

**Obstacles and Opportunities in Women School Leadership:  
A Literature Study****Vuyisile Msila***PO Box 392, University of South Africa, College of Education, UNISA 0003,  
South Africa**E-mail: msilavt@unisa.ac.za***KEYWORDS** Women Leadership. Glass Ceiling. Gender Stereotypes. Leadership Styles

**ABSTRACT** This article examines what literature says about women leadership in schools. A number of researchers opine that the teaching profession has many women in its fold. However, there are few women leaders in educational institutions. In South Africa there has been a conscious effort to address the past imbalances by (among others), ensuring that women are employed in positions of educational leadership and management. This article looks at literature that discusses the various aspects of gender and school leadership. Although the researcher focuses on South Africa, arguments here are of a universal nature. The claims show that generally, the *women in leadership* theme, is becoming topical in many countries. There are many women who are beginning to overcome the social stereotypes that underscore that women cannot succeed in leading organisations. Many well-run schools in South Africa today have women at the helm. Exploring theories like Simone de Beauvoir's, the article also examines aspects such as the *glass-ceiling* effect as well as various leadership styles. It concludes by showing that leadership differences between men and women are very minimal despite the society's stereotypes and often misguided pronouncements.