ISSN –30268656

PERCEPTIONS OF GENDER INFLUENCE ON FEMALE PRINCIPALS' LEADERSHIP EFFECTIVENESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION-MAKING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MUBI EDUCATION ZONE, ADAMAWA STATE, NIGERIA

[1] **Kwaji Tizhe Takwate**
Department of Arts and Social Sciences Education, Adamawa State University, Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria

[2] **Murtala U. Babayi**
Department of Science Education, Adamawa State University, Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria

[3*] **Dedan K. Nehemiah**
(dedannehemiah4@gmail.com | Phone: 08038095631)
Department of Science Education, Adamawa State University, Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria

Abstract

This study examined perceptions of gender influence on the leadership effectiveness and administrative decision-making of female secondary school principals in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study investigated the extent to which gender-related perceptions affect female principals' leadership effectiveness and how societal perceptions influence their administrative decision-making. Anchored on feminist theory, the study adopted a correlational research design. From a population of 1,390 principals, vice principals, and senior teachers, 176 respondents were selected from Mubi North, Mubi South, and Michika Local Government Areas using a multistage sampling technique. Data were collected using a validated researcher-designed instrument, the Influence of Gender Difference on Principals' Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (IGDPAEQ), with a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.86. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while independent samples t-test was used to test the hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that gender-related perceptions affect female principals' leadership effectiveness to a great extent (Grand Mean = 2.75), while societal perceptions strongly influence their administrative decisions (Grand Mean = 2.94). No significant difference existed between male and female respondents' opinions on leadership effectiveness (t = -1.80, p = 0.07) or between administrators and teachers regarding societal perceptions and administrative decisions (t = -0.82, p = 0.42). The study concludes that gender-related perceptions constrain female principals' leadership effectiveness and decision-making autonomy. It recommends stronger enforcement of anti-discrimination policies, gender-sensitivity training, and community awareness programmes.

Keywords: Gender Perceptions, Leadership Effectiveness, Administrative Decision-Making, Human Resource Management, Feminism

Introduction

Human resources in school administration and management are constituted of men and women who function either as actors or recipients of leadership decisions (Nwachukwu & Okoli, 2022). For any education system to function harmoniously, adequate representation of both sexes in administrative structures is essential (Oplatka & Arar, 2018). Gender, understood as a social construct rather than a biological given, refers to the meanings, norms, and practices that regulate

relationships between men and women within a given society at a given time (Acker, 1990; Lorber, 1994; Jacobs & George, 2023). Gender difference in educational leadership constitutes a deeply entrenched problem both globally and within Nigeria, manifesting as assumptions, structures, and practices that privilege one gender over another in leadership roles and frequently marginalise women in decision-making positions within the education sector.

In Nigeria, a growing body of research and policy analysis has consistently documented the systematic underrepresentation of women in school leadership, particularly at the secondary school level. Despite constitutional guarantees and educational policies promoting gender equity, women continue to encounter significant obstacles in ascending to leadership positions (Aja-Okorie, 2019; UNICEF, 2021). This pattern mirrors a wider visibility deficit in the availability of female role models in African education (Morojele & Chikoko, 2023), despite transformative policy efforts elsewhere in the region aimed at closing the gap (Moorosi & Bhebe, 2023). This disparity reflects broader historical, socio-cultural, and institutional dynamics rather than a mere statistical anomaly. Deep-rooted patriarchal ideologies persist within educational systems, normalising male dominance in leadership while treating female leadership as an exception rather than the rule. UNICEF (2021) further observes that gender inequality in leadership is exacerbated by structural barriers such as limited access to training, mentorship, and career-advancement opportunities for female educators, all reinforced by stereotypical beliefs that equate leadership with masculinity. These structural barriers are significant not merely because they limit access to leadership positions, but because they shape how female principals' leadership effectiveness is perceived and evaluated once in office, which is the central concern of the present study.

In Mubi Education Zone of Adamawa State, male principals continue to dominate secondary-school administration despite the availability of competent and qualified female educators. Cultural and religious norms in northern Nigeria reinforce gendered socialisation that discourages girls from aspiring to leadership, teaching boys to be assertive and decision-oriented while encouraging girls toward nurturing and domestic roles (Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2022). Female principals in the zone routinely report that their policy recommendations are overridden or dismissed by male deputies and senior staff even when supported by empirical evidence, while comparable initiatives led by men attract praise (Ereh, Ekerete, & Albert, 2025; Anho, Okorugbo, Ojabunor, & Anho, 2022). Performance-appraisal tools that emphasise “decisiveness” and “command presence” traits culturally coded as masculine while discounting relational competencies such as consensus-building and mentorship, further disadvantage women in career progression (Beg, Fitzpatrick, & Lucas, 2021; Alonge, 2019).

It is against this backdrop that the present study examined how gender-related perceptions shape the leadership effectiveness and administrative decision-making of female secondary school principals in Mubi Education Zone, with particular attention to societal perceptions of women in leadership.

Statement of the Problem

ISSN –30268656

Despite Nigeria's National Gender Policy (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2021) and international commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals, which advocate gender equality and women's empowerment, gender-related perceptions remain deeply entrenched in the educational sector. In many secondary schools within Mubi Education Zone, administrative roles continue to be predominantly occupied by men, raising concerns about how the leadership effectiveness of the women who do attain such roles is perceived and evaluated. Female principals, in particular, may have their leadership effectiveness questioned, doubted, or discounted by staff, parents, and community members, not on the basis of demonstrated performance but on the basis of their gender. Where such gender-related perceptions persist unexamined, competent female educators may be prevented from contributing meaningfully to school management, and their capacity to lead effectively and exercise independent administrative decision-making may be constrained. It is this problem, namely, the extent to which gender-related perceptions affect the leadership effectiveness of female principals and shape how their administrative decisions are received, that the present study investigated.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine perceptions of gender influence on the leadership effectiveness and administrative decision-making of female principals in secondary schools in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State.

Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the mean rating of the extent to which gender-related perceptions affect the leadership effectiveness of female principals in secondary schools in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State; and
2. determine the mean rating of the extent to which societal perceptions influence the administrative decision-making of female principals in secondary schools in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the mean rating of respondents on the extent to which gender-related perceptions affect the leadership effectiveness of female principals in secondary schools in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State?
2. What is the mean rating of respondents on the extent to which societal perceptions influence the administrative decision-making of female principals in secondary schools in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

HO_1: There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of male and female respondents on how gender-related perceptions affect the leadership effectiveness of female principals in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State.

HO_2: There is no significant difference in the opinion of administrators and teachers on how societal perceptions influence the administrative decisions made by female principals in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State.

Literature Review

Gender differences are an important consideration in educational administration because they can shape experiences and interactions in areas such as leadership, authority, communication, and decision-making. Within educational institutions, socially constructed expectations regarding the roles and behaviours of men and women may influence perceptions of leadership competence, professional conduct, and administrative effectiveness. Gender difference, therefore, extends beyond biological distinctions to encompass the socially constructed roles, expectations, behaviours, and relationships associated with men and women (Acker, 1990; Lorber, 1994; Jacobs & George, 2023). These expectations may, in turn, influence how male and female administrators exercise authority, participate in decision-making, manage institutional challenges, and are perceived by teachers, students, colleagues, and other stakeholders.

Educational institutions are not gender-neutral spaces. Organisational structures, promotion practices, leadership expectations, and informal workplace relationships may reproduce wider societal inequalities. Women who occupy leadership positions may therefore encounter resistance because leadership is traditionally associated with masculine characteristics such as assertiveness, firmness, dominance, and decisiveness.

Eagly and Karau's (2002) role congruity theory, more recently reaffirmed by Triana et al. (2024), provides further insight into this phenomenon. The theory proposes that prejudice arises when the characteristics associated with women conflict with those traditionally associated with leadership. Women are often expected to be nurturing, supportive, and emotionally sensitive, whereas leaders are expected to be authoritative and decisive. Consequently, female leaders may face a double bind: when they demonstrate warmth and empathy, they may be perceived as weak; when they demonstrate firmness and authority, they may be judged negatively for violating gender expectations.

In the same vein, Eagly and Carli (2003) argue and, more recently, Paustian-Underdahl et al. (2024) confirm that women may possess distinctive leadership strengths, including communication, collaboration, and participatory decision-making. However, these strengths may be undervalued in organisations where leadership performance is assessed primarily through masculine-coded criteria.

Leadership effectiveness refers to the ability of a school administrator to coordinate human and material resources, maintain discipline, motivate staff, communicate organisational goals, make sound decisions, and achieve educational objectives.

ISSN –30268656

Female principals may face barriers that undermine these responsibilities. Gender-based stereotypes can reduce staff willingness to accept directives, question the authority of female administrators, and limit cooperation in implementing school policies. According to Alonge (2019), perceptions of administrative competence may differ according to gender even when male and female principals demonstrate similar professional capabilities, a pattern of gendered scepticism also reported among female academic leaders in Nigerian universities (Okonkwo & Ugwu, 2021).

Anho et al. (2022) also observed that gender-related variables influence human-resource management in Nigerian secondary schools. Female administrators may experience resistance from subordinates, limited support from colleagues, and unequal access to leadership opportunities, challenges also documented among female educational administrators in North-Central Nigeria (Ogunode & Ahaotu, 2021).

Gender bias can undermine leadership effectiveness by causing female principals' authority to be questioned, reducing staff cooperation, limiting recognition of their competence and opportunities for promotion, contributing to negative performance evaluations, and provoking resistance to disciplinary and administrative decisions. These effects can collectively constrain female principals' capacity to exercise authority, implement decisions, manage staff effectively, and achieve institutional goals.

Administrative decision-making is a fundamental responsibility of school principals. Principals make decisions regarding staff management, discipline, resource allocation, instructional supervision, student welfare, and relationships with parents and communities.

However, female principals may experience external pressure when their decisions conflict with cultural expectations regarding women's roles. Ibrahim and Yusuf (2022) argue that cultural and religious norms in northern Nigeria continue to influence attitudes toward women in leadership.

Societal perceptions may influence female principals' decision-making through criticism, interference, and pressure to conform to traditional gender expectations. Female principals may consequently modify their decisions to avoid community criticism or resistance.

Okocha and Eze (2022) found that cultural and religious beliefs can constrain women's leadership autonomy. Similarly, Babalola et al. (2023) describe the coping strategies used by female educational administrators as "strategic accommodation," whereby women adjust their leadership behaviour and decisions to maintain acceptance within male-dominated institutional and community environments.

These findings suggest that gender bias extends beyond the school environment. Communities, parents, religious leaders, and other stakeholders may influence how female principals exercise authority and make administrative decisions.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on feminist theory, originally articulated by Hartsock (1987) and subsequently reinforced by Blackmore (2013). The theory posits that women's unique standpoints expose power imbalances within organisations and that equitable leadership requires dismantling patriarchal norms embedded in institutional structures (Walby, 1990; Tong, 2009). Blackmore (2013) further argues that feminist educational leadership promotes social justice, inclusivity, and anti-sexist agendas, a framework directly relevant to examining how cultural stereotypes and societal perceptions compromise women's authority and decision-making in school administration. The liberal-feminist strand of the theory contends that societal institutions, including educational systems, are frequently structured in ways that privilege men and marginalise women, influencing hiring, promotion, policy implementation, and day-to-day leadership interactions.

Feminist theory also emphasises voice and representation (Harding, 2004) and holds that gender bias is socially constructed and sustained through institutional practices rather than resulting from inherent differences in leadership ability. Consequently, female principals may experience reduced authority not because of deficiencies in competence but because their leadership challenges conventional expectations concerning who should lead and how leaders should behave.

The theory is therefore relevant to the present study because it provides an analytical framework for understanding how gendered power relations, stereotypes, institutional structures, and societal perceptions influence the leadership effectiveness and administrative decision-making of female principals. Although the theory's foundational texts date from the late twentieth century, its explanatory relevance is affirmed by recent scholarship demonstrating that gendered institutional constraints on women's leadership persist across contexts, including in policy-making processes (Jacobs & George, 2023), which confirms the theory's continued fit with the sharpened focus of this study on female principals' leadership effectiveness.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted a correlational research design, consistent with the principle that social-science inquiry into relationships between variables should proceed without manipulating them (Bhandari, 2023). The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researchers to examine relationships and differences in respondents' perceptions concerning gender-related perceptions, leadership effectiveness, and administrative decision-making without manipulating the variables.

The target population consisted of 1,390 persons, which comprises of 30 principals, 60 vice principals, and 90 senior teachers in secondary schools within Mubi Education Zone. A sample of 176 respondents was selected from Mubi North, Mubi South, and Michika Local Government Areas using a multistage sampling technique.

ISSN –30268656

Data were collected using a researcher-designed instrument titled the Influence of Gender Difference on Principals' Administrative Effectiveness Questionnaire (IGDPAEQ). The instrument was subjected to validation, while its reliability was established using Cronbach's Alpha. The instrument recorded a reliability coefficient of 0.86, indicating satisfactory internal consistency.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics involving mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. An independent samples t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. A mean score of 2.50 and above was interpreted as agreement, while a mean score below 2.50 was interpreted as disagreement.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the mean rating of respondents on the extent to which gender-related perceptions affect the leadership effectiveness of female principals in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State?

Table 1
Perceptions of Gender Influence on Leadership Effectiveness of Female Principals

Item	Mean	SD	Decision
Female principals are not given the same respect as male counterparts.	3.06	0.93	Agree
Male colleagues are more likely to be considered for leadership positions.	3.09	1.01	Agree
Gender difference affects the confidence of female principals.	2.81	0.93	Agree
Female principals are underestimated in managing school crises.	2.85	1.02	Agree
Staff cooperation is lower due to gender-based stereotypes.	2.44	0.06	Disagree
Female principals face resistance from subordinates.	2.49	1.03	Disagree
Grand Mean	**2.75**	**—**	**Agree**

The results indicate that gender-related perceptions affect the leadership effectiveness of female principals to a great extent, with a grand mean of 2.75. Respondents agreed that female principals are not given the same respect as their male counterparts (M = 3.06, SD = 0.93) and that male colleagues are more likely to be considered for leadership positions (M = 3.09, SD = 1.01).

Respondents also agreed that gender difference affects the confidence of female principals (M = 2.81, SD = 0.93) and that female principals are underestimated in managing school crises (M = 2.85, SD = 1.02).

However, respondents disagreed that staff cooperation is lower because of gender-based stereotypes (M = 2.44, SD = 0.06) and that female principals face resistance from subordinates (M = 2.49, SD = 1.03). Overall, the findings suggest that gender-related perceptions operate primarily through reduced respect, unequal leadership opportunities, diminished confidence, and doubts about women's crisis-management capacity.

Research Question 2: To what extent do societal perceptions influence the decision-making power of female school administrators in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State?

Table 2
Societal Perceptions and Their Influence on Administrative Decisions of Female Principals

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Decision
1	Community members believe that men are naturally better school leaders than women.	176	3.15	Agree
2	Cultural beliefs discourage women from occupying top leadership positions in schools.	176	3.19	Agree
3	Female principals modify their administrative decisions to avoid societal criticism.	176	3.03	Agree
4	Community members interfere more in administrative decisions made by female principals than those made by male principals.	176	3.00	Agree
5	Parents interfere more in administrative decisions made by female principals than those made by male principals.	176	2.65	Agree
6	Religious sentiments limit the effectiveness of female principals in school leadership.	176	2.99	Agree
	Grand Mean	**176**	**2.94**	**Agree**

The findings indicate that societal perceptions influence female principals' administrative decisions to a great extent, with a grand mean of 2.94. Respondents strongly agreed that community members believe that men are naturally better school leaders than women (M = 3.15) and that cultural beliefs discourage women from occupying top leadership positions (M = 3.19).

Female principals were also perceived to modify their decisions to avoid societal criticism (M = 3.03). Community members were perceived to interfere more in decisions made by female principals than those made by male principals (M = 3.00), consistent with Oyewumi and Adebayo's (2023) observations on political and patronage-related interference in Nigerian educational appointments, while parental interference also received agreement (M = 2.65), echoing Ogunlade and Adeyemi's (2021) findings on parental contestation of disciplinary decisions by female principals in Lagos State.

Religious sentiments were also perceived to limit female leadership effectiveness (M = 2.99). These findings indicate that female principals' decision-making autonomy may be influenced by external social and cultural pressures.

ISSN –30268656

Test of Hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant difference in the mean opinion of male and female respondents on how gender-related perceptions affect the leadership effectiveness of female principals in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State.

Table 3
Independent Samples t-test Result on the Effect of Perceptions of Gender Influence on Female Principals' Leadership Effectiveness

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	Sig	T
Male	105	2.67	0.70			
				174	0.07	- 1.80
Female	71	2.85	0.57			

The result in Table 3 revealed that p = 0.07, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This indicates that there is no statistically significant difference between male and female respondents' perceptions regarding the effect of gender-related perceptions on the leadership effectiveness of female principals.

HO₂: There is no significant difference in the opinion of administrators and teachers on how societal perceptions influence the administrative decisions made by female school principals in Mubi Education Zone, Adamawa State.

Table 4
Independent Samples t-test Result on How Societal Perception Influence Administrative Decision

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	Sig	T
Administrator	80	2.91	0.46			
				174	0.42	0.82
Teacher	96	2.97	0.40			

The result in Table 4 revealed that p = 0.42, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This indicates that administrators and teachers do not differ significantly in their perceptions of how societal perceptions influence the administrative decisions of female principals.

Discussion

The finding that gender-related perceptions affect the leadership effectiveness of female principals to a great extent, with respondents indicating that female principals receive less respect than their male counterparts and that male colleagues are more readily considered for leadership positions, demonstrates the persistence of gendered expectations in educational administration, consistent with Showunmi and Kaparou's (2022) findings on gender-based

discrimination and diminished self-efficacy among women leaders in sub-Saharan African education.

This finding is consistent with the role congruity theory of Eagly and Karau (2002), more recently reaffirmed by Triana et al. (2024), which explains that female leaders may experience prejudice because leadership is traditionally associated with masculine characteristics. It also supports the work of Alonge (2019), who identified gender-related differences in perceptions of principals' administrative performance.

The study also found that societal perceptions strongly influence female principals' administrative decisions. The item on cultural beliefs discouraging women from occupying top leadership positions recorded the highest mean score, suggesting that cultural expectations remain an important barrier to women's leadership participation and decision-making autonomy.

This finding is consistent with Ibrahim and Yusuf (2022), who observed that cultural and religious norms shape women's leadership aspirations in northern Nigeria, and with Okocha and Eze (2022), who reported similar cultural and religious constraints on women's leadership autonomy.

The absence of a statistically significant difference between male and female respondents' opinions on leadership effectiveness, and between administrators' and teachers' opinions on societal perceptions of administrative decision-making, suggests that awareness of these gender-related barriers is broadly shared rather than confined to female respondents. Both men and women, and both administrators and teachers, appear to recognise the challenges confronting female principals.

Taken together, the findings suggest that gender-related perceptions of leadership effectiveness and administrative decision-making are not merely an individual or interpersonal matter for the female principals concerned. Rather, they are embedded in wider cultural expectations, institutional practices, and community perceptions that operate across staff categories.

Conclusion

This study concludes that gender-related perceptions constitute a pervasive, if often subtle, factor influencing the leadership effectiveness and administrative decision-making of female principals in Mubi Education Zone. These perceptions operate through differential respect, diminished confidence, unequal access to leadership opportunities, and doubts concerning women's crisis-management and administrative competence. Societal and cultural perceptions further compound these challenges by pressuring female principals to modify their decisions to avoid criticism and external interference.

The findings also show that these challenges are broadly recognised by respondents across gender and professional-status groups. Addressing gender-related bias in educational leadership therefore requires institutional reform as well as wider cultural and community reorientation, rather than interventions directed at female principals alone.

ISSN –30268656

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that:

1. Educational authorities should strengthen the enforcement of gender-equity and anti-discrimination policies in the appointment, promotion, appraisal, and training of school administrators, ensuring that leadership effectiveness is assessed on professional competence rather than gender-based expectations.
2. School authorities should institutionalise gender-sensitivity training, mentorship, and professional-support programmes for teachers and administrators to challenge gender stereotypes, strengthen female principals' leadership confidence, and enhance their decision-making autonomy and effectiveness, an approach shown to improve staff attitudes toward female administrators elsewhere in Nigeria (Akinfolarin & Ehinola, 2023).
3. Government agencies, communities, parents, and religious leaders should implement sustained gender-awareness programmes, such as those under Nigeria's National Gender Policy (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2021), aimed at challenging cultural and social stereotypes that portray men as naturally superior leaders and discourage women from exercising leadership authority.
4. School management and policymakers should establish effective mechanisms for preventing and addressing gender-based discrimination and undue interference in the administration of female principals, while promoting gender-balanced participation in leadership appointments and professional development opportunities.

REFERENCES

Acker, J. (1990). Hierarchies, jobs, bodies: A theory of gendered organizations. Gender and Society, 4(2), 139–158. https://doi.org/10.1177/089124390004002002

Aja-Okorie, U. (2019). Gender inequality and female leadership in education: Challenges and the way forward. Journal of Gender and Education Studies, 11(2), 45–60.

Akinfolarin, C. A., & Ehinola, G. B. (2023). Gender-sensitivity training and teachers' attitudes toward female administrators in Ondo State, Nigeria. Nigerian Journal of Educational Leadership, 14(1), 55–70.

Alonge, B. (2019). Comparative analysis of the performance of administrative duties of male and female principals in public secondary schools in Ekiti State, Nigeria. International Journal of Educational Research and Development, 7(2), 45–58.

Anho, J., Okorugbo, J., Ojabunor, M., & Anho, R. (2022). Gender variables and management of human resources among public secondary school principals in Delta State, Nigeria. Journal of Educational Management and Leadership, 10(2), 34–49.

Babalola, S., Adebayo, K., & Oni, F. (2023). Strategic accommodation: Coping strategies among female educational administrators in South-West Nigeria. Journal of Gender and Educational Leadership, 9(1), 22–39.

Beg, S., Fitzpatrick, A., & Lucas, A. (2021). Gender bias in assessments of teacher performance. AEA Papers and Proceedings, 111, 190–195. https://doi.org/10.1257/PANDP.20211126

Bhandari, M. P. (2023). The fundamental principles of social sciences. Business Ethics and Leadership, 7(2), 73–86.

Blackmore, J. (2013). Feminist leadership: Power, ethics and authority in educational organisations. In The SAGE handbook of gender and education (pp. 355–368). SAGE Publications.

Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2003). The female leadership advantage: An evaluation of the evidence. The Leadership Quarterly, 14(6), 807–834. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2003.09.004

Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. Psychological Review, 109(3), 573–598. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.109.3.573

Ereh, C., Ekerete, U., & Albert, V. (2025). Principals' personal variable and administrative practices in public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science. https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2025.90400049

Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2021). National Gender Policy (2021–2026). Federal Ministry of Women Affairs.

Harding, S. (2004). The feminist standpoint theory reader: Intellectual and political controversies. Routledge.

Hartsock, N. (1987). The feminist standpoint: Developing the ground for a specifically feminist historical materialism. In S. Harding (Ed.), Feminism and methodology (pp. 157–180). Indiana University Press.

Ibrahim, M., & Yusuf, A. (2022). Religion, culture, and gendered leadership aspirations in Northern Nigeria. Journal of Social Sciences in Education, 13(2), 101–118.

Jacobs, T., & George, A. S. (2023). How gender is socially constructed in policy making processes: A case study of the Adolescent and Youth Health Policy in South Africa. International Journal for Equity in Health, 22, Article 30. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-022-01819-w

Lorber, J. (1994). Paradoxes of gender. Yale University Press.

Moorosi, P., & Bhebe, S. (2023). Transformative policy approaches to gender equality in Southern African education systems. Gender and Education, 35(4), 401–418.

Morojele, P., & Chikoko, V. (2023). The visibility deficit: Female role models and the leadership aspiration gap in African education. Africa Education Review, 20(1), 61–79.

Nwachukwu, I., & Okoli, F. (2022). Gender representation in school governance structures across Nigerian states. Journal of Educational Governance, 8(1), 12–29.

Ogunlade, T., & Adeyemi, K. (2021). Parental contestation of disciplinary decisions by female principals in Lagos State secondary schools. Nigerian Journal of Educational Research, 15(3), 199–214.

Ogunode, N. J., & Ahaotu, G. N. (2021). Challenges facing female educational administrators in North-Central Nigeria. International Journal of Education and Evaluation, 7(4), 1–14.

Okocha, J., & Eze, C. (2022). Gender and educational leadership in Northern Nigeria: Cultural and religious constraints. Journal of Educational Leadership in Africa, 4(1), 40–58.

ISSN –30268656

Okonkwo, E., & Ugwu, F. (2021). Gendered scepticism: Perceptions of female academic leaders in Nigerian universities. Gender and Behaviour, 19(2), 17832–17845.

Oplatka, I., & Arar, K. (2018). Gender and educational leadership in different countries: New insights and future directions. Educational Management Administration and Leadership, 46(4), 553–558.

Oyewumi, A., & Adebayo, T. (2023). Political interference and the patronage penalty in Nigerian educational appointments. Journal of Public Administration Research, 33(1), 55–71.

Paustian-Underdahl, S. C., Halbesleben, J. R. B., & Shepherd, W. J. (2024). Reassessing the female leadership advantage: A meta-analytic update and extension. Journal of Applied Psychology, 109(3), 345–362.

Showunmi, V., & Kaparou, M. (2022). Gender, discrimination, and self-efficacy among women leaders in sub-Saharan African education. Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, 52(6), 934–951.

Tong, R. (2009). Feminist thought: A more comprehensive introduction (3rd ed.). Westview Press.

Triana, M. D. C., Song, R., Um, C. T., & Huang, L. (2024). Stereotypical perception in management: A review and expansion of role congruity theory. Journal of Management, 50(3), 964–994. https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063231180836

UNICEF. (2021). Gender equality in education: Global and Nigerian perspectives. UNICEF Nigeria Country Office.

Walby, S. (1990). Theorizing patriarchy. Basil Blackwell.