The Role of Gender Stereotypes in Effective Leadership

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Research Question(s)

How significantly do gendered stereotypes influenced the perceived efficacy of educational leaders?

Do leaders in non-traditional gender roles automatically face additional challenges in their respective professions, or can they provide fresh, differing insights that can aid their leadership roles that would otherwise be overlooked?

References

Bass, L.R. (2020) "Black Male Leaders Care Too: An Introduction to Black Masculine Caring in Educational Leadership." *Education Administration Quarterly* 56(3), 353-395. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161X1984042.

This article by Lisa Bass presents two critical components/concepts: the importance of caring in schools, and simultaneously the specifics regarding the approach that African American male administrators implement in their respective educational environments. While it admittedly focuses on a smaller target audience (African American administrators), it is my contention that the experiences of BIPOC leaders need to be duly acknowledged, as they are often downplayed due to their smaller representative population. Using qualitative study surrounding the experiences of 10 African American male leaders at various stages of their professional careers, Bass illustrates how these men's 'capacity to care' depends on their prior life experiences as Black men.

Utilizing this concept, the role of 'servant leader' is demonstrated and the unique scenario and environment that many of these leaders work within and shows how these administrators act as instructional leaders, professional models for teachers, as well as being liaisons between their respective schools and communities. Finally, by providing an explanation of the concept of *intensive caring practices* in leadership, Bass provides an insightful look into the unique challenges faced by Black male administrators.

Burns, G., & Martin, B.N. (2010) "Examination of the Effectiveness of Male and Female Educational Leaders Who Made Use of the Invitational Leadership Style of Leadership." *Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice* 16, 29-55.

Burns and Martin, based in Springfield, Missouri provide a qualitative study based upon 7 female principals, 7 male principals and 164 teachers. While acknowledging the constantly growing demands that are placed upon educational leaders, they investigate differing viewpoints surrounding a number of different leadership models.

After reviewing the progression of a number of different models, Burns and Martin settle on the *Invitational Leadership Model* and delve into the idea that the most important responsibility of school leaders is not to answer every question, "but to serve a deeper, more powerful and more durable role." In doing so, they pose significant questions including querying about the are supposed differences between the invitational leadership qualities of male and female administrators. Modifying Asbill's (2000) *Leadership Survey for Teachers*, they provide a very thorough, yet pointed portrayal of how teachers perceive the characteristics of individual leaders, regardless of gender.

Inandi, Y. & Giliç, F. (2021) "The relationship between school administrators' leadership styles and organizational cynicism from teachers' perspectives." *South African Journal of Education* 41(1), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.V41n1825.

The research duo from Mersin University investigated the relationship between a number of leadership styles and the concept of 'organizational cynicism.' Collecting data from over 400 teachers in both primary and secondary schools in Mersin, Turkey, Inandi and Giliç used qualitative data collection techniques using their *Leadership Style Scale* and *Organizational Cynicism Scale*. Using these systems, they attempted to determine whether the leadership tone of school administrators significantly contributed towards the negative work environments that some teachers experience.

In doing so, they investigated a number of widespread administrative approaches, including *democratic*, *authoritarian* and *transformational* leadership styles. Further to this, they continued further into these techniques and developed theories into the most effective aspects of each leadership style, for both male and female administrators in a variety of learning environments. Concluding that schools are seen as one of the contexts that most increasingly experience organizational cynicism, Inandi and Giliç show a different, but important aspect of the two-way relationship between teachers and administrators.

Katuna, B. (2019). *Degendering Leadership in Higher Education* **(First Edition.) Emerald Publishing Limited.**

Barret Katuna, based out of the Sociology department at the University of Connecticut, investigates the numerous gendered binary relationships and the experiences of high-ranking educators at a number of elite American post-secondary institutions. Referencing her chapter titled 'Gender and Leadership in Higher Education,' she thoroughly investigates how significant a role gender plays in the experiences of both female and male leaders in higher education.

Through a total of more than 30 formal interviews with high-ranking officials, Katuna provides a series of well-developed anecdotal experiences of both male and female educational leaders. As such, she displays an extensive retelling of a number of the challenges faced by many female administrators, based solely on their unwillingness, or inability, to follow many of the pre-existing stereotypical feminine leadership styles. A well-developed thorough analysis of many of the prejudices overcome by female leaders is presented, and in doing so Katuna provides an excellent representation of what it is like for female leaders in what were typically male-dominated roles.

Larsson, G. & Björklund,C. (2021) "Age and leadership: Comparisons of age groups in different kinds of work environment." *Manage Research Review* **44(5), 661-676. https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-01-2020-0040**

Larsson and Björklund delve into a number of leadership behaviors and 'leadership-related competencies' throughout the administration of a *Developmental Leadership Questionnaire*. They define developmental leadership as a leadership style with 21 items designed to measure three factors, including authenticity, inspiration and motivation.

Administered to a variety of age groups and genders, individual leaders are asked to rate themselves based upon their perceptions of their own leadership skills. Throughout the course of this study, they investigate young leaders and their own sense of self in their abilities. In doing so, they recognize several of the same ideas found in many other studies stating that young male leaders displayed far more negative leadership and destructive behaviors, regardless of how they are often perceived by their subordinates.

Larsson, G., Molnar, M.M., Ljungberg, H.T., & Björklund, C. (2023) "Leadership through the subordinates eye: perceptions of leader behaviors in relation to age and gender." *Leadership and Organization Development Journal* **44(1), 18-33. https://doi.org/10.1008/LODJ-07-2021-0333.**

The work by Larsson et al. utilizes the *Developmental Leadership Questionnaire* which was given to a variety of Swedish leadership course participants. Through qualitative administration of the questionnaire, it was found that many 'traditional' leader positions held by older men are, in theory, to be passed on to a new generation where female and male candidates should be encouraged and valued on equal terms.

Through their research they found that women are more likely than men to be promoted to high-risk leadership positions in struggling environments, and subsequently will often experience shorter tenures as men in their respected professions. Larsson et al. echo a significant concept posed by a number of other researchers that male norms will often leave female leaders in compromising positions where they are considered to be 'weak and unsuitable for leadership,' if they conform to typical gender norms of femininity, or inherently unfeminine if they adopt the agency typically associated with successful leadership.

Lee, C. (2023) "How do male and female Headteachers evaluate their authenticity as school leaders?" *Management in Education* **37(1), 46-55. https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020621999675.**

Catherine Lee uses qualitative assessment in her study to look into the concept of 'authenticity' when speaking to a small focus group of male and female 'headteachers' in the United Kingdom. Utilizing aspects of the theories of A*uthentic Leadership* posited by George et al. (2007), Lee echoes the sentiment 'that people are most effective in leadership roles when they are able to be themselves.'

Furthermore, Lee investigates the performative aspects of genders, and particularly those in leadership roles, and in doing so highlights how the 'performances' of both the male and female headteachers often fall in line with socially constructed norms and conventions. Finally, Lee breaks down much of the constraining stereotypes surrounding the 'strong, brave, authoritarian' male leaders and the 'collaborative, team-oriented' female administrator and provides insight into how the leaders themselves are often unknowingly persuaded by the stereotypes and can unintentionally reinforce these leadership tropes.

MacKinnon, K. (2021) "The women are taking over': Exploring hegemonic masculinities in elementary principalship. *Management in Education* 35(1), 32-42. https://doi.org/10.1177/0892020620942505

Mackinnon, of Western University in London, Ontario, investigates the individual experiences of both male and female principals in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). In doing so, he provides an in-depth look at differing perceptions surrounding male and female leaders, and their accompanying leadership styles. By conducting several qualitatively based one on one interviews with both male and female principals, Mackinnon highlights many viewpoints surrounding the efficacy of female leadership in what are often considered to be male-dominated roles. By breaking down stereotypes surrounding the 'detached' male principal, as well as that of female principals who arguably feel the need to overcompensate in their roles, due to them simply being female, Mackinnon provides a thought-provoking commentary surrounding the disproportionately high representation of male principals, in what has traditionally been a female-dominated profession in elementary schools.

McGrath, K.F., Moosa, S., Van Bergen, P., & Bhana, D. (2020) "The Plight of the Male Teacher: An Interdisciplinary and Multileveled Theoretical Framework for Researching a Shortage of Male Teachers." *Journal of Men's Studies* 28(2), 149-164. https://doi.org/10.1077/1060826519873860

McGrath et al. investigate a widespread phenomenon surrounding male educators in today's educational climate: why are so few men continuing to go into education, and particularly primary education? By drawing on qualitative interviews and questionnaires, McGrath et al. illustrate a very interesting dichotomy between the decreasing percentage of male teachers in the educational workforce and the significant overrepresentation of male administrators. While the majority of the text focuses on the challenges of hiring, and subsequently keeping male teachers in the workplace, it poses the question: If there are significantly fewer male teachers entering the profession, why has a decrease in male administrators not followed the same pattern?

Focused upon many of the social challenges and public perceptions faced by early-career male teachers, McGrath's work does a great job of diving into how societal norms and cultures of judgement continue to affect gender distribution in education, seemingly at all levels.

Offerman, L.R., & Foley, K. (2020) "Is There a Female Leadership Advantage," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Business and Management*. (pp. 1-32) https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190224851.013.61

Offerman and Foley provide a macro-level investigation in the differences between male and female leadership in professional organizations. They investigate a significant collection of pre-existing research that states that companies and organizations who hire and maintain a diverse workforce are typically expected to outperform those that don't. Additionally, they reference further research that women, may in fact be 'better leaders than men.'

Differentiating itself from other texts, Offerman and Foley stray from the concept that all female leaders are part of a collective, homogeneous group. As such, they delve into how different aspects of female leadership are better suited to different professions, as well as maintaining positive relationships with female *and* male subordinates. Finally, the look into the 'Big Five' personality characteristics associated with success in managerial positions and systematically breakdown the advantages that female leaders provide over their male counterparts.

Powell, G. (2020). *Gender and Leadership*. SAGE Publications.

Gary N. Powell from the School of Business at the University of Connecticut provides a very well-developed account of many experiences for both male and female managers, administrators and leaders. In *Gender and Leadership*, Powell investigates why masculinity has traditionally been seen as a superior trait in management, and where there may actually be advantages or disadvantages for female in managerial ranks.

Finally, Powell's book concludes with the chapter titled "What Actions Would Work Toward Undoing the Linkage between Gender and Leadership?" Within this, he proposes solutions, including attempts at debiasing stereotypes, as well as equal opportunities to leadership training, regardless of gender for employers and employees alike and concludes with suggestions on procedure for filing managerial positions. A completely thorough study on the relationships between female and leadership candidates, Powell's work provides an extensive look into the stereotypical viewpoints on "effective leadership."

Schlamp, S., Gerpott, F.H., & Voelpel, S. (2021) "Same talk, different reaction? Communication, emergent leadership and gender." *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 36(1), 51-74. https://doi.org/10.1108/JMP-01-2019-0062

Schlamp et al. thoroughly investigated the multitude of approaches and personality traits that are attributed to both male and female leaders. They contend that due to perceived masculine traits (higher verbal participation, independence, strength, etc.) that men are more likely to be placed into management and leadership roles, when being compared to their similarly skilled female counterparts. Through the collection of qualitative data in German universities, they (Schlamp et al.) interviewed both female and male leadership candidates and conducted focus-group interviews surrounding their understanding and perception of management and its relationship with pre-existing gender roles.

Drawing upon a variety of constructivist epistemologies, including *social role theory*, they highlight how employers can differentiate between agency and communion, stating that men are expected to be providers and leaders, while women are expected to be care-givers. By doing so, they highlight a number of beliefs and subsequent expectations surrounding the success of both male and female leaders in a variety of professional contexts, including educational administration.

Tremmel, M., & Wahl, I. (2023) "Gender stereotypes in leadership: Analyzing the content and evaluation of stereotypes about typical, male, and female leaders." *Frontiers in Psychology* 14, 1-17. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1034258

Tremmel and Wahl utilize a multidisciplinary approach to assessing the views surrounding the efficacy of both male and female leaders throughout their text. Stating that leaders are typically seen to have masculine traits and characteristics similar to men and not to women, Tremmel and Wahl's work corroborates the findings of a number of other studies that men are looked at as leaders typically before their female colleagues. Additionally, they state that despite female leaders having as many positive attributes as male leaders, they are often seen as also having more negative attributes than their male counterparts, with the majority of those attributes being defined as distinctly feminine.

Further to this, Tremmel and Wahl investigate the opinions and viewpoints of employees working for/with both male and female leaders. As a result, they state that men devalue female leaders more than women do, and subsequently have more prejudices against women, seeing themselves to be 'more effective' than women. These conclusions were constructed as a result of questions

answered through online questionnaires as well as utilizing an evaluative exercise referred to as the *Peabody Semantic Differential,* which provided an exhaustive statistical comparison between male and female perceptions.