

## Female Leadership in a Rural School: A Feminist Perspective

Brigitte Smit

*University of South Africa, Pretoria, Gauteng, South Africa, 0003*

**KEYWORDS** Feminism. Relational Leadership. Narrative Inquiry

**ABSTRACT** This qualitative narrative inquiry focused on relational female leadership and ethics of care from a feminist perspective. Female leadership in a rural educational setting called for in-depth qualitative inquiries specifically on the African continent. In this inquiry one female school principal was researched over a period of three years. Empirical data were sourced from observations and guided conversations. The research participant was a female school principal of a rural primary (elementary) school, taught reading classes, gathered food for the hungry learners in her school, has established a Non-Profit Organisation, educated parents, disciplined learners, chaired committees, managed the school finances, initiated school building projects, and even made time to share as research participant her roles as a leader. Her school was located in a disadvantaged community, where most learners lived in squatter camps, 85% of the parents were unemployed, many were refugees from Mozambique and Zimbabwe, and many were orphaned, and most had only one meal per day, which was provided by the school. This narrative inquiry was framed in relational leadership and spoke to how the principal found grounding in the complex demands of the everyday school activities, while not neglecting to enact curriculum leadership.

### INTRODUCTION

This article illustrated female leadership in a disadvantaged school in South Africa. It is an interpretive inquiry that sought to understand the experiences of a female school principal from a feminist perspective, specifically an ethics of care and relational leadership in order to reveal the complexities of school leadership in disadvantaged schools. In the inquiry the researcher worked as an observer in the school over a period of three years. The inquiry was designed narratively, sourcing data from guided conversations (Hollingsworth 1992) and observations.

### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As preamble of this inquiry, the cue was taken from Grogan and Shakeshaft (2011: 6) who claimed that “much of the research about leadership has been critiqued for the absence of women in educational leadership studies. Studies, conducted only with men, have been generalised to all leaders without identifying them as single gender studies. This implies that research on educational leadership has presented

a biased interpretation, which leans strongly towards the views of men”. That said, most empirical research in educational leadership has been constrained by positivist research frameworks, which has failed to provide a robust, dynamic and multi-dimensional description of female leadership (Young and Lopez 2005: 340). Prevailing conceptions of leadership have been defined largely from Eurocentric and patriarchal perspectives. The empirical approach employed in this inquiry has offered an interpretive and qualitative approach for in-depth understandings of the multiple realities of female leadership in a particular educational landscape. The inquiry also proposed a broader alternative theoretical perspective of a feminist relational theory and the ethics of care, which offered the potential to strengthen the knowledge base around female educational leadership.

What could feminist theories of leadership offer to understand the experiences of female leadership in disadvantaged communities in the South African context? Given the dearth of research of women as leaders in general and female school principals in particular, this inquiry advanced knowledge theoretically and empirically. Substantive research on feminist theories has related to inquiries of power, autonomy, allocation and reproduction and ethics. These aspects could have relevance for female leadership but have not been equated to female leadership. Leadership has mostly been investigated from a male dominated perspective (Kramarae and Spender 2000; Vetter 2010; O’Connor 2010) given its public forum. Female leadership has

---

*Address for correspondence:*

Prof Brigitte Smit  
 Department of Educational Leadership and Management  
 College of Education  
 PO Box 392  
 0003 UNISA  
 South Africa  
 Telephone: +27(0)991-3033  
 Fax: +27(0)991-2569  
 E-mail: smitb@unisa.ac.za

been relegated to the private sphere where attention was focused on family and social relation (Vetter 2010: 3). Male domination was opposed by feminist researchers who insisted on a leadership that advanced the goals and aspirations of women. It was beyond the scope of this article to trace the history of feminism and its lack of contribution of feminist theories of leadership. What could be said though is that “the history of political thought has provided a broad and often contradictory basis on which to build feminist theories of leadership” (Vetter 2012: 6). One such an example was the work by Michel Foucault whose theories of power and discourse have influenced feminist political theorists in diverse ways. Foucault called “attention to the marginalized and silenced perspectives to gain greater understanding of the multiple ways in which power operates in society” (Vetter 2012: 6). Vetter offered four major strands of contemporary feminist theory that apply to current trends in feminist leadership theory: liberalism and feminist theory, Marxist feminism, ethics of care and feminist leadership, and Foucauldian and discursive feminism and leadership. This inquiry drew on the ethics of care and feminist leadership. Virtues such as compassion and care, which should not be interpreted in a narrow way with private life, instead it was appropriated in public and political life, including educational life. Tronto, cited by Vetter (2010: 8) has defined care as both disposition and action to reach out to other people in society at large. Care has been connected to democratic processes and a concern for social justice. “An ethics of care requires several components such as attentiveness to the needs of others, responsibility, understanding of contexts, competence and responsiveness on the part of those who have received care. Such ethics of care was applied in feminist theories of leadership and was often recognised by compassion, empathy, collaboration, and social justice” (Vetter 2010: 8). School leaders conceived of caring as a political, moral and ethical imperative and were committed to ‘making a difference’ in the lives of their learners. Research studies of women leaders, conducted for example by Blackmore’s (1989), Strachan’s (1999), Wyn et al. (2000), and Williamson and Hudson (2001) were motivated by doing what was best for their learners and staff.

An emerging trend in leadership theories has been the relational perspective and approach.

Uhl-Bien (2006: 654, 2001a, 2011b) has explained that the term relational leadership was quite new, although the concept of relation-oriented behaviour was not so new in leadership studies. It was Carol Gilligan, in 1982, in her well known text, *In a different voice*, who proposed, somewhat provocatively, that females value relationships more than males, which resulted in further research on female approaches to leadership with documented relational aspects, evidenced in communication styles, teamwork, collaboration and community connection (Shakeshaft 2006: 506). Earlier writings on relational leadership (Regan and Brooks 1995) have offered insights into how women transformed their understanding of school leadership. These women were insiders and resisted the traditional administrative behaviour as modelled by their male counterparts. In their research Regan and Brooks (1995) developed relational leadership as a theory based on empirical data sourced from 11 women, who resisted socialization into the prevailing male dominant culture (Regan and Brooks 1995: xi). The account of their practice was described as relational as opposed to controlling. Leadership as relational influence has been performed by anyone; it was not a person or a place or a thing, instead it was a verb: “leadership is the action of influence; it is relation, it does not exist by itself (Schmuck and Schmuck 1992 cited by Regan and Brooks 1995: xi). A new language that was relational was offered; a language of care, vision, collaboration, courage and intuition, which were feminist attributes of leadership. While these concepts were not new in the vocabulary, they were given new conceptualizations for the practice of relational leadership.

The first feminist attribute was care, which was defined “as the development of an affinity for the world and the people in it, translating moral commitment to action on behalf of others” (Regan and Brooks 1995: 27). Caring was the essence of education (Regan and Brooks 1995), and educational leaders remained in caring relationships over a period of time, nurturing growth of learners and staff. Put differently, relational leadership displayed care and concern for all colleagues and learners. Beck (1992) cited by Regan and Brooks suggested that ethics play an important role in educational leadership, which were informed and guided by care (Regan and Brooks 1995: 29). A feminist perspective

of care allowed dealing with particular individuals as individuals with whom leaders have relationships. Caring encouraged understanding of experiences of individuals who were living for example in poverty, or with a disability (Grogan 2000: 133). The second feminist attribute was vision, an ability to formulate and articulate original ideas through a facilitated process of encouragement. A visionary leader created a trusting work environment and colleagues were invited to collaborate and participate. Visionary leaders contributed to feminist thinking and to a new vision for schools. The third feminist attribute was collaboration, the ability to work in a group, supporting group members and creating a synergetic environment for all. Collaboration entailed inclusiveness, shared ownership, connectedness and cooperativeness. The fourth feminist attribute was courage, “the capacity to move ahead into the unknown, teasing new ideas in the world of practice” (Regan and Brooks 1995:29). It involved a degree of risk-taking for the good of the group or the individual, and a quality of leaving oneself vulnerable with a difficult situation. This kind of leadership did not call attention to the leader, instead it called attention to everybody else. The final feminist attribute was intuition as “the ability to give equal weight to experience and abstraction, mind and heart. Often intuition was given little credibility. However, “intuition as the initiator is the capacity of mind and heart that was integral to a relational approach to leadership” (Regan and Brooks 1995:34). These attributes of leadership differed greatly from the traditional administrative language of control, hierarchy, authority and division of labour. Whilst relational and traditional language was at opposite ends, it did not mean that relational language was only meant for female administrators. Instead it was meant for men and women. Moreover, an “increased presence of women administrators, as well as emerging feminist scholarship in this field, was corollary to the widening acceptance of the idea of leadership as relational” (Regan and Brooks 1995: xi).

A more recent text, based on women and educational leadership (Grogan and Shakeshaft 2011) explored the concept of relational leadership based on research conducted with female leaders in educational contexts. They suggested that relational leadership is about being in relationships with others in a horizontal rather than

a hierarchical sense. Stated differently, relations produced power in a flattened organizational structure. “Leaders who develop coherence around shared values are likely to deepen the sense of community with an organization – a sense of being in relationship with others who are striving for the same goals” (Grogan and Shakeshaft 211:47). Accomplishing goals usually took place with and through others; power was conceptualized differently emphasizing that power of everyone should be expanded. Given the male dominance of power, women often would express their discomfort with power and deny their own power. What has changed is the language in use about power, from power *with* rather than power *over* (Grogan and Shakeshaft 211: 7). This signalled a relational approach of power in the work of female leaders. Power was conceptualized by women as something that was shared and therefore they sought to expand everyone’s power (Grogan and Shakeshaft 2011). This supported how women perceived power and relationships as closely aligned and how power facilitated to strengthen relationships, and not to control them.

## METHODOLOGY

By way of introducing the qualitative research design and methodology for a leadership study, it is noted that leadership scholarship has largely been quantitative in orientation, grounded in the objectivist and positivist paradigm (Klenke 2008). However, narrative inquiry as a qualitative design type was slowly edging its way into leadership studies. Such qualitative inquiries offered “opportunities to explore leadership phenomena in significant depth, did so longitudinally, and answered ‘why’ questions about leadership as opposed to ‘how’ and ‘what’ type of questions as might have been answered by quantitative research” (Klenke 2008: 5).

For the purpose of this study, feminist qualitative research framed the design and methodology and considered how race, class, gender, age and material circumstances, in multiple contexts which rendered the taken for granted problematic in ways that moved towards social justice (Olesen 2007: 421). Feminist theory has been at its best when it has reflected the lived experiences of women, when it has bridged the gap between mind and body, reason and emo-

tion, thinking and feeling (Jagger 1983, cited by Regan and Brooks 1995:39). Furthermore, feminist research has not depicted women as powerless, abnormal or without agency. On the contrary, research participants had the power to withhold information. Given (2008: 334) suggested a way of opening the dialogical space for researcher participants to be heard, was by avoiding 'othering' in the research process, by requesting participants to share much information about themselves, while the researcher shared little or no information about herself. Feminist research acknowledged that knowledge and 'truth' were partial, situated, subjective, and relational. Closely linked to the feminist ethics of care, feminist qualitative research stressed the ethical dimension and the inter-relatedness of researcher and participant, and multiple ways of knowing (Olesen 2007: 422). This implied that feminist researchers were both implicated and participatory in the generation of data. Importantly were whose interests would be served by the research. The intent of this inquiry was to serve female school principals and that educational leadership was served from the perspective of women.

This research employed a narrative inquiry from a feminist perspective, which implied that more than 'imported voices', were needed to critically "transform and disrupt ideological and/or institutional arrangements ... in a disciplined and caring way" (Carspecken 1996: x). The processes of leadership, intended and unintended consequences of observed interaction patterns, relationships and socio-cultural contexts within educational landscapes were inquired into. To this end the researcher focused on the experiences of a female school principal. The field texts were analysed using constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz 2006), narrative inquiry (Clandinin and Connelly 2000; Clandinin, 2007; Clandinin, Pushor Murray Orr 2007; Slater 2010) and feminist narrative interpretations (Hilfinger Messias and DeJoseph 2004; Landman 2006). Narrative inquiry was a productive methodology for feminist research, respecting that research participants not only recounted their stories but also became "engaged in living, telling, retelling and reliving stories" (Connelly and Clandinin 1990: 4). Appropriately for narrative inquiry, as a relational way of knowing, was that as stories were told, in whatever forum, gaps were bridged, participants

were reached out to in order to develop relationships by sharing personal experiences related to the topic to create trust and to avoid othering. And lastly, ethical clearance was granted for this research project by the researcher's previous institution of employment.

## RESULTS

The researcher met the school principal, Naledi<sup>1</sup> about ten years ago as a master's student. Today she is a successful school principal of a primary school in a rural school approximately 80km away from Pretoria. She has been a teacher for 7 years, a head of department for 4, a deputy principal for 8 years and a school principal since 2006. She has also completed her PhD in Education Management. Her school has over 1300 learners. Her staff consists of 2 deputy principals, 4 heads of department, 23 teachers, 5 practitioners, 2 administrative staff and 5 ground staff. The narrative findings were constructed by Naledi:

Naledi's school was named after a former executive mayor from the area who had great political influence. The school was located in a rural area in the north eastern part of South Africa. Many farm schools in the area have closed down and therefor teachers and children have moved closer to my school. Approximately 85% of all parents of the school were unemployed and relied of government grants to support their children. Most children lived in squatter camps. Refugees from Zimbabwe and Mozambique came to the school to enrol their children. Sadly, these parents did not have identification documents and children had no birth certificates or immunisation cards. The Department of Education forced Naledi to admit these children conditionally for 90 days in order for parents to organise relevant documentation. Not only did she do not know where to place these children, given that they had no school report cards, but they also did not speak English or a local African language. Naledi was unable to request school fees and the daily running of the school was seriously compromised. She relied on donations of food and money. Most learners in the school had very little if anything to eat at home. Therefor she started a non-profit organisation (NPO) on the premises where she had volunteer workers cooking for approximately 200 children. This project complemented the

feeding project which was run by government. Schools in rural areas received one meal a day, which was sponsored by government. She realised though that the governmental intervention is insufficient and therefore she sourced funding from business in the nearby town. These businesses helped the school immensely to feed the hungry learners. The NPO also attended to the physical needs such as washing children and afternoon homework activities. Without this support she would have struggled even more. Most children were then able to participate fully in classroom activities and learning. It happened though that many children came to school sick, but actually they were only hungry. Winter time was the worst. Children did wear uniforms but there was very little that is *uniform* about the uniform as most parents could not afford the school uniform. Recently, she received an amount of money for a teacher award prize from the Department of Education. Although the money was intended for her personally, she decided to donate this money to buy uniforms for 63 learners. She found this to be far more rewarding. The home situation of most learners was unbearable. Orphans lived with their grandparents who relied on old age pension. Many parents have died because of AIDS and the local hospice attested to this.

As the school leader she was in charge of all the affairs of my school: curriculum, development of people, financial management, learners, infrastructure, as well as parents. She was the link between school and the community. She 'represented' the image of this school and she wanted it to be good one. She encouraged her staff to deliver on all counts of the requirements of the Department. She inspired and motivated her staff and accounted to the district and the department. Her view on what it meant to be leader in this school has developed over the years. She realised that often she was in conflict with the bureaucratic system, where she needed to make decision regarding learners and staff. She often responded as a buffer between the two. For instance, her decision to establish a NPO was a decision she took on her own – she responded to the needs of my school, realising that the Department would not assist. Such decisions put her in conflict with the authorities. She has been accused of running her school like a university. She was unsure where this accusation came from, but she suspected it

had to be with the fact she had a PhD in Education Management. This already added a great deal to her frustration as district official refused to visit her school or offer any support. Most of the time teachers who have postgraduate qualifications chose to leave the school and join the district or the Department as administrative officials. She has however chosen to stay – there was work to be done! She was utterly serious about her school and her leadership style showed it. She fought for her staff, encouraged them in their work, and motivated them to continue studying. She knew her staff was hardworking. Many of them came from farm schools where they have taught in classes combined of 3 to 4 grades, which was called multigrade teaching. Naledi still taught some classes in her school and particularly enjoyed the little ones. She offered accelerated reading programmes, realising how important reading was. As a teaching team she encouraged teachers to invest all their energy in teaching and in the learners. She realised that little help could come from the authorities and therefore decided to do this on her own. Under her leadership she had developed sports fields (which were unknown in poor rural communities) and she was in the process of building a strong room. She was also at the time of the research a building sight manager as the assembly area would soon be getting a roof. She requested tenders for these building projects, received some funding from the department and sourced additional funding. She needed a complete change of the academic face of her school – and the physical structures had to match. She wanted her school to look beautiful and to be a safe place!

District officials did not visit her school, because they were of the opinion that she was doing well enough and there was no need for such visits. The issue however was not that she was doing well, instead it was about the district not offering sufficient support. Had it not been for her sourcing of additional funding, her school would be in deep trouble. Government in her view did not do its part. Given this background of the non-involvement of government in her school, she decided to stay on as school principal and not take a position in the district where she could earn far more money.

Naledi was deeply concerned about what happened outside the boundaries of her school. Thankfully learners trusted her and shared with

her. Recently she received a pornographic CD which had been doing its rounds in her school – a primary school. She investigated the matter and called in the South African Police Service to assist. They found that foreigners from outside South Africa were distributing these materials. She was shocked at what her learners were exposed to. She often felt helpless, knowing that she was unable to fix the social ills in the community. Parents and learners were so exposed to evil things and she therefore wanted to create a safe haven for her learners at school. She kept learners at school until lateafternoon as a way to protect them. She was concerned about the level of unemployment and measures that women in particular went to in order to make ends meet. These were hardly commendable examples in the homes of learners about what constituted good work. She therefor often met with parents and raised these issues. Last holiday she had to have her school grounds cleaned and the paving needed to be painted. She put on an overall, and started working on her own. The next day many parents came to assist. Again, she liked to lead by example. But leadership was not always as straightforward and people did not always respond with kindness. She had challenges with her immediate management team. One of her deputy principals was unable to support her, as he suffered from a chronic illness. This added such pressure to the leadership of the school as she was unable to rely on him. She took the matter to the authorities, but with no success. Conversely, her other deputy principal was a tremendous support and the two of them were able to take over the leadership. What concerned her was the contradicting message of leadership they presented in her school. She trusted that a leadership of care and collaboration would however be experienced first-hand.

## DISCUSSION

Evidence of relational leadership has spoken clearly to the potential of leading schools in a caring manner. A relational leader has seen the world differently, with vision, with care and with collaboration. Naledi has conducted her work with a moral code of conduct, she has empowered others to achieve and has lead by example in and out of school. Responsibilities reach far beyond of what was traditionally known as

school. She was indeed everything to everybody: a narrative of all things to all people. Such narratives have helped us to understand by making the abstract concrete and accessible (Wetherell and Noddings 1991 cited in Reagan and Brooks 1995). The researcher agreed with the authors that such narratives ‘from the ground’ redefined leadership, have brought about a new language about leadership, and one that disrupted the male dominated discourse of leadership. Elevating the feminist attributes evident from the narrative data spoke to the explanatory power of these attributes in relational leadership. Naledi’s leadership experiences reflected feminist attributes of care, collaboration, vision, intuition and courage. This inquiry redefined the roles of leaders and specifically female leaders, attributes which were seldom if ever taught to graduate students. Given the findings of this inquiry, leadership in a disadvantaged context required a redefining not so in terms of tasks, instead as a way of being. Odora Hoppers (2012) offered a helpful explanation in this context, namely that leadership was a matter of how to be, not how to do. How to do this was the task of a manager. The most effective leaders were a living demonstration of how values and character when combined in action carry the day.” Through Naledi’s voice in her short narratives, it is envisaged that these would empower other teachers and school principals, both male and female to initiate such journeys in their schools appropriating the practice of feminist attributes of leadership to their work as school leaders. Such leadership could enrich school life for the entire school community. No doubt this took extraordinary courage and resilience to work beyond the boundaries of what was commonly considered to be ‘school’.

The inquiry has drawn purposively on a relational epistemology meaning, “all the systems of knowledge built on relationships” (Wilson 2008 cited by Chilisa 2012). Also, a relational axiology was built on the concept of relational accountability, respectful representation, reciprocal appropriation and rights and regulations during the research process (Chilisa 2012: 22). Theoretically, conceptually, epistemologically and methodologically this inquiry cohered with a feminist, relational and narrative approach. The topic of relational female leadership fitted comfortably in a relational epistemology as the researcher narratively sought the experiences of a female leader in a disadvantaged school set-

ting. Entering this educational setting in a different manner would direct the investigation on another path. Pagano (1990: 135) (cited by Reagan and Brooks 1995:64) reminded the researcher appropriately that “we make ourselves known to ourselves by making ourselves known to each other”. Therefore this inquiry invited other female leaders in education to learn from this experience and to build new knowledge adding to this experience in order to expand the understandings of relational leadership. Given that educational training was dominated by male thinking, managerial positions were mostly understood from that perspective. Relational knowing (Hollingsworth 1992: 386) that drew on feminist attributes might shed light on a different way of leading in schools, particularly in disadvantaged schools. Not many texts have spoken to relational leadership in disadvantaged school, specifically on the African continent. Therefore inquiries into the experiences of female leaders from a relational perspective have been critical to advance new understandings of leadership. The challenge was to find the language, the words to articulate experiences on the one hand, and on the other to make these accessible and acceptable for the academic community and the male dominated leadership discourse.

### CONCLUSION

Narrative inquiry, which was interested in lived and told stories was a form of feminist research to facilitate meaning and knowing. This was a compelling reason why knowledge constructed from female leaders’ experiences had been disseminated. Perhaps one could ask other female leaders what they would have liked to be passed on to the young principals following them. The suspicion was that the feminist attributes would be mentioned. The question remained though, would this relational way of knowing in educational settings be positively received by those in power?

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The experiences of female educational leaders in South Africa remain largely un-researched. Narrative inquiry played a pivotal role into understanding how female leaders negotiated their roles in disadvantaged school com-

munities. Systematic in-depth narrative accounts from a feminist perspective shed light on what happened on the ground in disadvantaged schools led by female principals. The researcher learned from these narratives how nuanced, diverse and complex the various educational landscapes were and that there was no single answer to how to lead schools in such contexts. The researcher also learned about educational leadership specifically relational female leadership in disadvantaged communities. Narrative accounts from the world of practice together with detailed observations were imperative for student teachers who were studying teacher education and educational management. Naledi’s narrative was shared in the world of practice. She reminded the researcher to restore a caring purpose and relational leadership to the efforts and to help create the kind of schools the children deserve.

### REFERENCES

- Blackmore J 1989. Changing from within: Feminist educators and administrative leadership. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 66(3): 19-40.
- Carspecken PF 1996. *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research. A Theoretical and Practical Guide*. New York: Routledge.
- Charmaz K 2006. *Constructing Grounded Theory. A Practical Guide Through Qualitative Analysis*. London: Sage Publications.
- Chilisa B 2012. *Indigenous Research Methodologies*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Clandinin D J, Connelly F M 2000. *Narrative Inquiry. Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Clandinin DJ 2006. Narrative inquiry: A methodology for studying lived experience. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 27(1): 44-54.
- Clandinin DJ 2007. *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry. Mapping a Methodology*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Clandinin DJ, Pusher D, Murray Orr A 2007. Navigating sites for narrative inquiry. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 58(1): 21-35.
- Connelly FM, Clandinin DJ 1990. Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5): 2-14.
- Gilligan C 1982. *In a Different Voice*. Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Given LM (Ed.) 2007. *The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Grogan M 2000. Laying the groundwork for a reconception of the superintendency from feminist postmodern perspectives. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 36(1): 117-142.
- Grogan M, Shakeshaft C 2011. *Women and Educational Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Hilfinger Messias DK, DeJoseph JF 2004. Feminist narrative interpretations: Challenges, tensions and opportunities for nurse researchers. *Revista Aquichan*, 4(4): 44-49.
- Hollingsworth S 1992. Learning to teach through collaborative conversation: A feminist approach. *American Educational Research Journal*, 29(2): 373-404.
- Klenke K 2008. *Qualitative Research in the Study of Leadership*. Bingley UK: Emerald.
- Kramarae C, Spender D 2000. *Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women. Global Women's Issues and Knowledge*. New York: Routledge.
- Landman M 2006. Getting quality in qualitative research: A short introduction to feminist methodology and methods. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 65(4): 429-433.
- O'Connor K (Ed.) 2010. *Gender and Women's Leadership: A Reference Handbook*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Odora Hopper CA 2012. *Ethical African Leadership: We Know Theories, but What is the Task*. Unpublished Address to the UNISA Pre-SENEX Meeting.
- Olesen VL 2007. Feminist qualitative research and grounded theory: Complexities, criticisms and opportunities. In: A Bryant, K Charmaz (Eds.): *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, pp.417-435.
- Regan HB, Brooks G H 1995. *Out of Women's Experience. Creating Relational Leadership*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.
- Slater CL 2011. Understanding principal leadership: An international perspective and a narrative approach. *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 39(2): 219-227.
- Strachan J 1999. Feminist educational leadership: Locating the concepts in practice. *Gender and Education*, 11(3): 309-322.
- Uhl-Bien M 2006. Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(6): 654-676.
- Uhl-Bien M. 2011a. Relational leadership and gender: From hierarchy to relationality. In: PH Werhane, M Painter-Morland (Eds.): *Leadership, Gender, and Organization*. Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 65-74.
- Uhl-Bien M 2011b. Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing. In: PH Werhane, M Painter-Morland (Eds.): *Leadership, Gender, and Organization*. Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 75-108.
- Vetter LP 2010. Overview: Feminist theories of leadership. In: K O'Connor (Ed.): *Gender and Women's Leadership: A Reference Handbook*. London: Sage Publications, pp. 3-10.
- Williamson RD, Hudson M B 2001. New Rules for the Game: How Women Leaders Resist Socialization to Old Norms. *Paper Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association*, Seattle, WA, April 10-14, 2001.
- Wyn J, Acker S, Richards E 2000. Making a difference: Women in management in Australian and Canadian faculties of education. *Gender and Education*, 12(4): 435-447.
- Young MD, Lopez GR 2005. The nature of inquiry in educational leadership. In: FW English (Ed.): *The Sage Handbook of Educational Leadership: Advances in Theory and Research*. 1<sup>st</sup> Edition. London: Sage Publication, pp.337-362.