

**PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT MALE TEACHERS'
UNDERREPRESENTATION IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE: A STUDY IN THE
EAST LONDON EDUCATION DISTRICT**

By

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ABSTRACT

Foundation Phase in many schools is dominated by females and there are no or few male teachers in these grades. Foundation Phase comprises both boys and girls and if girls need female teachers to teach them, so the boys also need male teachers. One of the reasons why males do not want to teach in the Foundation Phase is the gender stereotype that Foundation Phase is a woman's job, which deprive young learners the benefits that they could enjoy by having male teachers in their early years. The objectives of this study were to establish the parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase; to determine how parents and their children can benefit from being taught by male teachers in the FP; to ascertain what challenges parents perceive are experienced by male teachers in the FP and to ascertain how SGB parent component can attract male teachers for FP teaching in their schools. The study was conducted in the East London Education District from three primary schools in urban, semi-urban and rural school settings. The schools selected were those that have male teachers in the FP in Grade R, 1, 2 and 3. A purposeful sample of nine parents who have children in male teacher classes in the Foundation Phase were used; three parents from each school. Qualitative data were generated through semi-structured interviews and observations, using phenomenology design. Thematic analysis was conducted on the basis of the themes that emerged from the participants' responses to the research questions. This study adopted an interpretive paradigm to get an understanding of parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the FP from parents who have children in the male teacher classes in the FP. The findings indicated that parents feel a need for male teachers in the FP to act as disciplinarians. They also noted that their children who are taught by male teachers have good behaviours. Benefits like gender equality, improvement in sports, confidence of learners in doing their work and grooming and balancing for higher levels. It has appeared that parents also understand that male teachers experience challenges of being unaccepted by the parents of learners and also by their female colleagues. These challenges stem from the fact that teaching in FP is associated with being nannies which is a female duty; males are associated with child abuse and are thought to be paedophiles and there a great lack of trust due to these associations pointed at them. Parents in their responses have shown that they are for the view that the SGB parent component should ensure that male teachers are

employed in the FP by recommending them (male teachers) in the posts at Foundation Phase level and that it should be adopted in their schools.



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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my family; my mother and especially my father who made sure that I go to school when he didn't see the door of a school but vowed that he will ensure that his children will be educated; my husband, Nyameko, my sister-in-law Khunju and my daughter Zethu, for their support and encouragement.



ACRONYMS

FP	Foundation Phase
IP	Intermediate Phase
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
EY	Early Years
SGB	School Governing Body
UREC	University of Fort Hare Research Ethics Committee
SACE	South African Council of Educators



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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the background to the study about parents' perceptions on male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. The problem statement, research questions, objectives and the purpose of the study, its significance, scope of the study, definition of terms and chapter outline are also included.

1.2. Background to the study

Parents are the most important people in every child's upbringing, especially in the early years. All mothers, fathers, legal guardians and the primary caregivers of looked-after children are regarded as parents (Children's Workforce Development Council 2008 as cited by Ward, 2013). "If the parents of a child are married to each other or if they have jointly adopted a child, then they have a parental responsibility. This is not automatically the case for unmarried parents" (Ward, 2013:2). Ward (2013) further highlights that a father has parental responsibility if he has an agreement with the mother, or if he has jointly registered the birth of the child with the mother or if the parental responsibility has been granted by a court. This shows that, although parents are important in children's upbringing, some children are not fortunate to be raised by both parents. Some fathers cannot raise their children due to many reasons like not being married, family traditions that a child born out of wedlock belongs to the girl's family and family frictions. This study focuses on the perceptions of parents on male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase (FP) ages 6 to 9 years, as opposed to females who are highly represented at Foundation Phase level.

Merriman (2008) describes a parent as a person who is a father, mother or a person who has a child. This is also evident in section 576 of the Education Act of 1996 where parents are defined as all natural (biological) parents whether they are married or not. Children need both parents when they are growing up, especially in their early years. The fact is, both parents need to play a role in the child's life, and it is also good for the child to know both parents. Foundation Phase is regarded as the initial phase for formalized schooling particularly from Grade 1 level. Foundation Phase has a history of been dominated by female educators. According to statistics, female teacher percentage in education in general is higher than the percentage of male teachers.

Moosa and Bhana (2017) state that male role models encourage male teachers to improve boys' academic achievements and could help girls from a young age to better understand how to interact with men (Moosa & Bhana, 2017: 369). This draws attention to policy and how it relates to gender representation in education, particularly at the Early Childhood Development level ranging from birth to nine years of age, according to the Education White Paper 5 (2001); this will be discussed for purpose of clarity-seeking with regard to teachers' gender representation at FP level.

The South African, Education White Paper 5 (2001) defines Early Childhood Development (0–9 years) as the comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children from birth to nine years of age with the active participation of their parents and caregivers. This shows that children require both parents in their lives to guide them throughout their childhood, and this cannot be done by one parent, a mother or a father only; it needs a mother and a father. Likewise, this impacts on the gender representation of teachers teaching at Foundation Phase level.

The United States Agency for International Development USAID (2008: 5) highlights that gender equality means males and females have equal opportunities to realize their full human rights to contribute to and benefit from social, cultural, education and political development. Therefore, teaching in early childhood education is an example of a gendered profession organized by images, symbols and social understandings that allow for great distinctions in the enactment of gender roles (Baris, 2013: 109). This study seeks to understand and investigate what parent's perceptions are with regard to the under-representation of male teachers in the FP, which according to statistics, reflects female domination at this particular level. The argument for gender balance, as perceived by parents, is what is of researchable interest for this particular study.

Moosa and Bhana (2016) state that to involve men in traditionally female dominated professions such as teaching young children is motivated by concerns to end gender divisions of labour and gender inequalities (Moosa & Bhana, 2016: 1). Moosa and Bhana (2016) claim that societies must start accepting male teachers as part of early teaching by ensuring that societies accept them and become positive about their presence for the benefit of the school and the children, as gender equitable role models for children. There is a need, thus, for me as an educator to research the

perceptions of parents on male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. Parents are the most important people in schools; therefore, their perceptions are very valuable when it comes to the decisions they take and what they want for their children in the schools.

Many international studies show that there is gender imbalance in Early Childhood Development, and this is unpacked in this study. Gender stereotypes still prevail as more women are represented as teachers in FP as opposed to their male counterparts. This under-representation of men in FP education seems to be a global issue. International studies reveal that in Finland, the proportion of male elementary school teachers is 10%; in Germany, it is 4%; and in the United States of America, only 2% of males are involved in Foundation Phase education (Mashiya, 2014: 25). According to the United States (U.S.) Bureau of Labour Statistics (2010) cited in Browder and Bryan (2013), only 3%-5% of teachers of young children from ages 5 to 9 years are male, and the percentage of male teachers decreases drastically when race is added (Browder & Bryan, 2013: 143).

Rentzou (2011) noted that data from European and other countries show that men usually account for well below 5% of the workforce. Rentzou further asserts that in Greece, the Pan-Hellenic Union of day care centres operating in Athens stated that only 17 of its 2800 members are males. The municipal office responsible for the day care centres operating in Athens stated that only seven males work in these centres, and in Thessalonica, only four males work in the centres (Rentzou, 2011: 135). This shows that if there are fewer men working in child-care centres, there are only a few that work in the FP, which is a concern for the communities and societies that we live in. In Denmark, practitioners appear to be largely female in (EY) settings despite having restructured employment terms and conditions, but gender stereotypes or sensitivities about child abuse may mean that men meet prejudice; therefore, only few males become EY practitioners (Mistry & Sood, 2015: 118). Despite its topical nature, the issue remains emotive since around the globe, it is an accepted norm that few men are employed in early childhood services (Rentzou, 2011:136).

Yang (2013: 5) shares the same sentiments, "In Aotearoa (New Zealand), less than 1% of male educators work in early childhood education, which is one of the lowest participation rates in the world". Tsigas (2010: 1) states that, "Early childhood education

remains one of the most gender-skewed occupations in many Western countries. The percentage rates range from 1% - 4% in countries like Denmark and Spain. These percentages indicate that “The relation between early childhood education and gender is strongly structured”. Sumsion (2005: 112) claims that “The scarcity of men in early childhood education may be ascribed to a perception that men who choose to work with young children are either principals in training, or homosexuals or paedophiles.

In the United States of America (Boston), men are under-represented in FP education and care settings. Nationally, men comprise 5% of the teaching workforce and 2.2% of pre-school and kindergarten teachers (Roland, Janeiro, Holm, Jordan & Wright, 2010). This is also evident in Johnson, Middleton, Nicholson and Sandrick (2010: 18) literature stating that, “Gender disparities in teaching are not unique to the United States of America, and a comprehensive body of research and literature examining the experiences of male teachers exists both at home and abroad”. Browder and Bryan (2013) argue that, “Research consistently reveals that less than 25% of teachers (out of 3.5 million public school teachers) in the United States are male, and this percentage decreases in the field of childhood education” (Browder & Bryan, 2013: 142).



These international studies and percentage rates reveal that men are under-represented in teaching young children at foundation phase level which requires an investigation in terms of “bridging the gap” between female over-representation and male under-representation in the teaching profession. In so doing, addressing the gender inequalities that currently exist, internationally and nationally, requires attention in the teaching profession.

A study in Germany by Sobiraj, Korek, Weseler and Mohr (2011) reported on several international studies that explore the psychological health of men in non-traditional occupations (Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu and Mtshali, 2015). The study assessed specific attitudes towards the male role and, in particular, masculinity ideology. According to Sobiraj (2011), the masculinity ideology is defined as a set of beliefs and expectations about what men are like and should do and according to this normative perspective, men face cultural standards for being a *man* (Sobiraj, 2011: 799). This shows that the under-representation of men in the FP and in childcare centres is

caused by ideologies like these where males feel that they need to do certain jobs because of the cultural standards of being men.

The teaching of young children has long been dominated by women and there has been a low level of males choosing to teach in primary teaching (Drury, 2008). Martino and Kehler (2014) argue that the media has drawn attention to the disproportionate number of female teachers in elementary schools and the decreasing number of men choosing to enter the profession, as if this were a recent phenomenon. Such reports often call for affirmative action to address this gender imbalance (Martino and Kehler, 2014: 113). Patrick (2009) argues that, in relation to the call for male teachers, some of the universities in the United States of America have offered incentives to those men who want to pursue Foundation Phase teaching as a career.

According to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2007), 18,3% of elementary and middle school teachers were male, and fewer than 3% of early childhood education and care (ECEC) were male (Zhang, 2017: 4). In 2016, 21,5% of elementary and middle school teachers were male, and still only 2.5% of pre-school and kindergarten teachers were male (*ibid*). Zhang (2017) further cites that researchers argued that many jobs have been divided according to gender lines since the beginning (from the first gender division of labour in primitive societies), and gender disparity of occupations is still very stable over long periods of time (Zhang, 2017:4). According to Zhang (2017), no European country has reached the benchmark set for 20% male teachers in ECEC. Zhang (2017) further highlights that Norway succeeded to reach 9% of male ECEC teachers, while Denmark and Spain reached more than 8%, but there has been no growth at all in the US from 2007 to 2016 (Zhang, 2017: 5).

The above statistics from international studies show that male teachers are under-represented in the Foundation Phase, and this needs to be investigated from all viewpoints: teachers, parents and other stakeholders. This under-representation of male teachers in the Foundation Phase is a matter of concern as there is no gender balance in this phase since it is regarded as a female space. Although there are suggestions that males make good role models just like females and that they can better meet the educational needs of boys who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, it appears that some of the research evidence on role model argument may be highly contested (Mistry & Sood, 2015: 117). The gender imbalance in the

early years' settings is stark, with early years' workforce being some 99% despite policy shifts in favour of men working in this setting (Mistry & Sood, 2015: 116). The debate that females are caring, sensitive and creative than males has moved on, but as noted earlier, society still views males in the EY/ primary school settings with suspicion, thus deterring some males from entering the profession (ibid). These facts show that male teachers experience challenges when entering the FP sector, which makes them uneasy to join the FP teaching.

In Africa, there are similar issues; early childhood education is mainly populated with women. According to the National Centre for Educational Statistics (2003) in Africa, approximately 2% of teachers in kindergarten through to third grade are men. In preschool and childcare centres, the proportion is even less (National Centre for Educational Statistics, 2003). In Western societies, where pre-school education is well-established, the rate of male teachers in pre-school education varies from 1% to 4 %" (Baris, 2013). A study conducted by Mukuna and Mutsotso (2011) in Kenya shows that the community is uneasy and suspicious about men who choose to work with young children in preference to entering higher status or better paid occupations. In the words of one respondent, "Society refers to them as men who have not got their gender right" (Mukuna & Mutsotso, 2011). Prospective female teachers see primary teaching as parenthood, while male teachers see primary teaching as mothering (Sayed & McDonald, 2017).

Baris (2013) further asserts that *mothering* is a metaphor that represents an image of teaching and childcare as women's work used in early childhood education. He further asserts that one reason of labelling this occupation as women's work is that there are negative constructs such as "homosexuals" and "paedophiles" that are used to structure the gendered nature of teaching. Due to the feminization of the pre-school and foundation phase profession, there is a great gender imbalance leading to concerns and calls for male participation. Makeleni (2016) mentions Fordice and Nielson (n.d.) who argued that upon entering the teaching profession, male elementary teachers encounter mixed messages. If they conform too strictly to the traditional scripts of masculinity, they may be perceived as incompetent to work with elementary children. If, on the other hand, they are too nurturing and empathetic, their masculinity may be questioned (Makeleni, 2016).

African societies do not welcome men to work in early childhood as indicated in various studies, and many reasons which contribute to the under-representation of male teachers teaching young children have been highlighted. Nyoni and Nyoni (2012) point out stereotypes of femininity and masculinity which influence society's attitudes towards men and women either positively or negatively (Nyoni & Nyoni, 2012: 183). Sayed and McDonald (2017) assert that in Tanzania, teaching at lower primary level is perceived as a low-status job meant for female teachers, and this is attributed to the feminization of the teaching force to female students having stronger altruistic motives than their male counterparts. These are stereotypes or lenses that people use to categorize who works in the FP and why, thus depriving the children an atmosphere of both genders in the FP.

South Africa's statistics reveal that there is gender imbalance in the FP as males are under-represented as educators. The following table from Moosa (2013) also shows the enrolment in Edgewood Campus in KwaZulu-Natal University that had the lowest percentage of male student teacher enrolment in ECD and FP/IP and the percentage of males increase as the phases grow, that is, from Senior Phase/FET and FET.

Table 1: Number and percentage of male B.Ed. students enrolled in each academic year at Edgewood campus

PHASE OF SPECIALIZATION	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
ECD (Grade R-3)	17 2.3%	62 7.8%	61 7.2%	65 6.7%	49 4.2%
Foundation/Intermediate (Grade 1-6)	9 1.2%	6 0.7%	7 0.8%	11 1.13%	9 0.7%
Intermediate/Senior (Grade 4-9)	68 9.3%	69 8.7%	74 8.7%	71 7.3%	79 6.9%
Senior/FET (Grade 9-12)	218 29.8%	243 30.7%	238 28%	238 24.6%	293 25.5%
FET (Grade 10-12)	418 57.2%	411 51.9%	469 55%	584 60%	718 62.5%
The Total Number of male Bed students	730	791	849	969	1148

Source: Moosa (2013: 2)

The table above indicates the number and the percentage of male B. Ed students enrolled in each academic year in Edgewood Campus (Moosa, 2013: 2). Moosa

(2013) asserts that the table shows that these enrollments will consequently lead to a lack of male teachers in early childhood education.

The Foundation Phase has a high proportion of women, but a downside of this dominance has led to socially and culturally ascribed roles for women as primary caretakers of young children spilling over into the educational arena (Petersen, 2014). This shows that the perceptions of society that Foundation Phase are associated with women and childcare. Petersen (2014) further cites Cushman (2005), stating that, “historically, there are several reasons for the preponderance of women teachers in the Foundation Phase, including issues of economic development, the position of women in society, cultural definition of masculinity and the value of children and childcare” (Petersen, 2014: 5). It becomes evident that societies position women in child-rearing roles while men are perceived as heads of their families providing finance, security and discipline.

Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu and Mtshali (2015: 260) argue that the percentage of male teachers in FP education is very low when compared to female teachers. The Audit of Early Childhood Development (ECD) Centres’ national report on ages 0-9 years, issued on the 31st of July 2014, shows that females dominate the Early Childhood sector in South Africa. In the report, 98.6% of the supervisory staff for all the provinces are females while the gender of the teaching staff is a 99.2% total for all the provinces, with the Eastern Cape, Gauteng, Northern Cape having 100% female teaching staff. The gender of other staff also shows that the total for all the provinces is 79.1% female (Social Development, July 2014: 281-282). Mashiya et al (2015: 260) cited in Clyde (1991: 9), state that “the reasons given for the small number of males in early childhood settings are: lack of public acceptance, lack of pay and promotional opportunities, the stigma of male involvement in child abuse, and conflict over the ‘naturalness’ of males performing basic care tasks” (Mashiya, 2015: 260). A study by Petersen (2014) on views of two foundation phase first year cohorts at the University of Johannesburg found that male teachers are put into the following categories: ‘the good’ which are those who are perceived to be role models, ‘the bad’ which consists of the view that the phase is not suitable for men and ‘the ugly’, which is the view that associates men with child molestation.

Peterson and Petker (2011) as cited by Mashiya (2014) share the same sentiments claiming that, “teaching in the early grades is often accompanied by simplistic images of Foundation Phase teachers as ‘nannies’ and ‘caregivers’, both of which are generally associated with a woman’s role in society.” In the Black culture, children are raised by their mothers, not their fathers (Mashiya, 2014:26). Mncanca, Okeke and Fletcher (2016) attest to that saying “traditionally, the responsibility of caring and raising children in most South African societies has been left largely in the hands of women (Mncanca, Okeke & Fletcher, 2016: 202). Mashiya et al (2015) assert that males in female dominated professions have to carry out stereotypically female tasks and display feminine attributes, that is, violate traditionally expectations of masculinity ideology (Mashiya et al, 2015: 261).

These studies show that the nurturing and caring of young children has been regarded as the responsibility of females, which has resulted in the perception that males are not suitable for teaching in the Foundation Phase. Makeleni (2016) shares the same sentiments, “male students in Foundation Phase are practicing in an environment that is dominated by female educators and in many cases, they are mentored by educators who still believe that male educators are not suitable for FP. This means that lack of male mentors in the FP could pose a major challenge to male students who are doing teaching practice (Makeleni, 2016). Teacher training in South African Universities continues to attract a large cohort of female student teachers as opposed to male student teachers in the B.Ed. programme but more at the B.Ed. Foundation Phase level.

Duku (2006) highlights that most children in South Africa, especially in the Eastern Cape, stay with a female single parent. This implies that children need a male teacher to act as a role model. Jones (2009) argues that if men are more visible in the early childhood setting carrying out caring roles, this could potentially help to counter stereotypes of both men and women, reduce sexism and generally advance gender equality. Foundation Phase is claimed by women as their space, so males have to negotiate their identity within this space. Makeleni (2014) found that there are few male educators in F.P. The study also highlighted that female educators still claim the space as suitable for women. Sanders (2002) highlighted that all male early childhood teachers have to defend their choice of a profession to family, friends and female

teachers in their own profession. This shows that there is a need for male teachers in early childhood education for gender balance.

1.3. Problem statement

The problem is that male teachers are under-represented in the FP. Foundation Phase (Gr R-3) in many schools is dominated by female teachers, and there are no or few male teachers in these grades. Foundation Phase comprises both boys and girls, and if girls need female teachers to teach them, boys need male teachers. This implies that both female and male teachers may be role models for young children to address inequalities in gender representation that currently exists in schools. Drury (2008) argues that gender stereotyping looms large when it comes to reasons why a small number of men in childhood education settings, including those teaching young children, is a woman's job; this links with the lack of public acceptance due to the 'unnaturalness' of males performing basic tasks and childhood needs accompanied by the stigma of male involvement in child abuse (Drury, 2008: 314). This is one of many reasons why males do not want to teach in the Foundation Phase, which deprives young learners the benefits that they could enjoy by having male teachers in their early years as role models.

According to Drury (2008), primary school teaching is perceived as an unattractive profession for men – boring, hassle-causing, stressful or requiring too much patience” (Drury, 2008: 314). Gender discrimination cannot hinder participation of men in early childhood; it is up to a person to decide where to work without being judged by other people based on gender. There is no gender equality in the FP, and schools and societies need to address this under-representation of males. The under-representation of male teachers in the Foundation Phase should not be addressed by simply compelling males to enter the teaching profession; instead, they need to be offered assistance to do so (Sargent, 2000 cited in Moosa & Bhana, 2016). Makeleni (2016) found that there are few male educators in FP, and he also highlighted that female educators still claim the space as suitable for women. This, according to Makeleni (2016), implies that male teachers have to negotiate their identity. Male teachers need to be welcomed as teachers of young children so that they need not negotiate their professional identity teaching in the Foundation Phase.

1.4. Research questions

1.4.1. Main Research Question

What are parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase?

1.4.2. Sub-questions

1.4.1. How do parents perceive male teachers' representation in the Foundation Phase?

1.4.2. What are the benefits of having male teachers in the Foundation Phase?

1.4.3. What are the challenges for male teachers in the Foundation Phase?

1.4.4. What are the strategies that could ensure male teachers are represented in Foundation Phase?



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1.5. Objectives of the study

The study focused on the following objectives:

1.5.1. To establish parents' perceptions of male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase.

1.5.2. To determine how parents and their children can benefit from being taught by male teachers in the Foundation Phase.

1.5.3. To determine challenges that parents perceive are experienced by male teachers in the Foundation Phase.

1.5.4. To ascertain how male teachers could be attracted to Foundation Phase teaching in schools.

1.6. The purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the perceptions of parents about male teachers' under-representation in teaching at the foundation phase level. Furthermore,

it sought to understand parents' thoughts and knowledge of male teachers teaching in Grades R, 1, 2 and 3.

1.7. Significance of the study

The study is important as it is investigating the parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the foundation phase and to help encourage more male teachers to take up teaching positions at foundation phase level. The study will address issues of gender equity and help reduce negative stereotypes that our societies and communities have towards males teaching young children. Boys and girls can be motivated by embracing role models of male and female teachers from an early age if male teachers could play a more prominent and active part in the education of foundation phase learners. Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu and Mtshali (2015) highlight that research evidence reveals that male teachers welcomed the chance to be (non-traditional male) role models and others again welcomed the opportunity to be (compensatory) male influence, that is, providing learners with a father figure.

If male teachers are willing to be part of the foundation phase, then there would be benefits for communities, for early childhood education and for young children as male teachers would be accepted without being judged. Mashiya et al (2015) reveal that a study conducted by Lu and Jones (2010) and Pruett and Cowan (2009) state that an increased male presence in the education process tends to erode the social stigma that fathers' involvement in things like school events is not important. With more males being openly accepted by schools as teachers for young children, more fathers will find it more interesting to participate in the development of children, and a new norm will be established (Mashiya et al., 2015).

1.8. Research Methodology

The study investigated parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the FP using qualitative research. Qualitative research is particularly useful for understanding human perceptions and motivations of those being studied (Woodwell, 2014: 58). The paradigm used was the interpretivist paradigm, which according to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006) involves taking people's subjective experiences seriously as the essence of what is real for them. It is making sense of

people's experiences by interacting with them and listening carefully to what they tell us (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2001) argue that, "interpretive paradigms study individuals, their characteristics, different human behaviour, opinions and attitudes". Through the interpretive paradigm, we can gain a fuller understanding of meanings, reasons and insight into human action (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2001).

The qualitative research approach was deemed an appropriate approach to be used together with semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interview schedules basically define the line of inquiry (Maree, 2014). As a researcher, you must be attentive to the responses of your participant so that you can identify new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the phenomenon being studied to explore and probe these (Maree, 2014: 87). The main focus in qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people (Kumar, 2012: 104). Semi-structured interviews help to access in-depth revelations of the experience of the participants being studied by probing for more information when there is a need. This is what the study probed: beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of parents about male teachers in the FP.



1.9. Scope of the study

The study was conducted in the East London Education District in three primary schools. The schools chosen were among those that had male teachers in the Foundation phase (Grade R, 1, 2 & 3). This study sampled nine parents, three from each school, a single parent (male or female), a guardian (male or female) and a parent from a family where there is a mother and a father. The parents' sample was of those who have children in Gr R, 1, 2 and 3, depending on the placement of the male teacher. The study focused on the parents' perceptions of male teachers in the Foundation Phase. The study collected data from schools in urban, semi-urban and rural areas, which means that the profile of the parents was diverse to enrich this study.

1.10. Definition of terms

Early Childhood Development

Early Childhood Development is an 'umbrella' term or general classification that refers to the process by which children, from birth until they turn 9, grow and flourish socially, physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and morally (Department of Education, 1995: 33). In this study, we refer to learners from 6 to 9 years, that is Grade R to Grade 3.

Foundation Phase

Foundation Phase in South Africa is the first phase of the school curriculum applicable in Grades R, 1, 2 and 3 (Dictionary of Education Concepts and Terms, 2010: 47). In this study, Foundation Phase refers to Grade R to Grade 3 learners, and the study is located in Gr R, 1, 2 and 3, depending on male teachers' placement in the school.

Parent

Parent includes (a) biological or adoptive or legal guardian of a learner, (b) the person entitled to custody of a learner, or (c) the person who undertakes to fulfil the obligations of a person referred to (a) and (b) towards the learner's education at the institution (Dictionary of Education Concepts and Terms, 2010: 82). In this study, parents include all the people that look after children like mothers, fathers, grandmothers, grandfathers, uncles, aunts and even sisters.

Male/ Female

A person who belongs to the masculine/ female gender. Masculinity or femininity or one's gender identity refers to the degree to which persons see themselves as masculine or feminine given what it means to be a man or a woman (Ezebube, 2016: 25).

Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are beliefs about the characteristics and qualities attributed to men and women in society (Sikdar & Mitra, 2008: 3)

Experiences

An experience is something that happens to a person, which is seen, felt, done or lived through (World Book Millenium, 2000: 749).

Perceptions

Perceptions are views often held by many people based on how things seem (Khumalo, 2014: 5). Perceptions in this study mean parents' views and opinions on the under-representation of male teachers in the Foundation Phase.

1.11. Chapter Outline

Chapter 1: This chapter covers the introduction, the background of the study, the problem statement, research questions, objectives, purpose and significance of the study, the scope of the study and the definition of terms.

Chapter 2: This chapter comprises the theoretical framework and literature review.

Chapter 3: Research methodology, methods and ethical considerations are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Study findings and data analysis are presented in this chapter.

Chapter 5: This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations.



1.12. Summary

This chapter discussed the background and significance of the study. Among other things are: the statement of the problem, research questions and objectives of the study. The next chapter will focus on the theoretical framework and literature related to this study.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 presented the background and the context of the study. It also looked at the problem statement, research questions, the significance of the study and touched on the brief overview of the research methodology. The current chapter aims to review the existing literature relating to the purpose of this study and looks at how the chosen theory fits into this study. Literature review is important as it helps the researcher to identify relevant theoretical framework for the research problem; it is a basis for the study that helps to close gaps within the research problem. The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of parents about male teachers' under-representation in teaching at the Foundation Phase and the following objectives were explored:

- To establish parents' perceptions of male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase.
- To determine how parents and their children can benefit from being taught by male teachers in the Foundation phase.
- To determine challenges that parents perceive are experienced by male teachers in the Foundation Phase.
- To ascertain how the male teachers could be attracted to Foundation Phase teaching schools.



2.2. Theoretical Framework: Social Role Theory

The study employed Eagly's social role theory of sex differences as a theoretical framework. Societies have a tendency of categorizing duties according to gender, where there are duties for men and duties for women. With that categorization, men and women must abide by those categories, and it becomes difficult for each of them to perform duties that are not in their category. The Social role theory developed during the 1980s as a gender-related theory in which Eagly used gender roles as a term for the social roles that a society designates to men and women while gender stereotypes are stereotypes that people believe about men and women (Dulin, 2007: 105). Gender roles have an influence in the teaching profession, and the focus of many studies on males teaching in FP is based on the gender and not on the ability of men.

The origins of sex differences in human behaviour lie mainly in evolved dispositions in the differing placement of women and men in the social structure (Eagly & Wood, 1999). Ezebube (2016: 20) reveals that gender is often mistaken for the term sex and at times, the terms are used interchangeably. It is, therefore, necessary to distinguish between them. In this study, *sex differences* does not refer to biological differences, but to gender differences. Gender designates a set of categories to which we can give the same label cross-linguistically or cross-culturally because they have some connection to sex differences (Ezebube, 2016: 20). In the view of Sunderland (2006: 28) as cited in Ezebube (2016: 22), gender is a social correlate of sex, meaning the enactment of gender is largely dependent on what sex people belong to, that is, male or female.

According to Oakley as cited in Blackstone (2003), *gender* is a concept that humans create socially through their interactions with one another and their environments, yet it relies heavily on biological differences between males and females (Blackstone, 2003: 335). This is also evident in an example given by Nyoni and Nyoni (2012) where they assert that males and females are perceived differently in matrilineal and patrilineal social groups. In patriarchal ones, traits such as sweetness, modesty, subservience and humility are seen as feminine while adventurism, toughness, roughness and assertiveness are seen as masculine and expected of males (ibid). In the end, those so-called traits of femininity and masculinity become stereotypes that each particular society or group expects men and women to abide with in order to fit and not be labelled as deviants (Nyoni & Nyoni, 2012: 183).

The Social Role Theory suggests that almost all behavioural differences we know about between males and females are the result of cultural stereotypes about gender (how males and females are supposed to act) and the resulting social roles that are taught to young people (Eagly, 1987). Many societies have different expectations from men and women and react to men or women who perform what is not expected from them. Dulin (2007: 104) also defines Social Role Theory as the theory that focuses on interactions between and among individuals, groups, societies and economic systems as developed by social systems in which people live. This theory explains that the differences between men and women led to a division of labour. Gender roles are based on the different expectations that individuals, groups and societies have of

individuals based on their sex and based on each society's values and beliefs about gender (Blackstone, 2003: 335).

People conform to gender-appropriate behaviour in part because others expect them to do so (Eagly, Wood & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2004). Okeke (2004) highlights that gender refers to a culturally constructed notion of maleness and femaleness as distinctively opposed to biologically defined male or female sex; this makes gender a broad analytic concept which highlights women's roles and responsibilities in relation to those of men (Okeke, 2004: 3). Patrick (2009) cites the American National Women's History Museum, which states that teaching positions in America were entirely reserved for unmarried, native-born women. In general, female teachers worked for a few years in their late teens and early twenties before marrying and leaving paid labour (Patrick, 2009). Married women were then responsible for caring for children at home and were required to stop teaching (Patrick, 2009).

This is also evident in Blackstone (2003: 335) thus, "the traditional view of the feminine gender role prescribes that women should behave in ways that are nurturing, that is, working full time within home rather than taking employment outside of the home. In general, physical sex differences, in interaction with social and ecological conditions, influence the roles held by men and women because certain activities are more efficiently accomplished by one sex (Eagly & Wood, 1999). Men in many societies cannot, in any way, look after young children, and people in these societies believe that men are head of the families and therefore must go far away to look for jobs to be able to support their families. Females must look after children and raise them while their husbands have gone to look for work. Men are presumed by a traditional view of the masculine gender roles to be leaders. Blackstone (2003) agrees, "the traditional view of the masculine gender role, therefore, suggests that men should be the heads of their households by providing financially for the family and making important family decisions" (Blackstone, 2003: 335).

Eagly, Wood and Diekman (2000) cite Shelton (1992), "As the division of labour is realized in the United States and many other nations, women perform more domestic work than men and spend fewer hours in paid employment". As per the social role theory, this gender-stereotypic perception of the sexes stems from the perceived association of women with the domestic roles and of men with the provider role (Eagly,

Wood & Diekman, 2000: 126). Johannesen-Schmidt and Eagly (2004) agree when they say that in most contemporary nations, the division of labour is such that women spend relatively more time in child-rearing and domestic work than men, and men spend relatively more time in paid employment than women. This is also highlighted in Zhang (2017) thus, “male figures were socially constructed as the main support of a family, which means they were supposed to be financially responsible while women were taking care of the children, and this view of male gender role led males to seek better paid jobs since early childhood education jobs were mostly not well paid” (Zhang, 2017: 13).

Makeleni (2016) agrees when he cites Baris (2013: 108), stating that “throughout human history, gender has been one of the important factors which influence the division of labour”. Many jobs have been labelled according to gender lines, making some occupations women’s jobs and some men’s jobs (Makeleni, 2016: 27). Gender studies consider the difference between the sexes as a social construction, which has often generated inequalities (Rabelo, 2013: 4-5). With these constructions, people always associate certain jobs with a certain gender, thereby making it difficult for the other gender to enter professions (Rabelo, 2013). This has led to professions like teaching and nursing to be mostly associated with females than men as they involve a lot of nurturing, which is culturally viewed as females’ responsibility. In Turkey, kindergarten is called *anaokulu*, meaning school of mother (Baris, 2013). This name sends a message that early childhood education comprises motherly care. With low numbers of male teachers in elementary schools, some children might not experience having a male teacher until high school. Yet, teaching children is an occupation that requires caring and nurturing, qualities society perceives that men lack (Meader, 2017: 2).

The Social Role Theory is among the most influential explanations for why gender stereotypes are confirmed (Eagly, 1987 as cited in Vogel, Wester, Heesacker & Madon, 2003: 521). It proposes that one reason women and men confirm gender stereotypes is because they act in accordance with their social roles, which are often segregated along gender lines (Vogel, Wester, Heesacker & Madon, 2003: 522). The Social Role Theory argues that the beliefs that people hold about sexes are derived from observations of the role performances of men and women and thus reflect the

sexual division of labour and gender hierarchy of the society (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000: 124).

Gender is something one 'does' rather than 'is' and is always a background identity in social contexts (Ridgeway, 2004: 516). Women and men behave in gender-typed ways because the social roles that they perform are associated with different expectations and require different skills (Vogel et al., 2003: 520). All these contributions highlight that men are viewed with the perception of not being capable to teach young children in the Foundation Phase because of gender stereotypes; thus the social role theory is best suited to this study. Huntington (2013: 2) argues that from the time we are born, we are indoctrinated with cues from family, friends, teachers, playmates, strangers and the media on how to perform our genders. This also determines which gender we should be performing.

The social role theory is best suited to this study as it is gender related because the study is about parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. Societal discourses of what it is to be a man and a teacher are powerful and could be at the core of the shortage of males in elementary schools (Meador, 2017:17). The study looked at how parents view the under-representation of male teachers in the early years of teaching and how parents who have learners taught by male teachers perceive having male teachers in the Foundation Phase.

2.3. Review of literature

This section reviews related literature on parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. The literature review also includes benefits of having male teachers in the Foundation Phase, challenges experienced by male teachers in the FP and strategies that the SGB parents can implement to ensure that such teachers are represented in the FP.

2.3.1. Benefits of having male teachers in the Foundation Phase

As revealed by the analysis of the interviews conducted by Tsiga (2010) in Greece, male teachers argue that the presence of males in the Foundation Phase would fill a void of fathers' absence in young children that come from single parent families. The

male teachers of Tsiga's research responded that as per their understanding of parents' expectations, what is missing in kindergarten is someone who displays masculine behaviours and attributes, like an increase in discipline and a decrease in the frequency of behavioural problems (Tsiga, 2010: 7). Moosa and Bhana (2016) support this by highlighting that male teachers of young children are especially welcome to act as school disciplinarians and assume responsibility for teaching young children sport. This is also evident in a study by Mathwasa and Okeke (2016) when they cite Fagan (2007), "one way of increasing the involvement of men in the lives of the children is to involve fathers, other male relatives or family friends into early childhood education programs" (Mathwasa & Okeke, 2016: 231).

A study in Australia by Yang demonstrates that children who have solo mothers need a male role model so that boys learn what it is to be a man and girls learn how to relate to men (Yang, 2013). Lack of male educators in early childhood education impacts negatively on boys. Yang (2013) quotes McNaughton and Newman (2001) saying, "Male educators can induct boys into masculinity and may help those who are lacking in positive male role models". The presence of male teachers serves as role models to both boys and girls and can have a positive impact on improving the overall discipline in the schools. Browder and Bryan (2013) agree when they quote Lisburn (2011), "By having male teachers in early childhood, boys and girls could learn to abandon socially constructed ideas of gender-specific occupations". Many researchers agree that if there are more men in early childhood settings carrying out caring roles, this could help to counter children's sex-stereotyped views of gender roles, reduce sexism and generally advance gender equality (Farquhar, 2005; Sumsion, 2005 in Yang, 2013).

African-American males bring a multiplicity of talents and abilities to the classroom from which all children can benefit (Brown, 2012 cited by Browder & Bryan, 2013). Male educators could build a male-friendly atmosphere in early childhood education settings (Yang, 2013). Jones (2008) agrees that fathers or grandfathers would feel more comfortable about participating in early childhood education settings if there were more male educators who could encourage them. Male educators can build rapport with fathers and provide friendship (Yang, 2013). Having male teachers can encourage fathers to communicate and become more involved in the activities and in

all that takes place in the school; they could attend meetings and school events occasionally knowing that there are other males in the schools.

Mukuna and Mutsotso (2011) highlight that there are essential gender differences between boys and girls which make it difficult for females only to teach the children. Accordingly, male early childhood teachers are more able than their female counterparts to identify with and respond effectively to boys because they share an essential masculinity and an understanding of boys' perspectives and experience (Mukuna & Mutsotso, 2011). Baris (2013), in his study, mentions Sargent's article that highlights that the presence of a man in the classroom is associated with the male role model who contributes to an increase in discipline and, therefore, a decrease in the frequency of behavioural problems (particularly on the part of boys). Boys may be more comfortable and feel better understood because of male bonding.

Lu and Jones' (2010) and Pruett and Cowan's (2009) research proved that increased male presence in the education process tends to erode the social stigma that limits fathers' involvement in things like volunteering in school events (Mashiya et al, 2015). With more males being openly accepted by schools as teachers for young children, more fathers will find it more interesting to participate in the development of children. Essentially, a new norm will be established (Mashiya et al, 2015). Mashiya et al (2015) further concur that research has proved that children with a more significant male presence at school and at home tend to do better at achievement tests, get better grades and have better verbal and problem-solving skills, among many other improvements. Farquar's (2005) study demonstrates that male educators can bring a unique energy and perspective to centre programs, and there is less gossip or petty sniping in centres with male staff (Yang, 2013). Men bring more play, active involvement, entertainment and rough and tumble play to the way they interact in the program (Lamb, 2000). These benefits would not only help children, but could bring a lot in the schools, classrooms and communities. These benefits could also address gender inequalities in education.

2.3.2. Challenges experienced by male teachers in foundation phase

Researchers have identified lack of male educators as a problem for gender equity in different ways. The national early childhood curriculum in Australia encourages

children to 'experience an environment where there are equitable opportunities for learning, irrespective of gender, ability, age, ethnicity, or background (Ministry of Education, 1996: 66 as cited by Yang, 2013). There are barriers that influence men's attitudes to early childhood education such as: perception of teaching as a women's work, concerns about potential claims of child abuse, low salary, low social status, or absence of a male peer group (Cooney & Bitter, 2003; Marsiglio, 2009; Farquar, 2005, cited by Yang, 2013).

Australian researchers found that there are assumptions that only homosexual men were interested in early childhood education (Farquhar, 1997; Lyons, 2005 as cited by Yang, 2013). Lack of male educators in early childhood education was influenced by associations of early childhood education with mothering, entwined ideas that such work was 'natural' for women and that men who were interested in it were 'unnatural' or 'perverts' (Lyon, 2005 as cited by Yang, 2013). Certain feminist explanations of care have depicted women as better carers and thereby more suited to work with young children and are more appropriate for primary school teaching (Jones, 2008:699).

The Statistics Division of the United Nations  notes that women dominate the teaching profession at primary level except in several regions in Africa. The proportion of female teachers declines as the education level they work in rises (UNESCO Institute for Statistics: December, 2009). The characteristics of female occupations mirror common stereotypes of women and their supposed abilities (Anker, 2001: 139). Several studies indicate that the belief that women are more willing to take orders, accept lower wages and are less prone to complain about working conditions underpins the tenacity of occupational segregation (Anker, 2001: 140). The proportion of women workers in a professional guild plays an important role in the amount of salary earned: several studies indicate that the more feminized an occupation is, the more likely its employees are to be poorly paid. Country-specific surveys in Korea, Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands, where most teachers in upper secondary education are male, show that the average salaries in relation to GDP per capita were higher than in most organizations for economic co-operation and development (Drudy, 2008).

The reasons given for the small number of males in early childhood education are lack of public acceptance, lack of pay and promotional opportunities, the stigma of male

involvement in child abuse, and the conflict over the 'naturalness' of males performing basic care tasks (Clyde, 1994: 9 cited by Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu & Mtshali, 2015). This shows that low wages and social status in early childhood education are related factors that could mean that some men would never consider early childhood teaching as an occupation since they perceive wage level as important.

The presence of male teachers and childcare workers could go some way towards providing stable, positive male role models for these children, as compensation for what is missing at home (Jensen, 1996, as cited in Cameroon, 2001). Drury (2008) argues that gender stereotyping looms large when it comes to reasons why there is a small number of men in childhood education settings, that teaching young children is a woman's job, lack of public acceptance due to 'unnaturalness' of males performing basic needs and the stigma of male involvement in child abuse (Drury, 2008: 314).

Petersen (2014) cites Cunningham and Watson (2002) thus, "historically, there are a number of reasons for the preponderance of women teachers in the foundation phase, including issues of economic development, the position of women in society, cultural definitions and masculinity, and the value of children and childcare" (Peterson, 2014). Women are believed to be carers for young children and men are not, which makes it difficult for many men to register at university to take up FP teaching as a career. Jones (2008) shares the same sentiments, "one difficulty that men face in entering the profession is that they are perceived as doing women's work. The teaching of young children in particular is associated with women for two main reasons: first, because caring is perceived as essentially a female quality, hence construction of a mother being as akin to the social construction of teacher and secondly, as a result of the history of gendered skewed job occupation (Jones, 2008:690).

There is also substantial literature which indicates that the sexuality of men in early childhood education (6-9 years) is often viewed with suspicion (Martino & Berill, 2003 cited by Mashiya et al, 2015). Men who want to work as elementary school teachers, thus, risk being classified as homosexuals or paedophiles (King, 2004; Martino, 2008 cited by Peterson, 2014). Jones (2008:700) highlights that men who enter the FP environment run the risk of becoming less than respectable and the identity of 'inadequate male' may be constructed. It is such factors that effectively limit the number of men who choose to enter foundation phase teacher education programmes

(Cunningham & Watson, 2002 cited by Peterson, 2014). The complexity of historical and social issues, such as the image of a feminized career, low status, and public scrutiny, might deter males from choosing careers in education (Cushman, 2005a as cited in Meader, 2015: 12).

All these views show that it is not smooth yet in early childhood education, which means that more programs that will include both teachers. Parents need to be conscientized to remove all the negative perceptions about male teachers in Foundation Phase and focus on ensuring that male teachers are needed in this phase. Recruiting more males into the field is not a new trend, despite the fact that in recent years. There seems to be a growing demand from parents for male teachers because families want their children to know that men can have nurturing roles; it is an accepted norm that few men are employed in early childhood education (Rentzou, 2011). Farquar's (2012) study demonstrates that male educators can bring a unique energy and perspective to centre programs, and there is less gossip or petty sniping in centres with male staff (Yang, 2013). Men bring more play, active involvement, entertainment and rough and tumble play to the way they interact in the program (Lamb, 2000).



2.3.3. Strategies that SGB parents can implement to ensure that male teachers are better represented in the Foundation Phase

The shortage of male teachers has been highlighted in many studies (Mashiya, 2014; Peterson, 2014; Moosa and Bhana, 2016). The government has tried to attract male teachers in the Foundation Phase although men are still few in the phase. "Encouraging high quality learners to choose FP teaching as a career of choice is done through a Teacher Recruitment Campaign and by providing bursaries through the Funza Lushaka Bursary Scheme" (DoE, 2008: 5 as cited in Moosa & Bhana, 2016: 2). Gender imbalance in childcare and early years remains significant. This is despite the importance of male early childhood educators for the development of the whole child. Such significance also lies in the provision of high-quality care and education in primary schools, benefits for children, parents, female fellow workers, men and the profession of early childhood education and care (Rentzou, 2011:135). Moosa and Bhana (2016) highlight that, increasing the number of men in Foundation Phase

teaching can be used to increase men's involvement both in care work and in the lives of young children where they remain under-represented (Moosa & Bhana, 2016: 367).

It is essential for schools to accommodate male teachers in the Foundation Phase to close this gap of under-represented males in the FP. Male involvement with children is key to the 2012 White Paper on Families in South Africa (Department of Social Development, 2012). One of the compulsory / obligatory functions of the school governing body recommends the appointment of staff by the State and appointing staff to be paid by the school governing body at the school when applicable. The Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998 highlights that the members of governing bodies should know what the general rights, duties and conditions of service of educators are to assist them in the recommendation regarding the appointment of educators by the state. This is also evident in the Labour Relations Act, Act No 66 of 1995. Parents take part in the recruitment of teachers in the schools in their communities. They become involved during shortlisting and interviews. Even though they do not appoint teachers, they are given an opportunity to recommend any candidate that they feel will be suitable for the post.



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Since parents are actively involved in the employment of educators as SGB members, it is their right to recommend the appointment of male teachers in the Foundation Phase for gender equality. They may give strong and valid reasons why they need male teachers in the phase to ensure that their recommendation is valid. Stroud, Smith, Ealy and Hurst (2006) highlight that, in recent years, there has been favourable publicity about male teachers in major newspapers and editorial writers who have cited the need for male role models in teaching. Such publicity efforts should be increased in order to counter public perceptions that women are most effective in working with early childhood and elementary age children (Stroud et al., 2006: 59). In addition, public community forums sponsored by Boards of Education could increase awareness on the need for male role models. Such programs could encourage volunteerism among fathers as well as introduce successful male teachers to parents (Stroud et al., 2006: 59).

Zhang (2017) believes that the current recruiting strategies and suggestions need to be assessed and valued for their effectiveness; instead of figuring out the advantages of male teachers and how male and female teachers work together for the good of

students' performance and care should be investigated. There should be global organization on early childhood education in order for different countries to share experiences and work together (Zhang, 2017: 25). Gender should not be an issue when recruiting teachers for the Foundation Phase, instead, we should be working together to ensure that both genders are represented in the early years of children's education.

Assumptions that females are better suited to teach in the Foundation Phase should be done away with to ease the pressure from many male teachers who feel intimidated by working with many female teachers. Rentzou (2011) cites Martin and Luth (2000), "the under or over-representation of any group in any line of work signifies an imbalance and a threat to the ideas of a democratic society" (Rentzou, 2011: 145). Gender balance is good for young children, and male teacher recruitment strategies should be shared to increase the involvement of male teachers in the Foundation Phase. Makeleni (2016: 30) agrees, "equal gender representation in FP will also model a good nurturing environment not where males and females work together to nurture the child".



The under-representation of male teachers in Foundation Phase is depriving children the experience of both genders as teachers and role models in classrooms. Even though there are some barriers for men going into the early childhood profession, many researchers believe that more male educators would benefit young children, contribute to gender equality, improve staff relationships in the early childhood sector and encourage fathers to become more involved in their children's education. Despite these benefits, it appears that Foundation Phase education continues to be filled with stereotypical female gender roles and the perception that education at this level is still women's work. This is the reason why parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase are investigated to determine how parents in the 21st century respond to the under-representation of male teachers at this level.

2.4. Summary

This chapter reviewed literature on the benefits of having male teachers in the FP, challenges experienced by male teachers in the FP and the strategies that the SGB parents can implement to ensure that male teachers are represented in the FP.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY, DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

METHODS

3.1. Introduction

Chapter 2 covered the theoretical framework and review of literature. The benefits of having male teachers in the Foundation Phase were presented together with the challenges that male teachers experience in the FP. Strategies to ensure that male teachers are represented were also dealt with, though there was not enough literature presenting the strategies. From the literature, it is clear that there are benefits from having male teachers in the FP that male teachers are needed for many reasons in the FP. Methods, and methodology are covered in this chapter. The study explored the parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. Research paradigm and design, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instruments and data analysis are discussed. Ethical considerations and trustworthiness are also to be discussed, and data collected seeks to answer the following questions:



What are parents' perceptions about male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase?

Sub-questions

- How do parents perceive male teachers' representation in the Foundation Phase?
- What are the benefits of having male teachers in the Foundation Phase?
- What are the challenges for male teachers in the Foundation Phase?
- What are the strategies that could ensure male teachers are represented in Foundation Phase?

3.2. Research paradigm

Research paradigms reflect our beliefs about the world we live in. The technical word used to describe the ways that we think about and research the world is *paradigm* (Thomas, 2017: 107). According to Thomas (2017), paradigms are shared ideas in a particular community of inquiry; they are 'thinking habits' of researchers, rules of

procedure and shift as the old one proves to be inappropriate (Thomas, 2017: 107). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) assert that the research purpose determines the research design and methodology. Guba cited in Thomas (2010) suggests that in selecting a research approach, it is proper to select that paradigm whose assumptions are best met by the phenomenon being investigated (Thomas, 2010: 306). This is because a paradigm has influence on how knowledge is studied and interpreted (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Schwartz and Ogilvy (1979) cited in Maree (2014) describe paradigms as enabling us to tell a coherent “story” by depicting a world that is meaningful and functional, but culturally subjective (Maree, 2014: 48).

3.2.1. Ontology and epistemology

Richards (2015) highlights that there is ongoing debate about the philosophical basis for qualitative research, that is, in philosophical terms about ontology (what is real) and epistemology (what we know and think we know about it) (Richards, 2015: 26). Marie agrees, “when building the frame of research, we start by the conceptual underpinning of qualitative research where we focus on what truth is (ontology), how we find or get to know the truth (epistemological assumptions) and what conceptualizations (strands of qualitative research) are available to the researcher who identifies himself or herself with the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of qualitative research (Maree, 2014: 47). Maree (2014) further explains that the study of the nature and form of reality is called ontology, while epistemology looks at how one knows reality, the method for knowing the nature of reality or how one comes to know reality (Maree, 2014: 55).

Ontology embodies understanding what is while epistemology tries to understand what it means to know (Gray, 2018: 21). Barbour (2014) agrees that qualitative and quantitative research are often presented as embodying very different epistemologies (ideas about the knowledge and what constitutes evidence) and ontologies (ideas about the social world and how we can go about studying it) (Barbour, 2014:29). Empiricists believe that all knowledge is limited to what can be observed by the senses (their epistemology). They therefore have a difficult time acknowledging anything that cannot be measured (their ontology) (O’Leary, 2010: 5). O’Leary (2010) further defines

empiricism as the view that all knowledge is limited to what can be observed through the senses, that is, the cornerstone is a scientific method (O’Leary, 2010: 6).

From the above explanations, one can deduce that ontology refers to the nature and form of reality, which will have various definitions depending on the research methodology and approach to research. According to Kingwill (2016), a qualitative research paradigm is where reality is constructed through subjective experiences, which is how people’s mental ideas and concepts are understood as well as the deeper meaning that is attached to social actions (Kingwill, 2016: 37). This is also highlighted in Msiza (2016) thus, “ontology is the nature of how reality is constructed, that is, how we construct the nature of things, processes and ourselves as human beings (Msiza, 2016: 27).

Kingwill (2016) quotes Nieuwehuis (2007) who defines epistemology as the process in which reality can become known and assumes a ‘relationship between the knower and the known’ (Kingwill, 2016: 38). Maree (2007) also asserts that in terms of epistemology, the researcher in the research process should not decide on what is knowledge but report on what the participants perceive as knowledge. Gray (2018) defines ontology as the study of being, that is, the nature of existence and what constitutes reality (Gray, 2018: 21). The researcher met with the participants and asked questions about their reality and the meaning they have gained from their experiences of having male teachers in the FP to explore their perceptions about male teachers.

Maree et al (2007) delineates paradigmatic assumptions as illustrated in the following table:

Table 2: Research premises: delineating paradigmatic assumptions and perspectives

Ontological dimensions	Epistemological dimensions; paradigm/ perspectives	Nature of relationship between researcher and what is being studied
Realist stance: external reality is stable; general laws govern universe	Positivist (modern)	Researcher is an objective, detached observer

Nominalist stance: respondents internal and subjective experiences are more important	Interpretive (postmodern)	Researcher is empathically and (inter-)subjectively immersed in the research
Reality is constructed by persons; researchers need to analyze the respondents' discourses	Constructionist (postmodern)	Researcher is suspicious of object of study; political undertones can be identified; constructs own version of events

Source: Adapted from Terre Blanche and Durrheim, in Maree et al (2007: 35)

3.2.2. Positivism

Positivism is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond (Bryman, 2012: 28). According to Gray (2018) positivism was the dominant epistemological paradigm in social science from the 1930s through to the 1960s, its core argument was that the social world exists externally to the researcher, and that its properties can be measured directly through observation. The roots of positivism can be traced to Auguste Comte who saw human beings as a phenomenon to be studied scientifically (Babbie, 2011: 35). Denscombe (2010) highlights that positivism may be seen as an approach to social research that seeks to apply the natural science model of research as the point of departure for investigations of social phenomena and explanations of the social world (Denscombe, 2010: 120). There are two paradigm approaches, according to Thomas (2017), namely, positivism and interpretivism.

For positivists, knowledge about the social world can be obtained objectively: what we see and hear is straightforwardly perceived and recordable without too many problems, while interpretivists believe that knowledge is everywhere and is socially constructed, and all kinds of information are valid, even things of the mind (Thomas, 2017: 109). Gray (2018) agrees, "for positivists, the world is independent of our knowledge - it exists 'out there', while for relativists and others, there are multiple realities and ways of accessing them (Gray, 2018: 21). The paradigm that is rooted in the physical sciences is called the systematic, scientific or positivist approach while

the opposite paradigm has come to be known as the qualitative, ethnographic, ecological or naturalistic approach (Kumar, 2011: 14). Kumar (2011: 14) explains that it is the purpose of the research that determines the mode of enquiry that applies to research and that a positivist paradigm lends itself to both quantitative and qualitative research. Positivism lends itself to quantification, while interpretivism lends itself to words, thoughts and images: it is qualitative (Thomas, 2017:119).

Positivism is often associated with realism (Flick, 2014: 75). Both assume that there is a world out there (an external reality) separate from our descriptions of it (ibid). They assume too that the social and natural sciences can and should apply the same principles to collecting and analyzing data (Flick, 2014: 75). According to Goodwin (2005), positivism, also called the natural sciences model, originated from natural sciences; it is measured against empirical evidence (Goodwin, 2005). Gray (2018) highlights that positivism was the dominant epistemological paradigm, which argues that:

- Reality consists of what is available to the senses – that is, what can be seen, smelt, touched, etc;
- Inquiry should be based upon scientific observation (as opposed to philosophical speculation), and therefore on empirical inquiry; and
- The natural and human sciences share common logical and methodological principles, dealing with facts and not values (Gray, 2018: 22).

This is also evident in Easterby et al (2008) where they summarize the five main principles of positivism as follows:

1. There are no differences in the logic across sciences;
2. The research should aim to explain and predict;
3. Research should be empirically observable via human senses. Inductive reasoning should be used to develop statements (hypothesis) to be tested during the research process;
4. Science is not the same as common sense. The common sense should not be allowed to bias the research findings; and
5. Science must be value-free and should be judged only by logic.

These five principles are also evident in Bryman (2012: 28). Bryman (2012) terms the principles as: principle of phenomenalism, principle of deductivism, principle of

inductivism, objectivity and a clear distinction between scientific statements and normative statements.

3.2.3. Post-positivism

Gray (2018) defines post-positivism as a research tradition that rejects the belief that human behaviour can be investigated through the use of the methods of scientific inquiry, and is sometimes referred to as *anti-positivist* (Gray, 2018: 771). Creswell (2009) argues that post-positivism is an extension of positivism since it represents the thinking after positivism, challenging the traditional notion of the absolute and objective truth of knowledge in the social sciences. The post-positivist perspective is that not everything is completely knowledge (Krauss, 2005). The post-positivist paradigm stresses that the known and the knower cannot be entirely separated as claimed in the positivist research paradigm. Positivism contends that there is an objective reality out there to be studied, captured and understood, whereas post-positivists argue that reality can never be fully apprehended, only approximated (De Vos et al., 2011: 7).

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), post-positivism is often associated with quantitative approaches. Gray (2018) shares the same sentiments, “given the fallibility of observations, post-positivist research lays emphasis on inferential statistics with its emphasis on assigning probabilities that observed findings are correct (not certainties). Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) further contend that researchers make claims for knowledge based on (1) determinism or cause-and-effect thinking; (2) reductionism, by narrowing and focusing on select variables to interrelate; (3) detailed observations and measure of variables; and (4) the testing of theories that are continually refined (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011: 40).

3.2.4. Selected paradigm: Interpretivism

Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2011) assert that the researcher believes that the reality to be studied consists of people’s subjective experiences of the external world; s/he may adopt an intersubjective or interactional epistemological stance toward that reality and use methodologies such as interviewing or participant observations that rely on a subjective relationship between researcher and subject. This is characteristic of the interpretive approach, which aims to explain the subjective

reasons and meanings that lie behind social action (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2011: 7). They further highlight that a qualitative, interpretive researcher would also conduct interviews although probably in a more open-ended and in-depth manner, with a view to understanding how people experience stress and what it means for them (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2011: 279). King and Horrocks (2010) agree, "in interpretivism, qualitative interviewing fits; actually, conversing with people enables them to share their experiences" (King & Horrocks, 2010: 11).

Makeleni (2016: 43) cites Andrade (2009) as, "Interpretive paradigm entails that one can only understand the phenomena by actively being involved and experiencing it and then sharing the experience with others. Questions were asked during interviews, and these questions were answered by parents who have children taught by male teachers in Foundation Phase. Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls and Ormston (2014) highlight that qualitative research can be linked to the writing of Immanuel Kant, who published the Critique of Pure Reason. Kant argued that there are ways of knowing about the world other than direct observation. He proposed that "perception relates not only to the senses but to human interpretations of what the senses tell us" (Ritchie et al, 2014: 11).



People feel that men are unable to look after young children, but the fact of the matter is all people, irrespective of their gender, can look after young children. Yin (2014: 220) agrees, "The variety of evidence can include qualitative or quantitative data (or both) and can cover realist or relativist (or interpretivist) perspectives. Yin (2014) highlights that the quantitative part of a case study evaluation might assume a realist orientation, whereas a qualitative part might assume a contrasting, relativist (or interpretivist) orientation, that is, presenting a case from participants' multiple perspectives and meanings (Yin, 2014: 220).

The school of thought that stresses the importance of interpretation as well as observation in understanding the social world is referred to as "interpretivism" (Ritchie et al., 2014: 13). Ritchie et al (2014) further asserts that interpretivism is reflected in practices that emphasize the importance of understanding people's perspectives in the context of the conditions and circumstances of their lives. The purpose of research in the interpretive paradigm is to understand a specific context as it is. The focus for interpretivism might be to uncover how people feel about the world and make sense

of their lives from their particular vantage points (King & Horrocks, 2010: 11). According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2001), interpretive paradigms study individuals with their characteristics, different human behaviours, opinions and attitudes. Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) argue that interpretivist researchers rely upon what the participants say about the situation being studied.

Thanh and Thanh (2015) maintain that qualitative methods are usually supported by interpretivists because an interpretive paradigm “portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex, and ever-changing...” (Thanh & Thanh, 2015: 25). They further asset that interpretivism supported scholars in terms of exploring their world by interpreting the understanding of individuals, which is what the researcher tried to do: to understand perceptions of parents whose children are taught by male teachers in the Foundation Phase.

Easteby et al (2008) highlight the differences between a positivist paradigm and phenomenology. The following table illustrates those differences:

Table 3: Positivist paradigm and phenomenology

	Positivist paradigm	Phenomenology
Basic notions	The world is perceived as external and objective Independency of the observer Value-free approach to science	The world is perceived to be socially constructed and subjective Observer is considered a part of observation Human interests drive science
Responsibility of researcher	Focusing on facts Causalities and fundamental laws are searched	To be focusing on meanings Aiming to understand the meaning of events

	Phenomenon are reduced to the simplest elements Hypotheses formulation and testing them	Exploring the totality of each individual case Ideas are developed by induction from data
Most suitable research methods	Concepts have to be operationalized	Using several methods in order to different aspects of phenomena
Sampling	Samples have to be large	Small samples are analyzed in a greater depth or over longer period of time

Source: Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Jackson (2008)

3.3. Justification for choosing interpretive paradigm

This study sought to explore the parents' perceptions about male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase, and the researcher chose to use interpretive paradigm as she was interested in the participants' subjective realities and experiences. In the study, the researcher collected primary information/data on the perceptions of parents about male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase and how parents feel about having male teachers in this phase. The interpretive paradigm seemed to be relevant for this study as the participants who were interviewed were those that have children taught by male teachers at Foundation Phase.

The researcher conducted interviews with parents who have children who are taught by male teachers in the Foundation Phase (Gr R, 1, 2 & 3). Through the interpretive paradigm, we can gain a fuller understanding of meanings, reasons and insight into human action (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2001). This means that the interpretivist paradigm was used for purposes of finding out the parents' perceptions about male teachers' under-representation in FP (Gr R, 1, 2 & 3). Babbie (2010) asserts that interpretivism is about understanding and interpreting everyday events, experiences and social structure, hence the choice of the interpretive paradigm.

3.4. Research Approach

Research approaches, according to Creswell (2014), are plans and procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection (Creswell, 2014: 3). Creswell (2014) highlights three approaches to research and they are quantitative, qualitative and mixed method research approaches.

The following table shows different research approaches as tabled in Creswell (2014).

Table 4: Quantitative, Mixed, and Qualitative Methods

Quantitative Methods	Mixed Methods	Qualitative
Pre-determined	Both predetermined and emerging methods	Emerging methods
Instrument based questions	Both open- and closed-ended questions	Open-ended questions
Performance data, attitude data, observational data, and census data	Multiple forms of data drawing on all possibilities  University of Fort Hare Together in Excellence	Interview data, observation data, document data, and audiovisual data
Statistical analysis	Statistical and text analysis	Text and image analysis
Statistical interpretation	Across databases interpretation	Themes, patterns interpretation

Source: Creswell (2014: 17)

3.4.1. Quantitative approach

Babbie and Mouton (2011) define the quantitative approach as an approach that emphasizes on the quantification of constructs, statistical control and variable analysis. Creswell (2014) agrees, "Quantitative approach is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures (Creswell, 2014: 4). Maree (2007: 145) contents

that it is scientific and objective in its ways of using numerical data from only a selected subgroup of a universe...to generalize the finding to the universe that is being studied.

Quantitative data is therefore anything that can be articulated in statistical forms or which can be measured in some way, such as age, sex or income. It can be presented in the form of statistical tables, graphs, pie charts or bar charts. According to Maree et al (2007), one makes use of a numerical way to analyze variables by means of a frequency distribution. In such a distribution, the different response categories of the variables are shown together with the frequency (number) of respondents, and usually the frequency expressed as a percentage of the sample size, in each of the different categories (Maree, 2007: 184).

Denscombe (2010) highlights the following advantages and disadvantages of quantitative research approach:

Table 5: Advantages and disadvantages of quantitative research approach

Advantages	Disadvantages
- Scientific (statistical techniques based on mathematics and statistics) - Confidence in findings - Provide solid foundation for description and analysis - Large volumes can be analyzed relatively quickly - Tables and charts provide a succinct and effective presentation	- Data quality is only as good as the methods used - Technicist - Data overload can be a strength for it, but without care, the researcher can be overloaded - Quantitative analyst is not as scientifically objective as it might seem on the surface

Source: Denscombe (2010: 269-270)

3.4.2. Mixed methods approach

Mixed method approach refers to a research strategy that crosses the boundaries of conventional paradigms of research by deliberately combining methods drawn from different traditions with different underlying assumptions (Denscombe, 2010). Mixed

methods approach is the kind of research where the researcher combines quantitative and qualitative techniques, methods and concepts in a single study or series of related studies (Creswell, 2011). Denscombe (2010) agrees, “The term ‘mixed methods’ applies to research that combines alternative approaches within a single research project”. Quantitative research refers to research using numbers, while qualitative research refers to that which does not use numbers (Thomas, 2017: 119). At its simplest, a mixed methods strategy is one that uses both qualitative and quantitative methods (Denscombe, 2010).

The mixed methods approach has three characteristic features that set it apart from other strategies for social research. These can be summarized as follows:

1. Use of qualitative and quantitative approaches within a single research project. At the heart of the approach is the idea that researchers can bring together within a single research project certain elements that have conventionally been treated as an ‘either/or’ option. In most cases, the distinction is drawn between ‘qualitative’ and ‘quantitative’ with researchers variously writing about using both qualitative and quantitative methods, qualitative and quantitative data or qualitative and quantitative research.



2. It explicitly focuses on the link between approaches (triangulation). The mixed methods approach emphasizes the need to explain why the alternative approaches are beneficial and how the alternatives are to be brought together. Particular attention is given to the design of mixed methods research, especially the role of triangulation in justifying the use of the alternative approaches.

3. It places emphasis on practical approaches to research problems (pragmatism). The mixed methods approach is ‘problem-driven’ in the sense that it treats the research problem – more specifically answers to the research problem – as the overriding concern (Denscombe, 2010: 138).

The Mixed methods approach has advantages and disadvantages as highlighted by Denscombe (2010). The following table shows the advantages and disadvantages of mixed methods approach.

Table 6: Advantages and disadvantages of mixed methods approach

Advantages	Disadvantages
▪ A more comprehensive account of the thing being researched ▪ Clearer links between different methods and different kinds of data ▪ Enhances triangulation ▪ A practical, problem-driven approach to research ▪ Allow appropriate emphasis at different stages of the research process	▪ The time and costs of the research project can increase ▪ The researcher needs to develop skills with more than one method ▪ The QUAL/QUAN distinction tends to oversimplify matters ▪ The mixed methods design is generally recommended and does not allow for emergent research designs. ▪ The underlying philosophy of the mixed methods approach-pragmatism is open to misinterpretation ▪ Findings from different methods might not corroborate one another



Source: Denscombe (2010: 150-151)

3.4.3. Selected approach: Qualitative approach

Maree (2014) argues that the qualitative research approach is an umbrella term for a wide range of approaches intended at collecting rich, descriptive data in respect of a particular phenomenon with the aim of understanding a situation from the participants' points of view. Babbie and Mouton (2011: 75) further argue that research methodology focuses on the research process and the kind of tools and procedure to be used.

Corbin and Strauss (2015) describe qualitative research as a form of research in which the researcher or a designated co-researcher collects and interprets data, making the researcher as much a part of the research process as the participants and the data they provide (Corbin & Strauss, 2015: 4). They (Corbin & Strauss, 2015) further give explanations of why researchers choose qualitative over quantitative methods. These explanations include: exploring the inner experiences of participants; exploring how

meanings are formed and transformed; exploring areas not yet thoroughly researched; discovering relevant variables that can be tested later through quantitative forms of research and taking a holistic and comprehensive approach to the study of phenomena (Corbin & Strauss, 2015: 5). The main focus in qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values beliefs and experiences of a group of people (Kumar, 2011: 104). Maree (2014: 51) agrees, “Qualitative research typically studies people or systems by interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment (*in situ*) and focusing on their meanings and interpretations.

The methodology used by the researcher is a qualitative research approach that fitted well with paradigm chosen for the study. The purpose of the study was to investigate the perceptions of parents about male teachers’ under-representation in the Foundation Phase level and to understand parents’ thoughts and knowledge about male teachers in this phase of teaching. Qualitative approaches often give rich reports that are necessary for interpretivists to fully understand contexts (Thanh & Thanh, 2015: 25). In qualitative research, interviewing is one of the most frequently used methods when generating data (King & Horrocks, 2010: 6). Qualitative research was used in this study to collect data from parents whose children are taught by male teachers in Foundation Phase. Qualitative methods allow the researcher to study selected issues in depth, openness, and detail as they identify and attempt to understand the categories of information that emerge from the data (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2011: 47).

The qualitative research approach is the appropriate approach that was used together with semi-structured interviews. Lichtman (2014) highlights that, “qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world”. Qualitative research consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Lichtman, 2014: 8). Qualitative research tends to place emphasis and value on human interpretations of the social world and the significance of both participants’ and the investigator’s interpretations and understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Ritchie et al, 2014: 11). Qualitative research is particularly useful for understanding human perceptions and motivations of those being studied (Woodwell, 2014: 58).

Qualitative researchers attempt to study human action from the insiders' perspective, also referred to as the emic perspective (Babbie & Mouton, 2011: 53).

This is what the methodology and methods for the study attempted to do, as it investigated the perceptions of parents about male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. The main aim of basic qualitative research is to discover and interpret meaning (Makeleni, 2016: 48 unpublished). Makeleni (2016) further cites McMillan and Schumacher (2006) who assert that qualitative research is about individual and collective perceptions or views of the same situation and is concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from participants' perspectives. In this study, the idea was to find out if parents perceive a need for more male teachers to be included in a female dominated phase of teaching, and the researcher examined their responses to gain understanding of their perceptions. Creswell (2010: 56) argues that the aim of qualitative research studies is to engage in research that probes for a deeper understanding of a phenomenon rather than to search for causal relationships. Kumar (2012) also shares the same sentiments, "the main focus in qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people (Kumar, 2012: 104). This study explored feelings, beliefs, experiences and perceptions of parents regarding their children being taught by male teachers in the early years.

The aim of qualitative research studies is to engage in research that probes for a deeper understanding of a phenomenon rather than to search for causal relationships (Creswell, 2010: 56). McMillan and Schumacher (2006) highlight that qualitative research is about individual and collective perceptions or views of the same situation and is concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from participants' perspectives (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006: 112). This researcher probed for more understanding from nine participants who are parents of learners taught by male teachers in the FP in selected schools. The qualitative approach was appropriate to the study as it enabled the researcher to gain a clear understanding of the perceptions of parents about why there are few male teachers in the Foundation Phase. The method tried to understand people's perception, perspectives and understanding (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Creswell (2007) asserts that the method tries to understand an individual's experience of an event or tries to describe what is common in those experiences.

Cohen and Manion (2009) give the following advantages of the qualitative approach:

- The qualitative researcher has the power to visit the subjects in their natural habit. The researcher approached and arranged times with the respondents and the venues where the respondents would feel comfortable;
- Qualitative research typically reads like a story written in everyday language; Qualitative research describes everyday life from the point of view of the subjects. The researcher investigated the parents' perceptions about male teachers' under-representation and responses from parents of kids taught by male teachers; and
- Data collection is less structured than quantitative research; data collection has characteristics of flexibility, spontaneity and open-endedness. Semi-structured interviews were used in this study, and this allowed me to probe for more content. Respondents were free to respond and give their experiences in English or isiXhosa (Cohen & Manion, 2009: 23).

There are also disadvantages of using qualitative research approach. They are:



- It takes more time to gather data;
- Knowledge produced is not generalized to other people or settings, that is, findings may be the same as few people are included in the study; and
- Researcher's bias can easily affect the outcomes. Researchers should be careful not to influence the data collected.

Mgutshini (2012) summarizes qualitative research as follows:

1. Seeks to understand a phenomenon.... In this study, the perceptions of parents about male teachers' under-representation in the FP;
2. Considers context as very important.... The researcher in this study investigated a set of facts about how parents feel about having male teachers in the FP and how they think male teachers could do for their children in the FP;

3. Uses purposive samples.... The researcher sampled nine parents who have children in male teacher classes in their schools;
4. Collects data until saturation.... The researcher went back to the respondents whenever she felt like something is not clear during the transcription of data;
5. Usually describes a process, a set of conditions or an experience.... The researcher sat down with the respondents and explained to them how the research is going to take place and explained to them that their identities will not be divulged and that they are not forced to take part in the study; and
6. Identify themes.... The researcher looked at the responses of the respondents and identified themes and sub-themes from the data collected.

3.5. Research Design



Babbie and Mouton (2010) define a good qualitative research study design as one which has clearly defined purpose in which there is a coherence between the research questions and the methods or approaches proposed. A research design is a plan or blueprint of how you intend conducting the research (Babbie & Mouton, 2010: 74). Yin (2014: 28) consents that the design is the logical sequence that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and, ultimately, to its conclusions. Thomas (2017) also agrees, "Design is about plan and structure, and it also indicates the whole programme of a research, from purpose to execution.

The design of a research is not something separate from the purposes and the questions of a research: it is intimately connected with them (Thomas, 2017: 138). A research design is a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2014: 34). They (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2014) further assert that research designs are plans that guide the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure). Maxwell (2013)

agrees, “a good design, one in which the components work harmoniously together, promotes efficient and successful functioning; a flawed design leads to poor operation or failure” (Maxwell, 2013: 2).

The nature of the data dictates the research design and methodology to be applied in a particular study (Leedy & Ormond, 2005). Maxwell (2013) further explains a design as either a menu of standard types of designs from which you need to choose, or as a prescribed series of stages or tasks in planning or conducting a study. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) highlight that qualitative designs are as systematic as quantitative designs but emphasize gathering data on naturally occurring phenomena, and most of these data are in the form of words rather than numbers. They (McMillan and Schumacher 2010) further highlight five interactive qualitative designs: ethnography, phenomenology, case study, grounded theory and critical studies. These designs, according to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), can be organized by (1) a focus on individual lived experience as seen in phenomenology, case study, grounded theory and some critical studies and (2) a focus on society and culture, as defined by ethnography and some critical issues (McMillan & Schumacher (2010:23).



3.5.1. Ethnography

According to Barbour (2014), ethnography is the art and science of describing a human group – its institutions, interpersonal behaviours, material productions and beliefs and its principal task is to convey a detailed account of life in a specific cultural setting – whether this is exotic (as in traditional anthropological studies) or closer to home (in terms of researching specific events, groups or institutions) (Barbour, 2014: 155). It is the study of culture or social system (ibid) and a process of collecting descriptive data about a culture (Bernard, 2013: 310). Ethnography refers to the study of cultures and groups – their lifestyle, understandings and beliefs. In doing so, ethnography tends to emphasize the importance of understanding things from the point of view of those involved (Denscombe, 2010: 80).

Bernard (2013) further defines ethnography as a research strategy that combines different methods, but based on participation, observation, and writing about a field under study. One of the key features of ethnography is naturalism, or leaving natural phenomenon alone – in essence, the researcher tries to be invisible and involves

himself or herself in unobtrusive observation (Maree, 2014: 77). Maree (2014) further argues that ethnography assumes that all human behaviour is intentional and observable, and research should therefore be orientated towards understanding the reasoning behind people's actions (Maree, 2014: 76).

3.5.2. Phenomenology

Phenomenology focuses on the various types of experiences a person can have and these range from perception, thought, memory, emotion, imagination, desire, social and linguistic activity and actions (Labuschagne, 2015). It is a study of lived experiences. Phenomenology holds that any attempt to understand social reality has to be grounded in people's experiences of that social reality (Gray, 2018: 25). Gray (2018) further asserts that phenomenology aims to 'bracket out' preconceptions, requiring respondents to engage with reflexive techniques in order to generate a more accurate representation of the way in which they see the world.



3.5.3. Case study

Case study examines a single entity. Kumar (2011) asserts that, "to be called a case study, it is important to treat the total study population as one entity". The case study, though dominantly a qualitative study design, is also prevalent in quantitative research; a case could be an individual, a group, a community, an instance, an episode, an event, a subgroup of a population, a town or a city (Kumar, 2011: 126). Of the many definitions and understandings that define case study research, Bromley (cited in Maree (2007) defines a case study as a systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest. The case study approach works best when the researcher wants to investigate an issue in-depth and provide an explanation that can cope with the complexity and subtlety of real life situations (Denscombe, 2010: 55).

Maree et al (2007) cite (Yin, 1984: 23) who defines the case study research method as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly

evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. The exploration and description of the case, according to De Vos et al (2007), takes place through detailed, in-depth data collection methods, involving multiple sources of information that are rich in context. These, according to De Vos et al (2007), may include interviews, documents, observation or archival records. Case studies can have advantages and disadvantages, as set out by Denscombe (2010) below.

Table 7: Advantages and disadvantages of case study design

Advantages	Disadvantages
• The focus on one or a few instances allows the researcher to deal with subtleties and intricacies of complex social situations • Allows the use of a variety of research methods • Suitable where the researcher has little control over events • Theory-building and theory-testing can both use the case study to good effect	• Vulnerable to criticism in relation to credibility of generalizations • Often perceived as producing 'soft' data • Boundaries of the case can prove difficult to define in absolute and clear-cut fashion • Negotiating access can be a demanding part of the research process

Source: Denscombe: 2010: 62

3.5.4. Grounded theory

Barbour (2014: 334) defines grounded theory as an approach to analyzing qualitative data that argues that it is possible, through interrogating, comparing and contrasting pieces of data, to build up theoretical accounts. Grounded theory examines a phenomenon as related to theory. Denscombe (2010) concurs that grounded theory is characterized by the specific way in which it approaches the business of analyzing the data. Concepts and theories are developed out of data through a persistent process of comparing ideas with existing data and improving the emerging concepts and theories by checking them against new data collected specifically for the purpose (Denscombe, 2010: 108).

According to Denscombe (2010), the grounded theory approach has become firmly associated over time with qualitative research (Denscombe, 2010: 109). Gray (2018) agrees, 'one of the most valuable qualitative approaches is that of grounded theory, defined as a theory that is 'discovered, developed and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon (Gray, 2018: 694). In qualitative research, we may develop theory during the data collection process. This largely inductive method means that we are building theory from data or ground the theory in the data (Neuman, 2011: 175). Neuman (2011) further asserts that grounded theory adds flexibility and allows the data and theory to interact.

3.5.5. Critical studies

Critical studies are a qualitative research in which the researcher is committed to exposing social manipulation and changing oppressive social structures and in which he or she may have emancipatory goals (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 486). Critical studies are about non-traditional perspectives, theories and approaches.



3.5.6. Selected design: Phenomenology

The study undertook phenomenology research design as the researcher used nine participants who are parents with children taught by male teachers in the Foundation Phase (Gr R, 1, 2 & 3) in urban, semi-urban and rural school contexts. The purpose of phenomenology is to describe and understand the essence of lived experiences of individuals who have experienced a particular phenomenon (Lichtman, 2014:111). By lived experiences, Lichtman (2014:114) explained them as those experiences in which we are all involved, which Husserl refers to as life experiences. King and Horrocks (2010) define phenomenology as a philosophical tradition that has enormous influence on the development of qualitative methods, which stressed the need to employ its ideas in the direct exploration of the world of lived experiences (King & Horrocks, 2010: 179). Lived experiences of the everyday world, as revealed through interviews, is the major focus for phenomenological studies. This study explored perceptions of parents through interviews. The research questions were structured in such a way that the parents would be able to give their opinions about male teacher under-representation in the Foundation Phase.

Phenomenology invites us to set aside all previous habits of thought, see through and break down the mental barriers which these habits have set along the horizons of our thinking...to learn to see what stands before our eyes (Crotty, 2013: 80). In this study, the researcher saw through and broke the societal beliefs that male teachers are unable to teach young children in the Foundation Phase. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) agree when they assert that phenomenology is concerned with understanding meaning structure of the world of everyday life, that is, turning back and looking on what has been going on (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007: 23).

According to King and Horrocks (2010), Husserl developed his phenomenological method, central to which is the notion that the investigator needs to set aside his assumptions about the phenomenon under scrutiny and attempt to see it afresh (King and Horrocks, 2010: 176). Thomas (2017) describes phenomenology as the study of the way in which individuals' structure consciousness, examining the way meanings are given to the things of their experience (Thomas, 2017: 322).

A phenomenological research design was used in conducting the study because it is based on how participants perceive and experience having male teachers in the Foundation Phase. The phenomenological approach allowed participants, through semi-structured interviews, to elicit their own meaning of their experiences of having male teachers in the Foundation Phase, and looked at every little thing that the participants could reveal as they have a male teacher in their class. Phenomenology is based on how people identify their lived experiences and how they define such experiences. It focuses on how people combine their experiences about certain situations in order to understand the world and develop a particular philosophy of the world (Al-Busadi, 2008).

The advantage of phenomenology is that does not need technically advanced or expensive equipment in data collection and analysis. There is also intrinsic capability on (new) phenomenology to provide detailed information about experiences in a manner that can be easily accessible and catch the attention of many readers (Denscombe, 2014). Streubert, Speziale and Carpenter (2003) also share advantages of phenomenology as a highly appropriate approach to researching human experience and a method that is rigorous and systematic in investigation of phenomena. These advantages are also detailed in Denscombe (2010) as below:

Advantages of phenomenology

- Suited to small-scale research: Phenomenological research generally relies on in-depth interviews and does not call for technologically sophisticated or expensive equipment for the purposes of data collection and analysis. Coupled with this, it is often undertaken in specific localities such as hospitals, schools or industrial plants. In both respects, it lends itself to small scale research where the budget is low and the main resource is the researcher himself/herself;
- The description of experiences can tell an interesting story. There is an inherent potential within (new) phenomenology to describe experiences in a way that is immediately accessible and interesting to a wide range of readers. By unfolding the events and laying bare the feelings experienced by people, the research is likely to attract a relatively wide readership. It deals with everyday life, and people can generally relate to this;
- Offers the prospect of authentic accounts of complex phenomena: The social world is complex and rarely straightforward. A phenomenological approach allows the researcher to deal with that complexity and scratches beneath the superficial aspects of social reality. It calls for the researcher to delve into phenomena in-depth and to provide descriptions that are detailed enough to reflect the complexity of the social world; and
- A humanistic style of research: There is a respect for people built into the phenomenological approach. It carries an aura of humanism and, in its efforts to base its enquiry on the lived experiences of people in the everyday world; it represents a style of research that is far removed from any high-minded, abstract theorizing. In effect, the researcher needs to be close to the objects of study (Denscombe, 2010: 102).

There are also disadvantages of using phenomenology that include the probability of misinterpreting a phenomenon and the risk of findings that are not complete. Experiences cannot be generalized from explored experiences and it is possible to investigate the experiences that make participants vulnerable (le May & Holmes, 2012). These disadvantages are also detailed in Denscombe (2010):

Disadvantages of phenomenology

- Lacks scientific rigour: The emphasis of phenomenology on subjectivity, description and interpretation contrasts with the scientific emphasis on objectivity, analysis and measurement. Although phenomenology is self-consciously non-positivist – and proud to be so – there is the danger that this can be turned against it and be treated as a weakness rather than a strength by those who do not share its stance;
- Associated with description and no analysis: The importance attached to providing a detailed and accurate description of the events and experiences being studied can lead to accusations that phenomenology does nothing but provide descriptions. This might not be warranted, in particular where the phenomenologist goes on to develop explanations based on the descriptive material. There is, nonetheless, the danger that those who are not sympathetic to phenomenology might seize the opportunity to criticize it for its primary focus on description;
- Generalizations from phenomenological studies: Phenomenological research does not normally involve large numbers or instances of the phenomenon being studied. This will always raise questions about the representativeness of the data and how far it is justifiable to generalize from the findings. Phenomenologists, for their part, might not regard such a concern as relevant to their work, but many other kinds of researchers will be concerned with this issue;
- Attention to the mundane features of life: For phenomenologists, the study of routine aspects of everyday life occurs because it is fundamental for understanding the nature of the social world. For others, it might be (mis)interpreted as dealing with things that are mundane, trivial and relatively unimportant compared with the big issues of the day in the spheres of social policy, international relations, economic progress and the like;
- Feasibility of suspending common sense: In principle, suspending presuppositions about the way things work might seem a reasonable way of trying to get a clearer view of them. However, it is doubtful indeed, if it is ever possible to rid ourselves entirely of such presuppositions. Socialization and the use of language make it impossible. What can be done, though, is to be reflective and self-conscious about the way perceptions are shaped by things like common sense and then to try to moderate their impact (Denscombe, 2010: 103).

3.6. Sample and sampling techniques

A sample is a group that is selected from a population. By studying the sample, the researcher tries to draw conclusions about the whole population. The sample refers to the relatively small part of the population who are chosen to participate in the study. Researchers usually cannot make observations of every individual in the population they are studying (Maree, 2014). Instead, they collect data from a subset of individuals, a sample, and use those observations to make inferences about the entire population (Maree 2014). The sample is supposed to correspond to the larger population on the characteristics of interest. In each case, the researchers' conclusions from the sample are probably applicable to the entire population. Thomas (2017) agrees, "A sample is a group that is selected from a population and by studying the sample, the researcher tries to draw conclusions about the whole population (Thomas, 2017: 324).

Maree (2014: 172) mentions four methods of sampling under probability sampling as: simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling. Non-probability sampling has four main types. They are convenience sampling where selection is done based on the fact that they are easily and conveniently available and is quick and cheap, quota sampling may be either proportional or non-proportional; snowball sampling used where the population is difficult to find or where the research interest is in an interconnected group of people and purposive sampling is used in special situations where sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind (Maree, 2014: 178).

Purposive sampling is a non-probability form of sampling (Bryman, 2016: 323). Bryman (2016) further reveals that the researcher does not seek to sample research participants on a random basis. The goal of purposive sampling is to sample cases/participants in a strategic way so that those sampled are relevant to the research questions that are posed (Bryman, 2016: 323). They are selected with a specific purpose in mind, and that purpose reflects the particular qualities of the people or events chosen and their relevance to the topic of the investigation (Denscombe, 2010: 35). Researchers also make use of purposive samples, which means that sampling depends not only on availability and willingness to participate, but that cases are typical of the population are selected (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2014: 139). A purposive sample can be used in order to ensure that a wide cross-section of items or people is included in the sample. When used in this way, purposive sampling

is, to a degree, emulating a 'representative sample'. Based on prior knowledge, the researcher can deliberately select the sample in order to ensure that the full range of items or people get included (e.g. all age groups, all ethnic groups) (Denscombe, 2010: 35).

Johnson and Christensen (2008) define purposive sampling as a non-random sampling technique in which the researcher solicits persons with specific characteristics to participate in a study. Denscombe (2010) asserts that purposive sampling works where the researcher already knows something about the specific people or events and deliberately selects particular ones because they are seen as instances that are likely to produce the most valuable data (Denscombe, 2010: 35). Kumar (2014) shares the same sentiments, "The primary consideration in judgmental sampling or purposive sampling is your judgement as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of your study. Since it is a non-probability approach, purposive sampling does not allow the researcher to generalize to a population (Bryman, 2016: 323).

In this study, purposive sampling was used to select parents. Parents with learners taught by male teachers in the Foundation Phase were the ones that were targeted since they are the ones who have contacts with the teachers from time to time. These parents are the ones who notice the experience in their children while in male teacher classes and can attest to why they think it is best or worst to have male teachers in the FP. Purposive sampling can also be used as a way of getting the best information by selecting items or people most likely to have the experience or expertise to provide quality information and valuable insights on the research topic (Denscombe, 2010: 35). You only go to those people who, in your opinion, are likely to have the required information and be willing to share it with you (Kumar, 2014: 244). This is the reason why the parents with learners in the male teacher classes were sampled as they are the ones with the required information.

In purposive sampling, decisions about which criteria are used for selection are often made in the early stages of the research. Careful consideration needs to be given to the selection of participants for focus group interviews (King & Horrocks, 2010: 66). The aim is to facilitate interactive discussion and the sharing of understandings and views, while at the same time ensuring that the data generated are able to meet the

aims of the research (King & Horrocks, 2010: 66). This was the reason why parents whose children are taught by male teachers in the Foundation phase were selected for the study.

The parents sampled were those that have children in male teacher classes in the FP, and the following table shows the demographics of the sampled parents:

Table 8: Respondents' demographics

Participant	Gender (M/F)	Single/Married	Age Group	Parent/Guardian
1	F	Single	30-35 years	Parent
2	F	Married	40-45 years	Parent
3	M	Married	50-55 years	Parent
4	F	Single	30-35 years	Parent
5	F	Married	40-45 years	Guardian
6	F	Single	50-55 years	Guardian
7	M	Married	70-75 years	Guardian
8	F	Single	45-50 years	Parent
9	F	Single	60-65 years	Guardian

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In the study, parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase, nine parents (three from each school) were selected from three Primary schools around East London district. These parents were selected because they have learners in the Foundation Phase (Gr R, 1, 2 & 3) and were relevant to the study as they are the ones that experience, through their children, having male teachers in the Foundation Phase. Each of the parents were interviewed one-on-one as informed by a range of factors, including the principle aims of the study, existing knowledge or theories about the field of study and a hypothesis that the research may want to explore gaps in knowledge about the study (Ritchie, Lewis, Nicholls & Ormston, 2014: 114). In purposive sampling, people or other units are chosen, as the name implies, for a particular purpose (Leedy & Ormond, 2005: 206). For instance, we might choose people who we have decided are 'typical' of a group or those who represent diverse perspectives on an issue (Leedy & Ormond, 2005: 206). This is one of the reasons why the researcher sampled parents who have pupils taught by male teachers in Grade R, 1, 2 and 3.

3.7. Data collection instruments

Data collection means making sense of and recording experiences, feelings and social situations as they occur in the real world (Maree, 2014). The predominant method of data collection within a qualitative research included individual interviews, to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' knowledge about the phenomenon (Merriam, 2009).

3.7.1. The research instrument: Interview

An interview is a two-way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and to learn about ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant (Maree, 2014: 87). Rather than asking respondents to read questionnaires and enter their own answers, researchers have interviews to ask the questions orally and record the respondents' answers (Babbie & Mouton, 2011). Maree (2014) further argues that, "the aim of qualitative interviews is to see the world through the eyes of the participant, and they can be a valuable source of information, provided they are used correctly" (Maree, 2014: 87). Babbie (2010) shares the same sentiments, "unlike a survey, a qualitative interview is an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry, including the topics to be covered but not a set of questions that must be asked with particular words and in a particular order (Babbie, 2010: 318).

Interviews have advantages and disadvantages which are listed as follows by Denscombe (2010):

Advantages of interviews

- **Depth of information:** Interviews are particularly good at producing data that deal with topics in-depth and in detail. Subjects can be probed, issues pursued and lines of investigation followed over a relatively lengthy period.
- **Insights:** The researcher is likely to gain valuable insights based on the depth of the information gathered and the wisdom of 'key informants'.

- **Equipment:** Interviews require only simple equipment and build on conversation skills which researchers already have.
- **Informants' priorities:** Interviews are a good method for producing data based on informants' priorities, opinions and ideas. Informants can expand their ideas, explain their views and identify what they regard as the crucial factors.
- **Flexibility:** As a method for data collection, interviews are probably the most flexible. Adjustments to the lines of enquiry can be made during the interview itself. Interviewing allows for a developing line of enquiry.
- **High response rate:** Interviews are generally prearranged and scheduled for a convenient time and location. This ensures a relatively high response rate.
- **Validity:** Direct contact at the point of the interview means that data can be checked for accuracy and relevance as they are collected. In the case of Internet interviews, there is also the elimination of errors at the data entry stage. The researcher is no longer faced with passages in a tape-recorded interview where voices cannot be heard clearly and where there is consequently some doubt about what was said. Using the Internet, interview responses come in the form of text – text constructed directly by the interviewee. This eliminates inaccuracies in the data arising from the process of transcription.
- **Therapeutic:** Interviews can be a rewarding experience for the informant. Compared with questionnaires, observation and experiments, there is a more personal element to the method, and people tend to enjoy the rather rare chance to talk about their ideas at length to a person whose purpose is to listen and note the ideas without being critical.

Disadvantages of interviews

- **Time-consuming:** Analysis of data can be difficult and time-consuming. Data preparation and analysis are 'end-loaded' compared with, for instance, questionnaires which are pre-coded and where data are ready for analysis once they have been collected. The transcribing and coding of interview data are a major task for the researcher that occurs after the data have been collected.

- **Data analysis:** The interview method tends to produce non-standard responses. Semi-structured and unstructured interviews produce data that are not pre-coded and have a relatively open format.
- **Reliability:** The impact of the interviewer and of the context means that consistency and objectivity are hard to achieve. The data collected are, to an extent, unique owing to the specific context and the specific individuals involved. This has an adverse effect on reliability.
- **Interviewer effect:** The data from interviews are based on what people say rather than what they do. The two may not tally. What people say they do, what they say they prefer and what they say they think cannot automatically be assumed to reflect the truth. Interviewee statements can be affected by the identity of the researcher. Internet interviews, with their lack of visual and verbal clues, can go a long way towards avoiding this problem. The absence of visual and verbal clues, some researchers argue, democratizes the research process by equalizing the status of researcher and respondent, lowering the status differentials linked with sex, age, appearance and accent, and giving the participant greater control over the process of data collection. The lack of such clues, equally, can help to overcome embarrassment on topics and allow the respondent to open in a way that is unlikely to happen in the physical presence of a researcher.
- **Inhibitions:** In the case of face-to-face interviews, the audio recorder (or video recorder) can inhibit the informant. Although the impact of the recording device tends to wear off quite quickly, this is not always the case. The interview is an artificial situation (as, of course, are experiments) where people are speaking for the record and on the record, and this can be daunting for certain people.
- **Invasion of privacy:** Tactless interviewing can be an invasion of privacy and/ or upsetting for the informant. While interviews can be enjoyable, the other side of the coin is that the personal element of being interviewed carries its own kinds of dangers as well.
- **Resources:** With face-to-face interviews, the costs of interviewer's time and travel can be relatively high, particularly if the informants are geographically dispersed. [Denscombe, 2010: 192-193].

There are unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews. Gray (2018) has adapted a table for the summary of the characteristics of the different types of interviews from Arksey and Knight (1999). The table below shows the characteristics of structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews.

Table 9: Characteristics of structured, semi-structured and unstructured interviews

Structured	Semi-structured	Unstructured (non-directive, focused and informal conversation)
Quick to data capture.	Slow and time-consuming to data capture and analyze.	As for semi-structured
Use of random sampling.	The longer the interview, the more advisable it is to use random sampling.	Opportunity and snowball sampling often used. In organizations, targeting of 'key informants'
Interview schedule followed exactly	Interview refers to a guide containing mixture of open and closed questions. Interviewer improvises using own judgement	Interviewer uses aide-memoire of topics for discussion and improvises
Interviewer-led	Sometimes interviewer-led, sometimes informant-led	Non-directive interviewing
Easy to analyze	Quantitative parts easy to analyze	Usually hard to analyze
Tends to positivist view of knowledge	Mixture of positivist and non-positivist	Non-positivist view of knowledge
Respondents' anonymity easily guaranteed	Harder to ensure anonymity	Researcher tends to know the informant

Source: Adapted from Arksey and Knight, 1999 in Gray (2018: 382)

3.7.2. Unstructured interviews

According to Maree (2014), unstructured interviews take a form of a conversation with the intention that the researcher explores with the participant his/her views, ideas, beliefs and attitudes about certain events or phenomenon. Unstructured questions allow the interviewer great latitude in asking broad questions in whatever order seems appropriate (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 206). The strength of unstructured interviews is the almost complete freedom that they provide in terms of content and structure (Kumar, 2011: 145). You are free to order these in whatever sequence you wish and also have complete freedom in terms of the wording you use and the way you explain questions to respondents (Kumar, 2011).

Corbin and Strauss (2015) agree that unstructured interviews are interviews that are not conducted according to a prescribed interview guide and provide the richest source of data for theory building. The unstructured type of interview allows the interviewer to pose open-ended questions and the interviewee to express his/her own opinion freely (Thomas, 2010: 314). Corbin and Strauss agree, participants are able to talk more freely about those issues and problems pertinent to them and give participants more control over the course of the interview” (Corbin & Strauss, 2015: 38). Thomas (2017) also agrees, “An unstructured interview is like a conversation. There is no pre-determined format to the interview beyond your general interest in the topic. You don’t meet your interviewee with a pre-specified list of questions” (Thomas, 2017: 205). The direction of the interview is determined by both the interviewer and the interviewee to be at ease because it is like a discussion or brainstorming on a given topic (Thomas, 2010: 314).

3.7.3. Structured interviews

A structured interview is a meeting with another person in which you ask a predetermined set of questions. Beyond this set of questions, there is very little scope for further follow-up – little scope for pursuing an interesting comment from the interviewee (Thomas, 2017: 205). In a structured interview, the researcher asks a predetermined set of questions, using the same wording and order of questions as specified in the interview schedule (Kumar, 2011: 146). Structured questions (also called limited-response or selected-response questions) are followed by a set of

choices, and the respondent selects one of the choices as the answer (McMillan & Schumacher: 2010: 206). In the structured interview, questions are detailed and developed in advance, much as they are in survey research (Maree, 2014: 87). One of the main advantages of the structured interview is that it provides uniform information, which assures the comparability of data (Kumar, 2011: 145).

Corbin and Strauss (2015) highlight that structured interviews take away much control of the interview process from participants. This is because the topics that are covered are those deemed important by the researcher and perhaps are not the issues or problems important to participants (Corbin & Strauss, 2015: 39). Structured interviews are the most effective method for asking open questions and for eliciting more detailed responses (Gray, 2018: 246). Structured interviews are most appropriate when the goals of the study are clearly understood and specific questions can be identified (Thomas, 2010: 315).

3.7.4. Selected type of interview: Semi-structured interviews

The semi-structured interview is commonly used in research projects to corroborate data emerging from other data sources and allows for the probing and clarifying of answers (Maree, 2014). In semi-structured interviews, the same topics are covered in each interview and after the questions on the list have been covered, participants are free to add anything else to the interview that they might feel is relevant to the discussion (Corbin & Strauss, 2015: 39). With the semi-structured interview, the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest (Denscombe 2010: 175).

The semi-structured interview provides the best of both worlds as far as interviewing is concerned, combining the structure of a list of issues to be covered together with the freedom to follow up points as necessary (Thomas, 2017: 206). In order to get the best of both worlds afforded by the semi-structured interview, the researcher will need an interview schedule which is a list of issues which s/he wants to cover (Thomas, 2017). An interview schedule, drawn up prior to the interview, is a framework of issues,

leading to possible follow-up questions, leading to probes (Thomas, 2017: 207). Kumar (2014: 178) adds, “an interview schedule is a written list of questions, open-ended or closed, thoroughly pre-tested standardized wording, meaning and interpretation, prepared for use by an interviewer in a person-to-person interaction (this may be face to face, by telephone or by other electronic media). Interview probes elicit elaboration of detail, further explanations, and clarification of responses (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 358). The researcher should talk less than the respondent; cues the respondent needs can usually be reduced to a few words during the interview (ibid).

In the study, semi-structured interviews were used where the researcher was able to use follow up questions when more content was required or more clarity was needed. The interview allows the participant and the researcher to exchange information. Semi-structured interview schedules basically define the line of inquiry (Maree, 2014). As a researcher, you must be attentive to the responses of your participant so that you can identify new emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the phenomenon being studied, and explore and probe these (Maree, 2014: 87). (Nigel & Horrocks, 2010) describe semi-structured interviews as the ‘exemplary’ method for interpretive phenomenological analysis because the emphasis in this approach is on exploring how people interpret their experience (Nigel & Horrocks, 2010: 182), which in this study is how parents’ view the presence of male teachers in Grade R, 1, 2 & 3. Bryman (2016) asserts that in the semi-structured interviews, there is flexibility as they allow for interviewers to glean research participants’ perspectives on their social world (Bryman, 2016: 372).

Semi-structured interviews were used to clarify vague statements and to further explore the topics of the research. “With the semi-structured interview, the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest” (Denscombe, 2010: 175). Parents with learners in male teacher classes gave rich information about how they feel about having male teachers in the Foundation Phase. These semi-structured interviews afforded the researcher to obtain perceptions of parents about male teachers’ under-representation in the Foundation Phase.

3.7.5. Observations

Observation is a systematic data collection approach where researchers use all of their senses to examine people in natural settings or naturally occurring situations. It is one of the most important ways of collecting data in social research (Thomas, 2017: 226). Observing means watching carefully, and you can do this careful watching in some different ways, depending on the approach to research that you have decided to take (Thomas, 2017: 226). Kumar (2014) agrees, “observation is one way to collect primary data: it is purposeful, systematic and selective way of watching and listening to an interaction or phenomenon as it takes place (Kumar, 2014: 173). Conducting observations is only one of the myriad ways to collect qualitative data (Lichtman, 2014: 280). The researcher observed behaviours and reactions of the participants while responding to the research questions and this helped the researcher to probe as some reactions showed that there is more to the responses given. It is a good idea to pay attention to your physical surroundings and to the person you are interviewing and keep notes about your observations (Lichtman, 2014: 253).



Benefits of observations, according to Silverman (2001) are:

- Observation fosters an in-depth and rich understanding of a phenomenon, situation and/or setting and the behaviour of the participants in the setting;
- Observation is an essential part of gaining an understanding of naturalistic settings and its members' ways of seeing. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) agree, “the advantage of observational methods is that it is very important for research designed to study what occurs in real life, as opposed to in highly contrived or artificial settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010: 209);
- Observation can provide the foundation for theory and hypothesis; and
- Immersion and prolonged involvement in a setting can lead to the development of rapport and foster free and open speaking with members.

The researcher observed the participants as they responded to the questions by looking at how they reacted before responding to questions and even looking at their facial expressions to see if something needed to be probed further. Observation entails gathering data through vision as its main source. It may be used as the only source of data collection, or jointly with other techniques, such as intensive interviewing and

documentary study (Sarantakos, 2005: 220). Observation can focus on action, speech, attitudes or behaviour, and qualitative researchers may employ a rather general definition of the observation unit but a specification of this unit will be given (Sarantakos, 2005: 223). Creswell highlights that unusual aspects can be noticed during observation, and this is useful in exploring topics that may be uncomfortable for participants to discuss (Creswell, 2014: 191).

3.7.6. The interview process

An interview was chosen because it affords the researcher the opportunity to have access to spontaneous responses that reflect the true feelings and attitudes of respondents. Semi-structured interviews were used to generate data in this study. All the interviews took place in different venues where the participants felt comfortable: some took place in the participants' offices, and some in the school premises when they came to collect their children while others took place in the participants' homes. Creswell (2014) highlights that the place selected for the interview should be quiet and free from any distraction. The researcher ensured the above statement by allowing participants to choose spaces that are comfortable to them and to address power relations between the researcher and the participants.

Semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to gain understanding of the participants' perceptions about male teachers' under-representation in the FP. The participants were given the interview schedule which the researcher had compiled based on the research question of the study. The interview schedule was then given to the respondents before the dates of the interview, so on the day of the interviews they were aware of what was going to be asked. The interviews took 30 to 45 minutes for each participant.

In most qualitative research traditions, it is strongly preferable, if not essential, to have a full record of each interview (King & Horrocks, 2010: 44). Since they will be analyzing the data at a later date, most researchers believe that it is critical that they record the interview (Lichtman, 2014: 253). Usually, this means utilizing some form of audio-recording, although in a small proportion of studies, video-recording is used (King & Horrocks, 2010: 44). King and Horrocks (2010) mention audio recording, video recording and note taking as ways of recording during an interview. Where participants

refuse to be audio recorded or video recorded, the researcher can use note-taking (King & Horrocks, 2010:44). Participants were asked for permission to be recorded, and those that were not comfortable with that were not forced, so the researcher wrote down their responses.

In the study, the researcher used audio-recording and note-taking during interviews to ensure that she does not miss any information. Keeping a detailed handwritten record can be necessary – for instance, when a participant refuses consent to be recorded or where there is technical failure with equipment (King & Horrocks, 2010: 44). Lichtman (2014) agrees, “Issues related to the type of recording device used, the willingness of participants to speak when being recorded, the protection of privacy, and the quality of transmission need to be addressed. Sarantakos (2015) highlights that the most common methods of recording are writing down information *verbatim*, in summary or key words, tape recording conversations, video recording events and taking photos. Sarantakos (2005) further highlights that note-taking is the most common method, but is not always possible. Taking notes may divert the attention of the observers from the scene to the paper, causing them to miss part of what happens (Sarantakos, 2005: 229).



Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2014) reveal the advantages of recording:

- It allows you to keep a full record of the interview without having to be distracted by detailed note-keeping; and
- It also shows the interviewee that you take what they say seriously (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2014: 298)

On the negative side, it could detract from the intimacy of the encounter, with both interviewee and interviewer in part performing for the camera or tape recorder rather than really talking to each other (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2014: 298).

The advantage of using an interview rather than a questionnaire is that in an interview, the interviewer can follow up ideas, probe for responses and examine motives as well as feelings, whilst a questionnaire cannot (Bell, 2010 as cited in Moosa, 2013: 46). During the face-to-face interviews, the researcher made sure that she listened actively, continuously abided by the ethical principles, transcribed the responses and ensured that themes were emerging from the responses. The researcher ensured that every respondent has been approached in a friendly manner to encourage them not only to

participate but to ensure that they are comfortable when interviewed. Maree (2007) asserts that a researcher needs to be a sensitive observer who records phenomena as faithfully as possible, while at the same time raising additional questions, following hunches and moving into the analysis of the phenomena.

3.8. Trustworthiness

Babbie and Mouton (2011) concur that the key criterion or principle of good qualitative research is found in the notion of trustworthiness and neutrality of its findings or decisions. Trustworthiness is a process whereby the researcher confirms that the findings accurately reflect the respondents' experiences and views not the researcher's perceptions (Makeleni, 2016). Makeleni (2016) further cites Fox and Bayat (2007: 107) when they assert that the criterion of trustworthiness is a viable standard for measuring validity and reliability in qualitative research. Heck (2006) highlights that it is essential to send back collected data and interpretations to the research participants to check whether the results analysis is correct. The researcher ensured that the data collected on parents' perceptions about male teachers in the Foundation Phase was sent back to the respondents after interpretations to confirm trustworthiness.

According to Guba and Lincon as cited by Kumar (2014:219), trustworthiness in a qualitative study is determined by four indicators closely related to validity and reliability: Credibility, Transferability, Dependability and Confirmability.

3.8.1. Credibility

Credibility involves establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible or believable from the perspective of the participant in the research. As qualitative research studies explore people's perceptions, experiences, feelings and beliefs, it is believed that the respondents are the best judge of whether the research findings have been able to reflect their opinions and feelings accurately. Qualitative validity means that the researcher checks for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures (Gibbs, 2007 as cited in Creswell, 2014: 201). Creswell (2014) further reveals that validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research and is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher,

the participant, or the researcher of an account (Creswell, 2014: 201). Denscombe (2010) agrees, “The issue here is the extent to which qualitative researchers can demonstrate that their data are accurate and appropriate” (Denscombe, 2010: 298).

Merriam (2009) argues that in qualitative research, credibility is equivalent to the quantitative term *internal validity* and is achieved when there is correlation between the researcher’s findings and the reality of the participants’ lived experiences. Lincoln and Guba (1985) as cited in Denscombe (2010) make the point that it is not possible for qualitative researchers to prove in any absolute way that they have ‘got it right’ (as a consequence, they prefer to use the term ‘credibility’ in relation to this aspect of the verification of research.) In this study, the researcher ensured that when analyzing data, she used exactly the participants’ words that were used during the interviews. In addition, ethical research practices were applied and limitations of the research were clearly articulated to increase authenticity of the data collected.

In addition, referring back to the data collected (notes and audio recordings) was done intensively to find the links between the data and the interpretations. In order to verify the information, the researcher implemented member-checking, whereby the participants were asked to confirm the researcher’s interpretations of the data (Merriam, 2009). This is what Denscombe (2010) calls respondent validation where the researcher can return to the participants with the data and findings as a means of checking the validity of the findings. This allows a check on factual accuracy and allows the researcher’s understandings to be confirmed (or amended) by those whose opinions, views or experiences are being studied (Denscombe, 2010: 298).

3.8.2. Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2014) agree, “transferrential validity refers to the ability of the account to provide answers in other contexts, and to the transferability of findings to other contexts”. Transferability basically refers to the generalizability of data, that is, the degree to which findings of the study can be transferred to or can be applied in different settings or groups. The researcher is responsible for providing adequate or enough

data that is descriptive in the research report with the goal that readers can assess the appropriateness and applicability of data in various settings (Polit & Becker, 2008).

The researcher needs to supply information enabling others to infer the relevance and applicability of the findings (to other people, settings, case studies, organizations, etc.). In other words, to gauge how far the findings are transferable, the reader needs to be presented with relevant details on which to base a comparison (Denscombe, 2010: 300). In this study, the researcher selected information-rich parents: those that have learners in the FP being taught by male teachers and ensured that the data is credible enough to be transferred to other contexts. Merriam (2009) indicates that transferability may be promoted should the following strategies be implemented: purposive sampling as well as rich, thick descriptions of the context and meanings as ascribed by the participants. Research based on small numbers and qualitative data needs an alternative way of addressing the issue. This alternative way is what Lincoln and Guba (1985) as cited in Denscombe (2010) have called 'transferability'. This is an imaginative process in which the reader of the research uses information about the particular instance that has been studied to arrive at a judgement about how far it would apply to other comparable instances (Denscombe, 2010: 300).



3.8.3. Dependability

Dependability is very similar to the concept of reliability in quantitative research. It is concerned with whether we would obtain the same results if we would observe the same thing twice. As qualitative research advocates flexibility and freedom, it may be difficult to establish unless you keep an extensive and detailed record of the process for others to replicate to ascertain the level of dependability. Qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher's approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Gibbs, 2007 as cited in Creswell, 2014: 201). The question of reliability translates from 'Would the research instrument produce the same results when used by different researchers (all other things being equal)?' to 'If someone else did the research, would he or she have got the same results and arrived at the same conclusions?' (Denscombe, 2010: 299). Researchers should have the potential to show any changes or shifts in how the study was conducted (Bitzer & Botha, 2011).

The researcher ensured and confirmed dependability by keeping comprehensive records of each phase of the research process, including the formulation of the research question, research methodology, research methods and design, sampling procedures, and interview discussion transcripts, data analysis and findings of the study. Detailed records were maintained throughout the process. Principally, these revolve around the demonstration that their research reflects procedures and decisions that other researchers can 'see' and evaluate in terms of how far they constitute reputable procedures and reasonable decisions (Denscombe, 2010: 299).

3.8.4. Confirmability

Confirmability refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed or corroborated by others. Confirmability is also similar to reliability in quantitative research. Confirmability is also similar to reliability in quantitative research. It is only possible if researchers follow the process in an identical manner for the results to be compared. Confirmability refers to objectivity, that is, the potential for parallelism between at least two independent individuals about the accuracy of the data, relevance or significance. This guideline is concerned with establishing that the data interpretations are figments of the imagination. For this guideline to be accomplished, voices of participants and conditions of the study must reflect or the researcher's perceptions on the findings and not on the biases, inspirations (Polit & Beck, 2008). Denscombe (2010: 301) agrees, "This issue of objectivity concerns the extent to which qualitative research can produce findings that are free from the influence of the researcher(s) who conducted the enquiry".

In this study, the researcher achieved confirmability by making personal notes reflecting her own feelings, emotions and perspectives after each interview and then write a reflexivity report. The researcher kept raw data, including records of the audio tapes, interviews and notes. Member-checking was also used in order to code various transcripts to see whether they come up with the same category so that the researcher can negotiate to reconcile any differences (Conrad & Selin, 2011). The researcher gave each participant a copy of their own transcript for member checking to ensure that the transcripts were an accurate record of what was said. Qualitative data,

whether text or images, are always the product of a process of interpretation (Denscombe, 2010: 301).

3.9. Data collection procedure

The researcher requested permission from the UREC and the Provincial Education Department to conduct research (see appendix 1 reference GAL071SKEW01 and appendix 2). The researcher also approached the East London Education District and the schools for request to conduct research on the parents that have children taught by male teachers in FP (see appendix 3). A total of nine parent participants agreed to take part. The researcher made arrangements to meet with the sampled parents and give them consent forms to sign after the purpose of the study has been explained to them (see appendix 4). The researcher then arranged times and places to meet with the sampled parents for conducting interviews and further explained that the participation is voluntary. The researcher conducted face to face semi-structured interviews in order to elaborate on and generate opinions on the parents' perceptions about male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. During the collection of data, the researcher executes all the instructions and employs all the techniques outlined in the research design (Sarantakos, 2005: 227). A benefit of face to face interviews is that it enables the researcher to gain participants' cooperation by establishing a relationship with them (Maree, 2014: 302). All the participants were informed that they would be invited to an optional feedback session on the research findings.

3.10. Data analysis

Merriam (1998) and Rossman (1989) cited in Creswell (2014: 209) contend that data collection and data analysis must be a simultaneous process in qualitative research. Schatzman and Strauss (1993) also cited in Creswell (2009: 293), claim that qualitative data analysis primarily entails classifying things, persons and events and the properties which characterize them. During data analysis, the data was organized categorically per the responses of the participants, and themes were developed. Babbie and Mouton (2011) state that data analysis refers to the analysis of data that was gathered using qualitative techniques. They (Babbie and Mouton, 2011) further

state that there is no one neat and tidy approach to qualitative data analysis. Niewenhuis (2007) reflects that in quantitative research, the researcher aims to understand the way in which participants make meaning of the phenomenon under study through the analysis of their knowledge, experience and perceptions.

Braun and Clarke (2006) contend that a thematic analysis is a foundation method for qualitative analysis as it provides certain skills and knowledge that the researcher will be able to use in other forms of qualitative analysis. They (Braun & Clarke, 2006) define thematic analysis as a method that is used by a researcher to identify, analyse and report themes that emerge from the data. Data were collected through the use of semi-structured interviews and after each interview, the data was transcribed. Some of the participants responded in isiXhosa which compelled the researcher to translate from isiXhosa to English. According to them (Braun & Clarke, 2006), a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 82). Thematic analysis was used by the researcher to determine the themes within the interviews to explain parents' perceptions about male teachers' under-representation in the FP.



Gray (2018) lists the following six phases of analyzing data, as identified by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Table 10: Six phases of thematic analysis

Phase 1: Familiarize yourself with the data	• Transcribe the data • Read and re-read the data • Note down initial ideas
Phase 2: Generate initial codes	• Code interesting features of the data across the entire data set • Write notes in the text you are analyzing highlighting patterns • Ensure that all data are collated to a code • Individual extracts can be coded into as many different themes as they fit

Phase 3: Search for themes	• Collate codes into potential themes • Gather together all data relevant to each theme • Create visual representation of the themes in the form of thematic maps • Some codes may form main themes while others constitute sub-themes
Phase 4: Review themes	• Check if themes selected are valid in relation to the coded extracted and the entire data set • Two themes that lack sufficient data might be integrated and renamed • Other themes might be broken down into separate themes
Phase 5: Define and name the themes	• Refine each theme • Generate clear definitions and names for each theme • Identify the story that each theme tells • Be clear about how each theme fits with the overall story • Be able to describe the scope and content of each theme in no more than two sentences
Phase 6: Produce the report	• Select vivid and compelling extracts back to the original research questions and the literature

	• The account must provide sufficient evidence of what has been identified as themes within the data
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Source: Gray (2018: 693)

As data collection and data analysis are usually conducted simultaneously in qualitative research, the researcher began to look for patterns or themes that emerged from the data. I transcribed the recorded data and read it several times in order to familiarize myself with the data and to gain a better understanding of the data that was produced. I also analyzed data per the information gathered from the respondents, their responses and their reactions were included in the analysis. Themes were identified from the participants' responses where I categorized the information per theme on how parents perceive male teachers' under-representation in the FP.

There are advantages and disadvantages of qualitative analysis, and these are highlighted by Denscombe (2010):

Advantages of qualitative analysis



- There is a richness and detail to the data: The in-depth study of relatively focused areas, the tendency towards small-scale research and the generation of 'thick descriptions' mean that qualitative research scores well in terms of the way it deals with complex social situations. It is better able to deal with the intricacies of a situation and do justice to the subtleties of social life.

- There is tolerance of ambiguity and contradictions: To the extent that social existence involves uncertainty, accounts of that existence ought to be able to tolerate ambiguities and contradictions, and qualitative research is better able to do this than quantitative research. This is not a reflection of a weak analysis. It is a reflection of the social reality being investigated.

- There is the prospect of alternative explanations: Qualitative analysis, because it draws on the interpretive skills of the researcher, opens the possibility of more than one explanation being valid. Rather than a presumption that there must be, in theory at least, one correct explanation, it allows for the possibility that different researchers might reach different conclusions, despite using broadly the same methods.

- The data and the analysis are usually 'grounded': A strength associated with qualitative research is that the descriptions and theories such research generates are 'grounded in reality'. This is not to suggest that they depict reality in some simplistic sense, as though social reality was 'out there' waiting to be 'discovered'. However, it does suggest that the data and the analysis have their roots in the conditions of social existence. There is little scope for 'armchair theorizing' or 'ideas plucked out of thin air'.

Disadvantages of qualitative analysis

- The data might be less representative. The flip-side of qualitative research's attention to thick description and the grounded approach is that it becomes more difficult to establish how far the findings from the detailed, in-depth study of a small number of instances may be generalized to other similar instances. Provided sufficient detail is given about the circumstances of the research, however, it is still possible to gauge how far the findings relate to other instances, but such generalizability is still more open to doubt than it is with well conducted quantitative research.

- Interpretation is bound up with the 'self' of the researcher: Qualitative research recognizes more openly than does quantitative research that the researcher's own identity, background and beliefs have a role in the creation of data and the analysis of data. The research is 'self-aware'. This means that the findings are necessarily more cautious and tentative, because it operates on the basic assumption that the findings are a creation of the researcher rather than a discovery of fact. Although it may be argued that quantitative research is guilty of trying to gloss over the point – which equally well applies – the greater exposure of the intrusion of the 'self' in qualitative research inevitably means more cautious approaches to the findings.

- There is a possibility of decontextualizing the meaning: In the process of coding and categorizing the field notes, texts or transcripts there is a possibility that the words (or images for that matter) get taken literally out of context. The context is an integral part of the qualitative data, and the context refers to both events surrounding the production of the data, and events and words that precede and follow the actual extracted pieces of data that are used to form the units for analysis. There is a very real danger for the researcher that in coding and categorizing data, its meaning is lost or transformed by wrenching it from its location (1) within a sequence of data (e.g. interview talk) or (2)

within surrounding circumstances which have a bearing on the meaning of the unit as it was originally conceived at the time of data collection.

- There is the danger of oversimplifying the explanation: In the quest to identify themes in the data and to develop generalizations, the researcher can feel pressured to underplay, or possibly disregard, data that 'doesn't fit'. Inconsistencies, ambiguities and alternative explanations can be frustrating in the way they inhibit a nice clear generalization – but they are an inherent feature of social life. Social phenomena are complex, and the analysis of qualitative data needs to acknowledge this and avoid attempts to oversimplify matters.
- The analysis takes longer: The volume of data that a researcher collects will depend on the time and resources available for the research project. When it comes to the analysis of that data, however, it is almost guaranteed that it will seem like a daunting task. This is true for quantitative research as much as it is for qualitative research (Denscombe, 2010: 303-305).

3.11. Ethical considerations and negotiating access



In order to get to the point of being able to conduct a qualitative interview the researcher is required to enter into what is, in effect, a process of negotiation (King & Horrocks, 2010: 110). Yin (2014) agrees, “formal approval of your plan will come from an institutional review board (IRB) and the board is charged with reviewing and approving all human subjects research before such research can proceed (Yin, 2014: 78). There are many ethical issues in relation to research when dealing with human beings. Confidentiality, dignity, informed consent and many other aspects are of utmost importance in ethical considerations. Creswell (2009) highlights that ethical concerns stem from discussions about codes of professional conduct for researchers. Participants are to be protected, develop trust with them, promote integrity and guard against misconduct and inappropriate use of data that will divulge their private lives (Creswell, 2009). Johnson and Christensen (2008) put ethics as the principles and guidelines that help us uphold human value.

3.11.1. Ethical clearance

The researcher submitted letters and forms to the University of Fort Hare Ethics Committee and also obtained permission to interview and undertake research from the Provincial Department of Education and the District Office. The researcher also visited the East London Education District office to ask for permission to conduct research. She also approached the targeted schools around the East London district to negotiate with the principals to get permission to have interviews with the purposefully sampled parents.

3.11.2. Confidentiality and Anonymity

A research project guarantees confidentiality when the researcher can identify a given person's responses but promises not to do so publicly while anonymity is achieved in a research project when neither the researcher nor the readers of the findings can identify a given response with a given respondent (Babbie, 2010: 67). Maree (2014) agrees, "all participants' information and responses shared during the study are kept private and the results are presented in an anonymous manner in order to protect the identities of the participants (Maree, 2014: 301). Johnston and Christensen (2008) define privacy as controlling other people's access to information about a person. Further, Maree (2014: 41) further argues, "an essential ethical aspect of the research is the issue of the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study and the protection of the participants' identities". Confidentiality refers to the treatment of information that the individual has disclosed in a relationship of trust with the expectation that it will not be divulged to others without permission.

According to Burns (2000), both the researcher and the participant must have a clear understanding regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study. All audiocassettes will be destroyed after the study has been completed (Maree, 2014: 301). Confidentiality is the other means that researchers use to protect the privacy of the research participants. Confidentiality also refers to an agreement with the research investigators about what may be done with the information obtained about a research participant (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

Participants were given pseudonyms to protect their identities, and the names of the schools where they have pupils taught by male teachers in the Foundation Phase were removed for anonymity. The tape recordings were discarded after the data in them had been transcribed and were not given to anyone. All information gathered was treated with confidence and was not be divulged to anyone. All participants' identities and responses were kept confidential. All contributions remained anonymous and confidential. The information gained from the interviews remained with the researcher, and no names were used in any notes and transcriptions.

3.11.3. Informed Consent

Duku and Sotuku (2015) state that informed consent is a principle which ensures that participants in a research project have the right to be informed that they are being researched. All informed-consent procedures must meet three criteria: participants must be competent to give consent; sufficient information must be provided to allow for a reasoned decision; and consent must be voluntary and uncoerced (Kumar, 2012: 244 as cited by Makeleni, 2016, unpublished). Maree (2014) states that, informed consent needs to be presented to the participants in which the research process will be described. The researcher asked the participants to read the letter, ask questions to gain clarity and sign the consent form if they were willing to be involved in the research (Maree, 2014: 300). Christensen and Johnson (2008) refer to informed consent as agreeing to participate in a study after being informed of its purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, alternative procedures and limits of confidentiality.

Participants were informed of the purposes of the research before the study proceeded and were not forced to take part in the study. There were those who agreed at the beginning to be interviewed, but at a later stage, they had issues stating that they were busy and could not be available for interviews. The researcher did not force them; instead, she tried to find new participants who were also informed of the research before they proceeded. Participants were asked if they were willing to take part in the study and the researcher contacted them after they agreed to take part. This prevented participants from feeling exposed and uninformed. Informed consent is a principle which ensures that participants in a research project have the right to be informed that they are being researched (Duku & Sotuku, 2015).

3.11.4. Protection from harm

Human research should never injure the people being studied, regardless of whether they volunteer for the study (Babbie, 2010: 65). Babbie (2010) further highlights that in human research practice, this often concerns being careful not to reveal information that would embarrass subjects or endanger their home lives, friendships, jobs, and so forth (Babbie, 2010: 65). An essential ethical aspect is the issue of confidentiality of the results and findings of the study and the protection of the participants' identities (Maree, 2014: 42). The researcher avoided any situation where the participants felt uncomfortable about how the questions were asked. Where the interviews took place, she ensured that the participants were comfortable and safe from any danger. Participation was voluntary and the participants were fully informed of the research process.

3.11.5. Maintaining professionalism

The researcher tried to maintain professionalism throughout the interviews by showing respect, compassion and unselfishness to the participants.

In conclusion, this study focused on the parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase (Gr R, 1, 2 & 3), depending on the placement of the male teachers in their schools.

3.12. Summary

This chapter focused on the procedures taken to conduct the study. The qualitative approach was detailed to show how it fits with the phenomenology design chosen for the study and how the semi-structured interviews were used to gain information from the participants. The chapter also discussed how ethical issues were ensured and data collection instruments were also discussed. The next chapter will present and discuss the data collected through semi-structured interviews, observations and recording.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed methods and methodology adopted in this study. Research paradigm and design, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instruments and data analysis were debated. In addition, ethical considerations and trustworthiness were discussed. The purpose of the study was to investigate parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. Parents who have learners in male teacher classes in the FP from selected schools were interviewed by the researcher as individuals. The purpose of this chapter is to present and analyze data collected from the parents whose children are taught by male teachers.

The interview guiding questions were asked during the interviews and a lot of probing questions came as the participants were responding to the questions. Interviews were conducted using both English and an element of code switching to IsiXhosa when participants felt the need for that. The data collected is presented according to the themes and sub-themes identified during the process of qualitative thematic analysis. Denscombe (2010) highlights that where possible, researchers should avoid basing findings on one interview and look for themes emerging from a number of interviews. Where themes emerge across a number of interviews, the researcher does not have to rely on any one transcript as the sole source of what is 'real' or 'correct'. A recurrent theme in interviews indicates that the idea/issue is shared among a wider group; therefore, the researcher can refer to it with more confidence than any idea/issue which stems from the words of one individual (Denscombe, 2010: 176).

The following table presents sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis process.

Table 11: Summary of the themes and the sub-themes

Themes	Sub themes
1. Parents' perceptions about male teachers in FP	➤ Good discipline and better behaviour ➤ Male teachers as role models
2. Benefits of having male teachers in FP	➤ Gender equality ➤ Sports development

	➤ Grooming and balancing for higher levels ➤ Independence, confidence and neatness
3. Challenges experienced by male teachers in the FP	➤ Teaching in FP as female work ➤ Lack of trust due to sexual abuse and paedophilia
4. Strategies to ensure male teachers are represented in FP	➤ Parents to ensure that male teachers are given preference in FP teacher posts

4.2. The data collected aimed to answer the following question and sub-questions:

What are parents' perceptions about male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase?



4.3. Sub-questions

- How do parents perceive male teachers' representation in the Foundation Phase?
- What are the benefits of having male teachers in the Foundation Phase?
- What are the challenges for male teachers in the Foundation Phase?
- What are the strategies that could ensure male teachers are represented in Foundation Phase?

The study focused on the following objectives:

- To establish parents' perceptions about male (under) representation in the Foundation Phase.
- To determine how parents and their children can benefit from being taught by male teachers in the Foundation Phase.
- To determine challenges that parents perceive are experienced by male teachers in the Foundation Phase.

- To ascertain how male teachers could be attracted to Foundation Phase teaching in schools.

The schools selected were those that have male teachers in the Foundation Phase, and participants were parents whose children are in male teacher classes.

4.4. Profiles

4.4.1. Profile of the participants

As stated in the sampling procedures, nine parents were selected: three single parents, three married parents and three guardians. Single parents ranged from 32 to 40 years of age while guardians were two grandparents (grandfather, grandmother and a married one looking after her sister's child); married parents ranged from 40 years to 55 years of age. At the time of the research, all participants had learners in a male teacher class in the FP. Participants were referred to as respondents 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9, and their names were not used due to ethical considerations. Six of the parents sampled had learners in a male teacher class in Grade 3 while the other three had learners in Grade R, which is also a male teacher class.



4.4.2. Profile of the research sites

The schools selected for this study were those that have male teachers in FP in the East London Education District in the rural, semi-urban and urban settings. The school names have not been revealed in this study for confidentiality purposes.

4.5. Presentation of data responses

4.5.1. How do parents perceive male teachers' representation in the FP?

The respondents gave different opinions about their feelings about having male teachers in the FP; most of them felt very good about it as they are comfortable with the males teaching their children in the FP grades. Many responded that male teachers exercise good discipline on their children and that their children are better behaved compared to when they were in female teacher classes.

4.5.1.1. Good discipline and better behaved children

Male teachers are necessary in the FP for the strict discipline that is needed, especially for boys who need to be shown how important it is to be groomed by a teacher of their gender. Girls also need to acquaint themselves with male teachers, especially those that are from single parent homes. These views were also highlighted by the respondents. A long service married teacher, respondent 3, said:

I absolutely have no qualms about that, I am just grateful that he is going through those changes early in his life.

My son is a big mommy's boy and this change is impacting very positively on his character. My son knows now that excuses for laziness don't work with his new teacher. Last year he used to say if he is going to be in Mr.'s class, he will have to be more disciplined because this teacher is very strict.

I have met with his teacher a few times this year, and I can tell you he is very much passionate about his work. As for female teachers who have nurtured him to be what he is today, I have nothing but praise for them as he still speaks very fondly of them all.



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This was also uttered by respondent 1 who is a single parent who loves FP age because she says it is where a child's life is moulded:

I absolutely love it. It teaches my son a variety of things:

- Respect – how to respect an older male;
- It shows my son that males are aware, sympathetic, kind and sensitive of children's needs; and
- Discipline – if you are naughty you will get disciplined fairly but accordingly...female teachers can be a bit subtle

When probed on what she meant about female teachers being subtle, she responded:

They always use obvious methods of discipline, while male teachers use a variety of ways that have a positive impact on the child like going to the playfield and do push-ups.... boys love it but it doesn't make them do the same mistake again.

In the responses, it is clear that parents have noted that the male teachers in the FP set a good example for discipline in their children. The changes that have been shown in how their children do things - in the male teacher classes there is assurance that male teachers are disciplinarians and can have a positive impact on young children that they teach. Respondent 1 also highlighted that male teachers are sympathetic and kind towards the children, which is what male teachers are known not to have. Kind and sympathetic is often associated with female teachers and now this respondent shows that male teachers are also kind and sympathetic to children's needs. "Making men visible in the FP could do much to address men as carers capable of nurturing and forming caring relationships with children" (Moosa & Bhana, 2016: 15).

It is argued that male teachers could bring gender balance in a school setting by affirmation of behaviours that are acceptable for boys and girls (Bittner & Cooney, 2003). Sak (2012:588) as quoted in Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu and Mtshali (2015) echoed the same sentiments by asserting that male teachers are also thought to be better disciplinarians who encourage activity and organised physical activity" (Mashiya et al., 2015). Moosa (2013) quotes Marsiglio (2009) who argues that male teachers can show both male and female learners that men are able to offer a supportive learning atmosphere and that young people should be encouraged to view careers as open to anyone, irrespective of gender stereotypes (Moosa, 2013:112). Peterson (2014) asserts that another area of concern is the view that men in FP are associated with a sense of security, discipline and leadership. Rentzou (2011) also highlights that though recruiting more males into the FP is not a new trend; in recent years, there has been a growing demand from parents for male teachers because families want their children to know that men can have nurturing roles (Rentzou, 2011: 136).

4.5.1.2. Male teachers as role models for absent fathers

Other participants were also certain that they are happy with male teachers and raised the role model factor, though they had some reservations. This is evident in respondent 9:

Now that my grandchild is taught by a male teacher, she is behaving well and is collected. However, with the high level of children abuse by males, a female

teacher should be around. In reality, learners need to acquaint themselves with fathers who happen to be the male teacher. There is a need for male role models for learners who have absent fathers in their homes and the gap can be filled by male teachers at school or males in their communities.

This is also uttered by respondent 5:

We cannot run away from the fact that in most homes, male figures are absent and it's worth a while having them at schools.

Respondent 9 also has this to say:

In reality, learners need to acquaint themselves with fathers who happen to be the male teacher. There is a need for male role models for learners who have absent fathers in their homes and the gap can be filled by male teachers at school or males in their communities

These respondents agree with others that male teachers are disciplinarians and also agreed on male teachers being role models for learners with absent fathers. Yang (2013) agrees when he asserts that male teachers serve as role models to both boys and girls and can have a positive impact on improving the overall discipline in the schools. “A male teacher in this area of teaching would serve to make up for lack of a fatherly figure or lack of male influence at home” (Moosa, 2013: 90). Moosa (2013) further highlights the findings in a study by Carrington (2002) where it was found that that males in his study were more inclined to indicate that more male educators are required as male role models in the primary school environment. Msiza (2016) suggests that the recruitment drive is underpinned by the view that females are feminizing the boys, and male teachers will rescue them by being role models and father figures.

Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu and Mtshali (2015) cite a study by Clark (2009) where it has been proved that the benefits of a society that puts increased pressure on male teachers to be part of the early education process of a child tend to create an environment where children have role models similar to their fathers, even whilst at school (Mashiya et al, 2015: 263). Sak, Sahin and Sahin (2012) found that female preschool teachers not only think that their male counterparts are innovative problem-solvers and better disciplinarians, but also that they support the development of

children's social and emotional skills by serving as positive male role models (Mashiya, 2014:27). We cannot run away from the fact that many South African children are raised by single mothers, which makes them long for fathers in their lives. This is another factor that parents perceive can be played by male teachers in the FP. Nine million or nearly half of South African children are growing up with an absent but living father (Curnow, 2011 as cited in Mashiya et al, 2015: 260).

However, there are those that are still reluctant with having male teachers in the FP; as a result, they see that their children are more afraid than being disciplined. Respondent 2 did not think male teachers are suitable to teach in the FP:

I am not 100% comfortable because I don't think he has patience towards little ones. My son is always afraid to make any mistake because he says his teacher doesn't want to see anything wrong in his work.

When probed about her son confusing "striving for the best" with "not wanting to do anything wrong," because he is afraid of the teacher, she explained:

I am certain that he does not want to make any mistake as he is afraid that his teacher doesn't want anything wrong in his work.



The discomfort of having men teaching in the FP stems from the fact that men have 'a lot of power, and many children are scared of the father figure. As a result, the public are not comfortable with men in the FP (Peterson, 2014: 6).

The other respondent, Respondent 7, was also not happy with her grandchild being in a male teacher class, and he wanted to ask the school to change that but was stopped by his wife. When probed on why he was not happy, he responded:

FP is very crucial and it needs care and kindness, I don't think she can get that from a male teacher.

Further probing him about why he thinks her grandchild cannot get kindness from a male teacher, he explained:

I am a man, I know very well that men cannot nurture, it is a female duty to nurture a young child.... Men do not have that kind of skill and when I think about all the abuse cases that involve male teachers, I become more afraid.

The scarcity of males in early childhood education could be influenced by a perception that men who choose to work with young children are either principals-in-training, or homosexuals or paedophiles (Sumsion, 2005: 112). Baris (2013) asserts that mothering is a metaphor which represents an image of teaching and childcare as women's work used in early childhood education. He further asserts that one reason of labelling this occupation as women's work is that there are negative constructs such as "homosexuals" and "paedophiles" used to structure the gendered nature of teaching. Moosa (2013) asserts that men who want to pursue a career in teaching young children are in danger of being regarded as deviant, abnormal or lacking (Moosa, 2013: 3). They discovered that there is a perception that teaching children who are young is an extension of mothering, and that meaningful learning would only begin when learners reached the secondary phase in school (Moosa 2013: 3).

This shows that some people just do not welcome men; they are just unaccepted by communities when teaching in the FP. Peterson (2014) also highlights that what is most significant is how students reported on the link between male teachers in the FP and the perceived threat of sexual abuse. "In theory, most people favour increasing their [males] numbers, but in practice, many of us do not really welcome particular real men when they actually express an interest in working with young children" (Rentzou, 2011: 144). It is true that some male early childhood teachers are gay; however, it is also true that some male police officers, firefighters and professional athletes are gay. A man's sexual orientation should not preclude him from a career in early childhood education (Nelson, 2010 as cited in McGowan, 2016: 48).

Other respondents also found it advantageous to have male teachers in the FP to instill discipline:

Male teachers in the FP are most suitable to do the work because culturally, males are shown respect than females. Teaching and learning needs both teachers and learners to be disciplined and nowadays learners have become ill-disciplined. Without discipline, no learning can take place. Having male teachers in this Phase is advantageous.

Despite the few parents negative about male teacher presence in the FP, most parents see that having them in the phase is more advantageous; this means that they accept and welcome them to be part of the FP teaching.

4.5.2. What are the benefits of having male teachers in the FP?

For this particular theme, there was a lot that was highlighted by the respondents.

4.5.2.1. Gender Equality

Gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa; therefore, it needs to be practiced, though it is more about the recognition of females in its inception. The FP is female dominated, which means that male teachers need to also be represented in this Phase. Respondents gave a general idea that gender equality would be improved - like Respondent 1:

Yes! gender equality is very important. As we all know, teachers are not only teachers; they are caregivers, emotional comforters, problem sorters and many other things. If a child does not have a male figure at home, a Foundation phase teacher can imprint on a child's life in ways no one can imagine like how to act/ conduct yourself, how to treat others and how to treat the opposite sex.

This is also highlighted by Respondent 3 where he is showing that people need to adapt to a changing world:

Children have fathers too. Some have stepfathers and some have adoptive fathers. We are living in a changing world. There are same-sex marriages. These parents sometimes adopt children or have their own children from previous relationships.

Some children have fathers who are trans-genders. If the constitution of this country, and many other throughout the world allow people to live the way they like, then why are we still having schools taught by people of the same gender.

Respondent 3 shows that people need to move with times as the Constitution accommodates same sex marriages and allows people to live the way they like; male teachers must also be allowed and welcomed in the FP. This respondent is of the fact that there must be no schools with same gender teachers; teachers must be mixed for learners to enjoy having both genders from their early years.

Mashiya, Kok, Luthuli, Xulu and Mtshali (2015) highlight that male students enter the field because they want to explore new things. Some of the issues to be explored by males in FP relate to policies and practices promoting gender equity (Cushman, 2009: 3). This is also evident in Sumsion (2005) who asserts that if men are more visible in the early childhood setting carrying out caring roles, this could potentially help to counter stereotypes of both men and women, reduce sexism and generally advance to gender equality. Zhang (2017) cites Cooney and Bitner (2001) who argued that, in order to create a gender-fair classroom and to promote gender equality, ECEC teachers and administrators need to understand the change process within institutions.

In other words, having more male teachers in ECEC itself does not help to create a gender-fair classroom and build gender equality, only with “purposeful, explicit change in how teachers of young children think about teaching and learning with diverse groups” (Cooney & Bitner, 2001 cited in Zhang, 2017, 19) can the mission be achieved.

McGowan (2016) shares the same sentiments, “the early childhood community will continue to work within its own ranks in terms of welcoming men to the early childhood profession and make sure that the center policies are very explicit in terms of inclusion. “During staff and parent meetings, remind everyone that discrimination will not be tolerated including discriminating against men because of their gender” (McGowan, 2016: 48). Peterson (2014) also highlights the need for male teachers, “a body of literature (Evans & Jones, 2008) also argue for increasing the number of men in the FP owing to the detrimental effect of the dominance of women in the early schooling of male pupils in particular (Bleach, 1998; Johannesson, 2004 in Peterson, 2014: 4).

Moosa (2013) also shares the same sentiments, “if there was a more gender-balanced proportion of teachers, then this would send a potent message to young children that learning in a school situation is neither masculine nor feminine, but is rather a human experience” (Moosa, 2013: 94). Moosa (2013) further cites Marsiglio (2009) who argues that male educators can illustrate to both boys and girls that males are competent enough to offer a supportive learning environment and that young people should be motivated to see careers as open to individuals, irrespective of gender stereotypes.

4.5.2.2. Sport Development

Female teachers are dominating the FP and they do their best, but sometimes you will find that there is a gap in sport codes where you will find that they cannot help in other codes. If they help, you will find that the performance of their learners is not up to the standard of those learners that are trained by males in their schools. For that reason, male teachers are needed in the FP to improve in the development of sport. Parents like Respondent 9 have highlighted the sport issue:

Having said that, one of the reasons male teachers must be employed in the FP is the sport issue. There is a lot of energy needed to introduce sport to young ones. Men are needed in each and every school to come and assist in sport development.

Some Junior Primary schools have male volunteers who assist in sport, volunteers can only do so much. FP needs male teachers who are going to share their passion for the development of a child.

Respondent 9 share the same sentiments as respondent 3:

Yes, having a male teacher has made a huge difference. Learners need someone who understand them. Boys like having fun at school, and so are girls. Male teachers are able to roll with them in the sport fields. Boys enjoy the presence of a male teacher. My grandchild does not miss her classes now that she has a male teacher.

Male student teachers brought more play, active involvement and fun to the way they interacted with learners, as highlighted by the fact that they were able to assist the schools with sport and coaching using the equipment that was not used due to shortage of expertise (Mashiya, 2014). What is more, self-report studies by Rentzou and Ziganitidou (2009) and Vandenbroek and Peeters (2008) also found that male teachers are more likely to engage in physical activities to let children freely explore themselves and make more use of humour (Zhang, 2017: 16). One other benefit would be to activate sports from a young age (Mashiya et al., 2015: 264). They (Mashiya et al., 2015) further assert that in South Africa, children start sport activities like soccer once they are at the FP. It is advisable that sport is developed on young children (Mashiya et al., 2015: 264).

4.5.2.3. Grooming and balancing of the child for higher levels

Children from a young age need to have male teachers to prepare them for higher grades where there are more male teachers. When they meet male teachers for the first time in the FP, it is quite difficult for them to adjust and be familiar with the setting. This can affect their progress, especially in the first term when they are still learning how to respond to male teachers. It was evident from Respondent 5 that children need male teachers from FP in order for them to be acquainted with males for higher primary level:

Yes, for the grooming and balancing of the child for higher levels. Children who have met male teachers adapt easily at high school where there are more males.

I think male teachers are to be part of the FP and kids need to understand at a lower grade that teaching can be done by males and females. Male teachers need to model parenthood in the early stages of their lives.

Respondent 9 also felt that it is too late to include male teachers at IP as they are needed mostly nowadays in the FP:



Yes, male teachers are needed in the FP. As far as the curriculum is concerned, they fit very well. Schools should be balanced, that is, to have both male and female teachers in the FP. I think that it's too late to include male teachers at Intermediate Phase. It has become very difficult to discipline learners from as early as FP. Learners are becoming unruly. It is the responsibility of both males and females to bring order in our communities.

Having positive responses about male teacher presence, however, is not shared by all the parents. Other parents feel that FP children need feminine care, which they cannot get from the male teachers. Respondent 2 gave her opinion and she made sure from her response that she does not any more question about that as that was my observation:

No, because I don't think male teachers have feminine care as the female teachers.

One difficulty that men face in entering the profession is that they are perceived as doing women's work. The teaching of young children, in particular, is associated with women for two main reasons: first, because caring is perceived as essentially a female quality, the construction of 'mother' being perceived as akin to the social construction of 'teacher' and secondly, as a result of the history of gendered skewed job occupation (Jones, 2008: 690). Bhana and Moosa (2016) cite Skelton (2003) who similarly found that men's association with teaching young children was disparaged as not ideal for 'real men' because of its nurturing role associated with femininity. Jones (2007) further indicates that male pre-service teachers are aware that it is not acceptable for a man to work with young children as it is regarded as a soft option (Bhana & Moosa, 2016: 13). This is also evident in Mashiya (2015) where she highlights that according to Petersen and Petker (2011), teaching in the early grades is often accompanied by simplistic images of FP teachers as 'nannies' and 'caregivers', both of which are generally associated with a woman's rather than a man's role in society (Mashiya, 2015: 25).

Respondent 9 also has a reservation that there should be a female teacher working with the male teacher:



Now that my grandchild is taught by a male teacher, she is behaving well and is collected. However, with the high level of children abuse by males, a female teacher should be around.

Some members of the early childhood education community think men are inherently violent and overly aggressive, thus negating any nurturing attributes they may have (Jones, 2008: 697).

4.5.2.4. Independence, confidence and neatness

Male teachers have been found to instill confidence and independence in learners. Most respondents have highlighted how their children have become more confident and more independent in doing their work since they are in the male teacher class. This has also impacted on their performance as they always want to excel in whatever they do and need to do everything on their own with little time for TV and consciousness when doing their work. This can be viewed from Respondent 1 and 3:

Respondent 1:

Yes

- *My boy is more respectful*
- *Always conscious when doing his homework.... does not want to disappoint his teacher*
- *Makes sure that everything is done, packed correctly and on time*
- *Always makes sure that he looks his best when leaving for school*
- *Nails and hair must be on point*

Respondent 3 had this to say:

Yes, it has a great impact. My boy is no longer a mommy's boy, he is so independent. He does his work without being pushed and is always on time. He knows now, that it's school work before T.V. which we always struggled to talk to him about. Every day he has a thing or two to talk positively about Mr.... (his teacher)

Respondent 8 also shared the same sentiments:



Yes, they have a good impact. My son is much more confident and wants to excel as best as he can.

There is also Respondents 5 and 6 who also showed that independence and confidence are shown in her child's performance:

Yes, she is more responsible than last year.... She used to play a lot before doing her homework and sometimes didn't finish it, but this year she starts with the homework and this has shown in her first term results.

Independence and respect. I must say, he comes home and tells me what they have learnt exactly the way his teacher said it and he helps them to make the words easy to remember by showing them a game. He is very helpful, I haven't seen my grandson like this in Grade 1 & 2 when he was in a female class.

All these responses show that most parents see that having male teachers has a positive impact on the children with male teachers in the FP and that there is a need for male teachers in the FP to ensure that they benefit in their early years of schooling.

However, there are those few respondents who cannot compare the performance in their children between this year that they are having a male teacher than when they had a female teacher in the previous years.

Increasing male presence in ECEC will improve academic achievements of boys by paying more attention to boys' interests and preferences (Zhang, 2017: 16). According to Allen and Daly (2007) as cited in Mashiya (2014), children who have 'father figures' involved in their education are more likely to get better grades; have stronger verbal and problem-solving skills; perform better on achievement tests; demonstrate a higher tolerance for frustration; and are more likely to have positive peer relationships (Mashiya, 2014: 27). Mashiya (2014) further highlights that, according to the male respondents in her study, their presence appeared to benefit the classes they taught in various ways. Learners were eager to participate in class activities and spend more time with male student teachers, and even those who were known by their teachers as not being diligent in the submission of completed activities would submit on time when activities were presented by the student teacher (Mashiya, 2014: 29).



4.5.3. What are the challenges for male teachers in the FP?

Some parents assume that there are challenges experienced by male teachers in the FP while others are sure that male teachers experience challenges.

4.5.3.1. Teaching in FP is seen as female work

Challenges range between the fact that parents are harsh towards male teachers and that male teachers are performing female duties which they find it difficult for the male teachers. Respondent 3 has this to say:

Yes! The first one is the fact that little children need patience, tolerance and passion for the job that you are doing. The second one is the fact that some children come from homes with no fathers or male figures.

These children might take time to open up to a male teacher. It takes a lot of patience to establish trust and mutual understanding with the little ones.

FP learners have an ability to frustrate a teacher, just by staring at a teacher and not responding to instructions if they are afraid of something (I talk from experience as a Grade 5 teacher). Male teachers need by all means to establish a rapport with learners.

Children soil their pants at school because of various reasons ranging from sickness to other psycho-social problems. One out of five men can withstand having to clean after children in such situations. I heard from my child that this also happens in his class where children do not do homework and parents do not come when asked to do so by the teacher.

Respondent 9 also believed that:

Being a male or female teacher in the FP does not matter, if and only if everyone would fulfil his/her roles. Parents should help with the homework. The Department of education should employ cleaners. Male teachers do not accept taken for a ride and are not tolerant as female teachers. Where parents and the Department of Education fail to fulfil their roles, female teachers become overburdened and take everybody's responsibility. Parents fail to pick the children after school, so male teachers would not give in to that. Teachers are charged for everyone's failures. This is where I think male teachers will not give in.

These respondents feel that as much as male teachers are needed in the FP, there is a lot that they think male teachers would not be able to tolerate - like learners soiling themselves and those that wet their pants sometimes.

Respondent 2 had this to say:

Except that I find that it is a challenge to have them in the FP as I am always worried about how my son is doing.

While Respondent 7 had this to say:

The challenge is that they perform motherly duties, which could be a challenge for them.

When probed on why he said that they perform motherly duties when they are qualified teachers, he responded:

Yes, they are qualified teachers, but I do not think these early grades are appropriate for male teachers as I have indicated that it's more of motherly responsibility as a lot is happening to the little ones... "abanye basazichamela" (meaning they wet themselves). I do not see any male teacher being able to withstand that situation.

Sobiraj, Korek, Weseler and Mohr (2011) found that males in female-dominated professions are perceived as performing stereotypically 'female' tasks and displaying feminine attributes, "throughout the human history, gender has been one of the important factors which influence the division of labour". Many jobs have been labelled according to gender lines, making some occupations women's jobs and some occupations men's jobs (Baris, 2013: 108). Male teachers are willing to come and teach in the FP, but with negative attitudes towards them, it is going to be difficult to find many that will come. Parents and communities must welcome male teachers and change their stereotypical attitudes towards males in the FP for the benefit of the children and communities.



4.5.3.2. Lack of trust due to sexual abuse and paedophilia

Parents do not trust male teachers because there are many child abuse cases that male teachers are involved in, and that makes parents not to trust male teachers in the FP. Respondent 7 did not want to rule out the idea of having male teachers in the FP but had his reservations:

I do not think it is the wisest thing to have male teachers in the FP for a number of reasons which will sound negative. On a regular basis, men are weak and they are always involved in child and women abuse. Abuse happens between father and daughter/ husband and wife and many women have been abused from the early stages in primary and high school by male teachers and sometimes by boys and male teachers who are father-figures. At universities, you know the story of no sex, no marks.... that is a trend which simply illustrates the weakness that must not be underestimated, but I'm not writing men off. Male teachers can be orientated into how best to handle that situation which traditionally belong to women.

When probed on how he thinks that men can be orientated on how to handle young kids, he responded:

They need to be sensitized and made to understand how young ones react to certain things and how girls in particular behave because sometimes boys behave differently from girls, and males sometimes would not understand this as they are not always closer ekukhuliseni abantwana (in bringing up children). In the orientation, there's also a need for very strict measures to safeguard any situation that could harm the children. For instance, the use of your voice phambi kwabantwana (in front of the children) has an impact; if you shout at kids, you are destroying them because they are going to shrink, they will not grow as you will be instilling fear to them whereas if you talk to them they will listen and respond positively. If men are going to be engaged as they must perhaps be engaged, they need to be fully prepared, otherwise it's a recipe for disaster.

This shows that though male teachers are needed in the FP, they are not 100% welcomed by most parents as there is a lot of abuse that is associated with male teachers. Some parents do not fully trust the male teachers to be around their children alone without female teachers around them. The scarcity of males in the early childhood education could be influenced by a perception that men who choose to work with young children are either principals-in-training, homosexuals or paedophiles (Sumsion, 2005: 112).

This also evident in a study conducted by Mutsotso and Mukuna (2011) in Kenya which revealed that communities are uneasy and suspicious of men who choose to work with young children; they see them as men who have not got their gender right (Mukuna & Mutsotso, 2011). Petersen captured one student saying: "The public in South Africa seem to think that... their children are not safe, especially around male teachers. (The public is) justified for thinking this way as most child abuse is carried out by male offenders" (Peterson, 2014).

The literature review reveals that even in more modern societies, mistrust and suspicion are common and that there is an initial rejection of the male teacher, especially from parents; males are accepted only if they are familiar to the parents

(Rentzou, 2011: 144). Msiza (2016) asserts that in the United States, principals who have male teachers in their schools are faced with the challenge of assuring parents that the male teachers are not child molesters and can be trusted. Cushman (2005) indicated that the widespread media publicity given to a few incidents where teachers have abused children has produced greater awareness not only among male teachers but also among parents and children. Caring may be perceived as the prerogative of women who are widely held as being 'better for the job' and dominate caring professions. Some feminist perspectives support the view that caring is a strength which is particular, although not exclusive to women (Jones, 2008: 697).

According to Mashiya (2014), studies by Mukuna and Mutsotso and Sumsion (2005) are indicative of the troubling stereotypification of male teachers as sexual predators and paedophiles and a persistent fear that they may sexually molest young children. Due to recurring events where young children are raped, there is a grossly exaggerated suspicion of paedophilia; a fear that it is not safe to leave children alone with men because some are sexually attracted to young children; this has led to some parents not entrusting male teachers with their children (Mashiya et al, 2015: 260).

Peterson (2014) also shares the sentiments. There is also substantial literature which indicates that the sexuality of men in early childhood education is often viewed with suspicion (Martino & Berill, 2003). Men who want to work as elementary school teachers thus risk being classified as homosexuals or paedophiles (King, 2004, 2005; Martino, 2008), and this view is often accompanied by a strong demonizing discourse (Peterson, 2014: 4). Peterson (2014) further cites Cunningham and Watson (2002), "It is factors such as these that effectively limit the number of men who choose to enter FP teacher education programmes"

4.5.4. What are the strategies that could ensure male teachers are represented in the FP?

Most of the respondents welcomed the employment of male teachers in the FP and have come up with interesting ideas on how the SGB can ensure that male teachers are represented in the FP.

4.5.4.1. Parents to ensure male teachers are given preference in FP teacher posts

They felt that the SGB could use their rights to recommend male teachers for posts in the FP, and that could be a norm until male teachers are represented in the FP. This was also shown in their responses on how they felt about having male teachers in Grade R, 1, 2 and 3. Respondents 1, 3, 5, 6, 8 and 9 were certain that male teachers need to be given preference in the FP. The following are responses from Respondents 1, 3 and 5:

When doing interviews for vacant posts, they must make sure that males are a priority. If there are 6 FP teachers, they must make sure that 3 are male teachers. The SGB can even go to the extent to put on the advert that “males are more encouraged to apply”. A teacher can make or break a child’s life – being a teacher is a calling not a job and that implies to both male and female teachers.

The SGB can sit down with the staff and discuss the beefing up of the FP with male teachers. If a consensus is reached and everybody is on board, the school can craft an implementation plan e.g. All the retirees’ posts in FP and posts created through promotion, resignation or death, shall be filled with male teachers until such time that it becomes a norm that male FP teachers take their place in FP classes.

The SGB should ensure that kids don’t leave FP without being once in a male teacher class. They should hire more male teachers for the phase so that even if a child is not in the male teacher class, she must meet with them from time to time in their activities.

However, Respondents 2 and 4 were totally against male teachers in FP:

I would not encourage hiring of male teachers in the FP because at that tender age, kids need feminine care and from the experience that I have, male teachers are not willing to let kids be kids, they want them to grow and become adults.

I would not advise the SGB to hire any more male teachers in a Foundation Phase as I think they are more capable of being utilized in higher grades.

When Respondent 4 was probed on why she is against the hiring of male teachers when her child is happy with the teacher, she had this to say:

Yes, my child is happy and I like that but prefer female teachers for young children. I am a single parent but my child has uncles and grandfather at home whom he refers to as fathers.

Respondent 7 did not want to be unfair (that's how he phrased it) and suggested that the SGB has to make sure that male teachers are orientated into working with young children and should work under very strict terms:

For me, I recommend under very exceptional circumstances to have male teachers taking care of FP and under very strict monitoring because I don't want to be unfair and say they must not be employed. I know that some of them (male teachers) can do their job but some create some problems by doing what is not expected of a teacher. Having male teachers that are not monitored in the FP would be organizing for a disaster. The SGB can recommend them and have very strict terms in how they will work with children. As I have said earlier, they should make sure that the males that are recommended are fully orientated and are prepared for the little children.



All these responses show that parents are welcoming to male teachers in the FP and want them to be part of the FP teaching to ensure that young children are ready for the FP. In order to attract more men in the field, focusing on any single factor is not going to work. Zhang (2017) revealed the work of Barnard, Hovingh, Nezwiek, Pryor-Bayard, Schmoldt, Stevens, and Weaver (2000) who suggested that with collaborated work by administrators, government policy makers, current teachers, and trainers of teachers, greater success to recruit more male teachers could be achieved (Zhang, 2017: 22). Zhang (2017) further suggests that current recruiting strategies and suggestions need to be assessed and valued for their effectiveness (Zhang, 2017: 25). In order to recruit more males into the early education and care profession, parents suggest that strategies such as the following could help: advertising which appeals to men's nurturing instincts; media campaigns; teacher education programmes that actively recruit men to teach young children; and providing opportunities for young men to work with children (Rentzou, 2011: 144).

4.6. Summary

Data presented and analyzed shows that most parents have welcomed male teachers who teach in the FP for improving discipline, being role models, for gender equality, for sport development, and for learner independence and confidence. However, there are a few who still think FP is for females and that is also revealed in literature by many scholars. Parents have also advised on strategies that the SGB parent component could use to employ male teachers in the FP. This shows that they are willing to accept more male teachers in the phase.

The following chapter is the summary of the study's findings and will provide recommendations to ensure that male teachers are fully represented in the FP teaching.



CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION OF THE STUDY

5.1. Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the parents' perceptions about male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. The study focused on establishing how parents perceive the low male representation in the FP, what they believe are the benefits of having male teachers in the FP, what they perceive as challenges for male teachers and what can be done by the SGB-parent component to attract male teachers in the FP. This chapter concludes the study by discussing the findings and recommendations for future research.

5.2. Summary of findings

5.2.1. How do parents perceive male teachers' representation in the FP?

Parents have their own perceptions about the under-representation of male teachers in the Foundation Phase. The respondents have highlighted some points that show that they want male teachers to be represented in the FP for the benefit of their children.



5.2.1.1. Good discipline and better behaved children

Parents have highlighted the improvement and change in discipline and behaviour of their children. They highlighted that boys have found male teachers to be good in grooming boys and girls for the better. Their children are better behaved and are more disciplined than before. Male teachers have also been found to be passionate. Makeleni (2016) also reported in his study that male student teachers who went for teaching practice were seen as a resource in their host schools as they were given disciplinary roles (Makeleni, 2016: 109). He, Makeleni (2016) further reported that participants were even viewed as disciplinarians because teachers threatened children by reporting them to the 'new teachers'.

5.2.1.2. Male teachers as role models

Parents welcomed the male teachers in the FP as they feel a need for male role models for those children who are brought up by single parents and those that have absent fathers. Desire to be role models to children with absent fathers that was reported is in line with Curnow (2011) who argues that the real worry for many men is the huge number of single-parent families and lack of male role models in children's lives (Makeleni, 2016: 105). This was also revealed by six out of nine respondents, which shows that parents are really in need of male teachers in the FP. Martino and Kehloer (2006) as cited in Patrick (2009) quoted a theory concerning male teachers in education that claims that the "absent father" is at the heart of problems that boys are experiencing socially and educationally: Boys with no fathers, or with fathers who are not around much, are much more likely to be violent, to get into trouble, to do poorly in schools, and be members of a teenage gang in adolescence" (Patrick, 2009: 10)

Mashiya et al. (2015) concur that men want specific ideas about ways to be engaged and involved with children. Other learners benefited from forming close bonds with male student teachers as they felt at ease with the students, and some even shared personal stories with them (Mashiya, 2014: 31). Male teachers have the opportunity to be positive influential role models in the lives of students. Educational systems should continue to conduct research regarding the shortage of males in elementary education (Patrick, 2009: 11). It has also been found in a study by Msiza (2016) that FP teachers often play fatherly roles in class, noting that the high number of homes headed by mothers necessitates the presence of male teachers. Msiza (2016) further revealed that male teachers construct their gender identities as role models. Respondents showed that male teachers should be employed as educators in FP so that they may be role models to those learners who have no fathers in their homes and need male figures to confide in.

5.2.2. What are the benefits of having male teachers in the FP?

Parents have highlighted a list of benefits that they and their children enjoy by having male teachers in the FP.

5.2.2.1. Gender equality

The parents felt that gender equality would be improved if male teachers are employed in the FP. Parents highlighted that people need to adapt to a changing environment and accept that male teachers need to be welcomed in the FP for gender balance and that schools should include all genders, even if it is an FP school. This is also evident in Zhang (2017) where it is asserted that in order to create a gender fair classroom and to promote gender equality, ECEC teaching and administrators need to understand the change process within institutions. Makeleni (2016) asserts that the presence of males in FP specialization will also erode gender stereotypes within the field (Makeleni, 2016: 110). This was revealed by respondents in this study, which shows that gender equality is as important in teaching of FP as it is in the Constitution of South Africa.

5.2.2.2. Sport development

The issue of sport development emerged from the respondents in this study. Respondents have noted that a great improvement in sport will be achieved with male teachers in the FP. This is evident from Makeleni (2016) who found that male student teachers bring more play, active movement and fun to the way they interact with learners; this is highlighted by the fact that they were able to assist the schools in sport and coaching using equipment that was not in use due to shortage of expertise (Makeleni, 2016: 109). Mashiya (2014) also highlighted that the male student teachers who participated in her study were notably involved in sporting activities and used their skills to assist with sport training, to the appreciation of principals (Mashiya, 2014: 31). Kidd (2013) as cited in Msiza (2016) argues that sport is one of the key mechanisms through which men seek to claim their manhood, and this was evident in his study where participants strategically sought to position themselves as more successful sports or physical education personnel in their respective schools.

5.2.2.3. Grooming and balancing for higher levels

Parent respondents indicated that learners who have male teachers in low levels adapt easily at high schools where there are more male teachers. Male teachers need to be represented in the FP as this could also show learners that teaching is done by both

males and females even in early years. A parent respondent reported that schools need to be balanced by having both male and female teachers, which is also highlighted in gender equality. She even mentioned that male teachers should be employed in the FP so as to limit children's unruly behaviours. However, there are a few respondents who do not think that male teachers should be employed in FP.

5.2.2.4. Independence, confidence and neatness

Parent respondents found male teachers to be instilling confidence and independence when they do their work, which has resulted in great improvement in their results. Learners are not pushed to do their work; they just know that they have to do it. This was evident in five parent respondents, which shows that parents have noticed a great positive change in their children, which is more of a reason why male teachers need to be represented in the FP. Another respondent even added that her grandchild is very helpful, which he was not when in female classes the previous years. However, a few parents have not noticed any change in their children, which could be because they do not welcome male teachers in the FP for reasons cited when responding to previous questions.



5.2.3. What are the challenges for male teachers in FP?

From the responses given, it was clear that male teachers do face some challenges as FP teaching is seen as a female space. Teaching in the early grades is often accompanied by simplistic images of FP teachers as 'nannies' and 'caregivers' (Peterson & Petker, 2011).

5.2.3.1. Teaching in FP a female work

Nyoni and Nyoni (2012) point out that young children are viewed as delicate, and the 'soft' female is supposed to handle them - not the rough male, hence the 'onslaught' on males who dare to cross the divide and invade a 'female domain' in the eyes of a patriarchy (Nyoni & Nyoni, 2012: 183). Male teachers in the FP are not treated as teachers but are treated as men. One of the respondents cited that according to her culture, children are raised by mothers (female teachers in this case), so parents get

nervous and reluctant when a male teacher is in the FP. The other respondent felt that it is a challenge that male teachers are performing motherly duties. This shows that they are not taken as teachers who have skills on how to handle learners whereas they have learnt child development theories. According to Cunningham and Watson (2002), there was a perception that male teachers were not nurturing enough for younger age children. These researchers also stated that in order to teach in elementary schools, male teachers had to overcome several barriers, which they would not face if they were to teach in secondary education. The general public looks down on Foundation phase teachers. They think that it is a low-class profession. They do not even believe you if you say you have to study for four years to become a Foundation Phase teacher (Peterson, 2014).

Mashiya (2014) claims that *nanny* and *caregiver* are, in most cases, roles assigned to women. This has led to lack of public acceptance of males being teachers in the FP due to perceptions about the unnaturalness of males performing basic care tasks (Mashiya, 2014). Mukuna and Mutsotso (2011) agree when they assert that communities are uneasy and suspicious of men who choose to work with young children rather than higher status or better paid occupations. Drury (2008) shares the same sentiments, “Primary school teaching is perceived as an ‘unattractive’ profession for men, it’s boring, hassle-causing, stressful or requiring too much patience” (Drury, 2008: 314).

Moosa and Bhana (2016) indicated that for men who occupy or imagine work in non-traditional roles, tensions exist between the ‘feminine’ nature of the job and dominant notions of being a real man; these tensions play a vital role in upholding and supporting the sexual division of labour and socially defining tasks as ‘men’s work’ or ‘women’s work’ (Moosa and Bhana, 2016: 9). This is also evident in Rabelo (2013), “in the interviews, the reports were filled with emotions that involved, among other aspects: rejection of career choice by families; the teasing of classmates due to low income and suspicion of homosexuality arising from working as a teacher in this segment; discrimination by colleagues and fathers / mothers of pupils and shock when they said they were teachers of such young children” (Rabelo, 2013: 5). These and other points are the reasons why male teachers are few in the FP, which is something that needs to be looked at by our societies.

5.2.3.2. Lack of trust due to sexual abuse and paedophilia

The feminization of childhood education, according to Makeleni (2016), has led to some parent respondents to be uneasy to trust male teachers in the FP. This is also evident in a study conducted by Mutsotso and Mukuna (2011) in Kenya which revealed communities are uneasy and suspicious of men who choose to work with young children; they see them as men who have not got their gender right (Mukuna & Mutsotso, 2011). Due to child abuse cases that involve men, parents are uneasy about male teachers in the FP; as a result, they are always afraid for their children. According to Rabelo (2013), prejudices that appeared in the questionnaires the most were those related to: homosexuality (homophobia); the idea that men are incapable of dealing with children (e.g., for being different, young, rude, authoritarian); the assumption that all teachers of the segment are women and that it is a female job; fear of pedophilia and sexual harassment; the idea that teaching is an unprofitable occupation and not suitable for men (Rabelo, 2013: 4).

One respondent cited the no-sex, no-marks issue in universities, which is more of the reasons they do not trust male teachers in the FP. Male teachers are not trusted because of male association with child abuse. Mashiya (2014) highlighted that the parents of girl children expressed concern about males teaching FP. Many of the students in the study conducted by Moosa and Bhana (2016) indicated that as a male, pursuing FP teaching would often result in one's heterosexuality being questioned (Moosa & Bhana, 2016: 11). They (Moosa & Bhana, 2016), further assert that males who select traditionally female occupations are frequently deemed to be 'failures' or sexual deviants (Moosa & Bhana, 2016: 10). There is also substantial literature which indicates that sexuality of men in early childhood education is often viewed with suspicion (Martino & Berill, 2003). Men who want to work as elementary school teachers thus risk being classified as homosexuals or paedophiles (Peterson, 2014: 3). Male teachers are being alienated from working in the country's primary schools, largely by the societal stigma that portrays them as paedophiles, according to new research (Peterson, 2014). According to Walker (2005) as cited in Msiza (2016), men who perform alternative types of masculinities, such as gay, soft, subordinate and many other masculinities, are subjugated and treated as non-entities.

5.2.4. What are the strategies that could ensure ensure male teachers are represented in the FP?

Most respondents showed an interest in male teachers becoming part of the foundation phase so that learners can enjoy having both genders from their early ages. They were interested and were also impressed about what the male teachers have developed in their children: a positive attitude that has been displayed by their children in their work.

5.2.4.1. Parents to ensure male teachers are given preference in FP teacher posts

Mashiya et al (2015) recommended that proper recruitment strategies should be put in place by teacher education institutions and that male graduates should be given first priority where there are vacant positions to ensure the redressing of gender inequalities. Rentzou (2011) contented that in order to recruit more males into the early education and care profession, parents suggested that strategies such as advertising which appeals to men's 'nurturing instincts', media campaigns, teacher education programmes that actively recruit men to teach young children and providing opportunities for young men to work with children could be used. This was highlighted by most parent respondents in his study.

The first factor was that they were impressed with what the male teachers are doing in the schools and they emphasized that male teachers be given first priority in vacant posts. This was evident in six parent respondents who felt that male teachers are needed in the FP and should be given first preference on vacant posts. They even suggested that this be captured in minutes in SGB-parent meetings that male teachers should be employed in order to take their place in teaching young children.

In summary, it is clear from literature and from the respondents of this study that male teachers are needed in the FP to benefit the learners. Culture and society determine gender stereotypes, and this has led to the under-representation of male teachers in the FP. Communities should be fair and consider their children when thinking about gender roles in order for male teachers to freely join the FP without fears of being

called names. Gender roles should also be reconstructed so as to emphasize the importance of involving males in the education of the young children. A body of literature (Evans & Jones, 2008) also argues for increasing the number of men in the FP owing to the detrimental effect of the dominance of women in the early schooling of male pupils, in particular (Peterson, 2014: 4)

Many researchers believe that more male educators would benefit young children by contributing to gender equality, thus encouraging fathers to be involved in the education of their children, improving sports for the benefit of young learners, improving staff dynamics in EC and by ensuring safety and dignity in the EC institutions (Yang, 2013; Zhang, 2017). Importantly, these benefits are the need for young boys and girls to develop positive relationships with men and to develop positive views of maleness and masculinity (Cunningham, 2004; Dossey & Mukuna, 2008 as cited in Mukuna & Mutsotso, 2011). This is also evident in Peterson (2014), "Arguments include providing young boys with appropriate role models; ensuring that the teaching force is reflective of the balance of genders in society; breaking down gender stereotyping by providing young children with male role models for teaching as profession; and presenting a substitute 'father-figure' for those children with absentee fathers (Peterson, 2014:4). What emerges from the progressive literature is that it is not the gender but the quality and professional abilities of the teacher that matters in the classrooms (Msiza, 2016: 107).

5.3. Recommendations

The purpose of the study was to investigate the perceptions of parents about male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase and to find strategies that could ensure that male teachers are more represented in the FP for Grade R, 1, 2 and 3. Research in this study has shown that male teachers are doing well as far as parents are concerned and that there is a lot of change in the children since they are taught by male teachers. Most participating parents have shown an interest in welcoming the male teachers in the Foundation Phase as they have experienced many benefits by having male teachers for their young children. They cited male teachers as role models for those learners who have absent fathers in their homes. They also thought that male teachers are good disciplinarians who assist well in sports development. For them,

children need to have male teachers as early as possible so that they do not experience problems when they meet them in high school where there are many male teachers.

Hansen and Mulholland (2005) cited in Patrick (2009) stated the following gender-specific theories with regard to male teachers in elementary schools: In academic literature, reasons advanced for there being urgency in recruiting more men into elementary teaching are varied - to restore to elementary teaching the gender balance and diversity reflected in the wider society to offer children a more balanced education through a recognition that women and men operate differently as classroom teachers; to provide elementary school children with male teachers who model learning as acceptable masculine activity and who work cooperatively and respectfully with women as equals; to have male teachers as substitute or surrogate fathers to increasing numbers of children from homes where the father is absent; and to help to break down traditional gender stereotyping, particularly as expressed by boys (Patrick, 2009: 9)

It has also become clear in this study that there are those parents who still have not accepted male teachers in the FP as they have stereotypes that FP is a woman's job and that male teachers cannot perform well in teaching young children. Participating parents have also highlighted challenges that they think male teachers experience as they are in the FP; these include being associated with abuse and paedophilia, which makes other parents uncomfortable as they see male teachers with their young children (especially parents with girls) in a male teacher's class and pointed out that in universities, male lecturers abuse girls for marks. These and other allegations against male teachers have led to parents not to trust male teachers in the FP. Male teachers have the opportunity to be positive influential role models in the lives of students. Educational systems should continue to conduct research regarding the shortage of males in elementary education and should continue to review some of the more prevalent theorists in this field (Patrick, 2009: 11).

Participating parents suggested strategies that could be brought about by the SGB parents to ensure that male teachers are represented in the FP. They suggested that male teachers should be given preference in vacant posts in the FP and that when posts are advertised, it should be mentioned that male teachers are preferred for the

posts and that the SGB should insist in their meetings that male teachers need to be given preference in FP teacher posts. “There was a “need for a concerted effort” involving teacher unions, civil society, the Department of Basic Education and SACE “to counter the negative views of male teachers in foundation phase” (Peterson, 2014).

Many studies have also come up with the same suggestions on how to keep more male teachers in the FP (Mashiya, 2014; Mashiya et al, 2015; Rentzou, 2011). Male teachers are needed in the FP for the benefit of young children as role models. Teaching in the FP should not be seen as female work. Foundation Phase principals and pre-school administrators must accommodate male teachers in their programmes. Men should also be motivated to enroll in the FP specialization and be provided with bursaries specific for them. More males should be admitted at universities for enrolment in the Foundation Phase. Bursaries like Fundza Lushaka specifically for male teachers enrolling in Foundation Phase should be provided (Moosa & Bhana, 2016). “There was a drive to increase the numbers of Foundation Phase teachers, particularly those who were able to teach in an African language. As a country, we should be concentrating on action to mobilize for recognition of the value of Foundation Phase teachers, regardless of their sex” (Petersen, 2014). The salaries of teachers in general should be increased so that teaching can be a respectable and interesting career.

There are still few male teachers in the Foundation Phase for young children, and this needs to be looked at by societies and Education Departments. Parents and female teachers need to get rid of the stereotypes that Foundation Phase teaching is for females; it must be understood that there is a lot that children can benefit from having male teachers in the FP. Gender equality is enshrined in the Constitution and it will be more proper if it can be shown even in the case of Foundation Phase teachers by having both males and females teaching young children. Sayed and McDonald argue that policymakers need to nurture a culture of teaching as a positive and highly esteemed profession. Moreover, both providers and policymakers need to recognize the importance of teachers in schools as important role models for prospective teachers. Further, much work needs to be conducted to ensure more black and male Foundation Phase teachers join the teaching profession, which for many young children is their first encounter with learning and teaching (Sayed & McDonald, 2017).

More research needs to be conducted to investigate parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase.

5.4. Suggestions for further research

This was a Master of Education study investigating the parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. There have been studies in other countries that investigated parents' perceptions of male teachers such as Rentzou's study in Greece. In South Africa, more focus has been on the in-service male teachers and teachers' perceptions of male teachers in the FP. I suggest that there should be more research directed to parents on how they feel about having more male teachers in the FP. The study was conducted in the East London Education District, and only three schools were sampled, so it is necessary to conduct a similar study in other districts and other provinces to explore the perceptions of parents about male teachers in the FP.

More research is needed so that the Department of Education can be aware of how parents perceive the under-representation of male teachers in the FP. This information will assist schools, higher education institutions, provincial and national departments of education to provide more bursaries for male student teachers. Departments and higher education institutions could use the information to recruit more male students and teachers to the Foundation Phase teaching. The study used a qualitative research approach; perhaps other studies could use a quantitative approach so as to have a bigger population to be sampled, and others could mix the two by using a mixed research approach.

5.5. Conclusion

This was a qualitative phenomenological study situated within the interpretive paradigm. It investigated parents' perceptions of male teachers' under-representation in the Foundation Phase. Data was generated through semi-structured interviews and observations. Parent respondents were sampled from those that have children in male teacher classes in their schools.

Parent respondents in this study revealed that they need more male teachers in the FP to be role models, to improve sports development, to ensure that gender equality is practiced, for good discipline and grooming for higher levels. They also highlighted that male teachers experience challenges of not being trusted due to sexual abuse and also that other parents still hold stereotypes that teaching in Foundation Phase is female work. The study concludes that male teachers are needed in the FP and should be given preference in FP teaching posts.



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University of Fort Hare

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

To whom it may concern:

This document certifies that the dissertation whose title appears below has been edited for proper English language, grammar, punctuation, spelling and overall style by Rose Masha, a member of the Professional Editors' Group whose qualifications are listed in the footer of this certificate.

Title:

PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT MALE TEACHERS' UNDER-
REPRESENTATION IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE: A STUDY IN THE EAST
LONDON EDUCATION DISTRICT

Author:

Nomfihlakalo Kewuti



Date Edited:

16 September 2018

Signed



Dr. Rose Masha

APPENDIX B: APPLICATION LETTER TO THE UREC

5247

20 October 2017

The Chairperson
Faculty Research Ethical Committee (FREC)
University of Fort Hare
East London
5201

Dear Sir

Re: APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL

I, Nomfihlakalo Kewuti, Med student number 201403202 am writing this letter seeking an approval to conduct a research on the selected schools. The working title of my study is "Parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase in the East London Education District. Should you wish to contact me for further enquiries, feel free to contact me on the following contact numbers:

Cell Number: 083 490 5187

Email address: 201403202@ufh.ac.za/ mfihlimac19@gmail.com

Kindly receive the attached ethical application together with the CV and synopsis.

Yours faithfully



N. Kewuti

APPENDIX C: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: GAL071SKEW01

Project title: **Parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the foundation phase in East London Education District.**

Nature of Project: Masters in Education

Principal Researcher: Nomfihlakalo Kewuti

Supervisor: Prof G Galloway

Co-supervisor: N/A

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above-mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

Special conditions: Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:

Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescripts of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
 - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
 - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
 - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
 - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to
- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.
- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely



Professor Pumla Dineo Gqola
Dean of Research

07 March 2018

APPENDIX D: LETTER TO THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICE

5247

20 March 2018

The Superintendent General

Department of education

Zwelitsha

Sir / Madam

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, Nomfihlakalo Kewuti, am a Master of Education (Med) student 201403202 at the University of Fort Hare under the supervision of Professor Greta Galloway. I humbly request permission to conduct research in the East London Education District in three Primary Schools that have male teachers in the Foundation Phase. My study is looking for the **parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase** and I will be interviewing parents who have learners that are taught by male teachers in Grade R, 1, 2 and 3.

The study seeks to address issues of gender equity and reduces negative stereotypes that our society still have towards males teaching young children. The study could also inform parents to use their right as SGB's to ensure that male teachers are given preference when there are vacancies in the Foundation Phase to enable learners to enjoy having both genders from early years. I have the abilities to conduct the research.

Yours faithfully



N. Kewuti

APPENDIX E: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION OFFICE



STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH AND SECRETARIAT SERVICES

Steve Vukile Tshwete Complex • Zone 6 • Zwelitsha • Eastern Cape

Private Bag • Bhisho • 5605 • REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: +27 (0)40 608 4773/4035/4537 • Fax: +27 (0)40 608 4574 • Website: www.ecdoe.gov.za

Enquiries: B Pamla

Email: babalwa.pamla@ecdoe.gov.za

Date: 22 March 2018

Ms. N Kewuti

50 Dick King road

Haven Hills

East London

5201

Dear Ms. Kewuti

PERMISSION TO UNDERTAKE AN MASTERS THESIS: PARENTS PERCEPTIONS ABOUT MALE TEACHERS UNDERREPRESENTATION IN THE FOUNDATION PHASE IN EAST LONDON EDUCATION DISTRICT

1. Thank you for your application to conduct research.
2. Your application to conduct the abovementioned research involving three (3) Primary Schools under the jurisdiction of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) is hereby approved based on the following conditions:
 - a. there will be no financial implications for the Department;
 - b. institutions and respondents must not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation;
 - c. you present a copy of the written approval letter of the Eastern Cape Department of Education (ECDoE) to the Cluster and District Directors before any research is undertaken at any institutions within that particular district;
 - d. you will make all the arrangements concerning your research;
 - e. the research may not be conducted during official contact time;
 - f. should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application to do this must be directed to Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;



- g. your research will be limited to those institutions for which approval has been granted, should changes be effected written permission must be obtained from the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation;
 - h. you present the Department with a copy of your final paper/report/dissertation/thesis free of charge in hard copy and electronic format. This must be accompanied by a separate synopsis (maximum 2 — 3 typed pages) of the most important findings and recommendations if it does not already contain a synopsis;
 - i. you present the findings to the Research Committee and/or Senior Management of the Department when and/or where necessary;
 - j. you are requested to provide the above to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation upon completion of your research;
 - k. you comply with all the requirements as completed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoe document duly completed by you;
 - l. you comply with your ethical undertaking (commitment form);
 - m. you submit on a six monthly basis, from the date of permission of the research, concise reports to the Chief Director: Strategic Management Monitoring and Evaluation.
3. The Department reserves a right to withdraw the permission should there not be compliance to the approval letter and contract signed in the Terms and Conditions to conduct Research in the ECDoe.
 4. The Department will publish the completed Research on its website.
 5. The Department wishes you well in your undertaking. You can contact the Director, Ms. NY Kanjana on the numbers indicated in the letterhead or email nelisa.kanjana@ecdof.gov.za should you need

shou you need any assistance.

NY KANJANA

DIRECTOR: STRATEGIC PLANNING POLICY RESEARCH & SECRETARIAT SERVICES

FOR SUPERINTENDENT-GENERAL: EDUCATION



APPENDIX F: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE EDUCATION DISTRICT OFFICE

5247

16 April 2018

The District Director
Department of Education
East London
Sir

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I, Nomfihlako Kewuti, am a Master of Education (Med) student 201403202 at the University of Fort Hare under the supervision of Professor Greta Galloway. I humbly request permission to conduct research in the East London Education District in three Primary Schools that have male teachers in the Foundation Phase. My study is looking for the **parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase** and I will be interviewing parents who have learners that are taught by male teachers in Grade R, 1, 2 and 3.

The study seeks to address issues of gender equity and reduces negative stereotypes that our society still have towards males teaching young children. The study could also inform parents to use their right as SGB's to ensure that male teachers are given preference when there are vacancies in the Foundation Phase to enable learners to enjoy having both genders from early years. I have the abilities to conduct the research.

Yours faithfully



N. Kewuti

APPENDIX G: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH FROM THE DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICE

 Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
EDUCATION

BUFFALO CITY METRO DISTRICT

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR
DR WB Rubusana Building, NU 1 Mdanisane, East London, 5200 SOUTH AFRICA Tel: 043 708 6210 Fax :043 760 0545,
Website: www.ecdoe.gov.za ,Email: welekazi.dantile@ecdoe.gov.za

DATE: 16 APRIL 2018

Ms N. Kewuti
50 Dick King Road
Haven Hills
5247

Dear Ms Kewuti

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS IN THE
BUFFALO CITY METRO DISTRICT**

Approval is hereby granted for you, **Ms Kewuti**, to conduct research involving three (3) Primary Schools, with the topic ***"Parents perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase"***, as part of your study towards the Masters Degree qualification at the University of Fort Hare.

This permission is granted provided that you make proper arrangements with the affected school and to ensure that tuition time is not disrupted.

We wish you well in your endeavours.

Yours faithfully


E.G. KLAASEN
DISTRICT DIRECTOR- BCM

building blocks for growth


Isimiso elipheleleyo!

APPENDIX H: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH LETTER TO PRINCIPALS

5247

24 April 2018

The Principal

East London

Sir

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

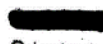
I, Nomfihlakalo Kewuti, am a Master of Education student at the University of Fort Hare who was supervised by Professor Greta Galloway who has now retired and now am under the supervision of Professor E. Adu. I humbly request permission to conduct research on the parents that have children in the male teacher classes in the Foundation Phase of your school. My study is investigating **the parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase** and I request to interview parents with learners that are taught by male teachers in Grade R, 1, 2 & 3.

The study seeks to address issues of gender equity and reduces negative stereotypes that our societies still have towards males teaching young children. The study could also inform parents to use their rights as SGB's to ensure that male teachers are given preference when there are vacancies in the Foundation Phase to enable learners to enjoy having both genders from early years. I have the abilities to conduct the research.

Yours faithfully



N. Kewuti

 Primary School
Principal: 28
Date: 24. 04. 2018

5247

24 April 2018

The Principal
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

East London

Sir

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

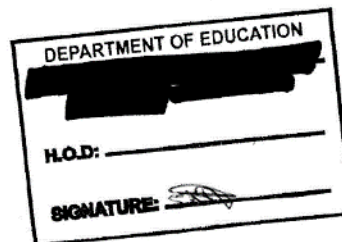
I, Nomfihlakalo Kewuti, am a Master of Education student at the University of Fort Hare who was supervised by Professor Greta Galloway who has now retired and now am under the supervision of Professor E. Adu. I humbly request permission to conduct research on the parents that have children in the male teacher classes in the Foundation Phase of your school. My study is investigating **the parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase** and I request to interview parents with learners that are taught by male teachers in Grade R, 1, 2 & 3.

The study seeks to address issues of gender equity and reduces negative stereotypes that our societies still have towards males teaching young children. The study could also inform parents to use their rights as SGB's to ensure that male teachers are given preference when there are vacancies in the Foundation Phase to enable learners to enjoy having both genders from early years. I have the abilities to conduct the research.

Yours faithfully

.....

N. Kewuti



[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
5247

24 April 2018

The Principal

[REDACTED] Primary School

[REDACTED]
East London

Sir

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

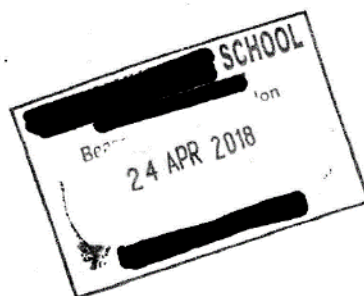
I, Nomfihlakalo Kewuti, am a Master of Education student at the University of Fort Hare who was supervised by Professor Greta Galloway who has now retired and now am under the supervision of Professor E. Adu. I humbly request permission to conduct research on the parents that have children in the male teacher classes in the Foundation Phase of your school. My study is investigating **the parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase** and I request to interview parents with learners that are taught by male teachers in Grade R, 1, 2 & 3.

The study seeks to address issues of gender equity and reduces negative stereotypes that our societies still have towards males teaching young children. The study could also inform parents to use their rights as SGB's to ensure that male teachers are given preference when there are vacancies in the Foundation Phase to enable learners to enjoy having both genders from early years. I have the abilities to conduct the research.

Yours faithfully


.....

N. Kewuti



APPENDIX I: INFORMED CONSENT FOR RESPONDENTS

Nomfihlakalo Kewuti

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OFFICE USE ONLY

Ref	Date
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University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

Ethics Research Confidentiality and Informed Consent Form

Please note:

This form is to be completed by the researcher(s) as well as by the interviewee before the commencement of the research. Copies of the signed form must be filed and kept on record

(To be adapted for individual circumstances/needs)

Our University of Fort Hare / Department is asking people from your community / sample / group to answer some questions, which we hope will benefit your community and possibly other communities in the future.

The University of Fort Hare student, Nomfihlakalo Kewuti (Master of Education) is conducting research regarding: Parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase. We are interested in finding out more about how parents perceive having more male teachers in the Foundation Phase and how parents and their children can benefit from being taught by male teachers in their early years. We will be interviewing nine parents from three Primary Schools (three from each school). We are carrying out this research to help address the issues of gender equity and to reduce negative stereotypes that our society and communities have towards males teaching in Foundation Phase.

Please understand that you are not being forced to take part in this study and the choice whether to participate or not is yours alone. However, we would really appreciate it if you do share your thoughts with us. If you choose not to take part in answering these questions, you will not be affected in any way. If you agree to participate, you may stop me at any time and tell me that you don't want to go on with the interview. If you do this there will also be no penalties and you will NOT be prejudiced in ANY way. Confidentiality will be observed professionally.

I will not be recording your name anywhere on the questionnaire and no one will be able to link you to the answers you give. Only the researchers will have access to the unlinked information. The information will remain confidential and there will be no "come-backs" from the answers you give.

The interview will last around 30-45 minutes (*this is to be tested through a pilot*). I will be asking you questions and ask that you are as open and honest as possible in answering these questions. Some questions may be of a personal and/or sensitive nature. I will be asking some questions that you may not have thought about before, and which also involve thinking about the past or the future. We know that you cannot be certain about the answers to these questions but we ask that you try to think about these questions. When it comes to answering questions, there are no right and wrong answers. When questions are asked

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Nomfihlakalo Kewuti

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about the future I am not interested in what you think the best thing would be to do, but what you think should be done to accommodate male teachers in the Foundation Phase and to ensure that children have them as male role models from the Foundation Phase.

If possible, our organisation would like to come back to this area once we have completed our study to inform you and your community of what the results are and discuss our findings and proposals around the research and what this means for people in this area.

INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby agree to participate in research regarding "parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase". I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop this interview at any point should I not want to continue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively.

I understand that this is a research project whose purpose is not necessarily to benefit me personally.

I have received the telephone number of a person to contact should I need to speak about any issues which may arise in this interview.

I understand that this consent form will not be linked to the questionnaire, and that my answers will remain confidential.

I understand that if possible, feedback will be given to my community on the results of the completed research.

.....
Signature of participant

Date:

I hereby agree to the tape recording of my participation in the study

.....
Signature of participant

Date:

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APPENDIX J: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about yourself as a parent of a Foundation Phase child.
2. Your child is taught by a male teacher in the current grade, how do you feel about that?
3. Do you think it is necessary to have male teachers in the Foundation Phase? Why?
4. Does having a male teacher in the grade have an impact on your child? In what way?
5. What do you think male teachers bring to your children in the Foundation Phase? Do you notice any change in him/her compared to when he/she was taught by a female teacher?
6. Are there any challenges that you think are experienced by male teachers who are in the Foundation Phase? What can be done to eliminate the challenges that they experience? (if there are any)
7. What, in your experience of a male teacher in FP, can the SGB do to make sure that there are more male teachers in the FP?

APPENDIX K: STUDY SYNOPSIS

Working Title: Parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase: A study in the East London Education District.

Parents are the most important people in every child's upbringing especially in the early years and they are responsible for their children's education and have a say in the appointment of teachers in their schools (Ward, 2013). Foundation Phase has a history of being dominated by female educators and female percentage in education generally is higher than the percentage of male educators (Bhana & Moosa, 2017). This shows that men are underrepresented in the Foundation Phase and this is evident internationally, in Africa and South Africa. Gender stereotyping is amongst the reasons why male teachers are underrepresented in the FP. The male underrepresentation in FP is depriving young learners the benefits that they could enjoy by being taught by male teachers in the early years as role models (Moosa & Bhana, 2017). The presence of male teachers in the FP could provide stable, positive male role models for the young children (Cameroon, 2001). Many researchers agree that if there are more men in Foundation Phase carrying out caring roles, this could help to counter children's sex-stereotyped views of gender roles, reduce sexism and generally advance gender equality (Faquar, 2006; Sumsion, 2005 in Yang, 2013). There is a need for me as an educator to research on the perceptions of parents about the underrepresentation of male teachers in the FP as parents are the most important people in our schools and therefore, their perceptions will be very valuable when it comes to the decisions they take and what they want for their children in the schools.

MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

What are parents' perceptions about male teachers' underrepresentation in the Foundation Phase?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To establish parents' perceptions about low male representation in the Foundation Phase.

To determine how parents and their children can benefit from being taught by male teachers in the Foundation Phase.

To determine what challenges, parents perceive are experienced by male teachers in the Foundation Phase.

To ascertain how SGB parent component can attract male teachers for Foundation Phase teaching in their schools.

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study will adopt interpretivism paradigm for the purpose of finding parents' perceptions about the underrepresentation of male teachers in the FP. It will use a qualitative research method will be used to gain understanding of the perceptions and motivations of parents. Data will be collected using semi-structured interviews as they allow for probing when more content is needed. A phenomenological study design will be adopted to understand the essence of lived experiences of parents who have learners taught by male teachers in Foundation Phase. Purposive sampling will be used to gather information from nine parents who have children in Gr R, 1, 2 & 3.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Nine parents from three Primary Schools (three from each school), will be interviewed in the East London Education District. The parents will be interviewed from rural, urban and semi-urban school settings.

ANTICIPATED RISKS

None

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS

The study will help to address issues of gender equity and reduce negative stereotypes that our society and communities have towards males teaching in FP. Young learners will be able to enjoy both female and male teachers as role models and motivators during their informative years and this could help them embrace both genders from an early age. Having male teachers in FP could help both boys and girls to abandon the socially constructed ideas of gender- specific occupations.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Informed consent will be required from the research participants (parents) as they will participate in their personal capacities. Confidentiality will be maintained by the

researcher as the information gathered during the study will be kept private. The researcher will request ethical clearance from the University of Fort Hare and follow all policies and procedures of the University. Letter requesting to conduct the study in selected Primary Schools will be written.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

None

