

A Systematic Review on the Impact of Gender Equity on Educational Leadership

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ABSTRACT

People have often discussed about whether men or women are better leaders. This ongoing discussion has led to debates and theories about male and female leadership. It shows that many are still curious about how being male or female might affect someone's leadership style. In educational institution, leaders deal with a lot of changes in a constantly changing and competitive environment. This study reviews the effects of gender equity on educational leadership, which focuses specifically on how it influences leaders regardless of gender. After conscientious evaluation guided by the review protocols, 12 were finally selected from the initial 436 articles. The findings indicate that gender equity fosters a variety of perspectives and strengths in both male and female leaders, enriching decision-making processes and promoting innovation. Moreover, it helps in reducing biases and creating a more inclusive environment, benefiting individuals of all genders. The review emphasizes the significance of promoting gender diversity in leadership positions for the overall improvement of educational management. Further, it is recommended for extensive research not limited to identifying the common challenges and experiences faced by leaders in both genders. Hence, this review puts emphasize on the essence and significance of gender equity to the leaders in every educational institution that will result for a more creative and inclusive learning environment to achieve its common organization objective.

Keywords: Gender equity, Higher educational leadership, Impacts of leadership of Men and Women, Educational management

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, there has been a widespread discussion and debate between men and women as leaders. This discussion encompasses various claims, theories, and speculative ideas about the distinction approaches to leadership that are often attributed to each gender (Abonyi, Boateng, Adjei-Boateng, & Ansaah, 2022). It implies that there is ongoing interest and analysis in understanding how gender may influence leadership behaviour and styles (Saint-Michel, 2018). Educational leaders encounter a variety of obstacles in an ever more competitive and dynamic setting. Despite women being the majority in the workforce, men largely hold the top managerial positions (Kairys, 2018). Most leadership positions in education and elsewhere are held by men. The notion of leadership is heavily influenced by gender. Across various culture settings, leadership remains associated predominantly with males (Catalyst, 2023). Despite women holding leadership roles and responsibilities, there persists a tendency to view the ideal leader as male (Saint-Michel, 2018).

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics' research, women made up a larger percentage of public-school teachers and principals in 2017–2018 than they did in 1987–1988—a 30-year difference in representation. Data from the 1987–1988 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) showed that women made up 71% of all public-school teachers. The National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) statistics from 2017–2018 indicated that the rate had risen to 77%. During that time, the proportion of female public-school principals more than doubled, rising from 25% in 1987–1988 to 54% in 2017–2018. Women have always made up

more than half of the teaching workforce, even in spite of legislative changes and increased employment options. Based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nearly in all occupations, women are paid less than men. The gap for public elementary and secondary teachers' compensation is smaller than the average.

Studies show different conclusions. Some support that there are differences in the leadership style between men and women and some do not support the said idea. Despite that, men and women have different types of leadership, it concluded that there were only small differences in leadership styles (Tarbutton 2019), they stress that female leaders in organizational settings tend to be more democratic and participative than men, who tend to lean more towards autocratic behavior. In the study it states that male is more likely to be transactional leaders while women are transformational leaders (Tabutton, 2019). Further, affirmed by the meta-analysis (Gao, Wang, & Liu, 2024) it shows the difference in the self-perception of male and female leaders.

Furthermore, in most of the male-dominated establishments, women adopted the type of style men are doing to demonstrate that women are capable and versatile and a more stereotypical masculine style of leadership than males. Further, the study found few to no differences in gender styles of leadership (Babiak & Bajar, 2019).

This review aims to revalidate the similarities and differences of impacts of gender as one of the determinants of education leadership. The findings will give enlightenment on the gaps, similarities and differences of leadership styles when gender is being focused. More so, it will give deeper understanding to synchronize the contracting ideas on the gender of educational leadership.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Leadership has been a fundamental aspect of human civilization since ancient times (Toma, Sorin-George & Catană, Ștefan & Gradinaru, Catalin, 2020). The Oxford English Dictionary defines a leader as someone who guides a group with a country or an organization (OUP, 2021). In an educational view, a leader motivates individuals toward specific objectives (Koçel, 2015:668) Adapting leadership styles is essential to effectively navigate challenging circumstances (Salihu, 2019). Managing school involves struggling with numbers of internal and external factors, including fostering teacher collaboration, cultivating a cooperative school environment, navigating financial challenges, and adapting to evolving situations (Kairys, 2018). The author conceptualizes leadership as the capacity to tackle problems, inspire, and empower others toward achieving organizational objectives (Peleg, 2017). Leadership styles and behaviors are shaped by situational forces and group dynamics (Priyashantha Win., 2022). Groups are directly impacted by leadership, which uses group cohesion and mobilizes diverse resources to satisfy followers' needs (Guney, 2013). It guides goal-oriented activities and fosters collective determination toward objectives. This is supported by research emphasizing the direct impact of leadership on group activities (Steinmann, Klug, & Maier, 2018).

The study and practice of leadership have expanded significantly in the past century, garnering widespread attention from scholars and professionals globally (Bush, 2007). Holding a leadership role equates to effective leadership. Leading effectively involves fostering connection, motivation, and instilling a sense of collective ownership over common goals (Valcour, 2020). Gender is just one of the ways in which individuals can be marginalized in accessing and exercising leadership but its influence and impact is prevalent both through time and across national borders (Catalyst, 2023). In particular women leaders may be seen as outsiders, as leadership is unconsciously identified with men (Schein, 2021). Gender plays an important part in shaping leadership styles and behaviors (Lee, 2023). Cultural norms and societal expectations often influence the leadership opportunities available to individuals based on their gender (Li, Jacob-Brassard, Dossa, Salata, Kishibe,

Greco, Baxter, & Al-Omran, 2021). Moreover, studies indicate that gender stereotypes can impact the perception and evaluation of leadership effectiveness.

Gendered Educational Leadership

In societal norms, women are reprimanded to participate to the social life, with rules predominantly crafted by and for men. For example, in twentieth century in most of countries, women were not allowed to practice of their right to vote. Women vote was not authorized until 1937 in the Philippines, 1944 in France, 1971 in Switzerland, 1974 in Portugal. Historically in Saudi Arabia, women were not allowed to participate in political processes, including voting and running for office, until 2015. In a male-designed society, it is not easy for women to find their own place. In this time, the world does not belong to men alone because women's implication in institutions, companies and governments reaches its climax.

Gender disparities in educational leadership have been extensively researched in numerous years (Nabi, 2019). The prevailing notion supported by research is that males are often perceived as more competent than females in work-related contexts. This perception was widespread among workers, leading to a preference for male supervisors who were believed to possess desirable managerial traits such as emotional stability and analytical skills (Griffiths, Roberts, & Price, 2018). Conversely, while superiors tended to value 'masculine' traits in leaders, subordinates often valued 'feminine' traits more highly (Krantz, 1998). Others claimed that female leaders prioritize fostering positive relationships with colleagues and followers, encouraging participation, power-sharing, and enhancing others' self-worth (Rosener, 1990).

In the past, the widely accepted belief that men are more dominant in educational management and leadership, as stated by Bush (2015) who suggests that "management is a male pursuit," male-dominated leadership positions but despite this, we've witnessed a steady rise in women making their mark in upper management positions (Kairys, 2018). It greatly affected women who aim for high-level managerial positions, the scarcity of women in higher leadership positions persists, both in the United States and internationally (Galsanjigmed, & Sekiguchi, 2023). Nowadays, there is a noticeable increase in gender diversity, with more women gaining traction in these roles. However, despite a recent doubling in the number of women in superintendence (Nabi, 2019), the representation of women remains disproportionately low, especially in countries where school leadership is still seen as masculine. This study specifically focuses on the role of women in educational leadership, examining the perspectives of female principals in upper secondary schools in Greece and Sweden. Social perceptions have significantly contributed to gender issues in leadership, with female leaders often perceived more negatively than male leaders (Larsson, Molnar, Ljungberg, & Björklund, 2022).

As women strive to break through barriers, it is important to continue researching gender differences in leadership styles. It emphasized that success is not limited to the traditional command-and-control style associated with males (Asbill & Gonzalez, 2017). However, gender stereotypes still influence perceptions of leadership effectiveness (Stelter, 2019). Female leaders have often felt pressured to emulate successful male leadership behaviors, leading to a need for women to balance 'feminine' and 'masculine' traits (Lee, 2023). Cognition of the unique skills and attitudes that women bring to leadership roles, including participative leadership and collaborative group management (Stelter, 2019).

Interestingly argues that it is important not just to acknowledge the existing gender-based disparities in leadership styles but also to appreciate and validate them (Coleman 2011). Furthermore, Coleman (2011) suggests that women's unique approach to leadership is often viewed as problematic, undervalued, and pressured to conform to male-oriented patterns, particularly in non-Western societies with patriarchal values and lacking democratic frameworks. Thus, there's a call for alignment between national and organizational cultures

since the former significantly influences the latter, shaping the prevailing and accepted leadership styles within each organization (Qureshi, Zaman & Bhatti, 2011). It is important for organizations to consider gender issues in leadership as an essential aspect of promoting fairness and organizational effectiveness (Henderson, 2017; Stelter, 2019). Finally, comprehending and aiding gender inequality in leadership will contribute a lot to the success organizations that promotes gender inclusivity.

Impacts of Leadership of Men and Women

There are studies resulted that regardless of gender, both can perform effectively as a leader in different way with a common goal. Various research has studied discrepancies in leadership styles and effectiveness between men and women, revealing that there are more parallels than distinctions on how male and female leaders perform (Sheng, Andrews, & Van Vugt, 2024). According to the study of Appelbaum, D'Antico, and Daoussis (2019), "Women often employ a participative and democratic leadership style, whereas men may prefer a more directive approach. Men and the concept of masculinity have heavily influenced the concept of leadership. As a result, the qualities traditionally associated with effective leadership, often aligned with masculinity, became the basis against which women's leadership capabilities were measured". These studies connote that traditional notions of masculinity have heavily influenced perceptions of effective leadership and it creates barriers for women in accessing leadership roles in different workplaces. Scholars argue that masculine traits are typically associated with leadership effectiveness which may disadvantage women in leadership (Lari, Al-Ansari, & Elmaghraby, 2022). Nonetheless, conflicting viewpoints exist. For example, some scholars contend that gender-specific characteristics are not a prerequisite for effective leadership (Engen, 2019). The connection between gender and other social variables that affect people's ability to negotiate leadership responsibilities, such as ethnicity and socioeconomic background (Bell & Nkomo, 2020).

The study aims to conduct a systematic review on the impact of gender equity on educational leadership. The authors extensively reviewed relevant literatures from various online academic databases concerning the conflicting ideas of gender equity and educational leadership. Subsequently, the authors synthesized the findings from the selected studies and discussed them within the theoretical view of educational leadership. Through this systematic review, the study seeks to address two primary research questions:

- 1) What are the Impacts of Gender Equity on Educational Leadership?
- 2) How do these impacts affect the quality of service provided by a leader?

RESEARCH METHODS

Protocol and Registration

The systematic review was carried out using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) (Liberati et al., 2009). It adhered to the identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion phases of the review procedure. A review methodology was created prior to the search being carried out. It offered options for databases, search phrases, and screening standards. This review looked for publications using a number of databases, including Google Scholar, Science Direct, ProQuest, and Taylor & Francis. These databases were selected via a two-round process. These databases were first only accessible online. Second, the goal was to extend the review process's reach to as many papers that are exclusively published in the aforementioned databases as possible.

Criteria

Included in the review methodology, we selected the publications based on a set of criteria. These standards served as a guide for the review to guarantee that the study's goals were met. The inclusion criteria that we adhered to were as follows: (1) articles that focus on gender equity; (2) articles that focus on leadership and management in higher education; and (3) articles that discuss the effects of leadership on both men and women. Numbers of articles were written in connection to the review criteria, but this review only pointed on articles that were published around 6 years prior to the review were considered.

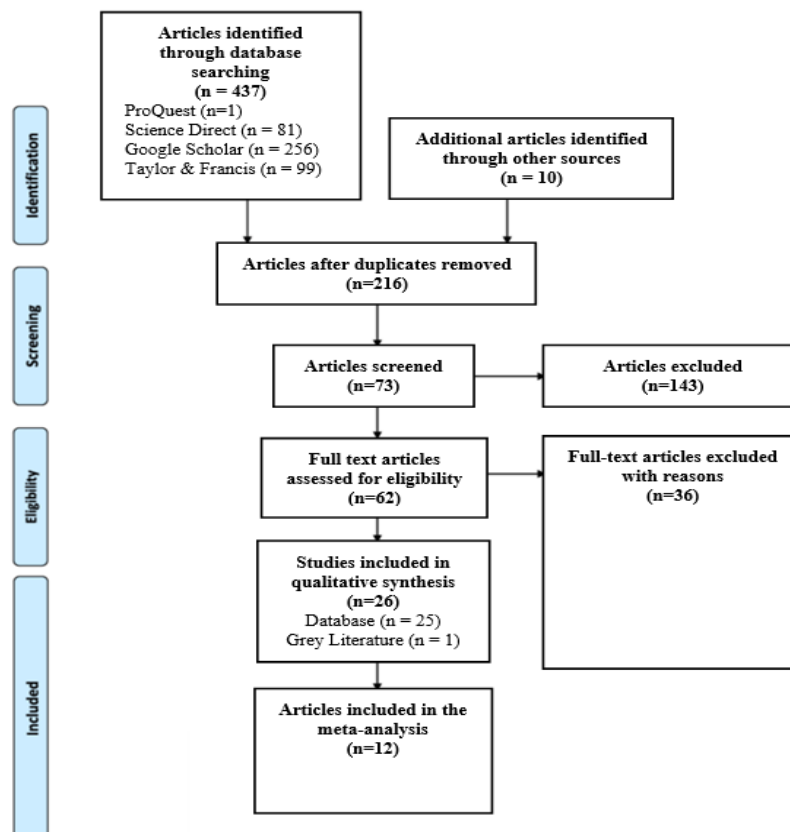


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram on Screening of Articles on the Review

Database Information Source

The following database information sources were considered in searching for the relevant article for the review: Google Scholar, Science Direct and Taylor & Francis with search phrase “Gender Equity in Leadership”, “Leadership and Management on Higher Education” and “Leadership Impacts of Men and Women”. These databases offered pertinent, abundant relevant resources for articles on gender parity, management and leadership, and the impacts of men and women on leadership, all of which are pertinent to the goals of this review.

Search

The extensive search using the terms “Gender Equity in Leadership”, “Leadership and Management on Higher Education” and “Leadership Impacts of Men and Women yielded 437 articles in Francis & Taylor, ProQuest, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. For the Google Scholar, the "advance search" option and specified the "in the title of the article" (Google Scholar) or "where the title contains" for the search terms were utilized. Similar technique of using advance search was used for Science Direct, ProQuest, and Francis and Taylor.

Article Selection

In selecting relevant article for this review, Figure 1 shows that there were 436 articles identified relevant to the given review which came from different databases. These articles were came from Science Direct (81), Google Scholar (256), ProQuest (1), and Taylor and Francis (99). There were also 10 article identified through other sources. Two hundred and sixteen articles were removed for duplication. The remaining 221 articles, 72 were screened, and 143 were excluded in the selection after evaluating the articles which does not discussed gender equity in leadership and management. Excluded article were not in line with the review objectives. The remaining articles resulting in 62 were considered for assessing its eligibility. On the other hand, 36 articles were removed due to irrelevant review objectives. Twenty-six articles were included in the qualitative synthesis where 25 of these are from databases and 1 from the grey literature and assess for final selection. The selection process only includes final numbers of 10 articles 10 that was used for the review.

Data Collection

The identified article was processed using Excel, which included the storing of the data. Duplications of articles published in two or more databases were treated as one, removing one entry. After this process, content analysis was conducted by carefully reading each article and considering the research focus, methods, and authors. As shown in the Table 1, a total of ten (10) articles were chosen for review, each of which was given special attention by the authors. The papers are then examined to come up at conclusions based on the research questions.

Table 1. Summary of the articles that were chosen

Title of the article	Author/s	Journal	Year published
Gender-based leadership in quality assurance development: A phenomenological study	Rohmatun Lukluk Isnaini Zainal Arifin Sri Rahmi Ahmad Syafii	Cogent Education Journal	2023
Investigating the Employee Acceptance towards Women Leadership in Public Sector	Hafizan Hamzah Azizan Zainuddin Nur Badrina Mohd Barakbah	International Journal of Academic Research in Accounting, Finance and Management Sciences	2023
Factors Affecting Trust in Female and Male School Leaders	Kenan Özcan Aydin Balyer, Fikret Firat	International Journal of Educational Leadership and Management	2022
Promoting gender equity in school leadership appointments: A comparison of male and female headteachers' instructional leadership practices in Ghana	Usman Kojo Abonyi FredKofiBoateng Emmanuel Adjei-Boateng Ellen Ansaah	Sage Journals	2022
The Intersectionality of Race and Gender on African American Women in Higher Education Leadership Roles in Two Southern States: Louisiana and Mississippi	Arlanda J. Williams	ProQuest Dissertations Publishing	2022
Indication of Gender Parity in the Indonesian Higher Education Institution: A Literature Study	Ribeh Najib Muhammad Nurul Hasanah Fajaria Arini Nurul Hidayati	European Union Digital Library	2022

The Glass Ceiling: Exploring the Leadership Journey of Men and Women in High-Tech	Shelia Faye Krueger	Digital University of San Diego Libraries	2020
Explaining the gender gap in school principalship: A tale of two sides	Miryam Martínez Martínez Manuel M Molina-López Ruth Mateos de Cabo	Sage Journals	2020
Leadership Perceptions Based on Gender, Experience, and Education	Taylan Budur Ahmet Demir	International Journal of Social Sciences and Educational Studies	2019
Leader gender stereotypes and transformational leadership: Does leader sex make the difference?	Sarah E. Saint-Michel	CAIRN International	2019
The Influence of Gender on Leadership in Education Management	Moira Rose Kairys	International Journal of Educational Management	2018
Gender leadership and inequality study on higher education in Indonesia	RR. Iswachyu Dhaniarti, M.H. Dr. Dani Harmanto	IEOM Society International Journal	2018

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis using the PRISMA model to conduct a systematic review, and as the result by the articles examined, there are many are many aspects or impacts on the quality of services provided by male and female leaders within educational institutions.

Impacts of Gender Equity on Educational Leadership

The systematic review of articles gathered conclude that gender equity in educational leadership contributes to organization significantly by giving effective performances. The study shows and highlighted the positive correlation between gender-equitable leadership practices and various dimensions of leadership effectiveness (Lukluk, Arifin, Rahmi, & Syafii, 2023). It includes decision-making, communication, and team collaboration (Radwan, Razak, & Ghavifekr, 2020). According to the result in the literature study, the impact of gender inequality on the leadership, decision- making is recognized as a key point skill needed to the effectivity of the leadership, and the study aims to provide the insights into the gender disparities in leadership roles (Muhammad, Fajaria, & Hidayati, 2022). It is not by the evaluation of leaders' virtues, indicating that both male and female leaders are perceived similarly in terms of morale, knowledge, and attitude.

Research findings suggest that it is more effective if gender is a diverse because it will show and suggest different ideas and better equipped to address complex challenges and capitalize on diverse perspective, ultimately leading to more unique, innovative and more effective solutions (Kairys, 2018). Furthermore, the study of gender-equity leadership and management create a culture of inclusion and belonging, where all the members in educational sector or community feel respected, valued, and empowered to contribute their distinct talents, skills, and insights.

Additional result, gender-equitable leadership has an implication for teachers and staff the outcomes and work satisfaction. Studies implies that gender-diverse leadership teams tend to deliver higher levels of employee engagement, academic performance, and school climate satisfaction (Özcan, Balyer, & Firat, 2022). This suggests that gender-equitable leadership practices positively influence the learning environment and student experiences, leading to improved educational outcomes for all the learners.

Effectivity on the Quality of Services Provided by a Leader

The articles discussed and examined and provide insights about gender equity in educational leadership influences the quality of service provided by the leaders. Gender-equitable leaders are more passionate and more likely to prioritize the interests and the needs of diverse people in the academe, including the students, teachers, parents, and community members. Through adopting inclusive decision-making processes and advocating collaborative technique to leadership (Williams, 2022). It also creates opportunities for open and good participation and engagement among all stakeholders in an institution. The results in the developments of programs, policies, and initiatives that address the unique needs and challenges of the educational community, that will lead to greater opportunity of satisfaction and trust in leadership.

Furthermore, this kind of leaders demonstrate a great commitment to professional growth and development among staff members. The study suggests that both genders show a good transformational leadership qualities like coaching, mentoring, counseling which really contribute to the professional betterment and job satisfaction of teachers and staff (Saint-Michael, 2019). Promoting a supportive and inclusive work environment, gender-equitable leaders enhance motivation, retention rate, morale among educators, most importantly benefiting the entire educational community.

CONCLUSION

This systematic review emphasizes the importance and significant impact of gender equity on educational leadership and its implications for the quality of service provided by the leaders in the educational sector (Martínez, 2020). It promotes diversity, inclusivity, and collaboration. Through accepting gender equity in leadership roles, it can use effectively the diverse perspectives and experience of their leaders to solve complex challenges, improve students and teachers' outcomes, and enhance the entire performance (Lukluk, Arifin, Rahmi, & Syafii, 2023).

The analysis of all research articles revealed a strong correlation between gender-equitable leadership and good educational outcomes. It is concluded that schools with different or diverse leadership teams benefit from a bigger range of ideas, promoting unique innovation and unique solutions for difficult challenges (Williams, 2022). Furthermore, gender equity creates a culture of inclusion where everyone is valued and able to contribute for common good. The research supports the positive influence of gender equity in educational leadership. Leaders that prioritize diversity can create a more supportive and inclusive atmosphere for all.

However, while our review highlights the impact of gender equity on educational leadership, there are somehow areas that still need more. We need longer studies to see how these practices affects the schools over time. Future research could also look at how gender interacts with other factors like income, ethnicity, and race. Furthermore, we need more studies that show exactly how gender-equitable leadership makes a difference, including mentorship or proper training. By filling in these gaps, we can better understand how to create inclusive and effective in educational institution.

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