

Digital Leadership and Women Entrepreneurship Education: A Systematic Literature Review on Empowerment, Innovation, and Performance in the Digital Era

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Abstract: Digital transformation brings both opportunities and challenges for women entrepreneurs, especially those who have to manage their businesses while fulfilling their responsibilities at home. This systematic literature review explores how women entrepreneurs' digital leadership can drive business success, while also considering their role as homemakers in the digital economy era. A structured search was conducted in Dimensions, google scholar, scopus, focusing on empirical studies published between 2020 and 2025. Inclusion criteria required studies that examined companies led by women, evaluated digital leadership or digital competence, and reported results related to empowerment, innovation, or business performance. There were 21 articles that met these criteria, and the results were evaluated using an approach in line with PRISMA from the Joanna Briggs Institute. The data was analyzed using a structured matrix and synthesized through an integrative narrative method. The results show that digital leadership increases empowerment by enhancing digital trust, encouraging innovation, and improving strategic decision-making, which overall supports business performance. However, there are still significant barriers, such as limited digital literacy, resource constraints, and pressures related to women's roles. This review highlights the need for targeted capacity-building initiatives and more rigorous future research.

Keywords: Digital Leadership, Woman Entrepreneurship, Empowerment, Innovation, Performance Momprenneur, Digital Era

A. Introduction

Digital transformation brings opportunities and obstacles for women entrepreneurs. Digital technology helps women entrepreneurs' access new markets through social media, thereby increasing operational efficiency and business growth. Women entrepreneurs are given the opportunity to engage with a wider consumer base, thereby promoting the expansion of their companies (Swati, 2024). The emergence of crowdfunding and microfinance has increased capital accessibility for women-led initiatives, encouraging economic autonomy.(Judijanto & Fanggidae, 2024). Digital transformation encourages the acquisition of new competencies, thereby increasing business acumen among women

(Swati, 2024). Despite the opportunities, mompreneurs also face various challenges. Many women entrepreneurs struggle with rapid technological advances, which can hinder their competitive abilities (Swati, 2024). Digital trends can cause stress and fatigue for mompreneurs who are trying to balance family and entrepreneurial responsibilities. On the other hand, digital transformation offers significant advantages, while simultaneously requiring a supportive ecosystem to reduce the challenges faced by female entrepreneurs. The existence of these opportunities and obstacles underscores the need for policies and resources aimed at empowering women in the digital age.

Digital leadership is one of the key competencies for an organization in facing the development of digital technology. A leader is required to have strategic and flexible capabilities in using digital technology to drive innovation, make informed decisions, and strengthen organizational culture. Digital leadership demonstrates the ability to integrate advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, into an organization's work systems to enhance customer centricity and innovation (Pepe & Pavone, 2021). Digital leadership is recognized as being able to help the concept of entrepreneurial leadership orientation and influence increased innovation in organizations. (Sagbas et al., 2023). Skilled digital leaders must possess competencies such as adaptability, emotional intelligence, and data-driven strategic vision (Santos, 2025).

Digital business transformation can support MSMEs in achieving sustainable goals (Rupeika Apoga & Petrovska., 2022). Digital leadership capabilities strengthen the link between innovative business models and sustainable performance (Chen et al., 2024). Mompreneurs with higher levels of digital competency and leadership demonstrate greater adaptability, innovation, and business sustainability, especially in the face of rapid technological change and competitive market dynamics (Abdullah et al., 2025). Digital leadership and resilience are key to achieving business success. Resilience is thought to mediate the relationship between digital leadership and business success, demonstrating the importance of mompreneurs in overcoming various challenges (Izzati et al., 2025) The beneficial influence of digital leadership satisfaction on organizational transformation and team efficacy has the potential to significantly enhance the capabilities of women's creative enterprises (Santoso et al., 2025) Women entrepreneurs face systemic barriers, including financial exclusion and socio-cultural barriers, which hinder their access to digital resources and network (Uli et al., 2025). A systematic literature review can elucidate these barriers and formulate strategies aimed at overcoming them, thereby promoting equality.

This study focuses on the concept of digital leadership among women entrepreneurs who also act as homemakers, a role that has been under-researched and lacks a broad empirical foundation. While the capacity of digital leadership to support innovation and organizational transformation has been recognized, gaps remain. These gaps present opportunities, as there is insufficient integration between digital leadership frameworks and the specific challenges and opportunities faced by women entrepreneurs, particularly those who also act as homemakers. Women entrepreneurs face unique challenges, such as balancing family responsibilities with business activities. Women entrepreneurs are leveraging mobile technology, AI, blockchain, digital payments, and innovation hubs to improve market access, financial inclusion, and capacity building. While digital leadership presents a promising avenue for empowering women entrepreneurs, particularly homemakers, future research needs to develop comprehensive frameworks and empirical

studies that consider the specific challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, while integrating cross-cultural and contextual perspectives to enhance the relevance and effectiveness of digital leadership in this area. Factors that motivate mother entrepreneurs to start a business include a desire to improve the family's economic status, an interest in the business, financial support for their husbands, and inheriting the family business. Success factors for women entrepreneurs include deep interest, careful planning, business knowledge, and a willingness to take risks (Embong, 2021). However, challenges such as limited digital literacy, regulatory barriers, gender bias, and a lack of gender-disaggregated data limit the growth and adoption of women-led fintech businesses (Nyamboga, 2025).

The practical implementation of digital leadership in empowering women entrepreneurs has not been widely researched, although several studies have generated actionable insights for practitioners (Muallidin, 2025). There is a significant lack of empirical research investigating the extent to which digital leadership facilitates the empowerment of women entrepreneurs. Most of the existing scholarship is largely descriptive and shows a lack of methodological diversity, thereby limiting understanding of the consequences of digital leadership on the phenomenon of female entrepreneurship (Muallidin, 2025).

The results of the study show that digital leadership is very important for encouraging development and improving business performance, especially for women entrepreneurs. The next section describes the salient aspects of this discourse. Digital leadership combines technological innovation with leadership methodologies and has undergone substantial evolution since 2016 (Indrio et al., 2024). Effective digital leaders demonstrate proficiency in technical, strategic, human-centered, and adaptive skills, which are essential for navigating digital transformation with expertise (Haka E Apriy., Sukmayadi. et al., 2024). women entrepreneurs face barriers such as gender stereotypes and limited access to financial resources; however, digital tools have significantly empowered them and facilitated their economic participation (Clarissa et al., 2025). Studies reveal that digital enterprises increase financial inclusion and create opportunities for marginalized demographics, thereby contributing to poverty alleviation (Santos, 2025). Research shows that women-led companies using digital tools witness substantial revenue growth, with e-commerce adoption resulting in a 30-45% increase in sales (Singh & Tyagi, n.d.). However, challenges such as digital skill gaps and cybersecurity issues persist, underscoring the need for targeted interventions to strengthen these initiatives (Singh & Tyagi, n.d.). While an emphasis on leadership and digital empowerment remains important, it is equally important to consider the systemic barriers faced by women entrepreneurs that can hinder the full realization of their potential in the digital economy. Addressing these challenges requires a holistic strategy that includes education, resource accessibility, and supportive policy frameworks.

A systematic literature review (SLR) is essential to consolidate fragmented research on digital leadership and its impact on the empowerment of women entrepreneurs. The purpose of this review is to describe conceptual boundaries and synthesize empirical data, thereby enhancing understanding of how digital leadership drives creative outcomes among women. The next section describes the reasons for conducting such a systematic literature review. The scientific discourse surrounding women's digital creative pursuits is characterized by inconsistency and divergence, with a lack of practice-

oriented insights and a significant shortage of cross-national comparative studies (Alhajri & Aloud, 2023). Investigations related to gender and women's international creative pursuits lack a cohesive theoretical framework, indicating the need for structured methodologies to assess experiences related to women's creative endeavors (Akter & Rahman, 2022).

A systematic literature review (SLR) discusses female entrepreneurial digital leadership, combining interdisciplinary evidence to produce a cohesive framework that enriches theoretical understanding and provides pragmatic strategic insights. How do female entrepreneurs face digital challenges while juggling dual roles as business leaders and homemakers? The literature on women's digital enterprises tends to be fragmented, revealing a lack of integrated theoretical frameworks that combine digital leadership with business needs and the household environment. The impact of institutional contexts and sociocultural values on digital leadership among women entrepreneurs has been under-explored, requiring comparative analysis across countries to distinguish the influence of various cultural paradigms (Alhajri & Aloud, 2023). Although SLR provides a robust framework for explaining digital leadership among female entrepreneurs, it is important to consider the broader consequences of digital leadership in various organizational contexts.

B. Methods

Research Design and Framework Review

The research method used in this study is a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to identify, organize, and synthesize empirical studies about the impact of digital leadership on the empowerment and commercial success of women entrepreneurs, especially mompreneurs, within the digital economy landscape. This framework was chosen because it works well with qualitative synthesis and mixed-method approaches, while also offering greater flexibility in capturing diverse concepts related to digital leadership and women's empowerment. The research conducted through the SPIDER framework is framed as follows: "How does digital leadership facilitate the success and personal autonomy of women entrepreneurs, particularly mompreneurs, in the digital economy?" This investigation summarizes three key constructs from the review related to digital leadership, empowerment, and the success of innovative efforts, allowing for the integration of various methodological approaches documented in the literature.

Database Search and Selection Strategy

The search strategy was carefully designed to identify empirical studies that had undergone peer review, discussing the relationship between digital leadership, female entrepreneurship, empowerment, and business performance. The research was conducted using the Dimension database, due to its broad coverage of high-quality journals in the fields of management, leadership, entrepreneurship, digital technology, and gender studies. The search query was developed through a process of iterative refinement, combining keywords that represent the main structure of the research. Boolean operators and synonyms were used to broaden the scope of the search and ensure diversity of structure across different studies and research contexts. The final search query executed in Dimension, Scopus and Google Scholar was: ("digital leadership" OR "e-leadership" OR "digital transformation leadership" OR "technology leadership") AND ("women entrepreneur" OR "female entrepreneur" OR "mompreneur*" OR "women-

led business*" OR "women-owned enterprise*") AND ("empowerment" OR "innovation" OR "performance" OR "business success" OR "entrepreneurial growth" OR "digital transformation"). This search yielded 1351 documents, which were then filtered using filters for publication year (2020–2025), document type (article), English language, and open access, resulting in 107 documents eligible for the initial screening phase.

Study Selection Procedures

The study selection process was conducted in two stages: an initial review of titles and abstracts, followed by a comprehensive evaluation of the full text. Both stages were based on predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria, designed in accordance with the SPIDER framework and in line with the focus of the review. Studies were considered eligible for inclusion if they evaluated women entrepreneurs or female-led companies; assessed digital leadership, digital competence, or leadership in the context of digital transformation; measured aspects of empowerment, innovation, performance, or outcomes; used empirical research designs; and were published in peer-reviewed journals. Conversely, studies were excluded if they were conceptual papers, non-empirical articles, publications in languages other than English, research that focused solely on general leadership without digital elements, or studies on small and medium-sized enterprises that were not related to women or digital transformation. The title and abstract selection stage reduced the initial number from 107 to 32 articles. A subsequent full-text evaluation was conducted on accessible publications, resulting in the identification of 21 studies that met the inclusion criteria and were included in the final analysis. This multi-stage selection methodology ensured that only empirically robust and conceptually relevant publications were considered in the synthesis.

Quality Recognition

To ensure methodological accuracy and reduce bias in the evidence base, all studies included in this analysis underwent systematic quality assessment using the Joanna Briggs Institute's Critical Appraisal Tool (JBI). This assessment instrument was chosen because it provides a specific assessment checklist applicable to various types of study designs, including qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research, which is consistent with the diversity of methodologies found in the included studies. Two independent external evaluators assessed each study, and any differences of opinion were resolved through discussion until consensus was reached. The evaluation emphasized transparency in research design, the absence of sampling procedures, the validity and reliability of the measurement instruments used, the clarity of the data analysis process, and the alignment of findings with the stated research objectives. All 21 studies achieved acceptable scores on methodological parameters, indicating that the resulting synthesis is supported by a sufficiently robust evidence base.

Data Extraction Process

A systematic data extraction protocol was developed to ensure consistency and accuracy across all studies included in this review. The extraction process included recording bibliographic information, methodological characteristics, research context, and findings relevant to the investigation. The main elements collected include the first author's name and year of publication, study design, geographical context, sample population, digital leadership conditions studied, outcome variables, main findings, and limitations found. Two additional dimensions were included to enhance comparative analysis, namely the theoretical framework used and the measurement instruments. All data obtained were

grouped in a comprehensive extraction matrix, which served as the basis for further analysis. This approach facilitated the collection and comparison of studies across different methodological traditions and contexts.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

The synthesis methodology uses an integrative narrative framework that allows for the combination of qualitative insights, quantitative results, and conceptual frameworks. Studies are systematically compared and analyzed in relation to the main research questions: digital leadership, empowerment, and business success. By analyzing the definitions and operationalization of digital leadership, the manifestations of empowerment in companies led by women, and the criteria for determining business success, patterns, similarities, and differences among the studies reviewed are described. The integration was based on thematic dimensions that emerged from the data, such as methodological trends in the literature, conceptualization of digital leadership, contextual and demographic characteristics of women entrepreneurs, mechanisms of the relationship between digital leadership and empowerment, and the impact of digital leadership on business performance. This thematic integration facilitates a comprehensive and coherent understanding of the relevant knowledge landscape, while identifying research gaps and directions for further research.

Ensuring Transparency, Replicability, and Accuracy

During the review process, specific measures were implemented to ensure that the methodology was transparent, replicable, and adhered to best practices based on systematic reviews. All determinations related to keywords, screening methodology, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and quality assessment were made in accordance with a predetermined protocol. Extensive participation of validators in the quality assessment process reduces the potential for researcher bias. The application of a combination of the SPIDER framework, JBI evaluation instruments, and structured extraction methodology strengthens the methodological integrity of the review and enhances the validity of the synthesized findings.

Results and Discussion

Studi Selection

Based on a search of the Dimensions, Google scholar, and Scopus database, 1351 articles were found. No duplicate records were removed. Articles were then filtered, resulting in 107 articles, of which 97 remained. The titles and abstracts of the 97 articles were read, and 65 articles were discarded, leaving 32 articles. Of the 32 articles downloaded, 11 failed, leaving 21 articles. The 21 articles were submitted to the validator and all met the quality requirements, and all 21 articles were retained. (Fig 1)

General characteristics of the studies included

A total of 21 articles were included, published between 2020 and 2025, with 21 articles conducted in several countries, namely: Turkey 2 (Sagbas. et.al, 2023; Muller et al., 2024), South Africa 2 (Maziriri et.al., 2023; Shava & Tigere., 2025), Malaysia 2 (Abdullah et al, 2025; Hisni, 2025), Indonesia 5 (Wulandari & Nadzriah., 2025; Religia et al., 2025; Widiasih & Gede S.D., 2021; Zahwa, 2025; Aisyah & Fivi., 2023), Pakistan 1 (Jan, et.al, 2025), India 1 (Biju & Thomas., 2025), Saudi Arabia 2 (Alsayegh M.F., 2024; Yousaf et al., 2022;), China 1 (Meier, Robert & Mike., 2025) Italy 1 (Audretsch et al 2024), Kenya 1

(Kamuri.S., 2021), South Korea 1 (Bae.B & Sunyong C 2021), Netherlands 1 (Ongena et al., 2024) and Germany 1 (Murmamn et al., 2023).

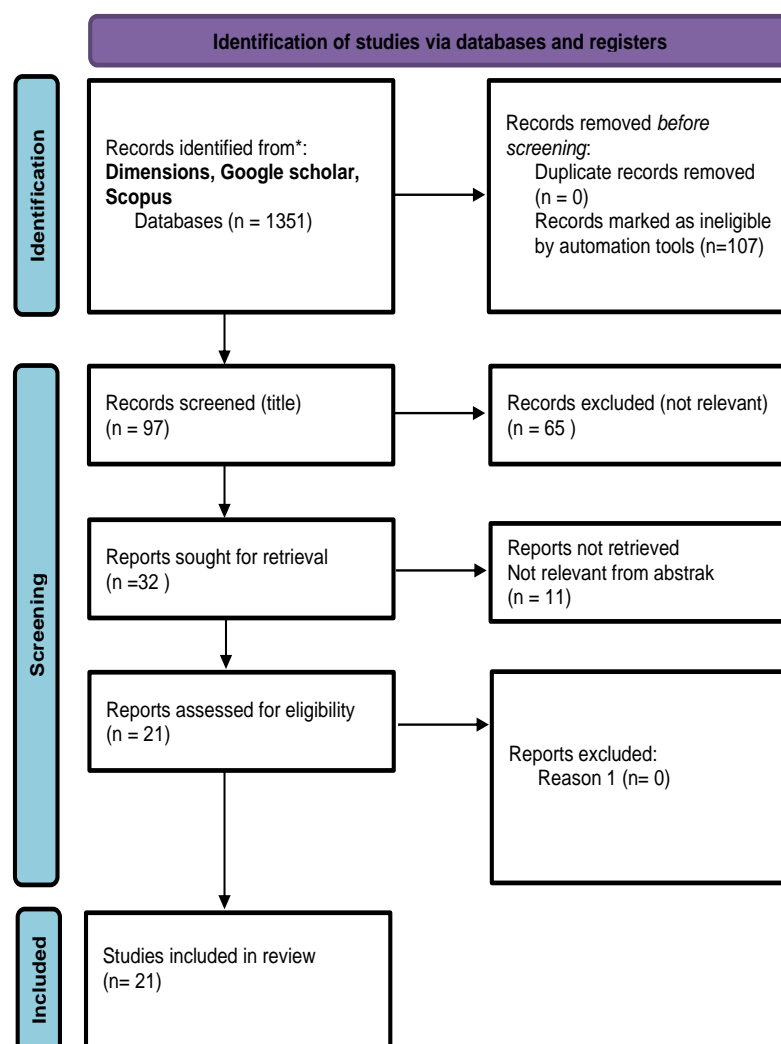


Figure.1. PRISMA Flow- Chart of study selection

Tabel 1. Characteristic of the studies include

No	Authors/ Years	Location	Design/ Method	Key Findings
1	Sagbas. et.al, 2023	Turki	Quantitative	Digital leadership and innovative behavior have a significant influence on innovative behavior.
2	Maziriri et.al 2023	South Africa	Quantitative	The ability to innovate, entrepreneurial education, and a proactive personality are key factors in mompreneur success. Education and adaptability can also improve performance.

No	Authors/ Years	Location	Design/ Method	Key Findings
3	Abdullah et al 2025	Malaysia	Quantitative	Women's entrepreneurial leadership in the digital economy era is no longer separate from digital capacity and leadership development will be less effective if it is not integrated with contextual and sustainable digital competency training.
4	Jan, et.al 2025	Pakistan	Quantitative	Entrepreneurial attitudes, perceived behavior, and subjective norms have a positive and significant influence on business sustainability performance in women-owned businesses.
5	Wulandari & Nadzriah 2025	Indonesia	Legal Research/ Qomparative	Women still face challenges such as gender bias, limited access to technology, and work-family imbalance.
6	Shava & Tigere/2 025	Afrika selatan	Qualitative Studi	Women still face challenges such as gender bias, limited access to technology, and work-family imbalance.
7	Biju & Thomas/2 025	India	Quantitative	Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy has a positive influence on sustainable performance
8	Alsayegh M.F/2024	Saudi Arabia	Quantitative	Entrepreneurial financial literacy has a positive and significant influence on digital leadership. Digital leadership has a positive relationship with business financial sustainability.
9	Religia et al/2025	Indonesia	Quantitative	Digital MSME leadership has a direct and significant impact on CRM implementation.
10	Meier, Rob ert, Mike/2025	China	Qualitative Study	Digital competitiveness is seen as the result of interactions between internal resources, market position, and cooperation.
11	Hisni, et al 2025	Malaysia	Quantitative	Digital leadership and resilience can enhance the success of women-owned micro-enterprises.
12	Widiasih & Gede S.D/2021	Indonesia	Quantitative	Innovation and sustainability performance fully mediate the relationship between CSS and sales performance.
13	Zahwa, et al 2025	Indonesia	Quantitative	Digital literacy and corporate resources have a significant positive influence on business performance, with digital innovation playing a key mediating role among members of the Indonesian Women

No	Authors/ Years	Location	Design/ Method	Key Findings
				Entrepreneurs Association (IWAPI) in West Java.
14	Audretsch et al 2024	Italia	Longitudinal Quantitative	Strategic adaptation through smart working, e-commerce, and home delivery increases the chances of survival for micro and small businesses more than medium-sized companies.
15	Yousaf et al 2022	Arab	Quantitative	Innovative performance moderates the relationship between digital crowdfunding platforms and crowdfunding performance.
16	Kamuri.S 2021	Kenya	Mixed Methods	innovative performance strengthens the relationship between digital platforms and crowdfunding performance
17	Muller et al 2024	Turki	Quantitative	Learning, business model innovation, and learning orientation have a positive effect on business model innovation, while technology acquisition has a positive effect on market expansion.
18	Bae.B & Sunyong C 2021	Korea selatan	Quantitative	CVF identifies two dimensions that distinguish organizations: Flexibility vs. Stability and Internal Focus vs. External Focus.
19	Ongena et al 2024	Netherlands	Qualitative Study	ITC (infrastructure, business spanning, proactive stance) is positively associated with organizational digital transformation.
20	Aisyah & Fivi 2023	Indonesia	Quantitative	All direct and indirect effects are significant and positive. Self-efficacy and self-esteem have a strong influence on performance.
21	Murmann et al 2023	Jerman	Quantitative Asosiatif	Innovation orientation moderates the relationship: the positive relationship between age and “new-to-market” innovation is only strong for founders with a median-to-high innovation orientation.

Research Themes and General Direction

The extraction results show that analyses of digital leadership, digital transformation, and female entrepreneurship have fairly consistent thematic patterns, namely the relationship between digital leadership and innovation, the intention to utilize technology, and business performance. These studies highlight the ways in which female leaders integrate technology to improve competitiveness and business effectiveness in various MSME fields. Overall, the literature indicates that digital transformation drives shifts in business behavior and creates new opportunities for women entrepreneurs. However, research focused on mompreneurs is still very limited and generally only implied in the context of

women-led SMEs as a whole, creating opportunities for new research on the unique dynamics of women who combine household and business responsibilities.

Methodological Approach

Definition and Dimensions of Digital Leadership Digital leadership in the extracted article is understood as the ability to use technology to guide organizations toward innovation, efficiency, and digital transformation. This definition includes a combination of technological competence, strategic ability, and the ability to motivate others to adopt technology. Dimensions that often emerge include adaptability skills, digital literacy, innovation orientation, the ability to recognize digital opportunities, and technology-supported communication. In the context of women entrepreneurs, digital leadership is also related to the skills of integrating technology into operations and marketing and supporting individual empowerment.

Background and Characteristics of Mompreneurs

The characteristics of mompreneurs in the literature describe women who run businesses while performing household roles, requiring a high degree of flexibility and adaptability in the digital world. They typically use digital platforms for marketing, communicating with customers, and managing business finances. Research shows that mompreneurs rely heavily on community networks, informal learning, and social support to improve their digital skills. However, barriers such as limited access to technology, variations in digital literacy, and dual roles are factors that influence their digital adoption patterns.

The Link Between Digital Leadership and Empowerment

Digital leadership supports women's empowerment by improving digital capabilities, boosting confidence, and developing skills in technology-based decision making. Empowerment is achieved through self-efficacy, innovation, digital readiness, and independence in running a business. In many studies, empowerment has been identified as a crucial pathway linking digital leadership to business outcomes. When women leaders are able to leverage technology, they gain greater control over their businesses and feel more confident in navigating the digital marketplace.

The Impact of Digital Leadership on Business Success

Findings from the extraction show that digital leadership improves business performance through innovation, operational efficiency, strengthening digital marketing, and data-driven decisions. These impacts are reflected in increased sales, improved customer loyalty, and expansion of the digital market. Digital leadership also improves business continuity through increased adaptability and knowledge.

This synthesis explains that digital leadership consistently strengthens the empowerment of women entrepreneurs and improves business performance through mechanisms of innovation, digital capability enhancement, and adaptive decision-making. These findings show that digital leadership is not merely a technological capability, but also acts as a strategic and psychological driver in companies led by women, especially for mompreneurs who juggle two roles at once.

Unlike previous studies that were separate, this review reveals a more in-depth integrative pattern in linking digital leadership, empowerment, and entrepreneurial outcomes, which has not been comprehensively explained in the current literature. The results of this systematic review expand on previous theoretical claims by showing that

empowerment functions as a mediator or enhancer of the impact of digital leadership more consistently than previously recognized. This review emphasizes the importance of capacity-building programs that develop digital literacy and digital leadership skills, specifically designed according to the limitations and needs of mompreneurs.

These findings also recommend that policymakers, incubators, and community organizations create a digital support ecosystem, including training, mentors, and access to infrastructure, to strengthen women's strategic use of technology. The inconsistency of concepts found in relation to digital leadership indicates the need for a clearer theoretical model that reflects the multidimensional nature of women-led businesses. The existence of powerful but untested mechanisms, such as the role of empowerment, social support, and interactions within the household, points to important avenues for improving existing entrepreneurship frameworks.

Future research needs to employ longitudinal and experimental designs to examine how digital leadership develops over time and how it causally influences empowerment and performance outcomes. Studies should also pay special attention to mompreneurs as a unique group with a different context of pressures, enabling the creation of more accurate models that combine household responsibilities, digital capabilities, and entrepreneurial identity.

C. Conclusions

Research shows that mompreneurs rely heavily on community networks, informal learning, and social support to improve their digital skills. However, barriers such as limited access to technology, variations in digital literacy, and dual roles are factors that influence their digital adoption patterns. Digital leadership supports women's empowerment by improving digital capabilities, increasing confidence, and skills in making technology-based decisions. Empowerment is realized through self-efficacy, innovation, digital readiness, and independence in running a business. Empowerment is a crucial pathway that links digital leadership to business outcomes. When women leaders are able to leverage technology, they gain greater control over their businesses and feel more confident in facing changes in the digital marketplace.

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