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Male Educator Recruitment in Early Childhood Centres: Implications for Teacher Education

Joyce Mathwasa and Lwazi Sibanda

Abstract

The absent male educators in the Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes have created a gap in the momentum of success gained through fathers' involvement in the early life of children. Worldwide, the gender imbalance trends in early childhood education and lower primary classes have been immemorial female skewed with men becoming extinct in the arena. Hitherto, copious studies testify of men's involvement as fathers in young children's early life as crucial for their social, emotional, and cognitive development. This chapter focuses on the importance of having male educators in the foundation phase of children's care and learning, barriers to male involvement as educators in early care and learning centres, and how learning institutions can recruit and train male educators specific for the ECD. Male educators in the ECD have been confronted by stigmatisation, ridiculed, hit glass ceilings, and are viewed with hostility and suspicion. A preliminary exploration of literature from renowned published work that focuses extensively on various countries across continents will be covered in this review. This chapter envisaged strategies that could be employed in the recruitment, retention, and active participation of male educators in the ECD settings that will inform policy and teacher education.

Keywords: elementary education, gender bias, male disempowerment, perceptions Recruitment and Retention

1. Introduction: early childhood development setting globally

There are various terminologies used to define Early Childhood Development (ECD) by different institutions for the diverse programmes. Commonly used early childhood terminologies are: "Early Childhood Education (ECE), Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), Early Childhood Care (ECC), Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD), and Early Childhood Care for Development and Early Childhood Development (ECD)" [1–3]. Worldwide, early childhood is identified as a period that "covers the prenatal phase to eight years of age and it is during this crucial stage that the brain develops immensely throughout the lifespan" [4]. It is in this period that the child needs extreme attention and appropriate care as it is the most critical time for the growth and development. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 6 (Article 6, UNICEF) every child has a right to early childhood development, highlighting "a right to live...and develop

healthy” and that every child has “the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and mental needs” (Article 27, UNICEF). Reiterating the importance of childcare, the World Bank [5] states that children who access adequate care and stimulation early in life are likely to be more successful later in life, and children with a healthy weight and physical development are more likely to develop normally.

In several European and North American countries, Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) has become the standard where most children from birth and upwards attend a regulated early education service due to the entrance of women into the corporate world. Additionally, early childhood services are characterised by much more than a drop-off location for working parents, but more importantly as a place where the child is given the chance to engage and develop in an array of educational and social activities. Extensive research has proved that early education has positive influence on school readiness thereby increasing the number of children in formal ECEC. There has been an increase in the demand for formal educative childcare since more mothers became career women and even the stay-at-home mothers need childcare service at some time to help their children develop social skills.

2. Men in early childhood development settings

For ages worldwide women have dominated in the area of Early Childhood Development and Care (ECEC). This has been due to public confidence in women as they have been considered to be more nurturing than men, which has also become a hindrance to men who anticipate pursuing careers in early childhood education [6–9]. Recently, studies in Trinidad and Tobago have exposed female dominance in the teaching profession where males constitute roughly a quarter of the teaching fraternity [10, 11]. It is worse in the ECD where male teachers are almost extinct. Similar statistics in Australia reveal that there is approximately two percent males in the entire early childhood profession [12].

Gender imbalance among the early childhood education personnel has been found to be a global phenomenon where extensive research confirms that the percentage of male early childhood educators lingered around 1–3% in the majority of countries in the West [13]. Xu & Waniganayake [14] also found scarcity of men in ECE in non-Western countries like China, where only 2% of ECE teachers are males. There is no difference in the Philippines where women outnumbered men as ECE teachers. Historically, childcare in most homes has been seen as a woman’s work, hence, the trend has spilt over to early childhood education making the female workforce to dominate. The long-standing perception from the society in those countries has been that women are more nurturing preventing men to equally participate in early childhood teaching profession [15]. Reviewing literature on early childhood teaching one finds scanty research on men as educators and in the studies that ventured into the subject mainly focus on the negative aspects of men’s choice in this career. A study by Jordan [16] revealed that while some men got support from fellow teachers, acquaintances, and family members to pursue careers in ECE, a good number of surveys described fears and challenges that men faced in the profession.

In the 1970s, Sweden introduced gender equality in the teaching arena and extended the public childcare resulting in the increased demand for well-educated pre-school teachers. Promotion of male recruitment started in 1971 as a form of positive discrimination to attract men to join pre-school teacher education. This initiative saw a ten percent increase in the number of men becoming pre-school teachers by 1975 [17]. However, the trend was that most men held managerial

positions which made the unions unhappy because the initial idea of male recruitment was to introduce male to hands on childcare through interaction with children and to have male role models in the pre-school classrooms.

Qin & Wang [18] observed how several governments worldwide had introduced broad reforms for ECE since 2010, whereby they increased financial input, launched political authorities who supported teacher training programmes. The teacher professional development policy is one of the reforms that has been extensively deemed to be the crucial element in promoting the quality of ECE. According to Kent [19] in this policy, teachers were considered as facilitators for educational reform and the custodians of sustainable development in schools [20].

Notwithstanding the desire to join the early childhood profession, male personnel in early childhood provision face hostile public perception who assume that men are more likely to abuse children more than their female counterparts [9, 21, 22]. There seem to be double standards when dealing with men. They are most valued as fathers, brothers, uncles, and grandfathers in homes and in the community but viewed with suspicion in early childhood settings. Men have been accepted in junior and senior sectors of education, yet their involvement with younger children invites scrutiny and scepticism.

The importance of ECE is that young children develop their gender identity [23] and realise the important role all genders play in their care and education. The traditional gender stereotypes are reinforced when young children do not relate with male teachers and caregivers who are responsible for their growth, learning and socialisation [24, 25]. The growth and development of children is incomplete if they do not experience a comparable range of models of masculinity and knowing what it means to be a boy or a man [26]. Early childhood is a critical time in their gender identity development, hence, the need for a gender balanced workforce to provide children with a richer variety of role models [27].

3. Theoretical framework

There are two fundamental discourses or policy narratives that have been the major concerns about the scarcity of male teachers in early childhood settings, which are: (i) the need for more male role models to fill the gap of absent fathers and the cumulative incidence of single-parent families [28–31] and (ii) the desire for more gender balanced representation in the teaching profession, a position that is often underlined by limited philosophies of equity which have failed to consider the importance of the status of women's work, racial inequality and the privilege of males [4, 27, 28, 32–35]. Male teacher shortage has dominated policy narratives particularly in trying to understand the policy physique of boys' education in which concerns of female dominance have been inextricably linked to the phenomenon 'failing boys' in need of male role models [36, 37]. Due to debates about gender balance in teaching, Riddell and Tett [35] have described these tensions as modernist and post-structuralist accounts of sex and gender where 'man' and 'woman' are socially categorised and increasing the numbers of male teachers so as to have a more gender balanced representation in the teaching profession has been problematic. However, policy initiatives that have simply engaged more males in teaching have not adequately addressed the politics of gender and race, hence, the deflation and rejection of teaching as women's work in early childhood continues to side-line males [38]. Masculinity and femininity tensions have drawn debates where scholars argue in a dissociating of sex and gender have created a divide between policymakers who deny that the sex of the teacher is irrelevant, and academics who think that gender may not affect performance of a person and suspicious parents who have lost

trust of men in the early years teaching [35]. Such debates, however, clearly highlight the need for further reflection on the against-epistemic concerns central to both policymaking and the theoretical frameworks that inform empirical research in the field of gender in early childhood education [39].

The issue of male absence in early childhood environments can be understood through various theoretical frameworks. The Social Role theory is one of the lenses which classifies men and women in terms of the customary division of labour where expected the responsibilities of men are frequently done outside the home while women presume their responsibilities involve managing homes [40]. The differences in gender propose that most behavioural disparities which are attributed to males and females are expectations of social roles which are governed by the cultural stereotypes [40, 41]. The social behaviour of males and females has been affected by the expectancies of stereotypes regarding gender such that they have acquired different qualities through this process of socialisation [41]. Explaining the theory, Halpern [42], suggests that the innate physical disparities between men and women pervaded the historical division of labour in the society. These particular gender roles correlate with perceived differences in cultures and societies; consequently, women are deemed as primary caregivers for children and nurturers in homes while men operate as breadwinners in families. Similar to this line of thinking is Coleman's [43] social capital and how it takes priority over the social role. These expectations that emerged due to the natural differences between males and females have caused gender stereotypes or gender categorising making them male-specific and female-dominated careers [40] such as nursing and teaching professions where women mostly outnumber males while men also tend to dominate in construction and engineering. The assumption in Eagly's theory is that women are better nurturers than men hence, they dominate in the ECD due to gender-specific careers cultivated from inborn competences. Worldwide there is a strong belief that gendered cognitive schemas encourage the projected roles of females and males. Subsequently, the social role theory explains the existence of a wide range of stereotypes and illustrates that men are capable of learning to perform certain roles and permeate in exclusively female domains [41]. Notwithstanding early socialisation, the social role theory proposes that men can acquire new skills and behaviours related with the provider role by involving themselves in social experiences that were once reserved for women.

Comprehensive sociological theories concerning gender lead us to Bem's [44] early theory of gender schema which she later modified to be the enculturated-lens theory (1993) used in gender related research. Bem's theories [44, 45] accentuate on the cultural learning of gender and specifically featuring the social and historical perspectives as 'lenses' for gender socialisation. In essence, human beings are socialised by various agents within the society (namely parents, school, and the media) leading to schemas also known as internal cognitive networks about masculinity and femininity which assist both to shape and guide the views of individuals. Bem [45] further explains the process leading to the schemas as follows:

- "the established pre-programming of the person's daily experience into the default decisions, or the traditionally pre-cut 'channels,' for that specific time and place which differ distinctly for men and women"
- "the transmission of unspoken lessons – or meta-messages – about what lenses the culture uses to organise social reality, including the notion that the dissimilarity between male and female, masculine and feminine, is extremely important".

That then leads people within the society to view themselves and the world they reside in through a gendered 'lens', that influences their thinking and actions. Watson, Wright, & Groenewald, [46] postulate that these social norms which precisely ascribe the roles and expectations of men and women that are deemed appropriate or desirable by the society are frequently resistant to change. The cycle of these perceptions on gender positions persists through generations.

4. Importance of male educators

The importance of have male educators in ECD has gathered momentum kindling the interest of researchers and policy makers in the recent years due to the consistent concerns such as 1) the none-participation of men as fathers in their children's lives, 2) the dearth of men in the early childhood settings, 3) the cognisance of the worth of father involvement in Early Childhood Care and Education and 4) the significance of men as role models for their children, particularly boys. Plentiful research testify to men's involvement as fathers in the early lives of young children as essential for their social, emotional, and cognitive development [47, 48]. There is no corresponding prominence on men as educators of young children, yet it is essential that every child gets influence from both female and male educators to maximise social, emotional, and academic development.

Notwithstanding changing perceptions that men are also needed in the sector, the ECEC profession in worldwide is still dominated by women. Since 2010, countries like China have realised the importance and increased their interests in ECEC prioritising the development of ECEC [8] and encouraging men to join the ECEC workforce as a means of improving the quality of ECEC. The biggest argument in many nations is that as role models and father figures male teachers contribute to all round growth and development of younger children. Jensen [49] presenting his argument insisted that male teachers are good at detecting and resolving boy related issues at school than female teachers because they understand the perspectives and experiences of boys based on their own lived experience. With the help of male teachers, boys are able to explore their own interest.

There has been worldwide discourse concerning the benefits of having men in the early childhood education and care, and three main aspects are highlighted:

- Engaging more men into the ECEC arena will bring gender equality in the society. Cameron and Moss [50] observed that the presence or the absence of male teachers in early childhood services contributes to or challenges dominant beliefs about gender roles and relationships in society. A mixed gender workforce in a centre forms part of a gender equity debates about men and women sharing childcare equally, in as much as a centre with only women workers is part of a very different arguments which classifies women an acutely suited to caring for young children.
- The benefit of having more male teachers in the early childhood education profession is the creation of a diverse working dynamic in centres thereby raising the status of teachers.
- Male presence in ECEC provide a male role model for children, especially for those who come from a single-parent family or have parents working long hours. A male teacher compensates for father absence in families [49]. The role played by male teachers in the lives of children cannot be downplayed as some families rely on their support to discipline children especially boys and be their role models.

5. Barriers or glass ceiling to male educator recruitment and retention

The absence of fathers' involvement in the early life of children has propelled the desire for male figures and male support in the early childhood programmes. Worldwide gender imbalance has been noted in the early childhood education and lower primary where classes have been female skewed with conspicuous absence of men in the arena [51–53]. Most of the studies in Netherlands found that eighty-five percent of primary teachers are female with the United Kingdom (UK) showing the similar trend of eighty-six percent female and Denmark had a slightly lower figure of seventy-six percent female teachers in the primary schools [54]. Mashiya [55] and Koch and Farquhar [56] found the number of men in early childhood setting as low as ten percent in Finland, only four percent in Germany, and the United States had only two percent. Studies also found that glitches resulting from gender prejudice, gender stereotyping and numerous systemic challenges lead to the failure of South Africa to attract male teachers in pre-schools [46, 57]. Teaching in pre-school is not a lucrative career choice for men hence, they shun it.

Worldwide there is social stigma against men who venture into early childhood teaching with most of them being labelled 'abnormal' [58], making a career as an EC teacher an unattractive option for men. Male educators often face scrutiny and suspicion when they attempt to express affection for young children thereby putting their livelihoods and reputes in jeopardy. Chen, [59] found that men in China face social stigma when they venture into working with young children as they are viewed as main breadwinners and being paid low salaries prevents them from considering the ECEC sector as a career choice [60, 61]. Existing early childhood teacher programmes are viewed by most scholars as inappropriate for men [59, 62] due to some mandatory modules such as dancing, music, and painting which men perceived to be challenging because of their genetic characteristics. Similar sentiments were expressed by Jing [62] who cautioned that most of the training environment are female-dominated and are likely to be highly 'feminised' with a more female students and staff making male trainees uncomfortable. Most studies have found that public distrust and constant community scrutiny are strong pull away factors that drive men from teaching young children with the remnants in the profession are those who drift to administrative positions escaping public antagonism [21, 63, 64]. Observing the situation of male educators in the early childhood Sanders [65] noticed that they constantly have to justify their career choice to family members, friends, and their female counterparts. The larger part of society perceive that men are less careful and patient with young children and should be allotted to carry out more educational tasks and less caring assignments [66–68].

The status of teaching in early childhood education has remained low hence most men cite that as a barrier to them venturing into that profession. Aggravating the situation is the misconception that teaching in the early childhood education entails one to possess marginal skills and proficiencies [21]. Some scholars like Cohen [69] and Cooney and Bittner [70] collaborate that the low status of ECE could be the reason why personnel working in that field are paid low salaries instigating many male teachers trained in ECE to move into higher status and higher paying positions in school administration or higher education. Besides low salaries, several studies have found other underlying reasons such as fear of child abuse allegations, lacking social status as the origins for the scarcity of men in ECEC field [71–73]. The need for male influence in the lives of the young generation requires concerted societal efforts to entice men in the field of ECEC.

6. Methodology

Research methodology is the path through which researchers need to conduct their research. This chapter adopted desk-based research also known as the systematic inquiry which relied on empirical researched secondary data which was gathered without fieldwork. Ideally, these published reports and statistics are certainly important sources [74]. In the context of this chapter the term is widened to include all sources of information such as reputable journals, books and different published articles that do not involve a field survey. As depicted by name desk-research is a technique which is mainly acquired by sitting at a desk and collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low-cost and effective technique as compared to field research. Still, for the researcher to save money and time they must have the proper knowledge that can be used as benchmark of the research procedure. Besides being time and financially economic there is reduced bias and infringement of ethics as there is no human contact in collecting data. The other advantage was that the researchers were able access information related to the phenomenon from a wider international community. However, the technique also has limitations such as lack of the ability to verify on the reported facts, stringent restrictions on the access of some publication that have relevant information.

7. Results

7.1 Benefits of male involvement in ECE

Men in families and the society at large are valued as breadwinners, protectors and disciplinarians who instil values and morals to their offspring. With this background several studies have sought the significance of male educator in pre-school. It turns out that in South Africa, men are rare in early childhood setting even though they would be valued as role models who would provide discipline for children. Educators' views were *"Having father figures in the foundation phase would provide male role model seeing that many children do not have fathers at home, and it would be good for discipline and the values because the foundation is important. Male educators can handle discipline better and they are good in handling sporting teams and children listen to them hence, they perform better in school."* Similar sentiments coming from parents were *"Men in education are not as valued as fathers are in families, there has to be a mind-set shift with people viewing the presence of men positively so that they continue that family stability, discipline and performance will improve. Participants in a study in China advanced that "Male participation in ECEC balances the gender ratio, moderates the environments, assists with the construction of children's masculinities and promotes quality education through."*

7.2 Culture and stereotype mind-set

Even though the presence of men in children's early education is important, culture and stereotype mind-sets prevent men from venturing into ECE as educators in the Eastern Cape elaborated that: *"People think that men are not suitable to handle early childhood teaching but ought to start at middle school. Men do not have that motherly love and patience with very young children as pre-school demands hands-on people."* Similar sentiments were expressed in Nigeria were that Men in ECE are *ridiculed by other men who regards them as if they are stupid.... men are shy and do not like to be humiliated."* Participants in a study in Zimbabwe posit that there was *a need for men to change their mindset, as some children who need their firm hands.*

Concurring was a study in Kenya where participant lamented that: *“Men were not accepted as educators of young children because of the negative stereotype belief that men are strict, harsh, impatient and can abuse children.”* Negative mind-set and stereotype attitude towards male educators deter men from venturing into female dominated teaching arena.

7.3 Fears, challenges and stereotypes

Whereas men play a pivotal role in nurturing young children, there is so much mistrust of men around children in pre-school centres from the society. Some participants expressed that: *“As a mother, I fear that male teachers may be too strict, small children are too subtle to be taught by men who are likely to touch children inappropriately and sexually abuse them and when their temper flares up, they may be aggressive and physically abuse children.... there is so much violence against women and girls.”* While research has proven that men bring stability in families, children behave and perform better but there are families with men physically present but have the worst maladjusted children more than those from single mothers. Some men can be very abusive to their families. Yes, they may be financially better but there are some men who do not really care for their families even if they can afford.” Some deep-rooted fear and mistrust of men was conveyed: *“I would not be comfortable with a male educator in the pre-school because men can be cruel and abusive as fathers or educators. I was traumatised by men in my family hence I had this child. Besides, children in the pre-school need toilet training, some changing of diapers which most men, especially African men are not socialised to do.”* Likewise, one participant said *“Men are so unpredictable because some are good, but others are very cruel.....I was raped by men I looked up to for protection when I was seven years.... So, I am sceptical about men in a class with very young children.”* A male participant voiced that *“Nowadays men are prone to alcohol and substance abuse so for men to teach very young children they have to be of sober habits.”* The sentiments expressed reveal general lack of trust and deep-rooted fear of men as educators of very young children although men are valued as fathers. The deep-rooted fear and mistrust of men is due to the high crime rate among women and children in South Africa with men equally not trusting other men with their children. In Turkey, a parent expressed her desire of having a male teacher for her child, but I could not ignore the concerns she had about Child abuse which affects as boys and girls.

7.4 Gender ascribed role

Eagly's Social Role theory suggests that nurturing of children is a role that is generally ascribed to women. Participants who conform to this theory attest that: *“In my culture man understand that they are breadwinners while nurturing of the child is a mother's duty. It never crossed my mind that when a man is teaching in the pre-school it's a job that sustains his family, however, I do accept that the children need male influence from early childhood. In caring for young children there is a lot of touching, hugging, wiping of this and that so we think that men do not have that kind of affection and patience. Generally, people think that men do not have the compassion to deal with little children because sometimes they do not show the emotion of love. Men are too stringent, and this can scare the little children. Its been for ages women dominating in this sector such that people just don't trust the men in ECD, maybe it is just the negative attitude or thinking about men. A young man lamented that he has been quizzed, viewed with suspicion ... but he advanced that, you see... the fact is that I love children, I have children of my own does not count to the society, and they just view us men with suspicion “My challenge has been to justify my motive to teach in the ECD mostly to my friends. It has taken some time for my colleagues to fully accept me. At times you can feel their suspicionit is*

like they are keeping a watchful eye on a prisoner at a distance... but I asked them why female teachers in high schools are never questioned of their motives." Data from different countries indicates that socialisation of men and women is inherent on ascribed gender roles.

8. Discussion

In this discourse men have generally been viewed as playing a significant role as fathers confirming literature in several studies which found that the involvement of men as fathers is valued as disciplinarians, teachers of values and moral and bread-winners, gender-role models, and nurturants [75, 76]. Collaborating this study is abundant research globally that attest to the involvement of fathers as essential for their social, emotional, and cognitive development [48, 56] in the early lives of young children. The importance of men as fathers is not a subject for debate as there is a mounting body of evidence indicating that fathers play a critical role in their child's mental and physical health development [77] increased sociability with later school success [78].

Although men bring up children in homes as their offspring when they turn up in educational setup, culture and stereotype mindset of people doubt their capability to nurture and educate children. In this chapter male educators have been recognised as pivotal in building up well-adjusted children behaviourally, yet cultural attitudes and stereotype prejudgments, and prejudices deter them from the teaching of young children [52, 79]. Besides being rejected by fellow female colleagues male educators face resistance from the communities they serve as confirmed by some studies [48, 80] which found that discrimination, marginalisation and the prevalence of gender inequality against male educators in pre-school was very high in many worldwide countries.

This study found deep-rooted fear of men from all sectors including other men. Men have been known to be strict which may scare young children confirming the prevalent belief in societies that men are not capable of caring for and educating young children like women [81]. There was widespread fear that men can abuse children in this study which has turned out to be a worldwide concern in early childhood settings. Collaborating these findings is the study are the claims by school heads who purposely avoid engaging male teachers as child protection measures because of the increase because of the increase of paedophilic abuse [82]. Parents claim that the safety and comfort of their children is paramount as it gives them peace of mind when they leave children in the care of schools and centres. However, there is no research that has authenticated abuse in schools as most of the abuse happens in homes from family members or close associates to families.

The findings in this study show that men simply avoid teaching in the early childhood setting due to gender ascribed roles, This conclusion is associated to social role theory of gender in which according to Eagly [40] most behavioural discrepancies which are attributed to males and females were as a result of cultural stereotypes regarding gender. The way males and females believed and acted was emanating from the social roles being instilled to people from a tender age.

9. Strategies for male educator recruitment

Research studies have revealed that there are more female ECD educators in the teaching profession as compared to their male counterparts. However,

the majority of the arguments for gender inequality among ECD educators stress that the teaching profession has become increasingly 'feminised' thus the education of male learners has suffered because of the resultant lack of models [83]. The main hurdle to men becoming early childhood educators is the prevalent belief in societies and in the teaching profession that men are not capable of caring for and educating young children than are women [81]. Hence, to counter such belief, there is need to devise comprehensive recruitment strategies where all education stakeholders have a role to play in enticing more male ECD educators to take up the profession. These stakeholders include administrators, teacher educators, career counsellors, and the ECD teachers themselves [81].

Mills, Martino and Lingard [83] point out that the Education Queensland's Male Teachers' Strategy indicates the need for more male educators to promote diversity within the education system. Thus, the following strategies as stated in Mills et al. [83] have been suggested,

- increasing the numbers of males applying for teaching positions;
- enhancing employer of choice status for males wishing to enter teaching as a career;
- increasing the representation of male teachers;
- increasing the job satisfaction level of male teachers, and
- improving working conditions and establishing a culture that values and acknowledges the needs of male teachers.

In addition, Cunningham and Watson [81] advise that each institution's policy, vision, or mission statement on staff diversity should include as a goal on active recruitment of men. Staff development sessions on gender issues in the workplace can encourage all staff to put aside their preconceived notions about the roles of teachers of different genders. Recruitment of volunteers from high schools, colleges, and universities is another strategy which could help in involving men in the ECD classroom. For instance, students in education, psychology, child development, family life, and occupational education are often required to complete service learning, community service, career exploration, or volunteer hours, these can be engaged in ECD centres and might consider teaching as a career because of rewarding experiences working with young children. Teacher educators should be actively involved in recruiting male ECD teachers through providing information on the early childhood field to career counsellors and guidance personnel. Accordingly, effective recruitment materials which depict men as ECD teachers and use of language that specifically speaks to men and addressing their questions and concerns would be fruitful. More so, ECD teachers should make ECD learners aware that males can be teachers by using language free of gender bias and by selecting, displaying, and reading children's books that show men as fathers, nurturers, and teachers [81].

Patrick [84] further reveals that to address the problem of shortage of male ECD educators, some countries such as the United Kingdom embarked on gender-specific recruitment for those positions and also offered monetary incentives. Consequently, through this incentive and efforts of recruitment, the United Kingdom had seen a steady increase in the number of male teachers in primary grades.

10. Conclusion

This chapter illuminated the significance of recruiting male educators to actively participate in nurturing, caring and teaching children at Early Childhood Development level. The global perspective of recruitment of male ECD educators and their participation has been highlighted in this chapter. Issues regarding barriers to male involvement as educators in early care and learning centres, and strategies on how learning institutions can recruit and train male educators specific for ECD level have been addressed. It is anticipated that the contributions of this chapter will inform policy makers, teacher education institutions and other stakeholders.

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