

Article

Female Teachers' Perceptions about Assuming Leadership Positions in Schools: a Case of Warren Park District

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ABSTRACT: This research on female teachers' perceptions about assuming leadership positions in schools: A case of Warren Park District was conducted because women are reluctant to take on managerial posts. So far, little attempt has been made to disaggregate information to avoid wholesale generalizations; hence, this study explores women's reluctance to assume leadership positions in Warren Park District. This study was aimed at establishing factors that affect women's participation in managerial positions in schools, assessing the perceptions of eligible female teachers about taking up leadership positions in educational institutions, establishing how confident eligible female teachers are in leading others in public primary schools, and identifying the major challenges that women encounter in their quest to get to leadership positions in public primary schools in Warren Park. The researcher utilized a mixed research strategy during the course of this study. In the study, the researcher chose the pragmatic research approach, which employs both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection as a complement in the way data is analyzed. A case study research design employing the mixed methods approach was used in carrying out this research in an attempt to assess women's reluctance to assume leadership positions in schools in Warren Park District. The target population from which the sample of participants was selected was 100 female teachers who were eligible for managerial posts in Warren Park District. The researcher utilized the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) method to determine 100 respondents. Random sampling enabled participants to be independently selected one at a time until the desired sample size was achieved. The researcher utilized both questionnaires and an interview guide. In this study, it was established that factors such as family responsibilities affect acceptance of a managerial post. Respondents believed that managerial positions were best suited for men. Most respondents noted that women are confident and eligible to lead others. Respondents noted that management jobs can be challenging, but they are able to handle such pressure. In this study, it has been noted that in most cases, when women aim to attain certain leadership posts, they will not get support from other male leaders or peers. On the other hand, the element that hinders female teachers' participation in school leadership is the inappropriate implementation of the provision of methods, which in turn was not successful in bringing more female teachers into school leadership. This was due to the fact that there were not enough female teachers in school leadership positions.

Keywords: female teachers; school leadership; perceptions; gender barriers

1. Introduction

Gender disparities in employment opportunities in the region are a challenge to the growing participation of women in the workplace. There are still very few women in the top public decision-making and policymaking positions in Zimbabwe in particular, and this may be much the same in secondary school management[1]. The

presence of women in leadership roles at the primary school level and above provides girls beginning to consider career choices with role models of women decision-makers and leaders. It is also imperative that women be actively involved in leading educational change given the vital role that the education system of a country plays in both national development and the development of a gender equal society [2]. For women to be active participants in the change and development process, they must be present and provided with the necessary skills and understanding needed to participate effectively in education leadership and policy-making at both school and national levels. According to Dzimiri [3], women are recognized in society as procreators of the coming generation as well as producers of goods and services. However, in many Zimbabwean communities, traditional perceptions of women as inferior to men continue to prevail, as many people invoke the preservation of African culture to justify the subordination of women. Enrolment at university and vocational training centers, which are preparatory paths for progress to leadership positions, has not been in favor of women. This has seen women being unfairly represented at higher levels of management because the majority of women are perceived to lack enough education to enable them to take up leadership positions in many organizations[4]. In the African context, lack of female role models among teachers of adolescent girls may have contributed to the unpopularity of teaching as a career choice for girls in the past[5]. Some African countries, like Zambia, have been implementing the policy of balancing leadership positions in schools following the rules of selection of school leadership in such a way that when there is a male school director, the deputy must be a female. Besides, when there is a female school director, the deputy must be male.

Women's scarcity in managerial and decision-making spheres is a global phenomenon. However, one obvious difference between developed and developing regions lies in women's access to education. In most countries where feminism has the most impact, women account for no more than 10% of managers and 3% of company directors, and this issue has received the attention of international organizations [6]. Several reports and research findings noted that there are women who have succeeded in their school leadership roles and initiated other women to be outstanding role models among teachers of adolescent girls, which has contributed to the unpopularity of teaching as a career choice[7]. There is adequate evidence that educating women is beneficial at the national, community, family, and individual level. With even basic education, individual women effectively engage in economic activities and thus contribute to greater national productivity. At the family level, educated women have reduced fertility rates, brought up healthier, better-educated children, and reduced infant and maternal mortality rates [8]. At the society level, educated women participate more in development activities as well as in political and economic decision-making processes. Women's reluctance in management and decision-making areas is a visible reality. In most patriarchal societies, females are regarded as inferior to males. Because of this, women are reluctant to take on both honored and utilitarian roles, and men have access to leadership and governance roles; this is a barrier to women's belonging in administrative roles. So far, little attempt has been made to disaggregate information to avoid wholesale generalizations; hence the reason for this study to explore women's reluctance to assume leadership positions in the Warren Park district.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- i. To establish factors that affect women's participation in managerial positions in schools.
- ii. To assess the perceptions of eligible female teachers about taking up leadership positions in educational institutions
- iii. To establish how confident eligible female teachers are in leading others in public primary schools.
- iv. To identify the major challenges that women encounter in their quest to get to leadership positions in public primary schools in Warren Park

2. Literature Review

2.1. Female Teachers' Reluctance to Take Up Managerial Positions in Schools

Uwizeyimana & Mathevula conducted a study on the promotion of female educators into school management positions: A Gendered Perspective in South Africa [9]. According to them, women's lives have been formed for millennia by their reproductive, domestic, and nurturing duties, whilst men's lives have been shaped by their concerns with business, science, managerial positions, and politics. This difference in focus has persisted even today. However, the combination of societal shifts and technical advancements in the modern and post-modern eras has demanded a broader definition of the social and professional duties of women and has made it easier for

women to enter the workforce. This has necessitated a broader definition of the social and professional roles of women. Nevertheless, women continue to be underrepresented in top-management roles, in spite of the fact that they have the rights and the qualifications to occupy any management position, including those that have traditionally been reserved for their male colleagues in the workplace.

The purpose of Uwizeyimana and Mathevula's study was to determine whether or not there are disparities based on gender in terms of the reasons that academics have identified as being the causes of the underrepresentation of women in school administration roles[9]. According to Magaisa, Moyo, Chamunorwa & Shava [10], despite the fact that there does not appear to be any gender-based difference on some factors, including family responsibilities, a lack of aspiration to management positions, a lack of mobility, female educators' fitness to hold management positions, and a lack of supportive networks that are considered to be the main barriers to the promotion of female educators into school management positions, gender-based differences do exist on other factors, such as a lack of support from male colleagues.

Although women make up 40% of the global workforce, they hold only 24% of senior management roles around the world, a figure that has not changed significantly over the past decade [11]. Why aren't more talented women moving up? Researchers have pointed to an array of reasons, from explicit discrimination to promotion processes that quietly favor men, but one of the most perplexing is that women themselves aren't as likely as men to put themselves forward for leadership roles through promotions, job transfers, and high-profile assignments [12]. Women begin their careers with ambitions that are just as high as their male peers, but before long they scale back their goals and shy away from competing for these jobs. The reason, many assume, is because women are risk-averse or lack confidence, or maybe because they have different career preferences than their male colleagues do [13].

2.2. Women's Perceptions about Taking Up Leadership Positions in Educational Institutions

Gender roles are connected to a set of stereotypical beliefs that influence every aspect of social life[14]. However, gender roles and stereotypes are subject to change. Women are more encouraged to actively participate in every sector of society, and many new opportunities have opened up to them. Recent research stresses cultural and structural factors as the main underlying reasons explaining the situation of women in leadership [11]. Shava & Chasokela (2021) [10] view social carriers of beliefs and ideologies, that is, school, media, family, and friends, as tending to employ sex differences 'as an explanation as to why women should prefer a career other than in science, such as in the humanities, as many some researchers have suggested[11]. Where women may have similar career goals as men, there are important structural and institutional differences between countries in the extent to which women may pursue these goals without giving up other goals that they might value, such as motherhood. In many European countries, social and family policies still support the traditional breadwinner model [2]. The implication is that women have to do more to move out of traditional beliefs and try to embrace equity in all sectors. Babic & Hansez (2021) conducted a study on the glass ceiling for women managers: antecedents and consequences for work-family interface and well-being at work[15]. It is important to emphasize that, despite enormous efforts made by businesses to promote diversity and legislation designed to ensure equal opportunity for women and men, women continue to constitute a sizable minority of those in positions of decision-making authority. This remark is representative of the phenomenon known as the glass ceiling, which is a form of discrimination against women that occurs vertically inside corporations.

2.3. Female Teachers' Confidence in Assuming Managerial Positions in Schools

According to Ohemeng & Adusah-Karikari, the treatment of men and women in the working world is frequently unequal. These inequalities are the result of personnel decisions being based on gender, an ascribed characteristic, rather than on an individual's qualifications or job performance[16]. According to Kassotakis (2017), if workers observe disparities in the way a firm treats its female employees, they are more likely to conclude that the organization has a glass ceiling. In terms of, for example, promotion at each level of the hierarchy, gender inequalities may be very tiny; yet, when added up, they represent a gap between the number of men and women occupying the highest positions in the firm [17].

A gendered culture that excludes and marginalizes women is defined by senior management, the vast majority of whom are men[10]. This culture is made up of a set of norms and organizational practices that promote and define masculine values, stereotypes, behaviors, and a vision of management and leadership [6].

These aspects of masculinity can be found in an organization's management and leadership. According to the social role theory proposed by Eagly[18], the image of the manager is frequently connected with that of a man who possesses so-called masculine attributes, such as authority, independence, competitiveness, and aggressiveness. Therefore, women, who have been linked for millennia with attributes that are diametrically opposed to one another, such as working together, listening, being sensitive, and having sympathy, would be less devoted to their employment and unable to manage[5]. Other attitudes about women in management can cause their superiors to overlook them as serious candidates for top management jobs. These ideas can be influenced by media portrayals of women in management. The incompatibility of the responsibilities of mother, wife, and manager is one example of these misconceptions. Another misconception is that becoming a manager requires an excessive amount of commitment, flexibility, and travel [13].

2.4. Major Challenges That Women Encounter in Their Quest to Get to Leadership Positions

Kassotakis (2017) [17] opines that women in educational leadership, in most cases, find themselves not fully established by the society they work with, making them feel their support to society not imperative. At this contemporary age, there are people who still believe that women are not suitably expert to compete successfully with men for advanced job status in the educational sector. Thus, such a structure of beliefs devalues women's liberation efforts. Women therefore have had an obscure time convincing men in some communities that they are competent to lead[1]. In most cases, they have to work extra hard in their profession to be identified and established as compared to their male counterparts who are gladly accepted in the community. Ghalia (2023) [2] observed that many women lose their drive to excel due to the many obstacles met along the path of becoming a leader. Moreover, men and women are generally not prepared to work under a woman because they feel that the moment a woman becomes the head, she has lost all her femininity [2]. Women managers are always at fault: if they are strong, they are regarded as aggressive, tough, and not feminine; if they are jovial, they are permissive; if they cry, they are emotional; if they make a mistake, remarks like "That's what you can expect from a woman" are heard all over, which is irritating and discriminatory [11]. According to [4], obstacles that women face in the discharge of their duties include discrimination. [4] also observed that a married woman who works outside the home actually carries two jobs. There is evidence to show that most of the household labor is done by an adult woman. In the execution of managerial duties, both male and female head teachers are saddled with similar challenges in the management of secondary schools[1]. However, female principals are often faced with societal demands and traditions that males do not face. Women principals are expected to complete their family responsibilities, maternal responsibilities, as well as managing the schools[1].

3. Research Methodology

In this study, the researcher adopted a pragmatist research philosophy. According to Kothari (2017)[19], pragmatist theorists hold the belief that research results ought to be observable, objective, or subjective with regard to the matter that is being studied. When it comes to resolving conflicts that arise over the course of research, pragmatism places emphasis on the connection that exists between theory and practice. The research had to adopt a pragmatist research philosophy because it promotes the application of a variety of approaches to the problems that are being studied. It is necessary for the researcher to adopt an acceptable approach by taking into consideration the research questions, research objectives, and the philosophical foundations of the research [20]. Since the researcher adopted pragmatism in this study, it was necessary to adopt the use of both qualitative and quantitative research strategies so as to acquire more insights from 100 female teachers who were eligible for managerial posts in Warren Park district. The use of a mixed research strategy has the potential to produce a more in-depth comprehension of a study subject than a single method could on its own. In this study, a descriptive research design was adopted. In this study, the researcher adopted the Taro Yamane sample size determination method, as shown below

The variables in this formula are:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n = the sample size

N = the population of the study
 e = the margin of error in the calculation
 $\text{Sample size} = 100 / (1 + 100(0.05)^2)$
 $\text{Sample size} = 100 / (1+1.2)$
 Sample size =80

4. Analysis and Presentation

4.1. Reliability Analysis

The reliability test was utilized to establish whether or not a scale possesses internal consistency. The researcher relied on Cronbach's alpha coefficient as the indicator in order to determine whether or not there was adequate consistency. The value of Cronbach's alpha for each construct and variable must be greater than 0.6, as this is a requirement. In a perfect world, Cronbach's alpha would be greater than 0.7. Nunnally (1967)[21] makes the assertion that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of a scale can be considered reliable if it is more than 0.6. In light of this, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient of a scale was determined to be 0.6 for the purposes of this study. In a perfect world, Cronbach's alpha would be higher than 0.7. Cronbach's alpha was used by the researcher for this study, and the value of Cronbach's alpha for the study was 0.9, which indicates that it may be suitable for the study. The reliability indices for the 6 different structures are displayed below in Table 1.

Table 1. Reliability Analysis

Item-Total Statistics					
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Squared Multiple Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Women cannot handle pressure	26.87	19.219	.303	.	.637
Recruitment favors men	26.96	19.028	.271	.	.649
Stereotype affect women	26.53	21.758	.162	.	.688
Most positions are best suited for men	26.85	22.262	.080	.	.610
Women have emotions which affects their leadership	26.65	20.418	.166	.	.680
Leadership positions are too heavy	27.04	19.269	.244	.	.660

The findings shown in Table 1 above demonstrated that the measurement scales were trustworthy because every Cronbach's alpha value for the constructs was greater than 0.60. The findings provide credence to the assertions made by Melovic et al. (2020)[22], who state that the value of a construct must be more than 0.6 for it to be considered reliable.

4.2. Descriptive Statistics in Relation to Research Findings

This section gives the findings on descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) of the constructs that were studied in this study. On each of the five constructs namely to establish factors that affect women's participation in managerial positions in schools, to assess the perceptions of eligible female teachers about taking up leadership positions in educational institutions, to establish how confident eligible female teachers are in leading others in public primary schools and to identify the major challenges that women encounter in their quest to get to leadership positions in public primary schools in Warren Park was presented on a Likert scale with four points was utilized. The response points were as follows: 1 was strongly disagree, 2 was disagree, 3 was agree, and 4 was strongly agree.

4.2.1. Factors that Affect Women Leadership in Schools

Table 2 below shows descriptive statistics of factors that affect women's leadership in schools

Table 2. Factors that affect women leadership in schools

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Lack of mobility affects my choice to be a manager	80	1	5	3.78	1.464
Lack of aspiration to management positions affect my acceptance	80	1	5	3.89	1.177
Family responsibilities affect my acceptance of a managerial post	80	1	5	3.90	1.284
My physiological make up affects my fitness to hold management positions	80	1	5	3.68	1.423
A lack of supportive networks for women as leaders affects my acceptance of a management position	80	1	5	3.43	1.345
Gender-based stereotypes resulting in a lack of support from male colleagues affect my acceptance of a management post	80	1	5	3.65	1.751
Valid N (listwise)	80				

From Table 2 above, it can be seen that the majority of respondents agreed that Family responsibilities affect my acceptance of a managerial post, with a mean rating of 3.90 and a standard deviation of 1.284. [9] conducted a study on the promotion of female educators into school management positions. A good majority of the teachers (mean, 3.89, SD, 1.17) indicated that lack of aspiration to management positions influenced their decision to accept management positions in schools, while a sizeable number (Mean, 3.478, SD, 1.464) indicated lack of mobility as a factor that influenced their uptake of a managerial position in schools. Considerably high numbers of teachers attributed their decision to participate in managerial positions in schools to factors, namely their physiological makeup (Mean, 3.68, SD, 1.423), a lack of support networks for women (Mean, 3.43, SD, 1.345), and gender stereotypes (Mean, 3.65, SD, 1.751).

According to [9], family responsibilities affect acceptance of a managerial post. Stereotypically speaking, women's lives have been formed for millennia by their reproductive, domestic, and nurturing duties, whilst men's lives have been shaped by their concerns with business, science, managerial positions, and politics. This difference in focus has persisted even today. However, the combination of societal shifts and technical advancements in the modern and post-modern eras has demanded a broader definition of the social and professional duties of women and has made it easier for women to enter the workforce [9]. This has necessitated a broader definition of the social and professional roles of women.

During interviews, respondent ABC noted that *"Women continue to be underrepresented in top-management roles, in spite of the fact that they have the rights and the qualifications to occupy any management position, including those that have traditionally been reserved for their male colleagues in the workplace. Despite the fact that there does not appear to be any gender-based difference on some factors, including family responsibilities, a lack of aspiration to management positions, a lack of mobility, female educators' fitness to hold management positions, and a lack of supportive networks that are considered to be the main barriers to the promotion of female educators into school management positions, gender-based differences do exist on other factors, such as a lack of support from male colleagues"*

There are now a greater number of female teachers in Warren Park district than there are male teachers. This has led to the profession becoming increasingly associated with women. It still seems that the traditional belief that women are fragile and unable to withstand the lengthy intellectual effort required of leaders persists, even in positions of authority [11]. This leads to a lack of representation of women in positions of power. According to Chigudu [13], it is considered that women in leadership positions are unstable, emotional, and unable to make decisions quickly enough, which makes them unsuitable for the demands of the leadership role.

When compared to men, it is widely believed that women are incapable of being effective leaders because of their perceived lack of strength.

Respondent ABD mentioned that ... *“The culture of Zimbabwe is one of the factors that has been identified as being a significant barrier to the advancement of women to positions of authority in the country. Men are considered superior to women in Zimbabwean culture and custom. Women were led to feel, as a result of social construction, that their roles in the workplace are merely supplementary to those of men and that their contributions to the family are unimportant. When marriage is viewed more as an act of religious faith to establish the next generation than as a shared economic advantage, it is often understood that the husband is the primary economic provider for the family. However, in other cultures, women may also contribute to the household income. This culture has had an effect on the level of competitiveness that women have with men. Many women will avoid competing with their male counterparts because they believe that priority should be given to males because they are the ones providing a greater economic benefit for the family. This perception leads many women to avoid situations in which they would be in a position of direct competition. Within the context of this society, men have been accorded greater privilege and superiority in order to provide them with easier access to positions of authority”*

4.2.2. Perceptions about Assuming Management Positions in Schools

Table 3 below shows descriptive statistics of perceptions about assuming management positions in schools

Table 3. Perceptions about assuming management positions in schools

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I believe that managerial positions are best suited for men	80	1	5	4.23	.937
My' emotional make up makes me unable to lead schools	80	1	5	3.82	1.324
My' physiological make up makes me not fit for management	80	1	5	3.94	1.202
A management job in a school is too heavy for me	80	1	5	3.84	1.100
Family responsibilities make me not interested in a school management job	80	1	5	3.64	.803
The management functions of a school are too complex for me as a woman	80	1	5	3.41	.954
It can be overwhelming for me to carry a school to success as a woman	80	1	5	3.77	1.101
Valid N (listwise)	80				

From Table 3 above, it can be seen that a good majority of the teachers (mean, 4.23, SD, .937) indicated that they believe that managerial positions are best suited for men, while a sizeable number (Mean, 3.82; SD, 1.324) indicated that their emotional makeup makes them unable to lead schools. Considerably high numbers of teachers attached their decision on perceptions about assuming management positions in schools mentioned, physiological make up makes me not fit for management (Mean, 3.94, SD, 1.202), management job in a school is too heavy for me (Mean, 3.84, SD, 1.100), family responsibilities make me not interested in a school management job (Mean, 3.64, SD, 0.803), the management functions of a school are too complex for me as a woman (Mean, 3.41, SD, 0.954) and it can be overwhelming for me to carry a school to success as a woman (Mean, 3.77, SD, 1.101). Oyeniran & Lili (2020)[23] conducted a study on how females deal with hindrances in School Headship. Evidence from the Ivorian Context. They noted that one of the most pressing issues facing the subject of education today is that of leadership, and more specifically, the leadership of school principals. Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that women educational leaders are more capable of successfully guiding their institutions.

In spite of this, the narratives behind how a woman leads a primary school, as well as the experiences, barriers, and challenges that come with the principalship, have not been adequately explored in the context of Ivorian culture. From a gender equity point of view, the goal of this study is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the challenges and roadblocks that are encountered by female school principals in Ivory Coast. According to the findings of Oyeniran & Lili (2020)[23], female school leaders need to overcome the aforementioned challenges in addition to the numerous other obstacles and problems that arise inside their institutions in order to continue their work. In order for this to be successful, it was necessary for women principals to be imaginative. This would also be achievable through the essential transformation of structures, as well as the reform of policies, with the goal of boosting the number of women recruited for leadership positions in educational institutions. Most of Oyeniran & Lili (2020) [23] respondents strongly believed that managerial positions are best suited for men.

During interviews, respondent ABG noted that *"It is considerably more beneficial for women to participate in school leadership at lower levels, such as leading and coordinating various clubs and departments, rather than participating in higher levels of school leadership, such as that of vice principal and principal"*

In this regard, Holtkamp [24] and Giddens [25] believe that women have been reluctant to pursue educational administration due to the fact that women have been performing the traditional role of homemakers while men have remained leaders in every aspect of life. They say this is because women have traditionally been expected to care for their families while men have been expected to take charge in all aspects of life.

In a similar vein, the qualitative responses provided by all of the respondents mirror one another in terms of their perspectives. On the other hand, the interviewee portrays the reason why female teachers are hesitant to pursue school leadership as not being a problem of low levels of self-confidence but rather their having an excessive amount of responsibilities at home.

In addition, the interviewee ACD provided the following information regarding the reluctance of women to accept leadership roles in schools.... *"Most women do not want to apply for the posts, saying perhaps women give priority to their family rather than school leadership because it needs too much time, which is a burden for women to balance home responsibilities and school leadership. They are not eager to take the posts because of the traditional beliefs which give home responsibility to women"*

In addition, the person who was interviewed, GGA, stated that..... *"In a patriarchal society, men are regarded as being superior to women in terms of leadership. Members of the society are of the opinion that men are more qualified to lead than women. Because of this, if there is a need for new leadership, most people will vote for a male candidate rather than a female one"*

In addition, the interviewee ABV stated the following: *"daughters are groomed for their marriage roles of wife, mother, and food provider from an early age, and they are conditioned from an early age to believe that a woman is inferior to a man and that her place is in the home, and the cultural belief that men are the better leaders make them reluctant to pursue careers outside the home."*

In the context of educational leadership, this means that male leaders are aware of their privileges and work to mutually increase their duties in order to promote each other's professional growth. This does not happen to women since men are hesitant to share with them, and in addition, there are only a small number of women who are willing to offer assistance. The absence of women who can serve as examples for other women is one of the primary reasons why there are not more women in positions of authority [7]. According to Makura [1], women view the role of school administrator as being part of a hegemonic male culture in academia. They do not experience a sense of ease when talking and discussing issues relating to their professional lives with men. They feel most comfortable receiving support from other women in similar situations. The most important person for female teachers to have on their side if they want to advance into leadership roles is a female principal. They require the inspiration and direction of other women in order to feel encouraged and confident in themselves. In the field of education, women teachers do not get the same kinds of social messages as male educators do regarding promotion to principalship.

4.2.3 Confidence of Teachers in Doing Managerial Work

Table 4 below shows descriptive statistics of confidence of teachers in doing managerial work.

Table 4. Confidence of teachers in doing managerial work

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation

Overall smooth running of a school	80	1	5	4.43	.937
Managing Financial resources	80	1	5	3.52	1.324
Decision making	80	1	5	3.74	1.202
Steering curriculum implementation	80	1	5	3.64	1.100
Controlling the staff in a school	80	1	5	3.54	.803
Managing infrastructural development	80	1	5	3.31	.954
Providing support for effective student learning	80	1	5	3.67	1.101
Leading in the use of modern technology in teaching and learning.	80	1	5	3.87	.891
Valid N (listwise)	80				

From Table 4 above, it can be seen that a good majority of the teachers (mean, 4.43, SD, 0.937) indicated that the overall smooth running of a school influences the confidence of teachers in doing managerial work, while a sizeable number (Mean, 3.52, SD, 1.324) indicated managing financial resources as a factor that influences the confidence of teachers in doing managerial work. Considerably high numbers of teachers attached their decision to confidence of teachers in doing managerial work factors namely, decision making (Mean, 3.74, SD, 1.202), steering curriculum implementation (Mean, 3.64, SD, 1.100), controlling the staff in a school (Mean, 3.54, SD, 0.803), managing infrastructural development (Mean, 3.31, SD, 0.954), providing support for effective student learning (Mean, 3.67, SD, 1.101) and leading in the use of modern technology in teaching and learning (Mean, 3.87, SD, 0.891). This was also supported by Oyeniran & Lili (2020)[23], who conducted a study on how females deal with hindrances in School Headship. Evidence from the Ivorian context noted that teachers' confidence is influenced by the overall smooth running of a school, managing financial resources, decision-making, steering curriculum implementation, controlling the staff in a school, and managing infrastructural development.

4.2.4. Which Main Challenges Confront Female Teachers in Assuming Managerial Positions in Schools?

During interviews, respondents were asked about challenges confronting female teachers in assuming managerial positions in schools. Respondent ABF noted that.... *"A challenge that faces women in leadership roles is finding a healthy balance between their personal and professional obligations. When a woman gets married and starts a family, society places an additional responsibility on her shoulders, forcing her to make a difficult choice between her job and her family. When women's lives more closely resembled those of their male counterparts, such as when their children were older or had grown up, and their husbands' employment could support the transfer, then they should consider whether or not it was the right time to seek advanced positions. Because the public (man) world is valued more than the private (female) sphere, it has become necessary for women to conform to the standards set by males in order to advance in their careers"*.

Respondent GGF noted that *"In many ways, men in Zimbabwean culture have access to more possibilities than women do as a direct result of the patriarchal standards that are still widely practiced there. People generally favor having sons over daughters when they start a family. Because only boys can carry on a family's tribe membership, the birth of a boy among some Zimbabwean ethnic groups is commemorated with a unique traditional ritual, whereas the birth of a girl is not given the same level of importance. As a component of the wedding ceremony, under certain customs practiced in Zimbabwe, a man is obligated to provide a monetary gift to a woman or her family. This is a sign that the wife has been completely subordinate to her husband ever since that precise moment"*

Respondent AGG noted that *"Tradition is also an essential factor in shaping the mentality of the society, which is predominantly Christian (more than 90% of the population). Unfortunately, according to the traditional understanding, women are not allowed to take leadership roles, and their participation in activities that take place outside the home is restricted. This interpretation gives rise to the belief that the husband is more important than his wife and promotes the concept of sexual subordination within the context of the ideal structure of a family or society. Women are expected to be submissive and obey their male counterparts, as they play a supporting function in society. Without the approval of their husband, women are not allowed to participate in activities outside the*

home. Additionally, in several religions practiced in Zimbabwe, women are not permitted to hold positions of leadership”

Respondent ACV noted that *“The most important quality for any woman who aspires to a management position is confidence. Growing up in a patriarchal system that is still widely practiced in many spheres of Zimbabwean society makes it difficult for women to assume positions of authority in the country. A lack of self-confidence and low self-esteem might emerge as a result of being indoctrinated by society to believe that women are helpless and nothing more than a second sex to men. The situation is made worse by cultural attitudes that place men in a higher position than women. There is a general reluctance among women to compete head-to-head with their male counterparts for leadership posts. Because of the long-held beliefs that women are helpless and submissive, modern women have been socialized to believe that they are incapable of holding positions of authority. As a result, modern women are unable to picture themselves in leadership roles”*

Respondent ABH mentioned that *“Women, like males, have a natural fear of failing. That is one of the stresses they face as a result of their leadership roles. They are held to the same or even higher standards than their male counterparts in this regard. Due to the fact that gender competitiveness and personal ambition are given a lower priority in the locally recognized standards and norms, the pressure that is placed on females to suppress their desires regarding their status is doubled”*

Respondent ADDT noted that *“The number of female school leaders (principals) in Zimbabwean schools is significantly lower than the number of male principals as a direct consequence of the gender gap that exists in educational leadership positions. Women are not allowed to participate in the informal relationships and networks that are maintained by the male-dominated organization that is comprised of school principals. In addition, the traditional values practiced in Zimbabwe have relegated women to subordinate roles, which has resulted in men ignoring the 'voices' of women. It would appear that male administrators and male managers are more comfortable sharing their knowledge with other males than they are with females, particularly in more casual circumstances. There is reluctance on the side of the male principals to impart their knowledge and experience to their female counterparts. There is a subset of traditional males who believe that women represent temptation, and as a result, these men strive to maintain a distance from women in all settings, including the workplace. Through the process of social construction, women's careers have come to be regarded as having less importance than male careers”*

5.Recommendations

5.1. Female Teachers Should Be Considered for Top Leadership Posts

It is necessary for various organizational officials (including School Principals and Education Officials) to give greater recognition to female teachers, place them in functional areas or job assignments that lead to the accomplishment of critical school tasks, and strengthen them so that they can hold higher-level positions. Educational leaders, such as school principals, town education officials, and officials in charge of women's and children's affairs, are responsible for ensuring that all applicable electronic guidelines are fully implemented. Additionally, educational leaders are tasked with appointing and supporting coordinators as one of their strategies to institutionalise and monitor gender fairness in their respective schools.

5.2. Embracing the Contributions that Women Have the Potential to Lead and Bring Positive Results

In order for societies to achieve their developmental goals, they must first embrace the contributions that women who have the potential to lead could make, and then they must encourage rather than reject women who have this ability. Through conversation in a variety of public venues, it is essential for female educators to become aware of the intrinsic qualities they possess and to teach their peers how to alter the unfavourable attitudes held by the community, parents, and students towards them.

5.3. Raising Awareness

Concerned bodies (Women Affairs) need to make concerted efforts to raise social awareness on the necessity of female participation in every leadership role, notably in schools. This is especially true when it comes to educational institutions. At the level of the school, it is necessary to appoint female teachers to leadership positions such as unit leader, department head, and co-curricular coordinator. This is to give them the

opportunity to develop their leadership and decision-making skills, so that they can work their way up the school's hierarchy and into a better position.

When selecting teachers to become principals, there ought to be some form of quota system in place for women's representation in the classroom. As a result, it is essential to broaden the opportunities available to women in order to encourage more of them to take part in school leadership roles and thereby provide them with the necessary skills for such roles. According to Grogan (2015)[26], women in critical leadership roles have a responsibility to talk about and think creatively with other women about strategies to successfully balance the demands of their jobs with the duties of their families. Women and men in authoritative positions within educational systems have a responsibility to actively mentor a greater number of female students. School principals, town education officials, and officials in charge of women and children could collaborate on a plan to include a gender unit or office on any committee or team that is charged with the recruitment, training, and development of female teachers for school leadership positions.

5.4. Acknowledging Potential Contribution of Women

In order for males to achieve the nation's developmental goals, they must be willing to acknowledge the potential contributions of females in leadership roles. In addition to this, they shouldn't be discouraging them but rather encouraging them. Building the capacity of female teachers to pursue school leadership could be accomplished through the implementation of practices that make use of financial resources. To encourage other women to pursue positions of leadership, particularly at the level of the school principal, and to counter perceptions of stress related to school leadership that discourage those who have the potential to apply for school principal, women in positions of leadership need to communicate the sense of effectiveness that they derive from their work. This can motivate other women to pursue positions of leadership.

6. Conclusions

In this study, it was established that

1. factors such as family responsibilities affect acceptance of a managerial post.
2. The status of the teaching profession at the time participants were growing up and thinking of occupations they would like to follow had an influence on participants' desire to choose teaching as a career.
3. Most women are confident and eligible to lead others.
4. Management jobs can be challenging, but most women are able to handle such pressure.
5. When women aim to attain certain leadership posts, they will not get support from other male leaders or peers.
6. Elements that hinder female teachers' participation in school leadership include the inappropriate implementation of the provision of methods, which, in turn, was not successful in bringing more female teachers into school leadership.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, O.S. and A.M.; methodology, O.S.; software, O.S.; validation, O.S., A.M. ; formal analysis, O.S.; investigation, O.S.; resources, O.S.; data curation, O.S.; writing—original draft preparation, O.S.; writing—review and editing, O.S.; visualization, O.S.; supervision, O.S.; project administration, O.S.; funding acquisition, A.M. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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