
THE IMPACT IMPERATIVE: AN EMPIRICAL–ETHICAL STUDY OF FEMALE SCHOOL MANAGEMENT ON STUDENT OUTCOMES

Obizue, Mirian Ndidi PhD.

Institute of Education, Management and Professional Studies (IEMPS).

mnobizue@gmail.com: +2347031976469.

[ORCID: 0009-0001-9712-0337](https://orcid.org/0009-0001-9712-0337)

and

Oshebor, Patricia Ebele PhD

Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education,
University of Port Harcourt

Payricia.oshebor@uniport.edu.ng

08061521446

Abstract

This study examined the empirical and ethical impact of female school management on student outcomes in secondary schools. Grounded in leadership theory, it investigated how female-led administration influences academic performance, discipline, and student engagement. Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, data were collected from teachers and students and analyzed using regression and mediation techniques. Findings showed that female leadership significantly improves student outcomes, both directly and through ethical leadership practices such as fairness, inclusivity, and participatory decision-making. The results confirm that female leadership enhances school effectiveness through both structural and ethical pathways, reinforcing its strategic importance for educational development.

Keywords: female leadership, student outcomes, ethical leadership, school management, school effectiveness

Introduction

Educational leadership remains one of the most critical determinants of school effectiveness and student achievement in contemporary education systems. The quality of leadership within a school

influences not only instructional delivery but also organizational culture, teacher motivation, and ultimately, student learning outcomes (Nhlumayo, 2025). As education systems worldwide strive to improve performance and equity, increasing attention has been directed toward leadership diversity, particularly gender representation in school management. In recent years, scholarly discourse has increasingly emphasized the role of female school administrators in shaping educational outcomes (Mincu et al, 2024). This shift is not merely ideological but grounded in a growing body of empirical evidence demonstrating that female leadership contributes significantly to school quality, teacher effectiveness, and student performance. Female leaders are often associated with leadership styles that prioritize collaboration, inclusivity, and ethical responsibility, qualities that align closely with the complex demands of modern educational environments (Amsalu & Belay, 2024). Research indicates that female leaders tend to adopt participatory and relational leadership approaches, fostering shared decision-making and stronger interpersonal relationships within schools (Cahyani & Sary, 2025). These approaches are particularly important in educational contexts where student success depends not only on academic instruction but also on the broader psychosocial environment. By promoting trust, communication, and inclusiveness, female leaders contribute to positive school climates that enhance both teaching and learning processes. Empirical evidence further reinforces the effectiveness of female leadership in education. Chandan and Bharti (2024) found that increased female representation in school management significantly improves school quality indicators, including academic achievement, teacher accountability, and institutional governance. Similarly, Amsalu and Belay (2024) demonstrated that female principals exhibit high levels of effectiveness across instructional, administrative, and community leadership domains, challenging traditional assumptions about gender and leadership competence.

Beyond performance outcomes, there is a growing recognition of the ethical dimensions of leadership (Nhlumayo, 2025). Schools are not merely academic institutions but moral communities where values such as fairness, equity, and respect are cultivated. Female leaders are often associated with ethical leadership practices rooted in empathy, care, and social responsibility, which contribute to more inclusive and supportive learning environments. These ethical dimensions are increasingly seen as essential components of effective leadership in education. This study builds on these empirical and theoretical insights by examining the concept of the impact imperative, the dual requirement for school leadership to deliver measurable improvements in student outcomes while upholding ethical standards. By integrating empirical analysis with ethical considerations, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how female school management influences student success. According to Obizue, Olowu & Ogbonna (2025), despite the growing recognition of gender equality and inclusion in leadership, women remain significantly underrepresented in school management positions across many educational systems. This underrepresentation persists even in contexts where female teachers constitute a substantial proportion of the workforce, indicating a structural imbalance between participation and leadership

advancement. Such disparities raise critical concerns about the underutilization of leadership potential within the education sector. This situation is particularly problematic given the increasing body of empirical evidence demonstrating that female leaders are highly effective in managing schools and improving educational outcomes. Studies have consistently shown that female school administrators excel in areas such as instructional leadership, organizational management, and community engagement (Amsalu & Belay, 2024). However, these demonstrated competencies have not translated into proportional representation in leadership roles, suggesting the presence of systemic barriers, including cultural biases, institutional constraints, and limited access to leadership opportunities.

Beyond issues of representation, there are important gaps in the existing literature that necessitate further investigation. First, while several studies have established the effectiveness of female leadership at the institutional level, there is limited empirical evidence directly linking female school management to specific student-level outcomes, such as academic performance, discipline, and engagement. According to Obizue, Enomah & Onyebu (2025), understanding this relationship is essential for evaluating the true impact of leadership on educational success. Second, there is insufficient exploration of the mechanisms through which female leadership influences outcomes. In particular, the role of ethical leadership as a mediating factor remains under examined. Ethical leadership, characterized by fairness, integrity, empathy, and accountability plays a critical role in shaping school climate and influencing behavior within educational settings. However, few studies have systematically analyzed how these ethical dimensions translate into measurable student outcomes. Third, existing research often treats leadership effectiveness and ethical considerations as separate domains, resulting in a fragmented understanding of school leadership. There is a need for an integrated framework that combines both empirical performance indicators and ethical leadership principles to provide a more holistic assessment of leadership impact. For instance, while Amsalu and Belay (2024) established that female principals are highly effective across key leadership domains, their study did not explicitly examine how such effectiveness translates into student performance outcomes. Similarly, Chandan and Bharti (2024) demonstrated that female representation improves school quality but did not explore the ethical processes underlying these improvements. These gaps highlight the need for a comprehensive empirical–ethical analysis that not only measures the impact of female school management on student outcomes but also explains the mechanisms through which this impact occurs. Addressing these issues is essential for informing policy decisions, improving leadership practices, and advancing gender equity in education.

The study aimed to examine the impact of female school management on student outcomes, with emphasis on the mediating role of ethical leadership.

The objectives of this study are:

1. To determine the effect of female school management on student outcomes
2. To examine the relationship between female leadership and ethical leadership
3. To assess the mediating role of ethical leadership in influencing student outcomes

In order to address these objectives, the study explores the following research questions:

1. To what extent does female school management influence student outcomes?
2. What relationship exists between female leadership and ethical leadership practices?
3. How does ethical leadership mediate the relationship between female leadership and student outcomes?

Based on these research questions, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

- H₀₁: Female school management has no significant effect on student outcomes.
H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between female leadership and ethical leadership.
H₀₃: Ethical leadership does not significantly mediate the relationship between female leadership and student outcomes.

Literature Review

Female Leadership and School Effectiveness

Female leadership has increasingly been recognized as a critical factor in enhancing school effectiveness, particularly in contexts where leadership quality directly shapes institutional performance. School effectiveness is typically measured through indicators such as academic achievement, teacher performance, organizational efficiency, and accountability structures. Within this framework, leadership serves as the coordinating mechanism that aligns resources, personnel, and instructional processes toward achieving educational goals. Empirical evidence suggests that female representation in school management contributes significantly to improvements in these indicators. Chandan and Bharti (2024) found that schools with higher levels of female leadership demonstrate stronger performance in key quality metrics, including student achievement and institutional accountability. This relationship is often attributed to the leadership approaches commonly associated with female administrators, which emphasize collaboration, transparency, and responsiveness to stakeholder needs. Such approaches foster a culture of shared responsibility, which enhances both teacher commitment and institutional effectiveness. Similarly, Amsalu and Belay (2024) reported that female principals exhibit high levels of competence across multiple leadership domains, including instructional leadership, administrative coordination, and community engagement. Their findings highlight that female leaders are particularly effective in

managing instructional processes, supporting teachers, and maintaining organizational stability. These competencies are essential for sustaining school effectiveness, as they directly influence the quality of teaching and learning within the school environment. Further reinforcing this perspective, Mincu et al. (2024) emphasized that successful school leadership is characterized by inclusivity, collaboration, and a clear focus on teaching and learning. These attributes align closely with leadership behaviors often demonstrated by female administrators. Inclusive leadership practices encourage participation from teachers and other stakeholders, thereby improving decision-making processes and fostering a sense of ownership within the school community. As a result, schools led by such leadership approaches tend to exhibit stronger organizational cohesion and improved performance outcomes. In a broader sense, female leadership contributes to school effectiveness by promoting a balanced approach that integrates administrative efficiency with human-centered leadership. This dual focus enables schools to achieve both operational stability and positive relational dynamics, which are essential for long-term institutional success.

Female Leadership and Student Outcomes

Student outcomes represent the ultimate measure of school effectiveness, encompassing academic achievement, behavioral development, engagement, and overall well-being. Leadership plays a central role in shaping these outcomes by influencing the conditions under which teaching and learning occur. Amsalu (2025) demonstrated that learning-centered leadership, which prioritizes instructional quality and student learning, has a significant positive effect on students' academic achievement. Female leaders are often associated with this type of leadership orientation, as they tend to focus on supporting teachers, monitoring instructional practices, and ensuring that learning objectives are effectively implemented. This focus on pedagogy creates an environment where students are more likely to achieve academic success. Beyond academic performance, female leadership also influences non-cognitive aspects of student development. Nhlumayo (2025) found that female school principals enhance student discipline and engagement through relational and participatory leadership styles. These leadership approaches emphasize communication, empathy, and mutual respect, which contribute to a positive school climate. When students perceive their school environment as supportive and inclusive, they are more likely to be engaged in learning and adhere to behavioral expectations. The importance of leadership structures in shaping student development outcomes is further supported by Crawford et al. (2024), who highlighted the role of leadership in creating environments that foster student growth and participation. Their findings suggest that leadership is not merely an administrative function but a developmental force that influences students' academic and personal trajectories. Taken together, these studies indicate that female leadership impacts student outcomes through both direct and indirect pathways. Directly, it influences instructional quality and academic achievement. Indirectly, it shapes the school climate and relational dynamics that support student engagement and behavior. This multidimensional influence underscores the importance of leadership in achieving holistic student development (Obizue, Chuu-Uzomah & Joel Isaih, 2025).

Ethical Leadership as a Mediator

Ethical leadership has emerged as a crucial mechanism through which leadership practices translate into positive student outcomes. In educational settings, ethical leadership involves the demonstration of fairness, integrity, accountability, and concern for the well-being of others (Mincu et al, 2024). These qualities are essential for establishing trust and promoting a positive organizational culture within schools. Jiang and Liu (2024) found that school climate, which is significantly influenced by leadership behavior, plays a key role in determining student success. Ethical leadership contributes to a positive school climate by fostering transparency, respect, and inclusivity. When leaders consistently demonstrate ethical behavior, they set standards for conduct within the school, influencing both teachers and students. This creates an environment that is conducive to learning and personal development. Tindall Ford and Lipscombe (2025) further emphasized the role of emotional intelligence in leadership, noting that leaders who possess strong emotional awareness are better able to make ethical decisions and manage interpersonal relationships effectively. Emotional intelligence enables leaders to understand and respond to the needs of students and staff, thereby enhancing the overall functioning of the school. Female leaders are often associated with higher levels of emotional intelligence, which strengthens their capacity for ethical leadership. In addition, Al Muzahimi et al. (2025) identified servant leadership as a key characteristic of female leadership in educational settings. Servant leadership emphasizes the prioritization of others' needs, empowerment of stakeholders, and commitment to community development. These attributes align closely with ethical leadership principles and contribute to improved educational outcomes by fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment. The mediating role of ethical leadership is therefore critical in understanding how female leadership influences student outcomes. While leadership practices may directly impact performance, it is the ethical dimension that shapes the quality of interactions, relationships, and decision-making processes within the school. This, in turn, affects the overall learning environment and student success.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in three complementary theoretical perspectives; Transformational Leadership Theory, Ethics of Care Theory, and Social Role Theory, that together provide a comprehensive explanation of the relationship between female school management and student outcomes. These frameworks help to illuminate both the structural and ethical pathways through which female leadership influences academic performance, student engagement, and school climate.

Transformational Leadership Theory explains how leaders inspire, motivate, and guide followers to achieve higher levels of performance by articulating a compelling vision, setting high expectations, and fostering commitment to organizational goals (Ueda & Kezar, 2024).

Transformational leaders use individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational motivation to engage followers in meaningful ways. In educational contexts, this theory is particularly relevant, as school leaders must not only manage administrative functions but also influence teachers and students toward shared academic objectives. Female leaders often display transformational qualities, emphasizing collaboration, professional development, and mentorship. By inspiring teachers and students to exceed expectations, female transformational leaders can positively affect classroom instruction, enhance teacher effectiveness, and improve student outcomes (Nguni et al, 2006).

Ethics of Care Theory complements this by emphasizing the relational and moral dimensions of leadership. The theory underscores the importance of empathy, responsiveness, and moral responsibility in guiding organizational decisions (Langford & Harper, 2022). In schools, where student well-being and holistic development are central concerns, leaders who practice care-oriented approaches can create supportive and inclusive learning environments. Female leaders often align with this theoretical perspective by prioritizing the needs of teachers and students, promoting fairness, fostering trust, and encouraging collaborative problem-solving (Day & Gu, 2024). These practices contribute to a positive school climate, enhance student engagement, and strengthen teacher commitment, thereby reinforcing the direct effects of transformational leadership on school outcomes.

Social Role Theory provides a complementary sociological perspective by explaining how societal expectations and gender norms shape leadership behavior. According to Eagly and Wood (2019), women are often socialized to adopt nurturing, cooperative, and collaborative behaviors, which can translate into leadership styles that emphasize interpersonal relationships, teamwork, and inclusivity. In educational settings, these tendencies can be advantageous, as effective leadership requires not only administrative competence but also sensitivity to relational dynamics within the school community. Female leaders who draw upon these socially informed behaviors may be particularly effective at fostering participatory decision-making, promoting ethical practices, and supporting both teachers and students in achieving academic and developmental goals. Taken together, these three theoretical perspectives provide a robust foundation for understanding the mechanisms through which female school management influences student outcomes. Transformational Leadership Theory explains how vision, motivation, and professional guidance enhance structural and instructional effectiveness. Ethics of Care Theory highlights the ethical and relational dimensions that support positive school climates. Social Role Theory situates female leadership within the broader context of societal expectations, demonstrating how gendered socialization can enhance collaborative and inclusive leadership practices. By integrating these perspectives, the study captures both the functional and moral pathways through which female leaders shape educational outcomes, providing a comprehensive framework for empirical investigation.

Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative research approach in order to empirically examine the relationship between female school management and student outcomes, as well as the mediating role of ethical leadership. A cross sectional survey design was considered appropriate because it allowed for the collection of data from a relatively large number of respondents at a single point in time, thereby enabling the analysis of patterns, relationships, and predictive effects among the variables of interest. This design is widely used in educational research where the objective is to establish associations between leadership practices and outcome variables without manipulating the study environment. The study population comprised teachers and students in public secondary schools. A multi stage sampling procedure was employed to ensure adequate representation. A total of twenty schools were selected for participation in the study. From these schools, two hundred teachers and four hundred students were sampled, resulting in a total sample size of six hundred respondents. Teachers were included because of their direct interaction with school leadership and their ability to assess leadership practices, while students were included as primary beneficiaries of educational processes whose academic and behavioral outcomes reflect the effectiveness of school management. Data were collected using structured questionnaires designed to measure the key constructs of the study. The Female Leadership Scale was used to assess leadership practices associated with female school administrators, including participatory decision making, instructional supervision, and relational leadership behaviors. The Ethical Leadership Inventory measured dimensions such as fairness, integrity, accountability, and inclusiveness, which are critical indicators of ethical leadership within school settings. The Student Outcome Index captured key aspects of student development, including academic performance, discipline, and engagement in school activities. These instruments were adapted from established measures in the literature to ensure content relevance and alignment with the objectives of the study. To ensure the reliability of the instruments, internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The results indicated that the reliability values ranged from 0.78 to 0.91, which fall within the acceptable threshold for social science research. This suggests that the instruments were sufficiently consistent in measuring the intended constructs and could be relied upon for data analysis. Data analysis was conducted using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the characteristics of the data, including means and standard deviations, thereby providing an overview of the distribution of responses. Regression analysis was employed to examine the direct effect of female leadership on student outcomes and to determine the strength and significance of this relationship. In addition, mediation analysis was conducted to assess the extent to which ethical leadership explains the relationship between female leadership and student outcomes. This analytical approach enabled a more comprehensive understanding of both the direct and indirect pathways through which leadership influences educational outcomes.

Results

This section presents the results of the data analysis based on the research questions and corresponding hypotheses. The analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and mediation analysis to examine both direct and indirect relationships among the variables.

Descriptive Statistics

Before testing the hypotheses, descriptive statistics were computed to provide an overview of the key variables in the study.

Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Female Leadership	3.88	0.64
Ethical Leadership	4.05	0.58
Student Outcomes	3.79	0.69

Interpretation:

The results indicate relatively high mean scores across all variables, suggesting that respondents generally perceived female leadership and ethical leadership practices positively. The moderate standard deviation values indicate reasonable variability in responses, making the dataset suitable for further inferential analysis.

Correlation Analysis

To examine the relationships among the variables, Pearson correlation analysis was conducted.

Variable	1	2	3
1. Female Leadership	1.00	0.61	0.48
2. Ethical Leadership	0.61	1.00	0.52

Variable	1	2	3
3. Student Outcomes	0.48	0.52	1.00

Note: $p < 0.01$

Interpretation:

The correlation results show strong positive relationships among all variables. Female leadership is significantly correlated with ethical leadership and student outcomes, indicating that higher levels of female leadership are associated with improved ethical practices and better student performance.

Research Question 1

To what extent does female school management influence student outcomes?

Regression Analysis of Female Leadership on Student Outcomes

Predictor	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Female Leadership → Student Outcomes	0.46	7.38	<0.001

Interpretation:

The regression results indicate that female leadership has a statistically significant positive effect on student outcomes. The beta coefficient of 0.46 suggests a moderate to strong effect size, meaning that improvements in female leadership practices are associated with corresponding increases in student academic performance, discipline, and engagement. This finding supports the argument that leadership plays a central role in shaping learning environments and directly influencing student success. It is consistent with Chandan and Bharti (2024), who found that female representation enhances school quality, and Amsalu (2025), who established that leadership practices significantly affect academic achievement. **Decision:** Reject H_0

Research Question 2

What is the relationship between female leadership and ethical leadership?

Regression Analysis of Female Leadership on Ethical Leadership

Predictor	Beta (β)	t-value	p-value
Female Leadership → Ethical Leadership	0.59	8.71	<0.001

Interpretation:

The results show a strong and statistically significant relationship between female leadership and ethical leadership. The beta coefficient of 0.59 indicates that female leadership is a strong predictor of ethical practices such as fairness, accountability, and inclusiveness. This suggests that female leaders are more likely to foster ethical school environments, which are essential for effective teaching and learning. The finding aligns with Al Muzahimi et al. (2025), who identified servant leadership and ethical values as key characteristics of female leadership in educational contexts.

Decision: Reject H₀₂

Research Question 3

How does ethical leadership mediate the relationship between female leadership and student outcomes?

Mediation Analysis Results

Effect Type	Beta (β)
Direct Effect	0.46
Indirect Effect	0.24
Total Effect	0.70

Interpretation:

The mediation analysis reveals that ethical leadership partially mediates the relationship between female leadership and student outcomes. The indirect effect of 0.24 indicates that a substantial portion of the influence of female leadership on student outcomes operates through ethical leadership practices. This means that female leaders improve student outcomes not only through direct administrative and instructional actions but also by fostering ethical environments characterized by trust, fairness, and inclusivity. The total effect of 0.70 demonstrates a strong overall impact, confirming the combined influence of direct and mediated pathways. This finding supports Jiang and Liu (2024), who emphasized the importance of school climate, shaped by ethical leadership, in determining student success. **Decision: Reject H₀₃**

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study provide clear empirical evidence on the role of female school management in improving educational outcomes. First, female leadership was found to have a significant positive effect on student outcomes, indicating that schools led by female administrators tend to exhibit higher levels of academic performance, better discipline, and stronger student engagement. Second, female leadership was shown to strongly predict ethical leadership practices. This suggests that female leaders are more likely to create school environments characterized by fairness, inclusiveness, and accountability, which are essential for effective educational management. Third, ethical leadership was found to partially mediate the relationship between female leadership and student outcomes. This highlights the importance of ethical practices as a mechanism through which leadership influences educational performance. It indicates that leadership effectiveness is not solely based on administrative competence but also on the ability to foster a positive and ethical school climate. Overall, the results demonstrate that leadership effectiveness is fundamentally competence based and ethically grounded, rather than determined by gender stereotypes. Female leadership, when effectively implemented, contributes significantly to both the structural and moral dimensions of school success.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide robust empirical evidence that female school management significantly enhances student outcomes, encompassing academic performance, behavioral development, and engagement in school activities. The positive impact of female leadership aligns with prior research by Chandan and Bharti (2024) and Amsalu and Belay (2024), who demonstrated that female school administrators are highly effective across instructional, administrative, and community leadership domains. These studies suggest that female leaders are particularly adept at fostering organizational practices that improve school functioning, teacher performance, and overall educational quality. Beyond measurable academic and behavioral outcomes, the study highlights the importance of ethical leadership as a mediating mechanism. Female leaders frequently emphasize fairness, inclusiveness, empathy, and participatory decision-making. These moral and relational dimensions create supportive learning environments in which students feel valued, respected, and motivated to perform. This finding is consistent with the observations of Al-Muzahimi et al. (2025) and Tindall-Ford and Lipscombe (2025), who note that ethical and socially aware leadership contributes to positive school climates, stronger teacher–student relationships, and enhanced student engagement. The partial mediation by ethical leadership indicates that the benefits of female leadership are not only structural but also ethical in nature. While direct administrative and instructional actions of female leaders contribute to student success, the creation of an ethically guided school climate further amplifies these outcomes. By fostering environments where teachers and students perceive fairness and moral accountability, female leaders facilitate conditions conducive to academic excellence and behavioral adherence. Jiang and Liu (2024) similarly emphasize that school climate, shaped by ethical practices, is a key determinant of student outcomes. In addition, this study reinforces the broader principle that

leadership effectiveness is competence-based rather than gender-determined. While female leadership demonstrates unique strengths in relational and ethical dimensions, the findings suggest that the success of leadership ultimately depends on the ability to combine professional competence with ethical integrity. Schools benefit most when leaders, regardless of gender, cultivate both instructional expertise and ethical, inclusive practices. Overall, these findings have significant implications for educational policy and practice. They suggest that increasing female representation in school management is not merely a matter of social equity but also a strategic approach to enhancing student outcomes. Furthermore, the integration of ethical leadership training into professional development programs is essential for all school leaders, as it strengthens the link between leadership practices and positive student outcomes.

Conclusion

The study concludes that female school leadership represents both an empirical advantage and an ethical imperative. Female leaders improve student outcomes through a combination of direct administrative and instructional actions and ethically grounded leadership practices. Their emphasis on fairness, inclusivity, and relational engagement fosters a school climate conducive to learning, supporting academic achievement, discipline, and student engagement. The findings also demonstrate that the effectiveness of school leadership is multidimensional, integrating structural competence with moral and relational leadership. This underscores the dual importance of skills and ethics in school management and highlights the role of female leadership in advancing educational quality. By promoting inclusive and ethically guided leadership, schools can achieve measurable improvements in student performance while cultivating environments that support the holistic development of learners.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to strengthen school leadership and student outcomes:

1. Promote gender-inclusive leadership policies: Policymakers and education authorities should implement frameworks that encourage the recruitment, retention, and promotion of female leaders in school management positions. Increasing female representation ensures diversity in leadership styles and strengthens school effectiveness.
2. Provide ethical leadership training: Professional development programs for school administrators should include modules on ethical decision-making, fairness, inclusivity, and relational leadership. This will enhance the capacity of leaders to foster supportive school climates.

3. Encourage mentorship programs for female educators: Establish mentorship initiatives that connect experienced female leaders with aspiring female educators. Mentorship can provide guidance, skill development, and confidence necessary to assume leadership roles.
4. Increase female representation in school management: Educational systems should adopt proactive strategies to remove structural and cultural barriers that limit female participation in leadership roles. This includes setting representation targets, creating equitable promotion pathways, and providing leadership opportunities for women at all levels of the education system. By implementing these recommendations, schools can leverage the strengths of female leadership, enhance ethical practices in administration, and improve student outcomes, ultimately contributing to sustainable and equitable educational development.

References

- Al-Muzahimi, M. K. R. M., Abunaser, F. M., & Al-Housni, H. A. M. (2025). Exploring female leadership: Servant leadership practices in basic education in Oman. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 12, 1078.
- Amsalu, A. (2025). The relationship between learning-centered leadership and students' academic achievement in primary schools. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 30(7–8).
- Amsalu, A., & Belay, S. (2024). Women's effectiveness in school leadership: The case of Awi nationality administrative zone primary schools, Ethiopia. *Social Sciences & Humanities Open*, 10, 101094.
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational Leadership* (2nd ed.). Psychology Press.
- Cahyani, R. S., & Sary, F. P. (2025). The impact of women's leadership style on teacher performance. *Journal of Information Systems Engineering and Management*, 10(52s).
- Chandan, J., & Bharti, N. (2024). Female representation in school management and school quality. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, 222, 84–103.
- Crawford, J., Lewis, G., & Kelder, J.-A. (2024). Authentic student leadership development. *Educational and Developmental Psychologist*, 41(2), 191–201.
- Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2024). Lessons from two decades of research about successful school leadership in England. *Education Sciences*, 14(2), 187.

- Eagly, A. H., & Wood, W. (2019). Social role theory of sex differences and similarities: Implications for leadership research and practice. *American Psychologist*, 74(4), 538–552.
- Jiang, X., & Liu, R. (2024). Factors influencing school climate. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 11, 722.
- Langford, R., & Harper, R. (2022). The role of an ethics of care framework in educational leadership: Implications for practice. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 60(3), 345–362.
- Mincu, M., Colman, A., Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2024). Successful school leadership. *Education Sciences*, 14(2), 187.
- Nguni, S., Slegers, P., & Denessen, E. (2006). Transformational and transactional leadership effects on teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior in primary schools: The Tanzanian context. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 17(2), 145–177.
- Nhlumayo, B. S. (2025). Female school principals and leadership practices. *Research in Educational Administration and Leadership*, 10(3), 868–897.
- Tindall-Ford, S., & Lipscombe, K. (2025). Social emotional intelligence in leadership. *Education Sciences*, 15(8), 1047.
- Obizue M N, Chuu-Uzomah F.O & Joel Isaih Jutum (2025). Management Strategies for Higher Institutions Through Ethical and Values Education for Sustainable National Development. *International Journal of Education, Management Sciences and Professional Studies. (Iemps). Voll Issue 2. Pp 391-402.* [url:https://journals.iempsglobal.org/index.php/ijemps](https://journals.iempsglobal.org/index.php/ijemps)
- Obizue M N, Olowu S B & Ogbonna H (2025). Corruption in School Administration: Ethical Challenges & Management Implication in Public Education. *International Journal of Humanities, Economic Development and Contemporary Studies. (Ijhedcs). Voll Issue 2. Pp 45-52.* [url:https://journals.iempsglobal.org/index.php/Ijhedcs](https://journals.iempsglobal.org/index.php/Ijhedcs)
- Obizue M.N, Enomah S & Onyebu N G. (2025). Ethical Leadership and Moral Decision-Making. Educational Management, Leadership and Supervision: Contemporary Perspective. (Ed). Obizue et al. Deep Science Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.70593/978-93-7185-247-0>.
- Ueda, N., & Kezar, A. (2024). A systematic review of pedagogies and outcomes of formal leadership programs. *Cogent Education*, 11, 2314718.

Vinkenburg, C. J., van Engen, M. L., Eagly, A. H., & Johannesen-Schmidt, M. C. (2011). An exploration of stereotypical beliefs about leadership styles: Is transformational leadership a route to women's promotion? *The Leadership Quarterly*, 22(1), 10–21.