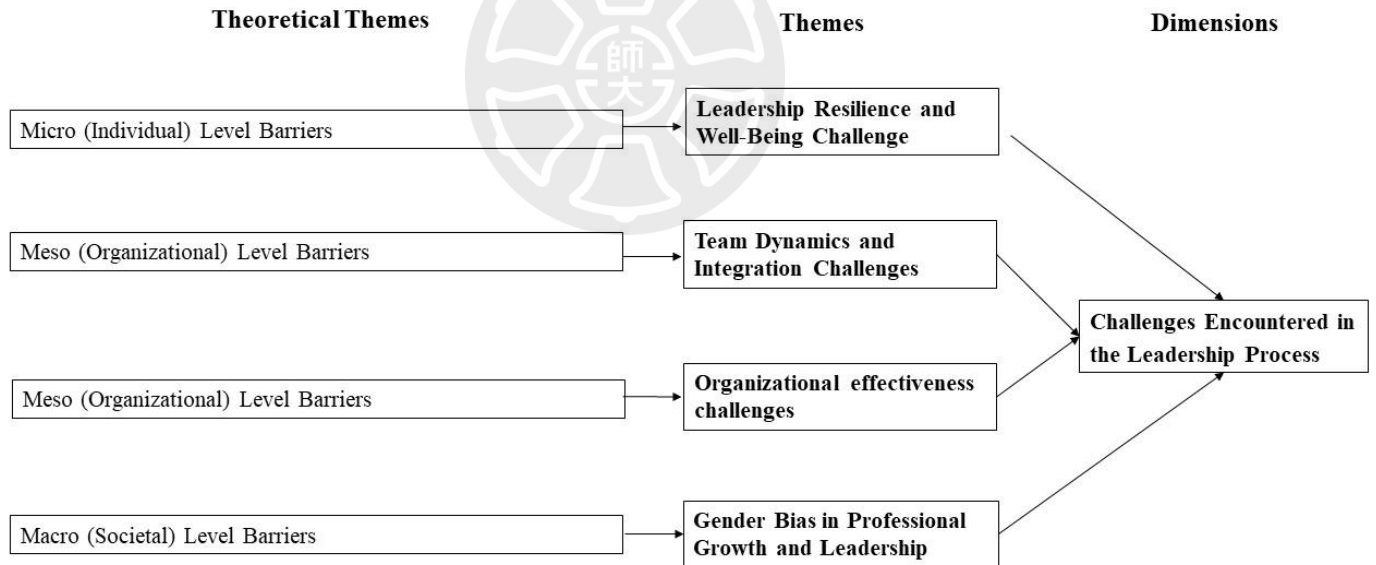


Theoretical Dimensions

The data structure presented in Figure 4.4 distinguishes Research Dimensions from Theoretical Dimensions. This theoretical model highlights that a cross-level analysis is essential, as biases at the macro level can also manifest at the micro and meso levels. Interview data indicate that these levels are closely interconnected, making it challenging to separate them. For instance, work-life balance challenges arise at the micro level, where young women leaders face difficulties with household responsibilities, and at the meso level, where organizations might lack supportive policies or programs.

Figure 4.4

Theoretical Themes Comparison

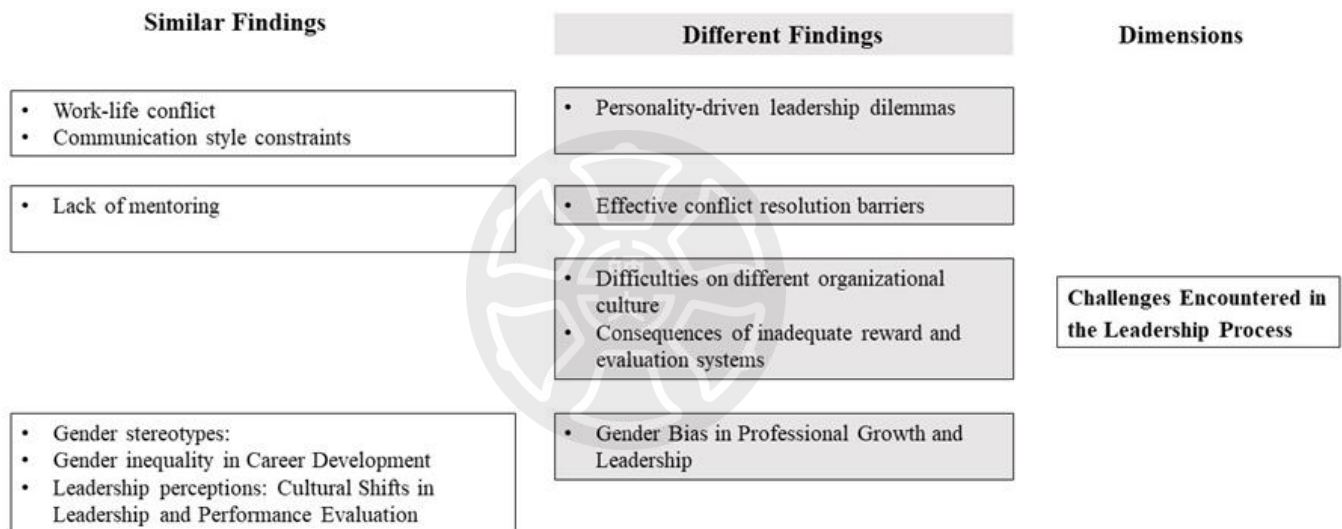


Comparison Between Research and Theoretical Framework

The following discussion will delve deeper into the analysis of the challenges identified in this study, which are based on the theoretical foundation from Diehl and Dzubinski in 2016. There are similarities and differences in the challenges identified across both studies. Figure 4.5 presents a comparison of these findings.

Figure 4.5

Theoretical Findings Comparison



Compared with theoretical study, this study revealed common challenges across various leadership settings, such as work-life conflict, where leaders struggle to balance professional and personal responsibilities. Communication style constraints also emerged as a universal issue, reflecting difficulties in effective communication. Additionally, a lack of mentoring was identified, indicating a gap in support and guidance for leaders. Moreover, gender stereotypes and inequality in career development were noted, highlighting systemic issues that affect the professional growth of leaders, especially women. Another similarity was found in leadership perceptions and cultural

shifts in leadership and performance evaluation, which reflect changing expectations and assessments of leadership roles across different contexts.

In contrast, this study highlighted specific challenges that were not in the theoretical framework. Firstly, personality-driven leadership dilemmas were noted, where leaders' personal traits clash with different team requirements. Secondly, issues with effective conflict resolution were also identified, pointing to barriers that prevent resolving internal conflicts efficiently and impacting team dynamics. Additionally, challenges associated with adapting to different organizational cultures were discovered, emphasizing difficulties in managing and integrating diverse cultural norms within organizations. Lastly, the studies pointed out the consequences of inadequate reward and evaluation systems, where ineffective frameworks lead to unfair recognition and advancement, leading to leadership challenges.

Challenges Encountered by Young Women Leaders

The research focused on young women between the ages of 25-44, revealing that fewer women leaders attain higher managerial roles compared to their male counterparts. While many young women hold first-level leadership positions, fewer advance to high management roles, highlighting the persistent barriers to their professional growth and leadership progression.

According to the results, young women leaders face similar challenges across personal, team, and organizational dimensions (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016). At the macro level, Coleman (2019) elaborates on the barriers of gender discrimination, stereotyping based on one's gender, and work-life balance. These factors significantly hinder women's professional advancement and leadership capability.

Similarly, some workplace participants highlighted the impact of gender stereotypes and leadership perceptions on their professional growth. Despite efforts to increase female representation, young women continue to be underrepresented in leadership positions, often due to persistent gender biases and structural barriers (Burkinshaw & White, 2020). Interestingly, all participants from university student associations did not encounter gender-related challenges but believe they will face them once they enter the workplace. Although the school context is simpler compared to the workplace, it serves as a way for young women to practice their leadership experiences. Therefore, it is also helpful to understand their challenges in this setting.

Resolving Strategies Employed by Young Women Leaders

The strategies employed by young women for effective communication and conflict resolution share significant similarities with recent scholarly literature. Scholars highlight the importance of open communication channels, collaborative problem-solving, mutual understanding, structured communication techniques, adaptive communication strategies, and emotional intelligence. These themes underscore the universal importance of communication skills in leadership and provide a robust framework for enhancing team dynamics and resolving conflicts (Hinds & Bailey, 2003; Shore et al., 2018).

For micro strategies, flexibility in communication strategies is one of the key themes. Hinds and Bailey (2003) discuss the importance of adapting communication styles to fit different team dynamics and individual personalities. This adaptability helps address diverse team needs and improve overall team performance. The study's findings on adaptive personality management and adjusting leadership styles to fit team needs align with this perspective (P15).

Adapting to different organizational cultures is another critical aspect discussed in recent literature. Meyer and Xin (2020) highlight the importance of cultural alignment and the integration of core values into daily practices, which is echoed in the study's findings on clarifying policies and integrating core values to foster a cohesive work environment (P9, P12). Both sources agree on the necessity of cultural adaptation for organizational success.

The significance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) training is a common theme in recent leadership and organizational studies. Shore et al. (2021) emphasize the effectiveness of DEI training in reducing biases and promoting an inclusive workplace, which aligns with the study's findings on the positive impact of gender-related training in improving workplace culture (P4). Both perspectives highlight the critical role of DEI initiatives in fostering a supportive and equitable work environment.

Despite the similarities in the literature, there are some differences between the two studies. While existing literature discusses the importance of knowledge-sharing and mentorship (Elias, 2018; Scandura & Williams, 2004), this study explains the specific approach to creating integrated learning and development networks. Participants emphasized the use of cloud-based information and systematic onboarding processes, which ensure that new leaders and team members can access and utilize resources efficiently (P16, P9).

While family-friendly policies are well-documented (Yadav & Sharma, 2021), this study places emphasis on the actual application and impact of such policies. The detailed accounts of how family care leave policies have been implemented and their positive effects on work-life balance provide a deeper insight into the practical benefits and challenges of these policies (P9).

The strategies employed by young women leaders exhibit several distinctive differences when compared to existing literature. These differences include a stronger emphasis on structured learning networks, and practical applications of family care leave policies. These unique strategies provide insights into the specific challenges and solutions relevant to young women leaders, contributing to a more detailed understanding of effective leadership experiences.



CHAPTER V CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This section consists of four parts: the conclusion, implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research. The conclusion summarizes the study's key findings. The implications discuss the practical applications and theoretical contributions of the research. The limitations address the constraints and potential biases encountered during the study. Finally, the suggestions for future research provide directions for further exploration based on the study's findings and identified gaps.

Conclusions

After thoroughly investigating the results and analyzing the data relating to the theoretical and empirical research questions, this study identified four primary challenges and three effective resolving strategies based on participant feedback, providing a truthful description of their experiences. The insights gained are valuable for young women leaders, organizations, and government policymakers aiming to foster a more inclusive environment. This chapter now presents and discusses the answers to the research questions in detail.

Main Findings

Challenges Encountered in the Leadership Process

Firstly, this study has identified the multifaceted challenges young women leaders face in Taiwan at the macro, meso, and micro levels. Four primary challenges were identified: Leadership Resilience and Well-being Challenges, Team Dynamics and Integration Challenges, Organizational Effectiveness Challenges, and Gender Bias in Professional Growth and

Leadership. These barriers significantly impact their ability to lead effectively and progress in their careers.

In Leadership Resilience and Well-Being Challenges, young women leaders struggle with work-life balance, communication style strains, and personality traits like perfectionism. In Team Dynamics and Integration, they encounter issues such as lack of mentoring and difficulties in conflict resolution. Organizational Effectiveness challenges include adapting to rigid cultures and dealing with inadequate reward and evaluation systems. Finally, Gender Bias in Professional Growth and Leadership presents significant barriers, including persistent stereotypes and unequal opportunities for advancement. According to the United Nations (2015), SDG 5 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Addressing the leadership challenges young women face is crucial for ensuring their full and effective participation and equal opportunities in decision-making. These challenges deeply influence young women's leadership development and career advancement. Creating an equitable environment where young women can thrive as leaders is essential for their advancement and economic growth.

Resolving Strategies During Leadership Challenges

In response to these challenges, the participants employed various resolving strategies crucial for their leadership development and effectiveness. Accordingly, this study identifies three key strategies young women leaders employ to address their challenges: Advancing Personal Growth and Communication Excellence, Facilitating Organizational Support and Cultural Adaptation, and Implementing Systemic Changes for Equality and Fair Recognition. These strategies collectively aim to overcome the challenges and enhance their leadership effectiveness.

By addressing these challenges, organizations can better support young women leaders and foster a more inclusive organizational culture. This approach helps them navigate challenges and enhances their overall leadership contributions.

Promoting personal growth and communication excellence aligns with SDG 5's objective of ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership. Facilitating organizational support and cultural adaptation, along with implementing systemic changes for equality and fair recognition, supports the goals of SDG 10 by promoting inclusive societies and reducing inequalities. These strategies are essential for achieving gender equality, empowering women, and advancing women in leadership.

Implications

Practical Implications

To Organization's Leaders

Organizations should focus on creating a supportive and inclusive environment for young women leaders. They should integrate effective strategies into their leadership development programs. According to participants, investing in targeted training programs focusing on personal growth, communication skills, and adaptive personality management is essential. These programs are suggested to include courses such as time management, effective communication, and conflict resolution skills. These are crucial for providing young women leaders with the necessary tools and knowledge to navigate the complexities of their leadership roles effectively.

Moreover, it is recommended that organizations recognize the importance of cultural adaptation and establish integrated learning and development networks that facilitate knowledge sharing and peer learning. As highlighted in the interviews, these initiatives help young women leaders adapt to various organizational cultures and enhance their effectiveness and satisfaction. This enables them to contribute more significantly to their teams and their overall success.

Beyond the organizational level, broader societal changes are necessary to ensure equality and fair recognition. As revealed in the interview data, policymakers must implement comprehensive support mechanisms such as wellness programs, flexible work arrangements, and family care leave policies to alleviate the work-life conflicts young women leaders face.

Besides, advocating for systemic improvements that reduce gender bias and focus on employees' abilities and contributions is another step. According to our study participants, gender-related training and fostering a DEI-centric workplace culture can enhance professional growth and leadership opportunities for young women. Developing fair and clear reward and evaluation systems will aid in recognizing and promoting talented women leaders, reducing gender bias, and ensuring equitable career advancement opportunities.

To Human Resources Managers

HR managers should establish mentorship programs that provide young women leaders with the necessary guidance and support, covering career development and personal growth. According to participant feedback, designing and implementing initiatives that help employees adapt to different organizational cultures, such as cross-cultural training and knowledge-sharing platforms, is essential. Furthermore, as noted in the interviews, it is crucial to ensure that

performance evaluations are based on objective criteria such as achieved targets, technical skills, and project outcomes. Evaluations should not be influenced by supervisors' preferences, such as gender biases, for example, assuming that women will eventually take maternity leave and cannot manage work and family responsibilities. Adopting standardized assessment tools and providing training for evaluators to identify and reduce personal subjective biases can help ensure fairness in performance evaluations. Consequently, promotion evaluations that focus on objective conditions are more likely to provide a fair working environment.

To Young Women Leaders

Based on the participants, young women leaders can enhance their effectiveness by cultivating advanced communication skills and prioritizing continuous personal development through mentorships and workshops. Strategic thinking and proactive problem-solving are essential to anticipate and address potential challenges. It is also crucial to develop self-awareness through consistent self-reflection to understand personal strengths and areas for improvement. Establishing clear boundaries between professional and personal life is vital to prevent burnout and ensure work-life balance. By implementing these strategies, young women can navigate their careers more effectively and assist themselves in better leadership roles.

In conclusion, by implementing these strategies and making these changes, organizations and society can better support young women leaders, allowing them to thrive and lead effectively in their respective fields. This will benefit the leaders and enhance the overall performance and inclusivity of the organizations they serve. Organizations can enhance their leadership effectiveness and pave the way for future leaders by fostering an environment that addresses and

resolves the specific challenges that young women leaders face. This study underscores the importance of continued efforts to understand and support the unique needs of young female leaders, ensuring they have the resources and opportunities to succeed and thrive in their respective fields.

Theoretical Implications

The findings in this study are supported by the literature and theories presented in Chapter Two, such as the gender-based leadership barriers model (Diehl & Dzubinski, 2016). By categorizing challenges according to macro (societal), meso (organizational), and micro (individual) levels, this model offers a comprehensive understanding of the barriers faced by women in leadership. This structured approach allows the researcher to conduct an in-depth exploration of participants' challenges across these levels. It provides a detailed and systematic framework for analyzing young women leaders' obstacles. Despite the strengths of the three-level leadership barriers model, it may not be fully applicable in different cultural and organizational contexts. This model might encounter applicability issues in local contexts due to the various cultures, workplace norms, and legal standards across different countries.

To better understand this dynamic, the researcher investigated Taiwan's young female labor and education participation rates, shedding light on the underrepresentation of young women leaders. The findings effectively illustrate the challenges young women leaders face in Taiwanese workplaces and educational contexts, as well as their resolving strategies.

Limitations

Firstly, the scope of the study was limited to participants in Taiwan, which may not fully represent the experiences of young women leaders in different cultural and organizational contexts. Secondly, the data collection covered a short period of time, potentially missing the evolving leadership challenges and strategies in the long term. Thirdly, the study involved a relatively small sample size, which might not fully represent the overall population. However, efforts were made to select the representative participants through a survey to ensure they met the research criteria, focusing on industries where women occupy a high percentage. Instead of using the snowballing method, the researcher expanded the study's applicability by distributing the survey online to find suitable participants.

Suggestions for Future Studies

Firstly, future research could focus on evaluating the long-term effectiveness of the strategies identified in this study for supporting young women leaders. While this study highlighted crucial strategies such as targeted training, mentorship, and cultural adaptation initiatives, their long-term impact still needs to be explored. Assessing these challenges over extended periods will provide valuable insights into their sustainability and adaptability through young women's progress in their careers.

Additionally, it is essential to explore the applicability of these strategies across different cultural and organizational contexts. Comparative studies in various countries could help determine the universal relevance of these strategies. Understanding how young women leaders adapt in diverse environments will contribute to their leadership development and the effectiveness

of global support. Ultimately, it enhances organizational performance by the potential of young women worldwide.



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APPENDIX A: SURVEY (ENGLISH)

Dear Participants,

I am Ting-Yu Lai, an MBA student at the Graduate Institute of International Human Resources Development at National Taiwan Normal University.

This research focuses on young women leaders between the ages of 25 and 44 years old in Taiwan, including various leadership positions in the workforce or in school clubs. This study aims to explore the challenges encountered by young women leaders in Taiwan and their resolving strategies they employed. All the respond in this survey is anonymous and confidential. The results only serve for research purpose and information for the company and Human Resources practitioners about leadership challenges and resolving strategies of young women.

If you are willing to take part in the study, you will be asked to read a series of statements and indicate your opinion by marking the appropriate response category and answering the questions. After you finish the survey, the researcher will select participants based on their responses. Interview will then be conducted. If you have any questions about the survey or about being in this study, you may contact me via my email: 61186017I@ntnu.edu.tw

Thank you.

Best Regards,

National Taiwan Normal University
Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development
Graduate Student: Ting-Yu Lai
Advisor: Wei-Wen Chang, Ph.D.

I. Basic Information

1. What is your age?
2. What is your highest educational background?
 Bachelor's degree Master's degree Doctoral degree

II. Background questions (Club Experience)

1. What type of leadership experience are you sharing about?
 Club experience Working experience
2. What group did you lead? _____
3. What was your title when you were leading the group?

4. How did you become a leader? Was it through election or volunteering?

5. If you volunteered, what motivated you to take on this leadership role?

6. How many group members did you lead? How many male and female members?

7. How long have you led the group?

8. What is your current job title? Or what are you currently doing?

III. Background questions (Working Experience)

1. What type of leadership experience are you sharing about?
 Club experience Working experience
2. What is your current job title?

3. What are you currently doing for your job?

4. What group (department) did you lead? / What project (event) did you lead?

5. What group (department) are you leading? / What project (event) are you leading?

6. What was your title when you were leading the group?

7. How long have you been leading/ led the group?

8. How many group members did you lead? How many male and female members?

APPENDIX B: SURVEY (CHINESE)

親愛的參與者您好，

我是國立台灣師範大學國際人力資源發展研究所的研究生賴亭諭，目前正在進行碩士論文的研究。本研究欲探討臺灣年輕女性領導者所面臨的挑戰及其採用的解決策略。本問卷旨在調查年輕女性人口統計問題以及背景問題。

本問卷屬自由參與性質並採匿名設計，研究結果將不會透漏任何個別資料，請您安心作答，並以實際感受惠予填選。本問卷所搜集的資料僅用於學術研究之用，以及為公司和人力資源工作者提供有關年輕女性領導者挑戰及解決策略的資訊。

若您同意以上研究說明，並且願意參與這項研究，您將花費 10 分鐘填寫此份問卷。完成問卷後，研究人員將根據您的回答篩選參與者，以進行後續的訪談。如果您對本問卷有任何疑問，您可以透過電子信箱與我聯繫。

信箱：61186017I@ntnu.edu.tw

再次感謝您的支持與配合，期待與您共同探討這一個重要議題！

敬祝

平安喜樂

國立台灣師範大學國際人力資源發展研究所研究生：賴亭諭敬上

指導教授：張煒雯博士

一、基本資料

1. 請問您目前的年齡是？
2. 您的最高學歷是？
 學士學位 碩士學位 博士學位
3. 您目前的婚姻狀況？
 已婚 未婚

二、背景問題(學校社團)

1. 您希望分享哪種類型的領導經驗？
 社團經驗 工作經驗
2. 您曾經領導過哪個社團組織或團體？

3. 當時您在該團隊擔任的職位是？

4. 請問您是如何成為該團隊的領導者？是經過指派、投票還是自願擔任？

5. 如果是自願擔任或是指派，能否分享是什麼動機促使您擔任這個領導角色？

6. 當時您領導的團隊成員有幾位？其中男性和女性各有多少？

7. 您總共領導該團隊多長的時間？

8. 目前您的職位是什麼？或者您目前主要的工作是什麼？

三、背景問題(工作職場)

1. 您希望分享哪種類型的領導經驗？ 社團經驗 工作經驗
2. 您當領導者時的職稱為何？

3. 請問您是在什麼產業及部門工作呢？您目前的工作內容為何呢？

4. 請問您是如何成為該團隊的領導者？是經過指派、投票還是自願擔任？

5. 如果是自願擔任或是指派，能否分享是什麼動機促使您擔任這個領導角色？

6. 當時您領導的團隊成員有幾位？其中男性和女性各有多少？

7. 您總共領導該團隊多長的時間？

8. 目前您的職位是什麼？或者您目前主要的工作是什麼？

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (ENGLISH)

I. Personal Leadership Experience

1. Can you give me your background as a young female leader in Taiwan?
2. How do you feel about being a leader?

II. Personal Dimension

1. Can you share your most profound personal challenges in leadership (e.g., in terms of personality, traits, or habits)?
2. Can you share your experiences of resolving any personal challenges (personality, characteristics, habits)?
3. What personal growth or transformation have you experienced as a leader?

III. Team Dimension

1. Can you share any specific conflicts or disagreements that happened in your team?
2. What strategies did you use to solve conflicts or disagreements to ensure effective team collaboration or achieve the team's objectives? How did you use it?
3. Have you encountered situations where team members have specific roles that come into conflict with each other? How did you handle the situations?

IV. Organizational Dimension

4. Are there any organizational culture/ regulations/ unspoken rules/ traditions? How did they affect your leadership?
5. How did you use strategies to adapt to organizational culture/ regulations/ unspoken rules/ traditions? How did they affect your leadership?
6. Can you provide an example of a project or activity that you led, which required you to closely align with organizational culture, rules, or traditions?

V. Gender Dimension

1. While leading the group, have you encountered any specific challenges related to your gender?
2. Can you share some methods or approaches you've used to deal with gender biases in your leadership journey? ?
3. Can you share any experiences where you changed gender perceptions in your team? And why did you change it?

VI. Others

1. Is there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (CHINESE)

一、 個人基本領導經驗

1. 請簡述您作為年輕女性領導者的背景和經歷。
2. 身為領導者這個角色您有什麼感想？

二、 個人層面探討

1. 能否分享您在領導中最深刻的個人挑戰(例如:個人性格、特質或習慣等方面)?
2. 能否分享您在領導的過程中，是如何解決個人挑戰？您採取了哪些具體的策略或方式來應對所面對的挑戰？
3. 在領導的過程中，您認為您有哪些個人成長或轉變經歷？能否分享您的經驗？

三、 團隊層面探討

1. 能否詳述您所領導的團隊出現的衝突或意見分歧的情況？
2. 您是如何運用策略來解決內部衝突或意見分歧的？這對於達成團隊目標有什麼幫助嗎？
3. 是否有過因團隊成員角色分配不清處而導致衝突的經歷？您是如何應對這些狀況的？

四、 組織層面探討

1. 您所在的組織中，有無特定的組織文化、規章、潛規則或傳統呢？能否和我們分享？這些因素是如何影響您的領導？
2. 您是如何運用策略來適應組織文化、規定、潛規則或傳統的？這些策略又是如何影響到您的領導能力的？
3. 請問是否有您主導的項目或活動需要您與組織的文化、規則或傳統密切配合的？您又是如何處理的？能否分享具體的實例？

五、 性別觀念探討

1. 在領導團隊的過程中，您是否遭遇過與您的性別有關的挑戰？能否分享具體的實例？
2. 能否分享您具體方法或途徑，在領導過程中是如何應對性別偏見的？
3. 能否分享您改變團隊內性別觀念的經歷？您又是基於什麼原因而進行這種改變？

六、 其他

1. 是否有其他想分享的事情呢？

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM (ENGLISH)

Dear Sir/Madam:

You are invited to participate in a research study titled “Leadership Experiences of Young Women in Taiwan: Exploring the Challenges and Resolving Strategies”. This study is being conducted by a student from the Graduate Institute of International Human Resource Development at National Taiwan Normal University. The researcher will explain this study to you and address any questions you may have. This form offers details about the research.

This research focuses on young women leaders between the ages of 25 and 44 years old in Taiwan, including various leadership positions in the workforce or in school clubs. This study aims to explore the challenges encountered by young women leaders in Taiwan and their resolving strategies they employed. Please carefully read the following information and confirm that you understand the information regarding this research study.

- The interview will be approximately 45 to 60 minutes and conducted through an online platform or face to face meeting.
- The interview will be recorded, and the researcher will be activity taking notes.
- The data will be accessible only to the researcher and related personnel (committee members and advisor).
- Any data collected will be used for research analysis.
- Participants personal information will be kept confidential, and they will be assigned a pseudonym to protect their identity.

If you have any concern or question, please contact Ting-Yu Lai via email: 61186017I@gmail.com.

I have read and fully understand the above information. I hereby consent to take part in this study.

Participant’s Signature

Printed Name

Date

I hereby confirm that I have explained this document to the participant prior to requesting him/her to sign.

Researcher’s Signature

Printed Name

Date

APPENDIX F : CONSENT FORM (CHINESE)

研究計畫

台灣年輕女性的領導經驗：挑戰與解決策略之探討

主要研究人員

姓名:賴亭諭

系所:國際人力資源發展研

究所

信箱:61186017I@ntnu.edu.tw

研究目的

本研究的目的是在於探索台灣年輕女性領袖所面臨的挑戰以及她們採取的解決策略。本研究採用質性研究的方法探討台灣25至44歲之間的年輕女性領導者，包括在職場或學校社團中擔任各種領導職位的女性。此研究的訪談將通過在線上或是面對面的會議進行，時長約為45至60分鐘。訪談將區分成四個部分，個人、團隊、組織及性別認知。藉由這四大部分去探討年輕女性領導者在領導時所面臨的挑戰及策略，期望能透過訪談更清楚的了解整個領導過程。訪談過程將會進行錄音，同時研究者會進行記錄。

請仔細閱讀以下資訊，並確認您已了解與此研究有關的內容。

保密原則

請您不要填寫任何能夠被識別的訊息，研究人員將盡一切努力為您保密。

1. 研究人員會分配代號號碼於所有參與者的研究筆記和文件。
2. 研究人員會將筆記、採訪紀錄和其他任何可識別參與者的訊息保存在上鎖的檔案櫃中，並由研究人員及相關人員（如委員會成員和指導教授）使用。
3. 除研究人員有法律義務報告特定事件外，參與者的數據將被保密。

如果您對於本次研究有任何疑問，或者您因參與本次研究而遭受不良影響，您可以透過電子郵件聯繫研究人員。電子信箱：61186017i@ntnu.edu.tw

自願參與

您參與此項研究是出於自願決定，如果您決定參加本次研究，您將被要求簽署一份同意書。在您簽署了同意書之後，您仍然可以在任何時候退出。退出本研究不會影響您與研究人員的關係。如果您在數據搜集完成之前退出研究，您的數據將被退還給您或銷毀。

同意與簽章

我已閱讀並理解所提供的訊息，並有機會提出問題。我明白我的參與是自願的，並且可以在任何時候自由退出，且不需要任何理由和費用。我自願同意參與本次研究。

參與者姓名 _____ 日期 _____

研究者姓名 _____ 日期 _____

