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SHORTAGE OF MALE TEACHERS: A MYTH OR REALITY?

By

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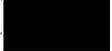
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Thank you so much for believing in my potential in being a male teacher and putting your full confidence in me without a single atom of doubt.

Shortage of Male Teaches: A Myth or Reality

Rafik Antar

Abstract

This study addresses the issue of the predominant shortage in male teachers at the lower grade levels in Lebanese schools. This issue has been highlighted in the international literature for decades, and many studies from Europe and North America have found that young students can benefit from having a male role model and that many males are discouraged from teaching young children due to misconceptions and low salaries. Research on this topic in Lebanon has been scarce, so this study can create awareness of this international and national shortage in male elementary teachers and perhaps help address the causes. In this exploratory study, perceptions of student teachers, retired and current male teachers and school directors were elicited concerning this shortage in male elementary teachers. Questionnaires were distributed to 91 undergraduate and graduate university students enrolled in a department of education at a private higher education institution. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 2 retired male teachers and one current male teacher, and online interviews were conducted with 5 school directors: two Preschool directors, two Elementary directors, and one vice principal. Qualitative and quantitative data analysis yielded results that were triangulated and used to address the research questions. Findings of this study showed that the salary plays an important role in a male's choice of career path; however, there were no significant results in terms of the impact of self-image and professional identity in this matter.

Keywords: Shortage, Male teachers, Professional identity, Salary, Self-image

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1-Background of the Profession

Teaching is placed in terms of prestige towards the bottom of occupations compared to medicine, dentistry and accounting. Unfortunately, teaching does not attract people to become part of the education sector as much as other secure professions. In England, Australia, New Zealand and the United States, teaching gives teachers the intrinsic aspect where they feel satisfied by helping students develop and become future leaders; however, teaching as a profession lacks the extrinsic aspect and faces increased community criticism along with the poor public image of the profession (Fwu & Wang, 2002).

Women remain the major part of the education system, where females teach and men manage (Jones, 1990). Statistics from the Department of Education and Science in England indicated that female teachers are more likely to be found working as classroom teachers rather than head teachers (Jones, 1990). The literature that exists concerning the topic of having more females as classroom teachers is wide and varied and shows that women are the major force of the education system because of their stereotyped gender role in society which shows that women are not suitable for the management role (Jones, 1990). Hence, we find more women than men in the education field. Teaching for men has been a second choice occupation while women are very often attracted to this profession especially that some studies have shown that this attraction is also a result of the lack of occupational choice (Jones, 1990). In a study conducted in Australia in the early childhood education field Sumsion (2000) explained that it has been historically seen that early childhood education is related to

caring and nurturing of young children which led to this profession as being regarded as a woman's job. Moreover, males who wanted to be part of the early education sector were viewed as either homosexuals or pedophiles and this leads men to reconsider being part of the educational system especially in the early years (Sumsion, 2000). Allan (1994) explored reasons why elementary teaching is perceived as a female career and findings indicated that male teachers are aware that the public and school administration feel a need for male teachers in the lives of young male students and that role modeling is a main component of their work, but male teachers feel confused between acting as role models and performing a job publicly perceived as a female's work.

1.2-Current Status of the Profession

It has been seen recently that there is no significant difference when choosing a career in terms of gender. For example, males and females have been choosing "non-traditional" occupations such as men are doing a woman's job and females have been doing a male's job; however, and despite this gradual increase in such participations, the gender balance still appears to be resistant to change in the education field (Anliak & Beyazkurk, 2008).

Since females are the dominant force of the education system then this leads to a shortage in male teachers in education. This shortage of male teachers leads to a shortage of men in Early Childhood Education (ECE) in specific where it is a very rare occurrence to find a male teacher teaching infants, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergartners, or even primary grades (Cooney & Bittner, 2001). "The call for more male role models has often been linked in problematic ways to moral panic about the underachieving boy and the "feminization" of teaching" (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010, p. 249). In other words, and in Canada, there has been some kind of

"feminization" of the education field where the number of male teachers compared to female teachers is significantly low, and the teaching environment has become more suitable to females, in addition to the perception that female teachers are promoting success conditions for girls at the expense of boys (Martiono & Rezai-Rashti, 2010).

1.3-Male Teachers in Education

There has been a lot of questioning about why men are not attracted to the teaching profession or failed to remain in this profession. One of the reasons was that men do not feel comfortable being part of a feminized profession. Male teachers might be considered as a prize or commodity in the education field, or they can be also seen as suspects especially if they do not fit the image of what a male teacher should be (Mills, Haase & Charlton, 2008). The attachment theory discusses that infants need secure attachment to explore the world (Pleck, 2007; Cooley & Coltrane, 2007), and "it has been long recognized that infants can form attachment relationships with fathers and other care-giving adults besides mothers"(Pleck, 2007, p.198). Thus, children can also see male teachers as their role models and could relate to them. The involvement of men in the care and the education of children have the potential to transform gender relations (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010). Men face more challenges in education than females, whether in being good role models, or in working in a predominantly female environment, which causes males to withdraw from the teaching profession in their first year of teaching (Cushman, 2007).

1.4-Males versus Females in Education

On the other side, some research studies have shown that there is no difference between men and women in the teaching profession; however, male teachers, in

general, opt for another career (Shumin & Guanghui, 2005). This leads to questioning the meaning of professional identity and whether males are really satisfied with the path they have taken in education, or if they are dissatisfied with their roles as teachers. The professional identity is linked to a male's self-image in society and his professional status as a teacher. This professional identity comes from a person's position in society and his interaction with others according to his experience (Sutherland, Howard & Markauskaite, 2010). For example and according to King (1998) and cited by Sumsion (2000, p. 130) male early childhood teachers' professional identity is limited due to the social perceptions that have shaped their positions in the educational system as suspicious. The emotional basis for a teacher's identity is when a teacher can understand how to handle student and parental demands when this teacher is under stress and pressure. A teacher's professional identity also includes their understanding of themselves and that they are supposed to be knowledge producers through taking control over their classrooms and liberating young minds by being facilitators and not a dominant force in classrooms (Jansen, 2001). The public image of a male teacher as someone who is doing a female job is one of the most important factors that define the shortage of male teachers (Cushman, 2007; Mills et al., 2008; Martino & Rezai- Rashti, 2010; Sutherland et al., 2010), along with the misunderstanding of a teacher's professional identity that might also lead to this shortage (Jansen, 2001).

1.5-Problem Statement

Most of the Lebanese institutes have been facing a low number of male teachers in their departments. This research sheds light on the reasons why there is a shortage in male teachers in education. Very little research has been conducted on this

issue abroad; however, almost no research was done on this problem in Lebanon. This study will support the role of a male educator in society and raise awareness for the need for more males to be part of the educational system, in addition to raising the awareness of the shortage of male teachers in Lebanon.

1.6-Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of this study is to explore the reason(s) of the shortage of male teachers in the Lebanese society in order to raise awareness of this problem and hopefully increase the supply of male teachers in academic institutes. It also presents a historical account of the profession of teaching and the role of male teachers in it both in the West and in Lebanon.

Through informal observations and conversations with other male teachers it was revealed that the number of male teachers in Lebanon is less than female teachers in elementary schools and preschools. There is no data on the actual needs for teachers (shortage) whether males or females.

1.7-Significance

It is very important to have such a research in a developing country such as Lebanon, for such countries need more professional educators to be able to develop. Having a negative image of male teachers is a problem that hinders educational progress in society. By raising the issue of the shortage of male teachers, more people will be aware of this problem and, hopefully there will be an increase in the supply of male teachers and education in general. Knowing that there is almost no research about this issue, this study will investigate the perceptions of people towards male educators and will find the missing link, so the depth of the problem could be reached, and solutions will be suggested.

1.8-Hypothesis

The expected results of this study would be that the shortage of male teachers is due to the society's perceptions of a male teacher such as his public image along with the low salaries in education. The public image in the study is the demeaning way people look at a male teacher.

1.9-Operational Definitions

The public image or social status of a teacher is basically the relative standing of teachers in the occupation compared to other occupations (Fwu & Wang, 2002). Professional identity of a teacher is the beliefs and values of a certain teacher about his/her profession inside and outside the classroom (Sutherland et al., 2010). The salary of a teacher is the amount of money a teacher gets after a certain period of teaching. The shortage of male teachers is the ratio of men to women in an academic institute where the number of female teachers is always significantly greater than the number of male teachers.

1.10-Division of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters and each chapter discusses a certain idea of the topic. Chapter one already introduced the topic of the shortage of male teachers as a whole and all the operational definitions that will appear in the thesis. This chapter also included the problem statement, purpose, significance of the topic and finally the hypothesis that will be accepted or rejected according to the findings.

Chapter two presents the literature that is discussed in relation to the topic. The literature that existed around this topic-though it was scarce- helped me in developing a framework for the study. The methodology section is written in chapter

three which highlights the type of research that was being conducted along with the number of participants and the methods that were used to conduct this research.

Chapter four reports the results pertaining to the study. All results obtained in chapter four opened a door to chapter five which discusses every single result and relates it to the literature review. The discussion chapter also explains the reasons behind accepting and rejecting certain ideas from the hypothesis. Finally, it presents the limitations of the study and my own self- reflection concerning the topic in addition to a reflexivity section.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines studies of male teachers status and presents main trends and issues of this topic

2.1-History of Male Teaching

The dilemma of the shortage of male teachers has been studied over decades. Although little research has been conducted on this issue I believe that this shortage will continue until the public image of a male teacher changes. According to Stevenson (1923), many male teachers have been leaving teaching and there are no new men coming to replace them. The problem still persists almost 90 years later. Stevenson (1923) also noted that the number of women in the teaching field has increased while the number of men has decreased. According to present research, this issue still persists. Nelson, Carlson and West (2006) found that the low number of male teachers in elementary education and the reasons for this shortage have been the same for the past quarter of a century. White, Gorard, and Huat See (2006) found that the number of teachers applying to education has increased since the early 1980s; however, most of the applicants were females. Green and Weaver (1992) surveyed first year education students over four years and found that the majority choose teaching for idealistic reasons and only a small number of those are males.

The question in such a context would be why is there a shortage in male teachers? One of the reasons for this shortage was the fact that male teachers do not get enough respect from the society they are living in; in other words, it is the profession's low status that has led to this shortage (Mills et al., 2008; Cushman, 2007; Fwu & Wang, 2002; Stevenson, 1923). "The social status of teachers refers to

the relative standing of teaching as an occupation in a hierarchy of all occupations" (Fwu & Wang, 2002, p. 211).

Teaching for men has been a second choice occupation and this has kept women as the major part of the education system. The trend became that women teach and men manage because of the stereotypes in society that women can not manage, so they are better in teaching while men are better in management, but can not be teachers because it is a "woman's job" (Jones, 1990). Vail (1999) found that male elementary teachers are a minority and face "sexism" and she also found a shortage in male teachers in Florida in the special education field. In a comparative study conducted by Shumin and Guanghui (2005), male teachers showed higher discipline and leadership qualities than women; however, they wanted another job so that they would not stay in the educational domain. The same study also revealed that there is no difference between men and women regarding their profession in terms of academic credentials, degrees, and professional titles (Shumin & Guanghui, 2005). According to Martino and Rezai-Rashti (2011) there is a shortage of male teachers in primary schools in Canada and Australia which led to the feminization of elementary school teaching. In Canada also, the number of male teachers in primary grades have been decreasing gradually. In a study conducted by Parr and Gosse (2011), the results showed that male teachers are perceived as occupying non-traditional roles and are often exposed to incorrect accusations. Wood and Hoag (1993) presented findings from a survey of elementary school principals in South Dakota, USA, sixty percent of whom had a high percentage of male teachers; however, the majority of principals in this survey even asked for more male teachers.

2.2-Present Situation of Male Teachers

In a study conducted in Australia, Buchanan (2010) found that teachers leave the occupation due to salary and the profession's status. He described teaching as a pool that keeps losing water since there is no concentration on the leak. One in five Australian teachers work more than fifty hours per week and this results in teachers leaving the job due to the workload that comes along with it. In England, Australia and New Zealand, teachers suffer of a poor public image where they have the intrinsic motivation which comes from helping students to learn and modifying their behavior; however, they lack the extrinsic aspect such as the prestigious public image (Fwu & Wang, 2002). In contrast, the teaching profession in Taiwan is different from other countries; teaching is a prestigious occupation with high social status (Fwu & Wang, 2002). Going back to the pressures that society puts on the teaching profession, Taiwan does not face such pressures because of the high status of teachers where the government plays a major role in that and "has adopted a centralized educational administration system to recruit and retain talented people into the teaching profession with good packages and incentives" (Fwu & Wang, 2002, p. 215). This policy had played a major role in keeping a more positive image for Taiwanese teachers in terms of prestige, greater job satisfaction and better academic qualities concluding that government policies make a difference (Fwu & Wang, 2002).

Where is the government's role in our societies in improving the public image of teachers? If in Taiwan the government did not play a major role in contributing to the education field, the image of teachers would have been just like other countries. Policies that support education by any government would attract more male teachers into the field. Unfortunately, some societies agreed that putting a man in a female's job would not do, for a man in a female's job is more damaging to boys than

domineering mothers (Martino, 2008). "The call for more male role models has often been linked in problematic ways to moral panic about the underachieving boy and the feminization of teaching" (Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010, p. 249). In other words, having more females in the education sector have made it difficult for little boys to relate to male teachers causing some under achievements.

Another question appears in this context which is if there is no difference between men and women in the teaching profession, then why is there a shortage of male teachers? All answers will show that it is because of the status of a male teacher in society (Mills et al., 2008; Cushman, 2007; Fwu & Wang, 2002; Stevenson, 1923).

Martino and Rezai-Rashti (2010) interviewed black male teachers in Canada to examine their views on being role models and on shortage in male elementary teachers. Findings suggest the need for empirical studies and analytical research to uncover reasons and school politics concerning this issue and to help education policy makers address this shortage. Johnson (2010) found that the shortage in male teachers in public education in the USA is more than a century old, and the numbers are still dropping especially in preschool and kindergarten. "Male teachers are faced with contradictory messages about their work" (Mills et al., 2008, p. 74). They are a "prize commodity" and a "suspect". To elaborate on this, males in the teaching profession are looked at as a precious asset to the institute they are teaching in because of the shortage of male teachers; however, they are also considered to be suspects in case they do not fit the image of the imagined male teacher as being a good role model (Mills et al., 2008). Even if males were able to overcome their social image as teachers, they will be followed by another obstacle which is being what society wants them to be as teachers. Some male teachers felt that their behaviors were constantly observed as they interacted with children and felt insecure of what is expected of them

as "male role models" and were perceived as having teaching styles that differed than that of female teachers (Sargent, 1999).

2.3-A Male Teacher's Professional Identity

This leads to the professional identity of a teacher which is related to the teachers' own beliefs, values and practices that make this teacher what he is (Sutherland et al., 2010). It is the professional identity of a teacher that should guide him and not the society's perceptions. The process of professional identity formation begins with the way teachers view themselves as being teachers and then comes the societal image, or perception (Sutherland et al., 2010). It is important to understand how male teachers experience and view teaching as a profession in order to deal with the phenomenon of shortage of male teachers (Ponte, 2012). The problem that exists in this context is the relationship between the image of a teacher being a good role model according to society and the personal identities of teachers. In other words, it is the struggle between the society's perceptions of teaching being a non-prestigious career that pays little money and the understandings that teachers hold of themselves as being knowledge producers with intrinsic satisfaction (Jansen, 2001). Ponte (2012) explained that male teachers view themselves as teachers who are serving the community and increasing social justice in schools, so there must be ways to attract more male teachers and support them to deliver more quality teaching.

2.4-Reasons for the Shortage of Male Teachers

Rowden-Racette (2005) refers to male teachers as endangered species since they count around nine percent of American elementary school teacher according to NEA's 2003 report; whereas in 1981, males counted eighteen percent of elementary school teachers. She presents survey results in 2002 by American Associations that

ascertained common beliefs that male teachers avoid elementary teaching due to low salaries compared to other jobs, the stigma of elementary teaching as a female's profession and the insecurity of possible accusations of child abuse. Moreover, Byrd et al. (2011) examine the shortage of black male teachers in USA schools and interview student athletes on their exposure to teaching as a possible future career. Findings indicate that student advising and career guidance is inadequate in this matter and that teacher education is not structured well to attract candidates. Ingersoll (2003) found that numerous qualified teachers leave teaching due to factors such as job dissatisfaction or changing careers. On the other hand Billingsley, Fall, and Williams (2006) show an opposite view of male teaching. They presented a national study on special education teachers showing that the majority of teachers who teach students with behavioral and emotional disorders were males.

2.5-The Role of Policy Makers

The panic of becoming a male teacher should be avoided and be put to end. It is only the society that causes this fear of becoming a male teacher. The government can set new policies such as requiring graduates to teach for at least five years in return for their tuition fees (Fwu & Wang, 2002). Teaching as a profession should not be an undesirable career, for it is one of the few professions where a person observes progress in a living organism and not an object and thus policies should be implemented by the government or by activists to reduce the impact of the shortage of male teachers. Policy makers have failed to address the importance of having more male teachers at schools, and schools need more male teachers as role models (Martino, 2008).

2.6-The Shortage of Male Teachers in Lebanon

Lebanon as a third world country does not have concerns for the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools although the problem exists just like in any other western country. There are no studies around this topic in Lebanon; however, there are topics that discussed the issues that education in Lebanon is facing. Lebanon as a country is full of beautiful landscapes with magnificent scenes, but always facing political problems (Bahous, Nabhani & Cohran, 2011). Since the topic that is being discussed is partially historical, the researcher would like to shed light on the history of education in Lebanon. Before the French mandate, Lebanon has seen many invaders and each invader had impact on the education system in Lebanon which led to many varieties in the Lebanese curriculum and during the rule of the Ottoman Empire each religious sect was managing its own educational system. The Ottomans established the first public school and the French established the first private school (Bahous et al., 2011).

During the French mandate all the schools that taught French and that were closed by the Ottomans in World War I, were reopened. French was the primary foreign language taught in schools (Private and Public) and thus the education system in Lebanon was taken from the French (Bahous et al., 2011). Official exams had to be done by all the students of private and public schools to keep the standards of education. Official exams were introduced to all students from the primary level to the secondary level (Bahous et al., 2011).

After Lebanon took its independence in the year 1943, there was a slight modification in the educational system where English and French became the two official foreign languages that were taught in schools. In 1968, the Lebanese curriculum was revised and the Ministry of Education wanted to improve the level of

education in public schools by training teachers and preparing them to become part of a well-developed educational system knowing that the rates of students in private schools exceeded the one in public schools since private schools offered better education. Unfortunately, the 1975 Lebanese civil war broke and all the strategies to improve the educational system stopped in addition to the destruction of many schools and the closing of others. After the end of the civil war, most public school teachers needed rehabilitation or were ill or were unqualified. A reform plan was created in 1994 to improve educational administration and teacher training along with a scale of salaries (Bahous et al., 2011).

Thus, the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools in Lebanon is somehow related to the history of the educational system and the wars that this country has gone through. Since there is no equality in the level of education, male teachers will fear the idea of becoming part of this system especially that such a system has not been very stable and males are considered as the breadwinners of the family (Jones, 1990).

2.7-Suggestions

More male teachers should be attracted to the educational system. Zahia (2005) suggests that alternative teacher certification may attract more male teachers from different fields of study or careers looking for change of jobs. Incentives such as financial aid and scholarships for male elementary teachers will help attract them to the teaching fields. Another recommendation would be accrediting programs for training and recruiting male teachers (Baker, Henry, & Reynold, 1998). Also, and in order to attract more students to teacher education and the profession, Carter and McCowan (1970), recommended that there should be close coordination between high schools and university advisors to stay abreast of market demands for students'

guidance and to improve in-service education programs. Chmelynksi (2006) reviews data from the National Education Association and others on male teachers in USA k-12 public schools and found that only one quarter of the teaching force are males and a very small number of those come from minority groups. He also found that educators call for more diversity among teachers and give examples from such groups of educators: 'Call Me Mister' and 'Men Instructing Students Towards Effective Role Models'. Both groups aim to recruit, train and help employ black male teachers in elementary schools in South Carolina. Byrd et al. (2011) recommend re-thinking alternative 'pathways' for students to shift from their current majors to the teaching field.

As for Ingersoll (2003), he concludes that traditional teacher recruitment efforts should be coupled with other solutions such as addressing the reasons for low teacher retention caused by the organizations themselves. According to Ruckel (2000) there are more than a hundred programs that are offered by American universities and colleges for alternative certifications of diverse teaching which were made for people who wanted to transfer from non-teaching careers to teaching. Such programs are important for setting guidelines and recruiting more male teachers. Robertson and Singleton (2010) found out that in special education male teachers were more employable than female teachers and the alternative certification led to more employability and higher retention rates.

2.8-Conclusion

The literature review helped the researcher find a path towards what he will be targeting in his study and the hypothesis was created according to what the literature has explained. In addition to that the history of education in Lebanon is a major problem in not finding male teachers in preschools and elementary schools perhaps

due to the instability that Lebanon has been facing for a while. The chapter that follows is the methodology chapter that was also constructed based on the study purpose and that is why the research was descriptive in nature.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1-Introduction

The following study describes and explores the reasons for the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools in Lebanon. This section introduces the instruments that were used in this research along with the design and the sample of the study and data analysis methods.

3.2-Research Design and Sample

The research focused on constructing a descriptive picture of the problem that is evident in each school where the study was done. In other words, the study targeted preschools, cycle one and cycle two, where the shortage of male teachers in those fields is significant. This qualitative research is exploratory/ descriptive by nature. An exploratory research is often conducted because a problem has not been clearly defined as yet, or its real scope is as yet unclear. It allows the researcher to familiarize him/herself with the problem or concept to be studied, and perhaps generate hypotheses to be tested. It is the initial research, before more conclusive research is undertaken. Exploratory research helps determine the best research design, data collection method and selection of subjects, and sometimes it even concludes that the problem does not exist. In this research, the problem was the shortage of male teachers and an exploratory research was done so that I would come up with the reasons of this shortage. The hypothesis that was created was that this shortage is due to the low salaries and the profession's low status.

Exploratory research can be quite informal, relying on secondary research such as reviewing available literature and/or data, or qualitative approaches such as informal discussions with consumers, employees, management or competitors, and more formal approaches through in-depth interviews, focus groups, projective methods, case studies or pilot studies. After reading the available literature review about my topic, I decided to use online interviews with Heads of Schools and open discussions with retired teachers and distribute questionnaires for students in the field of education. In addition, interviews are a way to test a certain hypothesis (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000), so as a way of testing my hypothesis I used interviews as an instrument.

The research aimed at exploring the nature of the problem and whether it exists or not and it described the situation of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). A qualitative research is a research that contains data which are most of the times not numerical (Punch, 2009). A qualitative researcher usually develops a theory or a hypothesis based on the data that exists around the topic s/he is planning to discuss. The literature review that exists around the topic helps in stimulating a researcher's thinking to develop a certain hypothesis around the topic (Burns, 2000). I chose my research to be qualitative since I was collecting participants' views. The issue already existed based on what the literature review discussed, so I used secondary data to formulate a hypothesis and my study turned out to be qualitative-exploratory. The strength of qualitative research prevails in studies which are descriptive or exploratory by nature (Burns, 2000).

3.3-Participants

The participants were the Heads of the Preschool and the Heads of the Elementary school in an American style school in Beirut - which is considered as a prestigious school in the area of Beirut- and also Heads of the Preschool and elementary school in a religious school in the area of Beirut in addition to one more Vice principal in another Lebanese Religious school. The three schools had their own prestigious status; however the American one has more prestige than the latter schools knowing that the American one has very high tuition fees and only parents who have good financial status enroll their children in it. To sum this up, I can conclude that school one has students who come from a high socio-economic background and the other two schools have students who come from middle socio-economic backgrounds compared to the first school. Moreover, the sample included students who are pursuing their degrees in education in Lebanon in a higher education institution which is considered as a prestigious university in Beirut. Students who are enrolled in that university come from middle to high socio-economic backgrounds. The historical aspect was present in the research through the retired male teachers who taught in elementary schools before the Lebanese civil war and a current male teacher who is teaching nowadays. Both of the retired teachers who were interviewed came from poor backgrounds from two different villages in southern Lebanon. One was a Christian village and the other was a Muslim village. As for the current male teacher, he comes from a middle socio-economic background.

The sample was a purposive and convenience sample. It was a purposive sample since each participant who was chosen had the information I needed on male teachers (Cohen et al., 2000). It was a convenience sample since I had an easy access to conducting this study which was held by using instruments such as interviews and

questionnaires (Robson, 2002; Cohen et al., 2011) and the participants in the schools were close to the area I live in. Ages of teachers varied between 25 and 70 years old. The ages of students ranged between 18 and 35 years old. All participants had different religious backgrounds with different socioeconomic backgrounds.

The sample selection was narrowed down to three categories of participants. The first included the participants who are the Heads of the Preschools and Elementary Schools and the Vice Principal. Those were chosen based on their positions and based on the questions I wrote in each interview to test my hypothesis. I needed the Heads of Preschools and Elementary schools and the Vice Principal to explore the availability of male teachers in those two fields. Moreover, I had easy access to the schools I conducted the research in knowing that I had friends who taught in those schools and they gave me the contacts that I needed. The second included participants who were students in the education departments pursuing their undergraduate and graduate degrees in the university where I study. So it was easy for me with the help of my professors to enter their classrooms and distribute the questionnaires that also were written to test my hypothesis. The third category included the retired male elementary teachers who have been teachers before the Lebanese civil war along with the current male teacher. It was difficult to find male teachers who are teaching at the elementary level nowadays, so I preferred to focus on the retired male elementary teachers and one current male teacher. I also had easy access in interviewing retired male teachers since a family member is a teacher in a public and a private school and he has good relations with retired teachers whom he used to work with. Both teachers taught Arabic language to elementary students and they only taught in the southern part of Lebanon that is in Christian and Muslim

schools. As for the current male teacher, he teaches economics in a religious school in Beirut.

3.4-Instruments

The instruments that were used in this study were interviews and questionnaires. Mail interviews (online-interviews) allow respondents to give more honest answers to personal questions, no interviewer is involved to bias the respondent's answers, and it is convenient for respondents' who can answer when they have time. A questionnaire consists of a set of questions presented to a respondent for answers. The respondents read the questions, interpret what is expected and then write down the answers themselves (Kothari, 1985; Dawson, 2002; Kumar, 2005). In exploratory research it is easier to use such kind of instruments since all questions are based on previous data (secondary data) to compare with qualitative data from interviews (Cohen et.al, 2000).

3.4.1-Interviews

Interviewing in a qualitative research involves the researcher in asking questions which lead to understanding the interviewee's perception and definition of a certain situation (See Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). An interview is a way of sharing ideas between two people or more about a topic of mutual interest (Punch, 2009; Cohen et al., 2011; Robson, 2002). Interviews were appropriate for this research since they were open ended and I was able to understand the nature of the problem through interviews. In addition to that interviews are not time consuming and are professional especially when a researcher is dealing with Heads of Schools.

In this study I chose to use online-interviewing (James & Busher, 2009) which helps in understanding the linguistic behavior of the participants without the

researcher being noticed. Also online interviewing helps researchers understand and develop a meaningful image about their participants' personal experiences especially that researchers are interested in what their participants say and the way those participants will say it (James & Busher, 2009). The advantages of such a method would be that it is an easy way to communicate and receive the answers directly without any delay. It is also easier since a researcher is able to send the interview to more than one participant at a time and receive an immediate answer. For example, in one school two interviews were supposed to be sent, so the interview questions were sent to the Head of the Preschool and the Elementary school at the same time and the answers were received after 15 minutes from both. Moreover, online interviewing helps a researcher in asking in depth questions without the need to be in direct face to face contact with the interviewee. Six interviews were sent by email and only five were answered.

Based on the literature on similar studies (Anliak & Beyazkurk, 2008; Cooney & Bittner, 2001; Mills et al., 2008; Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010; Shumin & Guanghui, 2005; Cushman, 200; Sutherland et al., 2010) interviews were constructed and piloted on two university male teachers. During the piloting minor changes were done and certain closed ended questions were modified to become open-ended questions. Two kinds of interviews were constructed. The first was for both the Heads of the Preschool and Elementary Schools and the Vice Principal and the second was for the retired teachers. The interviews elicited views on the reasons for the shortage of male teachers in the preschool and the elementary school level and whether there is an explanation for this shortage according to the Heads of Schools experiences and opinions. As for the interview with the retired teachers and the current teacher, it aimed to understand what has changed since the Lebanese civil war with respect to

the role of a male teacher in the lower levels of education. Both kinds of interviews included open-ended questions for the participants to be free in expressing whatever they feel. For example, questions included the way retired teachers felt about their salaries and status when they became teachers before the Lebanese civil war. Other questions for Heads of Schools included whether the culture of a school accepts males teaching children. The two kinds of interviews were sent by mail to be answered by the participants. The interview of the Heads of Schools was sent to three schools (2 preschool principals, 3 elementary school principals).

Research Purpose	Research Question	Participants of the interviews	Participants of the questionnaires
To explore the reasons of the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools	What are the reasons for the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools?	Heads of preschools and elementary schools. Retired teachers who taught before and after the Civil war and a current male teacher.	University students pursuing their degree in education.

3.4.2-Questionnaires

Questionnaires are widely used by most researchers to collect data when the researcher is not present. They are often used to collect structured and numerical data.

The questions that are included in a questionnaire should cover the purpose of the research and to answer the research questions (Robson, 2002; Cohen et al., 2011).

The questionnaires of this research were also constructed based on the literature review (Anliak & Beyazkurk, 2008; Cooney & Bittner, 2001; Mills et al., 2008; Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2010; Shumin & Guanghui, 2005; Cushman, 2007; Sutherland et al., 2010) and were piloted and fine-tuned by the same male teachers who piloted and fine-tuned the interview questions. The questionnaires did not need a lot of modifications knowing that they were fully understood by the male teachers. A minor change was done on one question that included whether this student wants to pursue a career in education or not, so the "WHY" question was added. The questionnaires of this study (see Appendix I) were distributed to 94 students in the education department, 5 were males and 89 were females. The questionnaires included questions that aided me in understanding which career path students are aiming to follow and if education was going to be their ultimate career or not. Also, it included the idea of how they think the society views male teachers and whether there is an acceptance of a male figure in the lower levels of schools. All participants came from different religious backgrounds and different socioeconomic status. Since I had easy access to the university, the questionnaires were given to four professors in the education department who in turn distributed them to their students. After this was done I collected the questionnaires from the professors and entered the collected data on the SPSS program. All questionnaires were filled and none were left empty. However, to prevent duplication, students were asked whether they have filled the questionnaire before or not.

There were common questions between the instruments to increase the rate of reliability and to try to prove the research hypothesis. For example, the interviews

with the heads of schools pointed out the acceptance of a male teacher in a kindergarten and an elementary school and the questionnaire had a close idea about whether the society accepts a male teacher teaching children. Also, both interviews included questions about the level of respect male teachers get, and all instruments targeted the question of whether the salary a teacher gets is satisfying or not.

3.5-Triangulation

I used two interviews and a questionnaire in this study and this led to the concept of triangulation. Triangulation by definition is the use of two or more methods of data collection for a certain study (Cohen et al., 2011). It is when a researcher gets data from two or more places (Punch, 2009). Triangulation brings out the strength of both qualitative and quantitative research (Robson, 2002). The more instruments are used the more valid and reliable a study is and triangulation is the key to make a study more valid and reliable (Cohen et al., 2011; Robson, 2002; Punch, 2009). Data from one instrument was checked against data from the other instrument to validate the results.

Triangulation is when a researcher uses two or more methods in data collection. It helps in understanding and exploring a certain topic from more than one perspective (Cohen et.al, 2000). As mentioned above (See section about validity and reliability), the same questions were asked in different instruments to ensure reliability. This is the effect of triangulation which helped me make sure that the reasons of the shortage of male teachers exist. The more the outcomes of different methods align together the more confident a researcher becomes concerning his findings (Cohen et al., 2000). As an example, most participants from the questionnaires and the interviews agreed that the salary is an issue related to the shortage of male teachers.

3.6-Data Analysis / Content Analysis

Since a lot of human behavior cannot be directly observed and measured and since people do not always give information about certain topics that they know, content analysis can be used. Content analysis is a technique that can be used to study human behavior indirectly through analyzing their communication (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). Content analysis is a method that is used with other methods of research such as historical research. It can help in describing trends in schools and helps in understanding certain perceptions of schools in addition to the different ways schools handle certain trends and issues (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000).

Qualitative data analysis is a very personal process with few rigid rules and procedures. For this purpose, the researcher needs to go through a process called Content Analysis. Content Analysis means analysis of the contents of an interview in order to identify the main themes that emerge from the responses given by the respondents (Kothari, 1985; Dawson, 2002; Kumar, 2005). The main themes of the data analysis were the salary, a teacher's self-image, and whether there is a shortage in male teachers or not. The codes of those themes were written in the SPSS program (see the section below). Responses of the interviews were classified under each theme. For example, if one of the interviewees agreed that there is a shortage in male teachers, this was written under the theme of "SHORTAGE". If a participant said that male teachers have a demeaning self-image, this was written under "RESPECT". If a participant agreed that teachers have a low salary then this was written under "SALARY". Interview answers were written verbally in the "Reporting the findings" section.

The data that is collected through the questionnaires was analyzed using the SPSS software to understand the number of men and women in education and to understand the major reasons for the shortage of male teachers. The data was coded according to the hypothesis that was set. In other words and since the hypothesis of the study aimed at understanding whether the salary and the profession's status would affect the shortage of male teachers, the codes used in the SPSS program were "RESPECT", "SALARY", and "SHORTAGE". Moreover, three peer researchers helped in analyzing the findings for inter-rater reliability. In other words, the results was read by a critical colleague other than the writer for the validity and reliability of the research done.

3.7-Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two important concepts in research. Reliability can never be sufficient in research without reliability and vice versa. If a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless. In other words, Cohen et al. (2011) state that validity means that a certain instrument must measure what it is supposed to measure. Validity means that correct procedures have been applied to find answers to a question (Kothari, 1985; Dawson, 2002; Kumar, 2005). For example, my research question was "what are the reasons for the shortage of male teachers?" validity occurs when the instruments I used answer this question. My interview included questions such as "are teachers paid well?" Such a question was asked to explore if there is a shortage because of the salaries.

Reliability refers to the quality of a measurement procedure that provides repeatability and accuracy (Kothari, 1985; Dawson, 2002; Kumar, 2005). Reliability is also the consistency and the stability of the research and if this research will show the same results overtime. Another aspect of reliability would be how consistent are

the items that are used in the research and whether those items are all working in the same direction. Reliability in brief is precision and accuracy measure (Punch, 2009; Cohen et al., 2011). For example, in my research all questions were related to the reasons of the shortage of male teachers. To elaborate, the questionnaires and interviews included the same questions but in different ways. You would find the same question about whether education is a well-respected career asked in the three instruments.

3.8-Ethics

Data is collected from people and about people, so participants should know that they are being part of a study and can avoid participating in the study at their own will. The findings of any research must be used ethically and no researcher is allowed to use the work of another claiming that it is his work (Robson, 2002; Punch, 2009; Cohen et al., 2011).

The participants of this research remained anonymous and were free to quit whenever they wanted and the names of the schools also remained anonymous (Robson, 2002; Punch, 2009; Cohen et al., 2011). The data collected was kept safe on a computer with a password. As for the biases, the researcher made sure to keep all participants anonymous so neither the questionnaires nor the interviews included any names or religions.

3.9-Conclusion

This chapter summarized the research design and the instruments that were used. It also included definitions and explanations for each instrument and method that was used so that the readers will develop a better image about what they are reading.

CHAPTER FOUR

REPORTING THE FINDINGS

4.1-Introduction

This chapter presents results of data analysis and findings of this study. As mentioned in chapter 3, instruments used were questionnaires administered to education students, interviews conducted with Heads of Schools and interviews conducted with retired teachers and one current teacher. All of findings from the three instruments were reported in this chapter. Findings are used to address the research questions posed by this study.

4.2-Interviews

4.2.1-Interviews with Heads of Schools

Ten questions were asked online to five Heads of Schools (preschool, elementary and secondary) of three schools. Two schools were religious schools that follow the Lebanese system of education and the other was an American school that follows the American system of education. All heads of schools interviewed were females with an experience of almost 10 years each in the field of education. Three of them are Lebanese and the other two are American. The questions targeted the perception of families towards male teachers in preschools and elementary schools in addition to the schools' tolerance of having a mixed environment of teachers in those levels. Other questions aimed at understanding the reasons why female teachers apply more to preschools and elementary schools than male teachers do. Also, the salary along with the satisfaction of teachers with their salaries were also addressed in the interview questions.

4.2.2-Interviews with Two Retired Elementary Male Teachers

To include a historical aspect in the research, ten questions were asked to two retired Elementary teachers who both taught before and after the Lebanese civil war in public schools. The first retired teacher who was interviewed is a Christian who comes from the southern part of Lebanon. The second retired male teacher who was interviewed was a Muslim who also taught in an elementary school before the civil war. The questions targeted the reasons that pushed them to choose the path of education and the public image of male teachers during that period along with the salaries they used to get.

4.2.3-Interview with a Current Male Teacher

An interview with a male teacher who is currently teaching at a religious School that follows the Lebanese system in education was also conducted. The questions asked to the male teacher were similar to the questions asked to the retired teachers. This was done so the researcher would be able to compare between the current status of a teacher before the Lebanese Civil war and after it. The questions of this interview targeted mainly the societal perceptions of a male teacher nowadays.

4.2.4-Questionnaires with Education Students

The questionnaires of this research were distributed to students who are pursuing their undergraduate or graduate degrees in education. 94 questionnaires were handed in; however, only 91 questionnaires were valid and this kept the researcher with a sample size of N= 91, of which 5 were male students and 86 were female students. The main focus of the survey was to understand the societal perceptions of

education as a career from the students' point of view and the reasons for the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools if this shortage exists.

Using the SPSS software, the findings were analyzed and concentrated on whether education is a respected career and how this is related to the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools. The researcher also established a relationship between the salary of a teacher and the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools.

4.3-Views and Acceptance of Male Teachers

4.3.1-Interviews with the Heads of Schools

Both Heads of Schools of the Lebanese religious school agreed on the same answers and filled the interview questions together since they thought it was easier to give one unified answer. They explained that females are generally more attracted to teaching young children since it is something *innate* and part of their interpersonal skills. When asked about the acceptance of a male figure in a preschool, or elementary school their answer was a simple yes and that parents have a very normal reaction for having a sports male teacher, technology and computer male teachers teaching their young children. A shocking, yet understandable fact was when both Heads of Schools agreed on the fact that females make better teachers in a preschool since they have the motherly instinct: “Females in preschool as they usually possess the motherly instinct required in order to help little learners cope with the changes they face when they enter new surroundings. As for the elementary level, it doesn't matter, since the learners have already adapted to their environment and where the presence of manly figure is important to learners as much as the presence of a female figure.”

Male teachers are accepted in their school as long as they meet the job requirements and it does not matter whether there is a male or a female teacher in a

classroom since, according to the Heads of Schools, it is the charisma and attitude of a teacher which makes a student respond to the teacher. The answer about what kind of challenges female and male teachers who work together might face was answered vaguely: “The same challenges are present either in a mixed environment or a homogeneous one.”

As for the American school, each Head of School answered the interview separately; however the answers were not very explicit. The Head of the Preschool agreed that female teachers apply to preschools and elementary schools more than male teachers without knowing the reason. She elaborated that male teachers are welcomed to their culture and are accepted just as female teachers. She added that she had never found a difficulty with parents who have male teachers teaching their children. Also, she explained that it does not matter what the gender of a teacher is to be a good one: “The better person regardless of sex”

She added that the culture of their school accepts male teachers since the public knows their ability of hiring capable teachers. She did not answer the question about the challenges that might face male teachers. She also had no comment about a student's behavior in a classroom with a male or female teacher.

The Elementary Head of School of the American school had a different opinion. She was not sure if females apply more than males to a preschool or elementary school and she did not understand the question about how male teachers would be viewed by the society. She said that parents would react towards male teachers just as they react toward female teachers and it does not matter what the gender of a teacher is. She sarcastically added that the culture of their school would accept having male teachers: “Yes- why not?”

The elementary Head of School of the third school explained that male teachers gain respect from both the community and the parents: “They are well respected and appreciated by both parents and community”.

However, she added that teaching as a public image has not been viewed as a prestigious career and that the orientation towards teaching as a career has been done the wrong way. For example, females apply more to teaching since they benefit from vacations to stay with their children: “from the public image teaching in general is not being viewed as a prestigious career and teaching in elementary and preschool has been a preference for females since they can benefit from vacations and stay with their children”

4.3.2-Interviews with the Retired Teachers

When the first retired male teacher was asked about the reasons for choosing education as a career and in specific elementary education, he insisted that he had no other choice. It was simply the lack of transportation, so he had to stay in his area and the only available position was teaching elementary classes. So it was not about happiness as much as it was about the lack of transportation: “It was not a choice, it was the situation and there was no availability to teach in the intermediate level.”

He wanted to study and later work in hotel management, but since Beirut was so far away and there was difficulty in transportation he stayed in the southern part of Lebanon and taught. He also had the choice to work as a banker and it was available; however, he chose to teach because people had positive perceptions towards teachers: “What motivated me to teach was the way people looked at teachers, their view of a teacher was full of respect”

When asked about the challenges and issues that faced teachers in their days before the civil war, he replied that there were no challenges that differed from the ones teachers faced after the civil war. He thought that some of the challenges were that students and parents stopped respecting teachers which caused classroom

management problems. There was no punishment for students in addition to the increase in the absenteeism rate which made many students stop studying and do their homework. The high cost of living changed students' and parents' perceptions towards teachers, so teachers stopped caring about teaching and were obliged to do other jobs because of the decrease in their salaries along with the high cost of living: “Those challenges did not exist during our days”

According to the first retired male teacher, young children viewed male teachers as role models and father figures before the civil war and they had a lot of respect for teachers and some fear of punishments.

When asked about his likes and dislikes about teaching, this retired male teacher explained that what he liked about teaching is that it is a humanitarian message that makes them proud of their students when they graduated. Also it was an advantage for him to meet new environments and cultures since he used to teach at different areas in the south. On the other hand, and what he disliked the most was the distance between a village and another since there were no roads or means of transportation. He also added that some school principals were very authoritative and controlled their working hours by adding hours to some teachers and subtracting to others without adjusting the salaries.

When asked about giving an advice to male teachers who want to be part of a preschool or elementary school, he rejected the fact that males should teach in a preschool: “Preschool is not for males. Women are better in preschools since they are more caring”

The first retired elementary teacher explained that he gained a lot of respect as a teacher to an extent that people envied him for his position. Unfortunately, he continued, nowadays all standards have changed and people judge you based on how much money you get paid: “The standards have changed because of the society of nowadays”

When the second retired elementary male teacher was asked about the challenges that teachers used to face at his time, his answer was that there were no challenges before the civil war; however after the civil war the new curriculum confused the students and there was no fear of or respect for the teacher. There was a lot of freedom for the students and they were able to do whatever they wanted without any punishment. He continued that after the civil war the high cost of living made him take another job and thus he stopped caring about teaching and he started advising people not to study education or teach: “The high cost of living made it difficult for me to survive so I had to do another job”

Young children used to fear and respect the teacher, he was a role model and people at villages saw him as a "Leader".

Just like the other teacher, what he liked about teaching was the fact that it is a message full of giving in addition to having new contacts and getting introduced to new cultures and environments not mentioning the summer vacation and holidays. On the other hand, what he disliked was the negative behavior of some principals who were very authoritative and controlling.

When asked about his advice to males who want to study education, he was completely against it since there is no progress in such a career: “Do not teach since it is not broad and there are no promotions or progress”

If he goes back in time he would have chosen Engineering since it is creative and not limited and there is always room for progress in it.

His answer for the last question was unexpected, for he said that teachers were appreciated and fully respected and envied in their areas, but nowadays people pity the teacher: “People used to envy me whenever I passed through the streets. Later on and after the civil war they started pitying me.”

4.3.3-Interview with a Current Male Teacher

The current male teacher elaborated on his view as a male teacher as something that his family and friends got used to: “family and friends got used to the fact that I am a male teacher after a series of debates”. In his opinion, male teachers teaching at the low level are dealing with social acceptance; however, the perception differs when people understand what teaching is all about: “the perception greatly differs with respect to understanding and the appreciation of the career” He finally adds that a male teacher is an authority figure who is an essential factor in the schooling of students.

4.3.4-Questionnaires

In the questionnaires the cross tabulation table shows the relationship between how respectful is education as a career and the shortage of male teachers. The findings showed that 21 participants who agreed that teaching in preschools and elementary schools in Lebanon is a well-respected career also agreed that there is a shortage in male teachers in the same domain. Only 17 participants disagreed that teaching preschools and elementary schools is a well- respected career and those 17 participants also agreed that there is a shortage in male teachers at this level. The 33 participants, who are not sure of whether teaching those lower levels of education is respected, agreed that there is a shortage in male teachers in those levels.

This left me with a sample of 72 participants out of 91 who agreed that there is a shortage in male teachers and that teaching in preschool and elementary is respected as a career, 15 were unsure about this issue, and 4 disagreed with this shortage. On the other hand, 22 participants agreed that it is respectful to teach lower levels, 45 were unsure about it and 22 disagreed that it is respectful.

4.4-Common Points

The common points concerning the views of teachers' respect and acceptance were that the four Heads of Schools and the Vice principal agreed that a male teacher is welcomed in their schools and they would accept and respect him as long as he has the qualifications needed. The two retired male teachers both agreed that a male teacher was fully respected and feared before the civil war, but lost all his respect after the war has ended. On the other hand, the current male teacher explained that a male teacher is facing some challenges concerning his image as a teacher in society. And finally the students in the education department were unsure whether teaching lower levels is a well-respected career for males.

To sum this up, the answers varied between all participants, yet the one finding I was sure of, according to the answers, was that teaching before the Lebanese Civil War was considered as a prestigious occupation, perhaps more in rural areas than in cities, while nowadays very few males apply to teaching because of the status of the profession.

4.5-Salaries of male teachers

4.5.1-Interviews with the Heads of Schools

The Heads of Schools in the Lebanese school agreed that the pay is not satisfying for all teachers and they believed male teachers are satisfied with what they are doing, but they do not necessarily seek promotion more than females since promotion is not a concept related to gender.

In the American School the Head of the Preschool explained that a male teacher's pay is just like a female's so when asked about a male teacher's pay, the answer was: "Same as for females - both would need two breadwinners to raise a family"

She explained that male teachers are satisfied with the job they are doing, but did not know if they seek promotion more than females or not.

The Elementary Head of School did not know whether the pay is satisfying for male teachers. Finally, she did not answer the questions related to a student's behavior in a classroom, neither the satisfaction of male teachers with what they are doing, nor whether males seek promotion more than female teachers.

The Head of School from the other Lebanese School also agreed that teachers are not well paid in the public and the private sector and that is why males take other careers such as engineering, medicine and computer science: “Males take prestigious careers such as engineering, computer science and medicine, where a male can guarantee a good societal image and a very good salary in comparison to teaching”

4.5.2-Interviews with the Retired Teachers

The first retired teacher who was interviewed suggested that it is better for males not to take teaching as an occupation nowadays due to the financial situation..

He was very satisfied with his salary before the civil war since everything was cheap and available, but after the civil war and even though his salary increased it was not enough because of the high cost of living.

When he was asked about his choice of career he replied that he wanted to help his parents financially and he was so glad that he got this job as a teacher especially that his degree helped him to take this position. His motivation was just to support his parents financially: “I chose this job to help my parents financially and it was elementary teaching because of the degree that I got. I was so happy when I got this position. I wanted any job just to be able to help my parents”

When he was asked about the salary, he mentioned that before the civil war it was very satisfying and he used to help his parents financially. Unfortunately, nowadays and after the civil war the salary is not enough even to satisfy basic needs.

4.5.3-Questionnaires

The question in the survey was whether primary and elementary teachers are reasonably paid considering the work they do. With the help of the SPSS software another table was constructed to understand the link between the salary and the shortage.

Findings showed that 5 participants who agreed that primary and elementary teachers are reasonably paid also agreed that there is a shortage of male teachers in the primary and elementary level. The 44 participants, who disagreed that teaching in preschools and elementary schools is reasonably paid, also agreed that there is a shortage of male teachers in those lower levels; 23 of those who were unsure about the salary and the payment agreed that there is a shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools in Lebanon.

The final results showed that 72 agree that there is a shortage in male teachers because of the salary, 15 are unsure and 4 disagree that the salary affects the shortage in male teachers. On the other hand, 8 agree that teaching lower levels is reasonably paid, 30 are unsure of it and 53 disagree that it is reasonably paid.

4.6-Common Points

From the three instruments combined I found that all participants agree that the salary is a major problem in a male choosing his path as a Preschool or Elementary teacher. The interviews with the principals have shown that the pay is not satisfying in those two levels of education. And to be put in a polite way one principal

claimed that in such a case a family would need two bread winners if one of the partners decides to become a preschool or elementary teacher. The retired teachers both agreed that the pay was satisfying before the Lebanese civil war; however, it is very disappointing nowadays and they did not advise any male to become a teacher but to choose another career. The questionnaires showed that 72 participants out of 91 agreed that salary affects a person's career and thus causes a shortage in male teachers in the lower levels of education.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The literature that exists about the shortage of male teachers is somehow limited and researchers are still trying to find the reasons for this shortage. Research about this topic has been conducted in some parts of the United States, Europe and Australia since 1923 probably (see Stevenson, 1923). In Asia some studies were conducted in Taiwan and the Far East and some in Turkey. However, in a third world country as Lebanon, no research was conducted, but the issue was raised by many educators. This was a slight problem for myself as a researcher knowing that the literature review that was found might not be enough to prove the shortage and the reasons behind it; however, Lebanon turned out to be facing a problem in the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools, but not all the reasons were similar to the ones presented in the literature that was reviewed. The hypothesis of this study was that this shortage in male teachers is due to a male's public image as a teacher and the low salaries that are paid to teachers.

5.1-Views of Male Teachers

5.1.1-Findings of the Retired Male Teachers vs Literature Review

In Turkey as elsewhere around the world it has been seen recently that there is no significant difference when choosing a career in terms of gender (Anliak & Beyazkurk, 2008). For example, males and females have been choosing "non-traditional" occupations and men are dealing with occupations that are perceived as a "women's job" and females have been pursuing occupations that are seen as a "male's job"; however, and despite this gradual increase in such participations, the gender issue still appears to be resistant to change in the education field (Anliak &

Beyazkurk, 2008). Findings from the present study have shown that it is true that very few men in Lebanon pursue a career in education nowadays since it is not a well-respected career and you would find more females than males among the working force in education especially in preschools and elementary schools.

As the retired male teachers in the study have agreed that it is better for a male not to pursue a career in education especially in the lower levels, Parr et al. (2011) found out that the number of primary male teachers in Canada is gradually decreasing.

Russell (2008) explains that it is important to have elementary male teachers as role models for children in order to encourage them to consider teaching as a future career. The retired elementary teachers agreed that they were seen as role models especially before the civil war and students respected them and feared them at the same time.

Buchanan (2010) found that one of the reasons teachers leave the occupation is due to the profession's status. After the Lebanese civil war, teachers lost their self-image and respect as educators so none of the retired teachers advised any male to study education and build a career in education cause of the status of such a job.

Based on the interviews with the retired teachers, the respect they used to get in their classrooms changed after the 1975 civil war. Students became less interested in learning. Both teachers put the blame on the new curriculum that was somehow flexible and took away the importance of a teacher's presence in class.

5.1.2-Interviews with Heads of Schools vs. Literature Review

Unfortunately, some societies agreed that putting a man in a female's job would not do, for a man in a females job is more damaging to boys than domineering mothers (Martino, 2008). On the contrary and in Lebanon, findings showed that there is no difference between men or women teaching a child; however it could be that a

female is better in teaching in a preschool because some of the Heads of Schools thought that females have an innate motherly instinct so they would be better in raising a child. However, this contradicts the attachment theory of John Bowlby that was discussed by Pleck (2007) who explained that infants can form attachment relationships with care-givers other than mothers. So it does not matter if a female or a male teacher was teaching at the preschool level as long as this teacher is able to give the right kind of care.

5.1.3-Questionnaires vs. Literature Review

Based on the findings of this study, male teachers teaching at the preschool level and the elementary level in Lebanon are still scarce. According to the questionnaires that were distributed to 91 education students (graduates and undergraduates, 5 males and 86 females). The results showed that 17 participants agreed that education is a low status career and this lead to a shortage in male teachers in the lower levels. Similarly, Wood and Haog's (1993) findings showed that the majority of principals in an elementary school agreed that there is a shortage of male teachers and asked for even more male teachers.

So to what extent is education as a profession respected and does it have an influence on the shortage of male teachers in the lower levels? I believe that most of those students enrolled in the education system as a whole used the safe side by labeling the question of whether education is respected or not as "UNSURE". 33 participants were unsure about whether it is respected to be a teacher or not; however they agreed that there is a shortage. It is the sad truth that even education students who are going to be future teachers do not know if the career they have chosen is respected, or not. To add, those future teachers are supposed to make a change about

how people perceive education as a career and must take a side of whether they see it as respectful or not.

The conclusion that I can come up with for now is that unlike the international literature we cannot judge if the profession's status is influencing the shortage of male teachers, but we can draw the conclusion of having a shortage in male teachers in the preschool and elementary level in Lebanon especially that out of the 91 participants only 4 disagreed that there is a shortage of male teachers.

5.2-Salaries of Teachers

5.2.1-Interviews with the Retired Male Teachers vs. Literature Review

The second part of the hypothesis was that this shortage in male teachers is due to the low salaries paid to teachers. Buchanan (2010) found that another reason teachers leave the occupation is due to the salary. Rowden-Racette (2005) believes that male teachers avoid elementary teaching due to low salaries compared to other jobs. Both male teachers agreed that before the civil war male teachers were not only respected, but they were also envied. Their salaries allowed them to live comfortably and their positions as teachers gave them very good status in society.

As a result of the Lebanese civil war, after 1975, the curriculum changed and the cost of living increased. With the increase of the cost of living a teacher's income was not enough to cover basic needs especially that males are considered as the breadwinners of a family (Jones, 1990). All this led those male teachers to find another job and become less interested in teaching. According to the findings of this study, one of the retired male teachers worked another job to be able to adapt to the new cost of living.

5.2.2-Interviews with the Heads of Schools vs. Literature Review

The interviews with the Heads of schools revealed that education as a career does not pay good money and a teacher needs another breadwinner in the family to be able to live. It is not only Lebanon that is facing the problem of money and education, it is an international problem. One in five Australian teachers work more than fifty hours per week with a low pay and this results in teachers leaving the job due to the workload that comes along (Buchanan, 2010). The only difference is that Lebanon is a third world country with not enough resources and job opportunities, in addition to having a high cost of living. A male in a country as Lebanon would not focus on a career that pays him a low salary, on the contrary he would concentrate on something related to business or engineering since such careers are well-known for giving valuable incomes and benefits. Similarly, Tishler and Ernest (1989) found that one third of the sample teachers he interviewed (3 American states) were leaving teaching because of the low wages. All Heads of Schools agreed that the salary is a problem when it comes to teaching and not all teachers are satisfied with their salaries or they need another breadwinner in the family to be able to live.

5.2.3-Questionnaires vs. Literature Review

In the questionnaire conducted, 44 participants agreed that teaching in preschools and elementary schools is not reasonably paid and they also agreed that there is a shortage. This proves the point of Jones (1990) which is that men are considered the breadwinners in the family. This leads to understanding that living in an expensive country as Lebanon, a preschool or elementary male teacher cannot be the breadwinner with a low amount of money paid to him at the end of each month especially if he has a family to look after.

5.3-Who is Responsible?

Ponte (2012) explained that male teachers view themselves as teachers who are serving the community and increasing social justice in schools, so there must be ways to attract more male teachers and support them to deliver more quality teaching. An intimidating question comes up, who is responsible for this and did the war destroy the educational system in Lebanon? At this point we cannot point fingers to anyone and the researcher cannot answer this question. However, it is well known that a country is shaped based on the amount of intellect and education an individual has. The more the population of a country is educated the better the country will be. As for the cost of living, is it only teachers who got affected? Every employee was affected, but why is it always the teachers, especially public school teachers, that complain about their salaries? It is perhaps because teaching has become a demanding but demeaning career in our country and the government is not taking into consideration the needs of our educational system? People once used to envy a teacher for his position now they pity him.

5.4-Self-Reflection

As a self-reflection, as a male teacher in Lebanon, I believe that it is not the money that counts in education. It is the intrinsic satisfaction that a person gains after teaching a class and seeing the progress in humans and not in objects. This might sound too Platonic, but again the salary is just a myth that has been told since people understood the meaning of money.

To conclude, such a discussion would be suitable for this study only knowing that time was not always on my side as the researcher which limited the reliability of the study. Although the findings along with the discussion rejected the fact that

education as a career is not respected (based on the sample of this research), I found out that the salary does affect every person's decision in choosing education as a career. Other research should be conducted with respect to this topic so that a right solution for this issue would be implemented.

5.5-Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore the reasons for the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools in Lebanon. Findings have shown that a major reason for this shortage is the salary. The shortage of male teachers became a major problem internationally and in our Lebanese society. As a long range consequence, the study will enable those concerned to look in depth of this problem and thus be able to figure out suggestions and solutions for the shortage of male teachers.

5.6-Limitations

As mentioned above, the limited research on the topic of the shortage of male teachers has affected this research. Also, many schools were not very cooperative when asked to conduct interviews with their principals, which left me with a limited number of Heads of Schools to conduct interviews with. The time limit to finish this research was not enough to distribute more questionnaires and try to find cooperative schools. Other limitations were based on the instruments themselves especially the interviews with Heads of Schools since some of the schools found the questions provocative and intimidating. Due to this limited number of participants the research might not be very reliable although it is valid. However, this study shed light on an important issue in teaching: male teachers are important in children's lives, but they have become rare in Lebanon.

5.7-Implications for Future Practice

The findings of this study would be an eye-opener to schools and policy makers in Lebanon. Schools must understand that salaries are unsatisfying for their teachers and must increase their pay to prevent any shortage in any gender. Policy makers also must take steps in creating programs to attract more male teachers into the field of education such as offering scholarships and grants to male students who want to be enrolled in education in return for their efforts in teaching for 5 years.

5.8-Suggestions for Future Research

Time is a key element in such a study and thus any researcher who would like to add to this research must make sure that time is on his side. For future recommendation, it would be a good idea to have several researchers working on such a study where each researcher is located in a different country or city understanding the culture of the schools where each researcher is living. This will add to the reliability of the study and will highlight the idea of whether the public image of the teacher is the same nationally or internationally.

5.9-Reflexivity

If I had the chance to conduct such a study again, I will be using the help of other researchers who would be working by my side and who can establish good connections with all kinds of schools so that we can create a more reliable research and we will dig deeper into the issue of a male teacher's self-image and public image. Researchers and people who are involved in the education and psychology system are in need for more explanations regarding the shortage of male teachers in preschools and elementary schools, so such a study is valuable and must be taken into consideration every time a person tries to explore the reasons behind this shortage.

This leads me to say that such a study was worth conducting since it elaborated certain ideas that were not taken into consideration before hoping that the concerned people would also try to find a solution for such a problem. A developing country such as Lebanon is in desperate need for research and that was one of the reasons I have tackled this subject hoping that some awareness would be raised to find the right solutions and implement them.

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Appendix I
Questionnaires

Age:

Gender:

1- Which subjects would you like to teach the most?

- a- Science
- b- Mathematics
- c- Languages
- d- Business
- e- If any other please mention:_____

2- Which grade level would you like to teach? (you can choose more than one option)

- a- Preschool
- b- Elementary
- c- Intermediate(middle school)
- d- Secondary(High school)
- e- University
- f- Adults

3- Is education the career you want to choose ultimately in your life?

- a- Yes
- b- No

4- Please mention why "Yes" or why "NO"

5- Teaching is a career suitable for both, males and females:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

6- Primary and elementary teaching is a well-respected career in Lebanon:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

7- There is a male teacher shortage in the primary and elementary levels in Lebanon:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

8- Parents in Lebanon are more likely to encourage their daughters to become primary or elementary teachers than their sons:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

9- Primary and elementary teaching in Lebanon is reasonably paid for the work involved:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

10- In preschools and elementary schools, male teachers have a positive impact on the achievement of young boys:

- a- Agree

- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

11- Female teachers are generally more caring than male teachers:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

12- The society in Lebanon tends to be suspicious of men who work with young children:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

13- Schools in Lebanon prefer female teachers teaching young children:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

14- In the next twenty years more men will feel more comfortable about wanting to work with young children in Lebanon:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

15- It is vital that both male and female teachers are recruited to teach in primary and elementary schools:

- a- Agree
- b- Unsure
- c- Disagree

Appendix II

Interviews with Heads of Schools

- 1- Do female teachers apply to a preschool or elementary school more than male teachers? Why?
- 2- How are the male teachers of this school viewed in the community?
- 3- How do you think parents react towards male teachers teaching their children?
Example if you can.
- 4- Who do you think makes a better teacher in elementary and preschool: males or females? Why?
- 5- Does the culture of this school accept having male teachers as primary or elementary teachers? Why?
- 6- What are the challenges for male and female teachers who work together inside the school?
- 7- How does a student's behavior differ in a classroom of a male or a female teacher in preschool or elementary? Example
- 8- Is the pay satisfying for male teachers? Why?
- 9- Are male teachers satisfied with their teaching?
- 10- Are male teachers more likely to seek promotion? Why?

Appendix III

Interviews with the Retired Teachers

- 1- Why did you choose primary/elementary school teaching for your career and are you glad you did that?
- 2- What motivated you to apply for this particular post?
- 3- What do you see as the key issues facing male teachers in the primary/elementary schools today and did you have it in your days?
- 4- How did young children view you as a teacher?
- 5- Did the parents have any problems in having a male teaching their young children?
- 6- What did you like and dislike most about teaching?
- 7- What advice can you give to a male who wants to become a primary/elementary teacher?
- 8- If you go back in time, what would you have chosen as a career other than teaching? Why?
- 9- Were you satisfied with the salary?
- 10- How did the people in your hometown view you back then?

Appendix IV

Interview with the Current Male Teacher

- 1- Why did you choose teaching for your career and are you glad you did that?
- 2- What do you like and dislike most about teaching?
- 3- How do your family, friends, and community view you as teacher? Would this change if you were an elementary teacher?
- 4- What do you see as the key issues facing male teachers in the primary/elementary schools today?
5. In your opinion, how would young children view males as their teachers?
6. What advice can you give to a male who wants to become a primary?

Appendix V

Interview with the Vice Principal

- 1- Why do you think female teachers are more in number than male teachers at the preschool and elementary school levels?
- 2- How are male elementary teachers viewed by parents? By the community?
- 3- How might a student's behavior differ in a classroom of a male or a female teacher in preschool or elementary?
- 4- Do male and female teachers differ in their demands for salary and promotion?
- 5- Do you think shortage in elementary school male teachers is related to self-image or public image? How?