

**Factors that Affect the Low Participation of Male Teachers in Private Elementary Schools
in Piedecuesta, Santander**

Undergraduate thesis to obtain the Degree of Bachelor in Foreign Languages
with Emphasis in English

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Abstract

Title: Factors that Affect the Low Participation of Male Teachers in Private Elementary Schools in Piedecuesta, Santander¹

Authors: Mayerly Parra Moreno, Laura Catalina Díaz Garzón, Michell Juliana Rueda Gualdrón²

Keywords: Education, Gender stereotypes, Male Teachers, Elementary School, Stigmatization

Description: This study aimed to discover which factors influence the lack of participation of male teachers in private elementary schools in Piedecuesta, Santander. The low number of male teachers in this area is a phenomenon that society tends to overlook. Hence, data to find the possible factors was collected through two surveys, one directed to pre-service teachers and another to primary school children's parents. In addition, a semi-structured interview was carried out with 10 different private schools in Piedecuesta. The results concluded that pre-service teachers fear their gender may play a negative role when looking for a job in an elementary school; however, 43% still want to teach in that area. In addition, parents are not really fond of any gender; 75% of them expressed no real preference. Yet, a dichotomy was evident between the parents' and institutions' responses. Since institutions were open about their positive views on male teachers but still stated that parents were the ones who influenced their decision to hire male staff. For instance, other reasons were the low demand for male teachers due to the feminization of the job and the influence of the background of sexual abuse in Colombia. Even with some of the answers given, it can be concluded that regardless of the gender of the teachers, if prepared, they can work just as well as female teachers. This implies that if there was more discussion about it, there would be more gender-balanced participation in that area.

¹ Degree work.

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Resumen

Título: Factores que Inciden en la Baja Participación de Docentes Hombres en Escuelas Primarias Privadas de Piedecuesta, Santander³

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Palabras Clave: Educación, Estereotipos de Género, Profesores Hombres, Escuela Primaria, Estigmatización

Descripción: El objetivo de este estudio es descubrir qué factores influyen en la falta de participación de los docentes varones en las escuelas primarias privadas de Piedecuesta, Santander. El bajo número de docentes hombres es un fenómeno que la sociedad tiende a no darle importancia. Por lo tanto, los datos para encontrar los posibles factores se recogieron a través de dos encuestas, una dirigida a los maestros en formación y otra a padres de niños de primaria. Adicionalmente, se realizó una entrevista semiestructurada a 10 colegios privados de Piedecuesta. Los resultados concluyeron que los maestros temen que su género pueda jugar un papel negativo a la hora de buscar trabajo en una escuela primaria; sin embargo, el 43% sigue queriendo enseñar en esa área. Sin embargo, se hizo evidente una dicotomía entre las respuestas de los padres y las de las instituciones, puesto que las instituciones mantienen opiniones positivas sobre los profesores varones, pero afirman que los padres son quienes influyen en su decisión de contratar personal masculino cuando 75% de los padres expresaron no tener preferencias. Otras razones fueron la feminización del trabajo y los antecedentes de abusos sexuales en Colombia. Aún así, se evidencia que independientemente del género, si están preparados, pueden trabajar igual de bien que las profesoras. Esto implica que si se hablara más del tema, habría una participación más equilibrada entre los géneros en esa área.

³ Trabajo de grado.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Problem statement

It is not a hidden fact that in elementary schools in Colombia, there is little participation from male teachers. This is highlighted in the report "Informe Temático Día del Profesor (2020)" by the *Consejera Presidencial para la Equidad de Género*, which shows that only 27% of elementary school teachers in Colombia are male. According to Mills, Haase, & Charlton (2007), when male students don't have these masculine role models, they may feel isolated at school, which can lead to low academic performance. Moreover, it could be alarming that male educators don't have equal chances to contribute to the development of children who are beginning to adapt to the education cycle ahead of them.

The causes of the male teachers' low rate phenomenon are still highly inconclusive and are attributed to a number of different aspects, such as gender stereotypes, salary rates, job opportunities, and the background of sexual abuse in schools. This unmistakably reduced number of male teachers in early childhood is well attributed to both perceptions of gender and gender roles in the occupation. Firstly, there has been a perceived change in society's view of imposing gender on certain occupations, resulting in more gender balance and equality. Yet, according to Torre (2018), this is less likely to happen with males entering jobs that are socially conceived as lower-status female occupations, and the elementary school field is included in this category. Moreover, it has been found that because of this gender segregation in jobs, men are prejudiced and stigmatized when they enter female-dominated fields, which makes them reluctant to do so (Torre, 2018). Consequently, with fewer male teachers working in these stereotypically "female jobs", they will have fewer opportunities to contribute to a higher sense of equality for the new

generations. Additionally, they would have the opportunity to challenge the traditional female attribution to occupations related to nurturing and teaching (Sumsion 2000a, 2000b; McBride, Rane, and Bae 2001, as cited in Sakire & Derya, 2008).

In second place, it is nothing new that teachers at all levels of education are constantly struggling to get better and higher salaries and opportunities. Low salaries are one of the main daily concerns for both female and male educators. Nonetheless, even if society frequently turns a blind eye to the myth of men being the primary breadwinners in their households, it is still a problem. In this matter, Berge (2004) says that low incomes are indeed an impediment for men who want to pursue teaching as a career (as cited in Patrick, 2009).

In third place, a factor that could influence this phenomenon is the limited job opportunities for women in Colombian history. For example, universities in this country have only admitted women since 1935, resulting in a limited number of professional careers for women to pursue (Universia Colombia, 2010). Women had larger chances of becoming elementary teachers due to the number of Normal Superior Schools that were available only for women. Once they graduated, they were motivated to be teachers, in elementary or, in a rare case, in high schools, creating many generations of normalists' female teachers.

Finally, not only in Colombia but unfortunately around the world, sexual abuse of boys and girls is a day-to-day issue that threatens children not only in their homes and on the streets but also in schools. According to Colombia's Ministry of Education (2022), there have been reported 876 cases of abuse at schools all over the country in the period of time between January 2018 and February 2022. The malefactors behind these aberrant cases are not only male teachers, but they are still in the public eye. Due to the nature of these events, it is not surprising that parents might start to think that their children will be in better care with a woman and will

stigmatize the presence of men, whether they are staff of the institutions or the teachers themselves. As a result, the principals of the schools might act according to these preferences and would rather hire and keep female teachers in their institutions. Moreover, male teachers themselves would not want to be treated as possible child molesters and therefore avoid working in elementary schools because all their movements might become overly cautious. According to Sargent (2000), elementary school teachers are positioned in a job that might expose them to accusations of improper interaction with students because of their gender.

1.2 Driving question

Which factors contribute to the little participation of male teachers in private elementary schools in Piedecuesta, Santander?

1.3 Justification

The lack of male representation in elementary education is an issue that does not get enough public attention. There are not many people who question why there are so few male teachers at these early levels of education. As stated before, possible factors like gender stereotypes, salary rates, job opportunities, and a background of sexual harassment are some of the obstacles that male teachers who might be interested in elementary school may face. The roots of these issues are alarming and must be properly treated in order for authorities to take them into account for future reforms and campaigns in education. The ideal purpose of those changes is to benefit male teachers and provide a generally open path to carry out this profession. One example of an education reform addressing this problem is the 40% quota that Finland applied until 1989, when the ratio of male/female teachers dropped from 40/60 to 20/80, as

stated by Uusiautti, Määttä, et al. (2013). According to Schaede and Mankki (2022), this previously applied quota had a favorable effect on students' academic success, specifically in the long term, with better educational outcomes and employment rates. Another relevant example of a scheme directed toward this issue is the Male Teachers' Strategy created by Education Queensland in Australia. As stated by Mills, Martino, and Lingard (2004), the strategy had as its main purpose the "attraction, recruitment, and retention" of male teachers. For each one of these stages, they proposed different and varied procedures like targeted scholarships, a policy framework to support workforce diversity and equity, and partnerships with other government departments to promote teaching (Education Queensland, 2002).

That is the reason for this research, which looks into the diverse and uncertain factors that might influence this low participation of male teachers and has the purpose of leaving a record in this country for future campaigns or reforms to be done in education. With the information collected, a look into the perspectives of the different people involved in this matter will hopefully raise awareness in the reader, thus completing the first step for change in this field.

1.4. General Objective

To discover which factors influence the lack of participation of male teachers in private elementary schools in Piedecuesta.

1.4.1. Specific objectives.

- 1) To indagate into the institutions' perspectives on how common it is to hire a male teacher in a private elementary school.
- 2) To record the perspectives and level preferences of male pre-service teachers that intendo to work in the teaching field.

- 3) To look into the parents' preferences over their children's educators.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Background

The lack of male teachers is an issue that has called the attention of many, but that has not been so often fully addressed. The reason why people do not do much research on the subject may be influenced by their unawareness and normalization of the same. On the one hand, there is Martino (2008), who states that the presence of a male teacher positively influences students of both genders, offering relatedness to boys and an introduction to the interaction with the other gender for girls. On the other hand, McGrath and Sinclair (2013), do not agree and do not see a need for the masculinization of education, not conceiving a specific need for it. Nevertheless, this research aims to find out what the factors are that influence the absence of male educators.

This literature review is intended to address the three main factors that are considered most relevant in the context of this investigation. These factors are: gender stereotypes, the background of sexual abuse, and job and educational opportunities for women.

2.1.1. Gender Stereotypes.

As mentioned before, the occupation of teaching has a legacy of being considered a "women's job" and a low-status occupation. According to Martino (2008), the few men that enter the occupation face gender stereotypes such as the belief that teaching in elementary school is a "women's job" and that they lack the nurturing skills necessary to participate in them. Common beliefs like these hinder men from entering the occupation.

In this issue, it is commonly mentioned that there is a worry about the absence of "male role models," yet Martino states that this moral panic and the presumed possibility of female

teachers emasculating young boys are a result of heteronormative ideas that fear "gender deviancy" (2008).

Furthermore, men who choose to work in fields where women are more prevalent may later opt to leave. Analyzing this issue, Torre (2018) notes that men who enter low-status and traditionally female occupations have to deal with higher levels of prejudice. These findings provide important insights since elementary school teachers are commonly considered to be part of both of the previously mentioned groups. Besides, when men break social expectations of following "gendered occupations," they face certain gender pressures that hinder them from either pursuing those occupations or draw them away from them. Moreover, Torre (2018) concludes that men would move between female and male-dominated jobs due to the gender stigma they continue to feel even after they have entered the job.

2.1.2. Background of Sexual Abuse in Colombian Educational Institutions.

Sexual harassment and abuse of minors are endemic in Colombia. Not only on the streets and in households, but also in educational establishments, where it is perpetrated by school workers, administrators, and even teachers themselves. Sexual abuse coming from teachers is defined by Shakeshaft (2003) as "teacher sexual abuse," a concept that refers to any sexually motivated behavior by an adult (physical, verbal, or visual) toward a student. According to Kocturk (2020), teachers approach their victims in a more "friendly" manner, such as by offering them prizes, whether monetary or academic, and by displaying seductive attitudes.

As previously stated, the Ministry of Education (2022) reports that there have been 876 cases of sexual assault in schools in just four years, yet it is worth mentioning that these numbers may not be accurate since many of these are not actually reported to authorities. It is no surprise that the majority of these incidents, particularly those in the spotlight, are blamed on male

personnel at these institutions. As a result, parents may be concerned about the presence of these teachers in the schools where their children are educated. This was seen in the results of a study carried out by King (2018), where some parents expressed their discomfort with male teachers taking care of their children, especially their daughters, and their preference for female teachers as their first option.

It is important to highlight that the previously mentioned case is not a generalization. As stated by Warin (2018), the presence of male teachers in some other cases may mean an improvement in the relationship between parent-teachers, especially with the father's participation and comfort in the school environment.

2.1.3. Job and education opportunities for women in Colombia.

The phenomenon of mostly women teaching in elementary and preschool is highly related to job opportunities for women since the professional field was not the same for both genders, which meant that job offers for men and women were unequal in the past. In Colombia, women had almost 40% less involvement than males in the same age range during that time, according to a particular participation rate poll from 1994 that compares the number of men and women in the labor force from 1976 to 1992 (Farné, 1994).

This matter is also connected with the fact that before 1934, women only had the chance of choosing between becoming a nurse, teacher, odontologist, or housewife since there were only a few technical schools that they were admitted to (EL TIEMPO, 2017). Adding to this, there is clear evidence of Normal Superior Schools (ENS in Spanish) being the principal contributor to the pedagogical training of women in teaching, which ultimately led to an increase of female teachers in rural areas as well, since the main objective of the schools was to make education for children accessible and systematic enough to create more educators that could eventually

practice the profession (Muoz Bravo, 2020). The ENS established the government's effort to carry out its policies of modernization, democratization, and social assistance to the poor and excluded population. On another note, men were highly encouraged and usually preferred to study and pursue better-paying jobs such as engineering, medicine, law, etc. since they were the only ones that could do it (Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE), 2020).

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The author Nel Noddings is known for linking the concept of "ethics of care" to education. As Mitrano notes, Noddings rejects the essentialist stance that women are better suited to work with children because of their innate abilities for caring (Noddings, 1995, as cited in Mitrano, 2014). Although caring is more associated with women because they are more likely to be with children nowadays, Mitrano believes that caring can be developed through the experience of caring for others. This author highlights the importance of taking the discussion of male teachers in elementary school and moving on from the issue of the lack of masculine role models towards the representation of these educators in caring interactions at schools (Mitrano, 2014).

The authors of this research will approach the issue through the lens of a sociological and feminist perspective. According to Blackstone (2003), the concept of gender from a sociological lens proposes that gender roles are learned and sometimes unconnected to the biological characteristics of males and females. Moreover, Blackstone notes that the feminist perspective believes that since gender roles are learned, they can be unlearned and modified as well. This viewpoint emphasizes that gender roles create a disparity in power between males and females in

societies. According to the author, these differences can be clearly seen in working environments, where workers are still segregated by gender and expected to fill traditionally female or male positions at work (Blackstone, 2003).

2.3. Legal Framework

Regarding legal terms, this investigation will follow a series of laws taken into account for the development of this project. First of all, the General Education Law (Law 115) in Article 4° mentions that in order to guarantee high quality in Colombian education, there will be assurances on the accreditation and training of educators, showing a commitment to monitor the educational process. In the same way, in Article 104, the teacher is conceived as a guide for the training, teaching, and learning processes in educational institutions, marking its great importance in education.

In respect of gender equality, Law 823 of 2003 Article 2° dictates its foundations on "the constitutional recognition of legal, real, and effective equal rights and opportunities for women and men." Likewise, with respect to job opportunities, Article 9° dictates equal opportunities to enter academic programs, stipulating that campaigns will be carried out with the purpose of removing sexism and other discriminatory practices from formal, non-formal, and informal education's methods and contents, as well as gender stereotypes of professional, vocational, and labor orientations that allocate particular occupations to men and women.

With regard to sexual abuse of infants, Law 1146 of 2007 Article 2° stipulates that sexual violence against children is regarded as "any act or behavior of a sexual nature employed on a child or adolescent, using force or any form of physical, psychological, or emotional oppression, taking advantage of the conditions of defenselessness, inequality, and the existing power

relations." Later, in Article 11°, there is a remark about the importance of "early identification in the classroom" and that all schools must have components that aid in the quick recognition and prevention of sexual abuse that students may experience inside and outside of educational institutions.

3. Methodology

3.1. Type of investigation

The method chosen for the investigation is a mixed-method sequential explanatory design. This type of research is quite common among academics, and it refers to gathering and evaluating data in two separate phases of a single study, first quantitatively and then qualitatively (Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998; Creswell 2003, 2005; Creswell et al. 2003). This mixed-methods design is challenging to implement despite its ubiquity and simplicity, as it is important to take some methodological considerations into account. These issues include the weight or priority given to gathering and evaluating both quantitative and qualitative data, their sequencing, and the stage(s) in the research process at which the two stages are linked and the results are integrated (Morgan 1998; Creswell et al. 2003).

3.2. Hypothesis, variables, and indicators

It is expected that by using a mixed-method sequential explanatory design, the independent variables (gender stereotypes, cultural background, and background of educators' sexual abuse) will be better understood in order to study the effects they may have on the dependent variables (job offers for men in primary institutions, hiring process in these institutions, and an overall number of male teachers working in that field).

Table 1*Hypothesis, variables, and Indicators*

Hypothesis	
<p>The combination of the factors of gender stereotypes, few job opportunities for women in the past, and a background of sexual abuse are the main causes of the low number of male teachers in elementary schools.</p> <p>Null Hypothesis: The combination of the factors of gender stereotypes, few job opportunities for women in the past, and background of sexual abuse are not the main causes for the low number of male teachers in elementary schools.</p>	
Variables	Indicators
Gender Stereotypes	➤ The hiring process for males performed by the institutions.
Job Opportunities	➤ Answers by the program's male students. ➤ Parents' perception over institutions.
Sexual Abuse Background	hiring male teachers.

3.3. Sample

This study will be carried out in the city of Piedecuesta, Santander, Colombia. In order to know the hiring processes in private institutions, the sample population will consist of 10 private elementary schools in the city. Because the hiring process in public schools in Colombia is based on a teacher selection contest that every aspirant must complete and pass, the institution's preference of gender may not be taken into account or be less discriminatory towards the male gender. The educational institutions will be chosen according to their disposition to participate in the study.

A sampling technique by networks commonly known as "snowball" is going to be used with pre-service teachers and parents. According to Alperin and Skorupka (2014), because this sampling method is non-probabilistic, no inferences about the population are made, and the results are more precise. First, as a means to know the perspectives of male undergraduate students and their level preferences, pre-service teachers with a bachelor's degree in foreign languages with an emphasis in English from the Industrial University of Santander will be invited to participate. Then, as parents are the ultimate decision-makers over their children's well-being, the opinions of those willing to participate are going to be taken into account.

3.3.1. Relevance and Ethics.

This study will shed some light on the issue of the lack of participation of male teachers in elementary schools. The participants' identities and the names of the institutions will be confidential as this research will be conducted under ethical principles and parameters used to protect the information collected. In the case of the interviews, the administrator of the institutions will read and sign the informed consent document (annex.1) before taking part of the study to allow the researchers to use their information as the material of the study.

3. 4. Data collection instruments

In order to collect the necessary information for this research, the authors will make use of various data collection instruments. According to Artino et al. (2014), self-administered surveys, or "questionnaires, are data collection instruments that fit the criteria of being systematic and easily analyzed. It is also worth mentioning that it is one of the most used instruments in the educational research field (Artino et al, 2014). Therefore, pre-service teachers and parents are going to be provided with surveys (Annex 2 and Annexes 3, respectively) in a

specific administration software called Google Forms. The instrument that best suits this study is Google Forms surveys since these, along with other tools, can shed light on the matter that is the principal target of inquiry while also adding the space and option to write a specific train of thought or anecdote that the contestant may have. using questionnaires that will be applied to as many individuals as possible. Likewise, the other instrument that suits this study is the interviews, specifically for school administrators (Annex 4). With these interviews, it is aimed to collect precise data from the institutions about the hiring process of male teachers since, according to Cohen et al. (2007), it is a versatile technique for data gathering, permitting the use of multi-sensory channels: verbal, non-verbal, spoken, and heard. In this case, semi-structured interviews are going to be used to fulfill the purpose of this study and interact deeply with the school administrators' responses. As stated by Newcomer et al. (2015), this type of interview incorporates both closed- and open-ended questions, frequently with follow-up queries directed to just one specific participant.

3.5. Resources and analysis techniques

For the evaluation of the data obtained, the program Microsoft Excel was used. The organization of all the data collected in the surveys for parents and pre-service teachers will correspond to Microsoft Excel collecting and analyzing Google Forms data on the results. For the open questions on the surveys, the cohesion and similarity of the words and points of view of the participants within the semantic network will be compared and sought. Moreover, the interviews are going to be the predominant data for the analysis, and the transcriptions are going to be analyzed using summaries and conceptual memos. Additionally, the thematic analysis will be used with the answers of the institutions, pre-service teachers, and parents. Thematic analysis

is an active process of reflexivity in which the researcher's subjective experience is crucial to deriving meaning from evidence, as explained by Braun and Clarke (2006).

4. Findings

The primary goal of this study was to identify some of the factors explaining why there are fewer male teachers in the city of Piedecuesta, Santander, and what, if any, specific variables influenced this decision. The methodology used for the data collection was surveys for the pre-service male teachers, and for parents whose kids are studying in elementary school; then, the authors used interviews to gather the answers of the school administrators of 10 private schools located in the city. Surveys were delivered to male pre-service teachers as well as parents through Facebook and WhatsApp groups. The goal of the analysis was to communicate the parents', pre-teachers', and educational institutions' responses in a systematic manner. Several applications were used for data analysis, including Google Forms and Microsoft Excel. The researcher was able to construct cross-tabulation results from various survey items using this combination of statistical methods. Furthermore, Google Forms was used to organize data and collect individual replies from male participants and parents.

The results of all completed surveys and interviews were reviewed and discussed in this section in order to establish which specific patterns could be found as influencing variables in grade-level selection. Multiple responses were permitted for several of the survey questions, allowing each question to receive more responses than actual participants.

This section was organized into several key category headings based on the previously stated research sample population. The aggregate statistical outcome for each research issue was then used to explain each topic. This is followed by a breakdown of the topic into three primary

categories: (a) male pre-service teachers' concerns, (b) parents' perspectives, and (c) private schools' responses broken down by the number of male teachers in their institution.

4.1. Male pre-service teachers' concerns

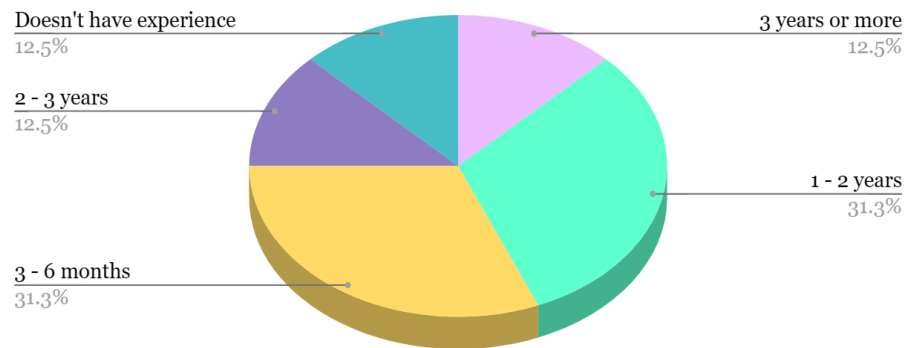
In order to collect the perspectives and level preferences of male pre-service teachers, the tool Google Forms was implemented. Participants were recruited through the social networking site Facebook and the messaging app WhatsApp. These platforms were used because they provided easy contact with the students at the university. Specifically, through chat groups and Facebook groups, which are commonly used to share academic-related information. The targets of both tools were male students belonging to the Universidad Industrial de Santander who are currently studying for a teaching bachelor's degree. The link to the survey was shared on the aforementioned tools, accompanied by a short, straightforward text that explained the objective of the survey in order to collect the answers from the people interested in the topic. In the text, it was clarified that the survey targeted male pre-service teachers from any of the teaching degrees at the university. The survey was left open for a month, during which it collected the answers from 18 participants in total. Nonetheless, because two of them identified as female, their responses will be disregarded. Only the 16 answers from the male pre-service teachers will be analyzed. Each participant will be labeled with the letter P (participant), followed by a number indicating the order of response, e.g., "P1."

In order to know the backgrounds of the participants, some questions focused on their teaching experience. First, how long have they been teaching, either outside the university or as pre-service teachers at the pedagogical practicum? As shown in Figure 1, the options provided

were: 3 to 6 months, 1 to 2 years, 2 to 3 years, 3 or more years, or no experience at all. They could only choose one option.

Figure 1

Time of teaching experience



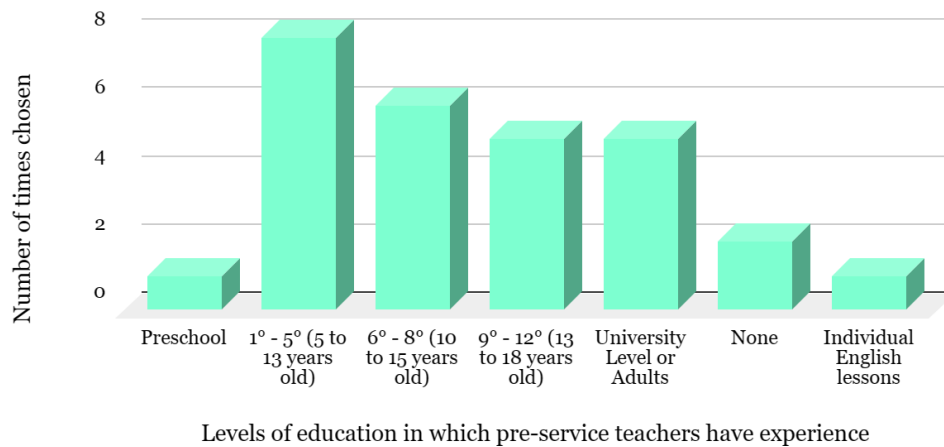
As illustrated above, it was found that the teaching experience of 31.3 % of the participants was from 3 to 6 months; equally, the other 31.3 % stated to have 1 to 2 years of experience; the rest of the participants were evenly divided between 2 to 3 years (12.5 %), 3 or more years (12.5%), or no experience (12.5%).

Second, the participants were provided with a variety of options in order to know the levels at which they have had experience teaching. As seen in Figure 2, these were preschool, first through fifth grades of primary education, sixth through eighth grades of secondary education, ninth through twelfth grades of higher education, higher education for adults, and none of the above. On these questions, the participants had the option to choose more than one answer. It was discovered that half of the participants (50%) had teaching experience on the first five levels of primary education; 37.5% had teaching experience in grades sixth to eighth of secondary school; levels ninth to twelfth of high school; and levels ninth to twelfth of high school were evenly divided, each with 31.3%; only 1 participant had teaching experience in

preschool education, and 2 stated to lack experience on any of the levels. One of the participants suggested a different category: "teaching individual English lessons.

Figure 2

Levels in which pre-service teachers have experience



4.1.1. Levels Preference.

Now, moving into the male pre-service teachers' preference for certain education levels, there were a variety of answers. The soon-to-be teachers had the chance to choose multiple times from 5 categories that encompassed all levels, from preschool to university level, and even teaching adults in a language institute context. The first question that relates to their preferences for their future professional career was, "Based on your experiences as an aspiring teacher, what levels would you like to teach?" The number of selected responses was 31. From those votes, only 6.3% had the will to teach in preschool, 43.8% to teach from 1° to 5°, and 18.8% to teach from 6° to 8°. A greater number of votes were cast for grades with older students; 50% teach from 9° to 12° and 75% teach at university levels or adults in general. (See Figure 3.)

The pre-service teachers were also asked about the factors that influenced their preference for those certain levels. A total of 29 votes were gathered and divided into different categories. The first category was salary with 18.8% of the votes, followed by the age of the

students with 81.3%, personal experiences with 50%, and job opportunities with 18.8%. Apart from these options predetermined by the researchers, two future teachers suggested other aspects that influenced their decision. In the first place, there is "practicality when teaching classes" as said by P4, and another more specific being the one from P5: "I think I would get along better with older students (ninth grade and up), but I have never worked with children and I would like to because I feel that it is more fun than with older students since resources such as songs, stories, and games are used more frequently." (See figure 4.)

Figure 3

Pre-service teachers' levels preference

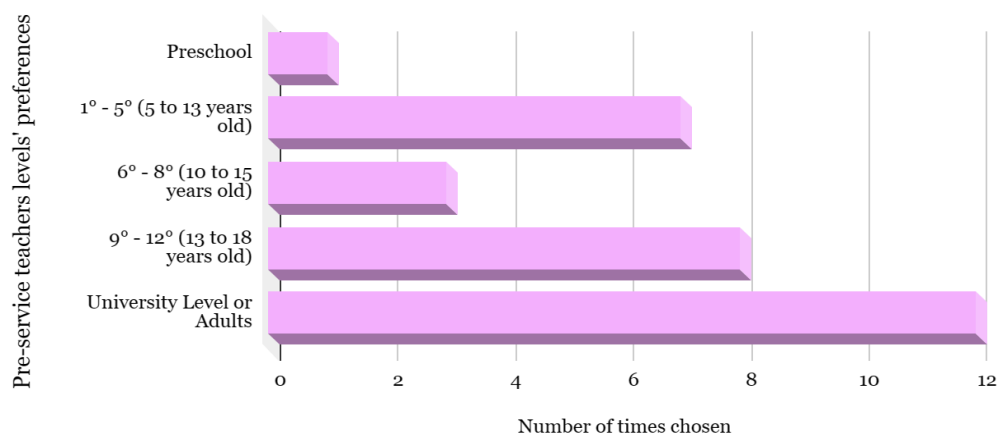
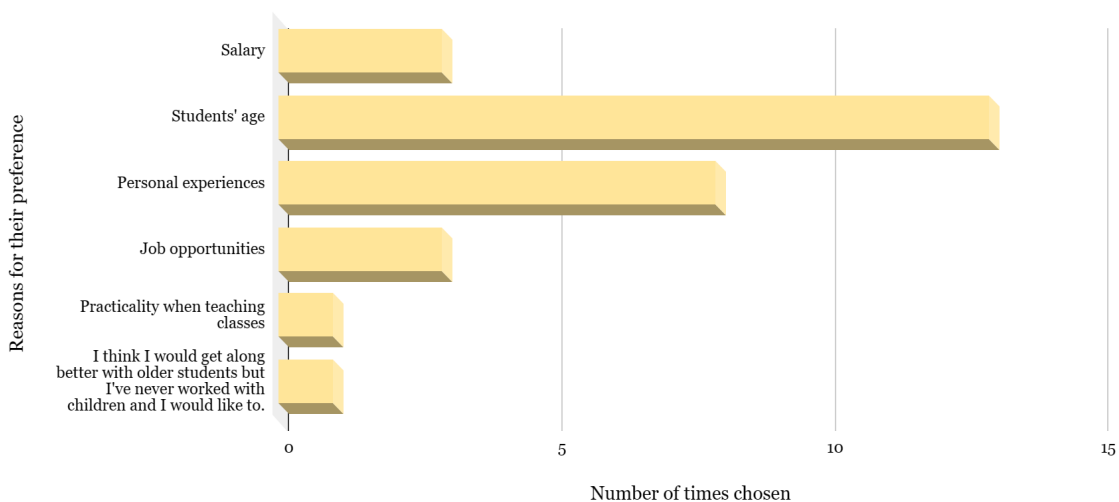


Figure 4

Factors that influence the level of pre-service teachers' preferences



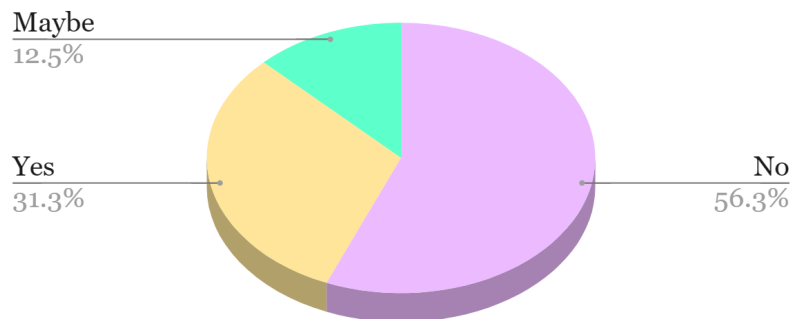
4.1.2. Gender as an obstacle in male teachers' teaching careers.

In this section, the participants were asked about the obstacles or problems that their gender has caused them in their teaching practice and also if, based on their experience, they thought that this same characteristic would bring them particular barriers in the future.

4.1.2.1. Current drawbacks in their profession. To introduce this part, pre-service teachers were asked if their gender has ever influenced or represented an obstacle in their practice as aspiring teachers. Of the 16 participants, 56.3% responded with "No", meaning that they haven't faced such obstacles. Furthermore, 31,3% stated that they had encountered these issues, while 12,5% were unsure and responded with a "maybe" (See Figure 5).

Figure 5

Pre-service teachers' thoughts on the influence of their gender in their career



The five teachers who responded positively to the previous question were asked to briefly mention what kind of obstacles they encountered. Three factors were frequent and interconnected: the preference for female teachers' motherly aspects, the stigma toward male teachers by parents, and the greater demand for female teachers in job offers. As for the first factors, the participants stated that since the female figure resembles the mother figure, it makes children feel more comfortable and also gives parents a preference and confidence in letting their

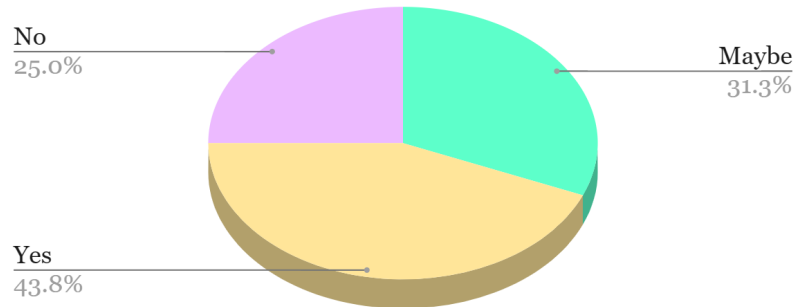
children be cared for, and taken to the bathroom and other types of assistance by women and not by male teachers. Related to job opportunities, the participants declared that in schools and face-to-face institutions, there are more jobs available only to female teachers due to all the stigmas towards male teachers.

Finally, one answer that was not directly linked with these three categories was one short sentence that called the attention of the researchers because it was a very different answer from the previous ones and it was forceful in the way that it showed a rather fateful scenario caused by the stigma around male teachers. Hence, P3 said: "I think I got fired for that reason".

4.1.2.2. Possible future barriers. Just as there are many obstacles currently when trying to get a job as a male, as answered by the pre-service teachers, there are also a few more boundaries that they feel they may have in the future. In the survey design, the ninth question was about the future and how they thought their gender could potentially influence their career path as graduated teachers and not just pre-service teachers, as that is their current situation. The answers to this were quite varied. Out of the 16 male students surveyed, 7 answered "yes," or that they definitely feel that being a male teacher will influence their futures as teachers, this represented 43.8% of the answers. For the next section of "no," which was for the ones that didn't think that being a man would have an impact on their career, there were 4 people who chose this answer, making it 25% of the total answers. Finally, there was another answer that was added to the survey, and it was "maybe" for the ones that were not sure of their answer or haven't yet encountered a work situation in which their gender could play a significant role. Surprisingly, 5 people still chose this answer, making it 31.3% of the total answers to the question.

Figure 6

Pre-Service teachers' thoughts on the influence of their gender in their future career



As the ending question, the researchers asked the surveyed students to explain or clarify the reasoning behind their answers, and most of them gave answers that were similar in nature. In their first opinion, they believe there is a strong bias towards female teachers, especially in elementary school grades. P8 and P9 also added that a lot of institutions or parents prefer their children to have a female teacher in charge of their kid, which seemed to represent a motherly or protective figure, and are considered more creative, didactic, and careful with the kids when it comes to teaching and class management, besides the fact that this profession has been more female-oriented due to countless generations of female teachers, making it hard to overlook this stereotype. This is supported by the job offers that are often given by the institutions. In most cases, they explicitly mention that they are looking for female tutors or teachers for the job and not males.

Similarly, P1, P4, and P6 stated in their responses that "the younger kids may appear to have a tendency of preferring female teachers because they like the caregiver, loving, nurturing, and patient role just as their mothers because it is everything that they know from that young age," P4 responded. Moreover, people will often think those male teachers are likely to be gay or

homosexual if they are in charge of certain subjects, and it could be a strong consideration for the institutions when hiring male participants.

One more participant (P9) also wrote that there was this very well-known "bad reputation" attributed to men in general that made people afraid to have a male teacher. Because there are not only scandals of potentially improper acting in elementary or high schools but even in university settings, there have been plenty of these incidents. This actually makes it more difficult for men to obtain jobs not only in preschools but also at other levels, resulting in these jobs being filled by women. Furthermore, an extra response gives an important insight into what happens to the men that get a job in a school: they have to be incredibly careful with their actions because it will ultimately lead to a misunderstanding. As an example, you should never be alone with a student in a classroom.

P7 even mentioned an anecdote from their school experience in the answer box. The school in which he gave classes was full of women; there were no male professors, not even for the subjects that are often related to men like physical education or computer education. And, he says, this is not the only case he has ever seen; the school in which he studied also followed this women-only methodology. In the end, the participant also discussed how he fears that it may not be easy for him to get hired in the future since there are many schools like the ones he mentioned.

Another point of view was that when parents and institutions encounter a real male professor who is passionate about his profession and appears inspired and motivated to work at the elementary levels, there could be a significant shift in perspective on both authority figures and future teacher aspirants.

Despite this, there were a few replies that stated that their gender wouldn't have an impact on their career. Someone mentioned that the level at which women are taught is nowadays linked to their preferences and not their gender. In the same way, there are now a growing number of institutions that hire men and are solely focused on the capabilities and knowledge that the aspirant has and not their gender.

4.2. Parents' Perspectives of male teachers

For collecting the points of view and predilections of parents whose young kids study at a private school in Piedecuesta, the researchers also created a survey similar to the one given to pre-service teachers. In this case, the participants were recruited through Facebook and WhatsApp groups because, in most cases, the people inside those groups can send the survey to its respective target. Since the past method did not give enough information about parents, the researchers also asked parents directly outside of some schools at noon when they were about to pick up their kids. The targets of the survey were mainly parents, but there was also a small percentage of grandparents who were in charge of the kids. The link to the survey was shared along with a brief explanation of the content and the questions of the survey, in addition to an introduction of the topic of the investigation and the investigators' names and contact information. In the explanation, it was clarified that the people needed for the survey were specifically parents of kids currently studying at any elementary level.

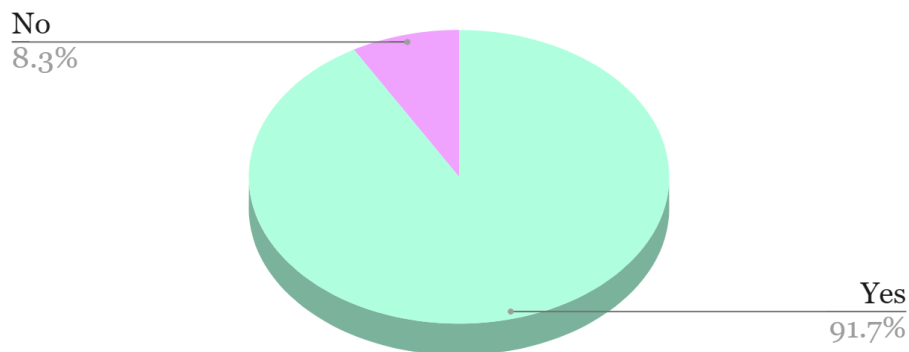
Moreover, this second survey was left open for the same amount of time as the pre-service teachers' (1 month), and it collected a total of 12 answers from different parents. However, in the first question, one of the parents stated that their kids were not currently in elementary school, but the researchers decided to keep the answer because, in a further

explanation, their kid was about to enter elementary school the next year. As a result, all 12 answers were dissected. Each participant will be labeled with a similar methodology as the pre-service teachers, identifying them with the letters SG (Student Guardian), followed by a number indicating the order of response, e.g., "SG1."

To get specific information about the preferences of the participants, the first question in the survey asked if the participant had at least one child studying in any elementary school at the moment of completing the questionnaire. The possible answers for this question were "yes" or "no," and participants could choose only one. 11 contestants, representing 91.7% of the people, answered positively, while only one person, or 8.3% of the answers, were negative (see figure 4). SG11 was the person who answered no; despite this, the person immediately explained that his kid had to leave school for a semester but that next year she will continue attending class.

Figure 7

Parents who currently have one or more children studying in elementary

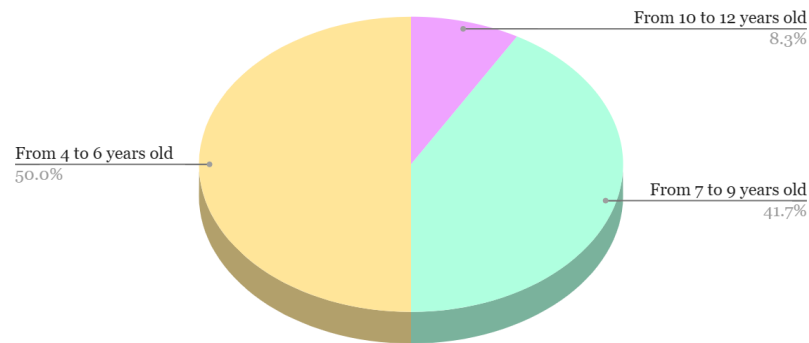


In the second question, the researchers asked about the ages of the kids, as shown in Figure 5. In order to give a more precise answer, the participants had to choose between the following options: 3 years old or less, 4 to 6 years old, 7 to 9 years old, 10 to 12 years old, and 13 years or older. In this question, the participants could select multiple choices if required since some of them had more than one kid. In spite of this, all of the contestants only picked one

option. Half of the 12 contestants answered that their kids were aged 4 to 6, making it 50%. Then, 5 contestants (41.7%) selected the age range of 7 to 9 years old. Only one SS answered that their kid was 10 years old or older, and it completed the chart with 8.3%. The options 3 years old or younger and 13 years old or older received 0% of the responses.

Figure 8

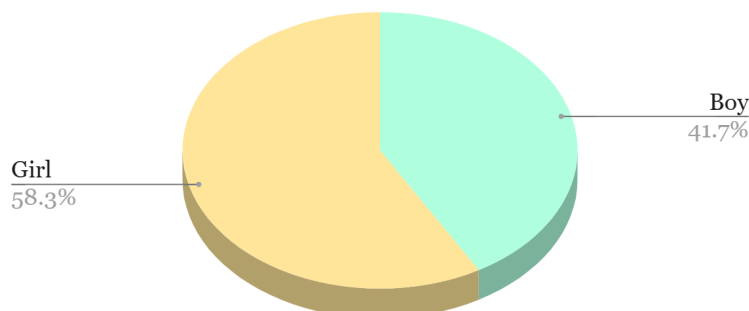
Age range of the children



For the third question, the researchers needed to find out about the gender of the kids since it was expected that parents of girls would prefer female teachers over male teachers due to a fear of possible sexual assault. The choices that were given were "boy," "girl," and "other" for the kids that did not identify with either option. This question was also multiple choice; however, all the guardians chose only one option once again. In the answers (see Figure 9), 7 out of 12 contestants (58.3%) selected that their kid was a girl, and 5 out of 12 contestants (41.7%) responded that their kid was a boy. None of them chose the option "other."

Figure 9

Gender of the children

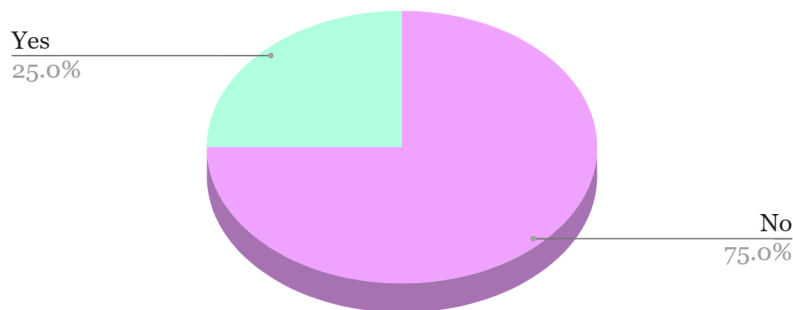


4.2.1. Preference for the gender of the teachers who teach their kids.

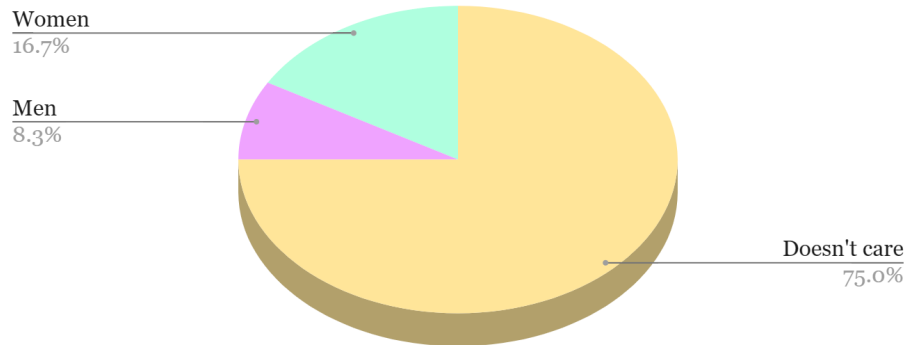
Going on to the question that addresses whether the parents did have a preference for the gender of the teachers, really surprising information was collected. Although what the researchers believed was that parents would definitely have a preference for the gender of teachers as reported in previous literature on the subject, in reality, the majority did not care about that factor at all. The great majority of students' guardians (75%) said that they did not have any preference for the gender of the teachers in charge of the students. On the other hand, only SG7, SG8, and SG12 (25 percent of the participants) stated that they actually cared about that characteristic (see Figure 10).

Figure 10

Do you have a preference regarding the gender of the teachers who teach your child?



Concerning the previously posed question, the guardians were given three options: female, male, or doesn't care. As can already be deduced from the answer to the preceding question, 75% of the participants who said they have no preference for any gender chose the option "doesn't care," restating their opinion. In contrast, the remaining 25% was divided in the following way: SG8 and SG12 (16.7%) expressed that they preferred the teacher to be female, and SG7 (8.3%) said that they preferred a male instructor for their kids. See Figure 11.

Figure 11*Parents' preferences on the gender of their child's teachers***4.2.2. The reasons behind the students' guardians' preference for teachers' gender**

In this segment, the students' guardians were asked about the motive for their preference for the teachers' gender on an open-ended question at the end of the questionnaire. The researchers will address the findings in the following way: first, the answers of the 25% of guardians who had a preference for a certain gender; then, the answers of the 75% of guardians who stated that they had no preference for any gender.

4.2.2.1. Guardians who had a preference for teachers' gender. As stated before, 25% of the guardians (SG7, SG8, and SG12) affirmed having a preference for the teachers' gender. They were primarily motivated by two factors. First, they stated qualities associated with the gender they preferred, followed by a fear of the guardian related to the gender of the child and the threat of being harmed by a male teacher.

On the one hand, SG7 and SG12 highlighted that their previously stated preference for a certain gender was because of the qualities they perceive as most important in a teacher. According to their perspective, these qualities were attached to the gender of the teacher. First, SG7 affirmed that they preferred a male teacher because "they explain better and faster."

Therefore, their motives are due to the belief that male teachers are better at explaining the topics of the class and managing its pace. Then, SG12 stated that they preferred to have a female teacher with their child. The reasons presented were that "female teachers are more patient and loving when teaching kids." Therefore, they attribute to females the characteristics of being patient and loving, specifically with children.

Lastly, the guardian SG8 stated that "since I have a girl, I am afraid a male teacher will do something to her, but if the institution has a male teacher, one has to conform to it." Therefore, the reason for their preference is a perceived threat by male teachers because of the gender of their child. As a result, this guardian has a preference for them as a protection measure. Cases like this may be related to the increasing rates of male teachers who molest girls at schools. Yet, they are open to having male teachers if they are part of the institution.

4.2.2.2. Guardians who had no preference for any gender. The remaining 75% of guardians stated that they had no preference for the gender of the teachers. When asked about their motives, they expressed common ideas, which will be categorized into 4 categories. Firstly, the teachers' capability to teach is not related to their gender. The guardians SG1 and SG11 agreed on this view, expressing that both female and male teachers have equal capabilities to be "excellent teachers" (SG1).

Secondly, "anyone can teach, without gender discrimination" (SG2). The topic of gender equality and discrimination was touched upon by the guardians, SG2 and SG3. For these participants, these are the reasons why they do not have a gender preference for the teachers. Thirdly, "gender has nothing to do with the quality of the teaching." For the participants in SG4, SG5, SG6, and SG9, the quality of teaching was a common theme. They expressed that the quality of teaching is what they value, as stated in SG6: "What is important is the quality of the

teacher, not their gender." It was also expressed by SG5 that quality has no relation to the gender of the teachers. Finally, guardians SG4 and SG10 agreed that the way the teachers treat the children is what matters. They find it important that teachers treat the children in a way that is "caring and with love" (SG10).

4.3. Institutions' Preferences and Perspectives

As for the collecting of the Elementary Institutions' perspectives, the researchers opted for a different approach to the previous surveys, and they used live interviews instead. In order to collect the data, the researchers went to approximately 20 different schools. Only 10 of them agreed to participate in the study. The researchers had to go in person since it was recommended instead of sending emails directly to the institutions because they could be more responsive if the researchers talked to the administrations this way. Even though the goal was to interview 15 schools, the researchers got the answers from 10 out of 35 total private schools in Piedecuesta, Santander. The researchers wrote and printed a confidentiality form for the institutions' administrators to read and sign that was about the nature of the interview and the information regarding the participants' participation and the use of the information they were going to provide, as well as the contact information of the researchers and their respective signatures. This form was given to each administrator for them to keep; in addition to this, there was an extra sheet with only the signatures for the researchers to keep as evidence of the confidentiality agreement with each institution.

The contestants in these interviews were three principals, six members of school management, and one teacher of the school, or the people in charge of the hiring process. Furthermore, the interview process took an average of 10 minutes, of which 6 were for the audio

recording of the answers. The researchers then compiled all the answers and transcribed them all for analyzing each question through memos (Annex. 5). The collection of the interviews lasted a month and a half due to the difficulties in the schedule. Each of the institutions was labeled with the letters "PS" (Private School) and the number of their response. As a result, all 10 answers were analyzed. In addition to this, the information collected was classified into five categories that were enclosed in the interview guide: hiring criteria in private institutions, Teacher population, thoughts on the lack of male teachers, beliefs regarding the level of female and male teachers' efficiency, and institutional preferences of each school.

4.3.1. Hiring criteria in private institutions.

When the private schools were asked about the criteria they looked for when they hired a new teacher in the institutions, 60% of them responded that the most important aspect of a teacher was their charisma and attitude towards the class and the children as well. It was crucial for a new teacher to be engaging and to get along with the kids because, when it comes to elementary school levels, patience and attitude are necessary to teach and have a positive influence on the kids. Another prominent notion was that they needed a degree and qualifications before hiring a teacher. Training in the pedagogic field is a constant criterion that they look for, even if it's only the Escuela Normal Superior degree. PS6 mentioned that even if they have no working experience with institutions, they can hire new contestants only based on their education. Finally, PS9 was the only intuition to emphasize the importance of teaching passion in the job interview because it will determine how well they perform with children in the future.

4.3.2. Teacher population.

The private schools were asked about the total number of teachers enrolled in the institution's elementary level this year. Besides, they were also asked about the number of male

teachers at that level. The total number of elementary school teachers found in the 10 institutions interviewed was 70. It was also found that of this amount, only 16 were male teachers and 54 were female teachers (see Figure 12). This result shows that 22.9% of these teachers were males and 77.1% were females (see Figure 13).

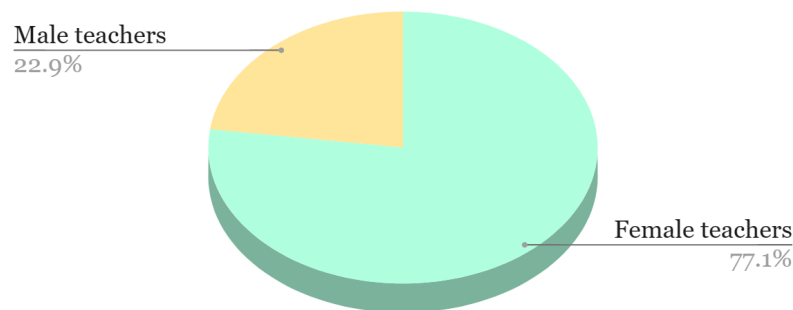
Table 2

Number of teachers in 10 private primary schools in Piedecuesta

ID	Teachers in Elementary Level	Female Teachers	Male Teachers
PS1	6	2	4
PS2	14	13	1
PS3	8	5	3
PS4	5	4	1
PS5	2	1	1
PS6	5	5	0
PS7	12	10	2
PS8	8	6	2
PS9	5	5	0
PS10	5	3	2
Total:	70	54	16

Figure 12

Percentage of male and female teachers in the 10 private primary schools



As inferred from Figure 12, only two of the PSs had 50% or more male teachers at the elementary level. These were PS1 and PS5, with the first having the highest percentage of 66% and the second having 50%. In the other eight PSs, the percentage of male teachers was less than

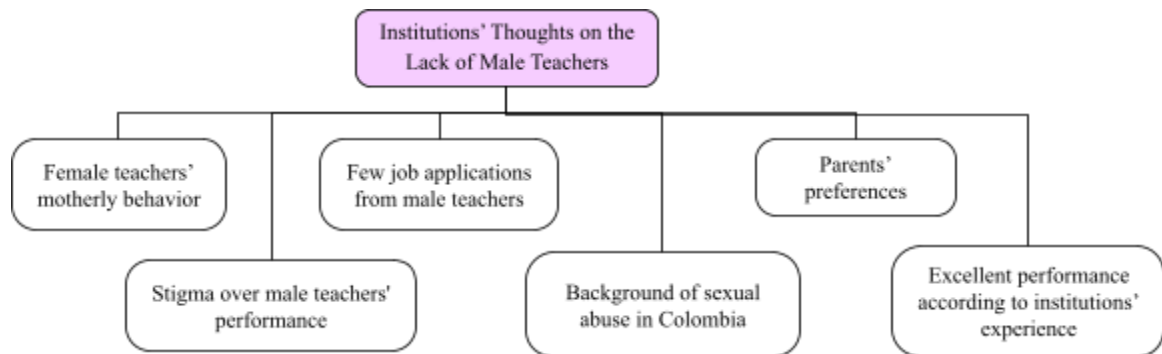
50%: PS10 (40%), PS3 (37.5%), PS8 (25%), and PS4 (20%). The lowest percentages were those of PS7, where only two out of twelve teachers were males (16%), and PS2, where only one out of fourteen teachers was a male (7.1%). Two PSs had no male teachers, these were PS9 and PS6, each with five teachers who were all female.

4.3.3. Thoughts on the lack of male teachers.

In this section of the interview, the leading question directed toward the school administrators was: Why do you think the number of male teachers is so low in primary school? The responses were classified into six different aspects that encompass the main ideas of the participants (see Figure 14).

Figure 13

Institutions' thoughts on the lack of male teachers



In the first place, four of the PSs mentioned that there is a strong and pretty common belief in the maternal instinct of women, which is why childcare is automatically associated with them. PS1 said that "it is easier for women to get along with a child, due to this matter of the maternal instinct of protection." As a result, PS2 stated that this is the reason why those tender attributes are more sought after for primary school teachers than high school teachers. Moreover, PS3 and PS4 stated that based on all the characteristics that are commonly associated with them, it is more common for women to be more involved with teaching and education than men.

Secondly, four institutions mentioned a stigma over male teachers' performance. PS1, PS2, PS4, and PS9 affirmed that there are certain prejudices in society about the performance of men, which is why male teachers are often associated with being very strict and lacking patience, which would not be useful when dealing with children. Even more, PS9 said that male teachers are believed to be less engaged with students. Specifically, PS2 said that due to these characteristics, "for men, one looks more to the high school area; maybe the men are stricter in that area".

In third place, there are three institutions that express that one of the aspects that influence this lack of male professors is the low demand on their part. Regarding PS2, PS3, and PS7, they do not get many resumes from men, mainly from women. As mentioned in the first aspect, PS3 highlights that the reason behind the lack of male teachers might be that there are almost no applications for this job from men because women are the ones who are more associated with it: "I consider that to be especially true because of the demand... the demand", "It is mainly women who become more familiar with matters of education".

Moving on, the fourth aspect is the background of sexual abuse in Colombia, which has left a trace of fear. Four of the interviewed administrators mention these acts in a peculiar way, full of euphemisms and trying to avoid any direct wording related to sexual molestation. The PS1 and PS6 institutions referred to this problem as "certain problems" that occur with men in general and that took place in some other schools that give rise to bad comments about the integration of male teachers in the area. Instead, PS6 and PS8 directly mention that it is because the rate of harassment and rape by men is higher, and that is why there is a latent fear that men can harm little girls. Hence, PS8 added:

In preschool, you have to take the children to the bathroom, you see? So it's not the same for a man to take a girl to the bathroom, or even a boy to the bathroom, right? than to be taken by a female teacher [...] this is due to the situation. Also, this same institution emphasizes the importance of reminding male teachers on how to behave; [...] I have seen that the girls, mainly the fifth graders, already have woken up in that emotional part, let's say, to call the attention of the opposite sex, and then sometimes, let's say, the physical education teachers, I have always had to talk to them and tell them: look, this is your function [...]"

Related to the above, in fifth place are the preferences of the student's parents or guardians, which seem to be one of the most decisive aspects for four institutions. Three of these four institutions (PS6, PS8, and PS10) stated that parents always ask them directly if there are male teachers in the institutions or not. According to the fourth institution mentioned, PS 9, it is common to hear parents say, "I don't want it to be a man," when they are asking about teachers' information. All of these administrators agree that parents prefer to leave their kids with female teachers, so they don't tend to hire as many male teachers as they would like. In response to PS8, it is stated that the parents' preference is due to their fear of their children being harmed by a man.

Nevertheless, although some negative conceptions are held about male teachers in primary school, three schools maintain that, according to their experience, these teachers can perform their job in an excellent way and, more importantly, with no problems related to their gender. From these responses, there is one that is important to highlight for its detail and the description of the exceptional welcoming of the four male teachers in this school:

There are many men who perform very well working with children and situations that necessarily could be problematic do not occur (...) the children appreciate and love them and we have not had any problems with them and they perform very well with primary school students. (Private School 1)

4.3.4. Beliefs regarding the level of female and male teachers' efficiency

Regarding the general beliefs that PSs hold regarding the level of efficiency between men and women, there was a majority of schools that made clear the fact that men and women could both be equally qualified for the role of teacher because it all depends on their level of education and capability to teach, not gender. There was even an institution called PS2 that explained their position towards this statement of equality and said that nowadays there are no differences between the performance of either male or female teachers because the world has come to a point in which both can be considered alike.

Some of the institutions like PS1, PS3, PS6, and PS9 also went beyond and said that, in their experience, men are even more efficient than women when it comes to teaching. PS1 mentioned this because they have seen how the kids interact with their male teachers and, in most cases, want to continue with the same homeroom teacher. Another point is that men respond more rapidly to crucial situations and are more responsible and hard-working. There was a final opinion that only a few institutions (PS5 and PS6) pointed out: it all depends on the real calling and the will that men have for their profession. Only if they seem prepared and capable of managing a classroom full of kids can they be as efficient as the female teachers that have taught in schools for many years.

4.3.5. Institutional preferences

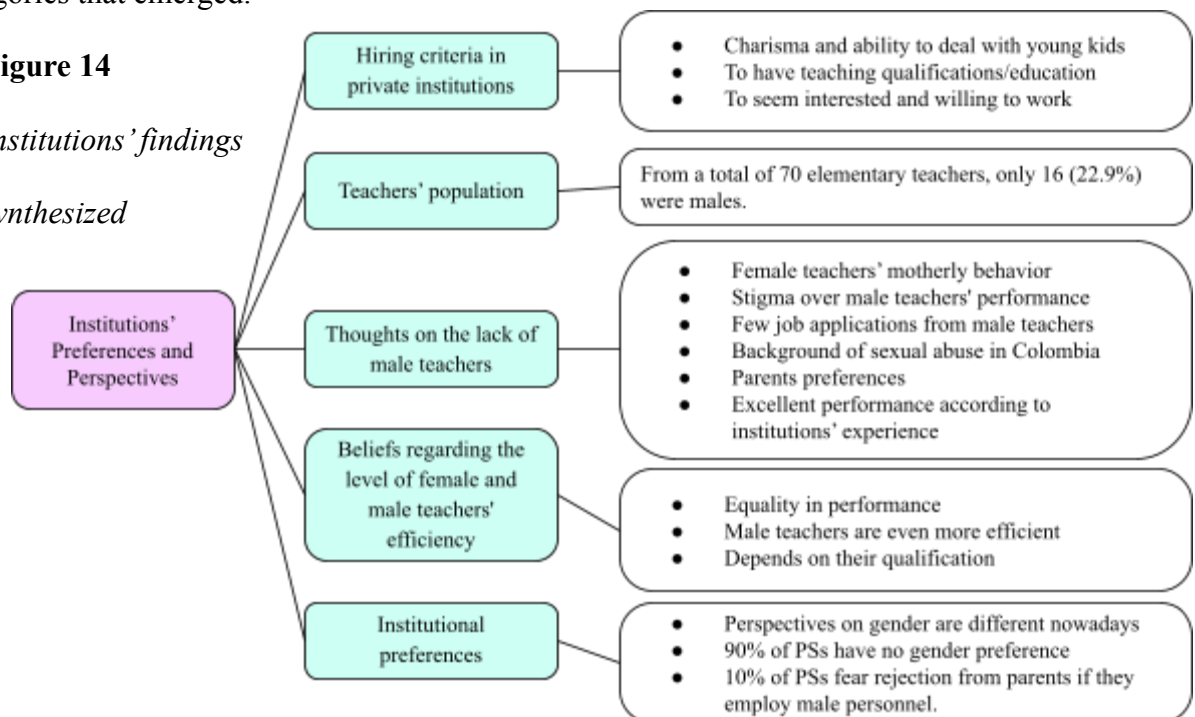
According to the institutions' statements, 90% of them express no gender preference at all. They affirm that the gender of the teachers is not relevant in any way. As said by PS1, "their sex is not the one giving the class and taking care of the students." Some PSs highlight that what they give importance to is the quality of the teachers, not their gender. They name some essential attributes such as the ability to make students feel comfortable, empathy, previous knowledge, charisma, and professionalism. Their ability to accomplish and comply with what the institutions expect from them is also mentioned. On a different note, PS10 states that they do have a preference for the preschool level. They prefer female teachers because of their tone of voice. According to them, females have a "sweet" tone of voice, which makes students more comfortable. Instead, male teachers tend to have a "stronger" tone of voice, which scares them. In elementary school, however, they declare that they have no gender preference, and that what is important is the teacher's preparation and empathy with the children.

Moreover, some institutions express their perspectives on gender ideas such as gender equality and how different young teachers are from a decade ago. PS2 expressed that nowadays there is more freedom of gender and therefore they, as an institution, cannot stigmatize. They mention the acceptance of different sexual orientations of male teachers as well: "sometimes male teachers with different sexual orientations apply to the institution, and it does not matter anymore because it is very normal" (PS2). Besides, PS1 made a comparison with the teachers from 10 years ago; they say that nowadays teachers are different, and maybe 10 years ago a female teacher would have been better, but in this day and age, not anymore. These shifts in perspective bring new ideas to these institutions and make it easier for teachers to adapt to new generations.

Finally, one of the institutions mentioned that they fear rejection by parents if they have male teachers. PS6 expresses that parents are very "wary." When they go to the school asking for information to enroll their children, one of the common questions is, "Who are the people living in the house?" "What do they do?" in order to determine whether or not any males are present when their children attend school. This happens since the school is owned by blood-related sisters, and one of them lives with their son. The interviewee expressed that they even have a dilemma because their son is studying to be a teacher and they have not decided if he will be allowed to teach at their school. This is a result of their fear that parents will decide not to enroll their children if there is a male teacher. Another school mentioned being aware of this situation. According to PS8, when the parents do not know the institution well, they are distrustful if there is a male in the school. The possible reason they provide is "situations that have happened in other institutions." To sum up the findings of these sections about institutions' perspectives in Figure 15, the authors synthesized the five previously mentioned categories with the respective sub-categories that emerged.

Figure 14

Institutions' findings synthesized



4.4. Analysis and Discussion

In order to discover patterns, it was critical to identify any correlations between the opinions of the three different categories (Male pre-service teachers' concerns, Parents' perspective of male teachers, and Institutions' preferences and perspectives). Those trends should provide responses that could have an impact on the increase of male elementary teachers by providing vital knowledge to other institutions and future male teachers who may be interested in teaching in the elementary field. The answers to the survey and interview questions gave useful insight into specific patterns and reasons to divide the answers into categories.

As mentioned in the results section, several tools were employed for data analysis, including Google Forms and Microsoft Excel. This combination of statistical tools enabled the researchers to generate cross-tabulation reports from multiple survey questions. On the one hand, for the analysis of the interviews, the researchers made use of thematic analysis in order to discover meaningful patterns in the data and derive themes. On the other hand, Google Forms was utilized to arrange data and record individual responses from male participants and parents. To compute information in this study, cross-tabulation of reports from the perspective of pre-service teachers regarding their personal experiences and concerns regarding their future professional growth with all other questions was required. This form of study offered answers to the question of whether any distinctive patterns were discovered between either set of people in this section of the paper.

Pre-service teachers' experience, preferences, and reasons for their preferences.

There were a total of 16 male university students who responded to the first survey. Since 14 of the participants already had some sort of experience teaching, whether it was a university requirement or in extracurricular activities, they can already share their opinions and thoughts

regarding what it is actually like for them to work in that context. As a result, the researchers aimed to know at which specific level the student had experience, and the students stated that most of the experiences that they had were in levels below the ninth grade and above preschool, with the majority in elementary.

Nevertheless, in order to find out the actual preferences of these university students, they were asked which grade they currently take or will take in the future. Interestingly enough, almost all of the students chose the university level or adults, while only half preferred to teach at the high school level. The most popular option goes to university levels, as expected, even though half of them haven't yet experienced teaching at those levels. According to Patrick (2009), it is not unusual for men to prefer other teaching levels than elementary, having a special affinity for high school and university environments where women are not necessarily the majority when it comes to the teaching field. Despite this, there was an important number that still chose elementary as the grade they would like to teach. This is because the majority of them have experienced an elementary-level classroom and enjoyed it. According to Sargen (2000), it is also common for men who have a better affinity with children rather than teenagers to prefer teaching at the elementary level; it all depends on the pedagogic approach and personality of the subject, but the school environment plays a huge role in this position, because most male teachers are akin to feel more comfortable in their practice if the institution and co-workers are also welcoming.

When the students were asked for the reasoning behind these preferences in the next question, more than half of the contestants picked the age of the students as the main factor, followed by the other half that answered that it was due to personal experience. For the concluding questions of this survey, the researchers divided the answers into two segments:

current barriers and future barriers. For the first category, the first question was whether they felt their gender had negatively impacted their professional development. A large number of the answers showed the same argument about the fact that institutions were most of the time looking for female teachers and not male teachers, reassuring the gender stereotypes of women being more qualified to take care of little children because of the nurturing and affectionate resemblance to a mother. As it is also explained, men are more eager to suffer from prejudice when they enter "female occupations" and are even considered effeminate by society (Torre, 2018).

Finally, the question switched from the present to the future. Less than half of the participants stated that their gender could represent a burden; similarly, a third chose the option "maybe." From these answers, the researchers gathered additional information by asking what their thoughts were on the influence of their gender for the previous question, and, once again, the answers led to an explanation in relation to it. 75% of the answers concluded that being male was definitely a disadvantage for their future job search due to the fact that most job opportunities in elementary school were offered to women, remarking that they were also very aware of the common conception of sexual harassment that there is towards men and how complex it is to prove themselves as teachers when the opportunities are denied. The stereotype of sexual aggressors is, sadly, not far from reality and an incredibly difficult mentality to erase; as a consequence, a lot of parents fear for the most-of-the-time seen danger of male personnel in schools and other environments where children can find themselves vulnerable, as illustrated by King (2018). Only 25% of the responses said that teaching little kids nowadays is becoming a more gender-neutral field compared to the past, consequently not representing an obstacle for them. This idea is also supported by Patrick (2009), who agrees on the matter by explaining how

men and women are both supposed to be prepared to teach if they went through the appropriate training and learning in a university or college setting.

Now, what was previously said about this barrier to job opportunities differs from the hiring criteria of the institutions in this study, where it was never mentioned as an important requirement to work there, and almost all the institutions said that they mainly cared about the teacher's attitude and charisma. Nevertheless, a vote of confidence is given to the pre-service teachers, since the institutions did not maintain coherence throughout all their responses, since some of them, despite mentioning only those hiring requirements, eventually said that they refrained from hiring men.

Dichotomy in the perceptions

One of the discoveries made in this study was the dichotomy between the actual preferences of parents over the gender of teachers and the institutions' perceptions of the lack of male teachers. Previous studies, like the one from King (2018), state that parents most of the time have a certain preference for female teachers because of the fear of getting their kids hurt by a male. This was not the case with the sample of students' guardians that took part in this study. As can be seen in the results, the vast majority of SGs expressed that they do not hold any preference when it comes to the gender of the teachers, as they mainly care about the quality of the teaching imparted and that they care for their children. This is almost entirely different from the experiences reported by a large number of institutions interviewed.

It is noticeable that for these institutions, the fact that some educational establishments do not hire men is due to the fear that parents will not enroll their children there. Something important to highlight is that some of the institutions that stated that they had to confront this situation by getting the question "Do men work here?" were the ones that opened up the most in

the interview and spoke with more confidence and without being self-conscious. Even in a specific institution (PS6), it was repeatedly stated that the only reason they do not allow male teachers to work there is due to parental pressure to keep the institution with only female teachers. These statements were mainly related to the stigma attached to male teachers due to the number of cases of educators' sexual abuse in Colombia and because people still share the same idea as in Noddings (1995, as cited in Mitrano, 2014), in which the role of education is seen as innate to women due to the characteristics that make them more appropriate for this job.

Now, in order to know why there is this clash between the ideas of the guardians surveyed and the experiences that were revealed in the interviews, a few aspects must be taken into account. As previously stated, the interviews were semi-structured, which may have been an important factor in allowing the institutions to relax a little more and tell researchers about their personal experiences. This may denote a higher level of sincerity, a level that could not be verified in the survey that was made for parents. Furthermore, since the medium in which the survey was promoted was through social networks, especially Facebook, it would not be a surprise to receive responses from parents who are a little younger and therefore with more open minds. The reason to say this is related to the previously completed Digital 2021 Global Overview Report. Based on this report, Alvino (2021) brought a more localized version of it called "Statistics of the Digital Situation of Colombia in 2020-2021," where it was said that the majority of social media users are in the age range of 13 to 34 years old. As a result, it is thought that the parents' age may have played a role in the results, which differed from the experiences described by institutions where parents were portrayed as female teachers' advocates.

Nevertheless, if it is taken into account the number of parents and students' guardians that participated in the survey, it is noticeable that it is not a representative sample, which gives more

reliability to what was said by the institutions. Overall, what the institutions said must be acknowledged, as it was a more significant sample within Piedecuesta, and in addition, having used open questions helped to collect a large number of specific experiences.

Gender and efficacy

The institutions' perceptions of the efficacy a teacher may have are a deciding factor when it comes to the hiring process. It is part of the criteria they search for, alongside personal characteristics and educational qualifications. In the results, it was evident that all the interviewed private elementary institutions perceived female and male teachers as having the same level of efficacy. For two of the PSs (PS5 and PS6), it is clarified that their efficacy level is dependent on the qualifications and vocation of the aspiring teachers. Yet, they all agree on the fact that female and male teachers can achieve the same level of efficacy. Besides, SGs are on the same side, since they also perceive that the gender of the teacher has no relation to their qualifications and qualities as teachers. Therefore, it is possible to infer that from the point of view of the PSs and SGs, the efficacy factor does not relate at all to gender, and as a result, it may not be a factor contributing to the lack of male elementary school teachers.

However, it is perceived from the answers of these institutions that they may believe a gender can be better than the other. It is the case of the institutions that affirm that male teachers can sometimes outperform female teachers. Perhaps one of the institutions that shared this thought was PS1, which believed male teachers to be better at reacting immediately in dangerous situations involving students. Contrary to female teachers, who were seen as more prone to being paralyzed by fear, Another gender-assigned characteristic by the PSs was that of PS9, who qualifies male teachers as "hardworking." For instance, the institutions report their great experiences with male teachers at the elementary level. PS1 expressed that since 4 out of the 6

teachers in primary are males, it implies how great male teachers can be. They reported that these male teachers get along well with children, are appreciated by them, and have not caused them any inconvenience so far. In addition to this experience, there is that of PS10, who was a teacher himself. He stated, "I'm the third-grade teacher, and the parents are very happy with me." A lot! "They even want me to teach their kids in the next grade."

More interestingly, some of the institutions are aware of the common gender stereotypes that may hinder the participation of male teachers at the elementary level. They mention that society has stigmatized these teachers, which is seen as the cause of their scarcity. As mentioned by a majority of them, it is believed that they are not as motherly and nurturing as women are (PS1, PS2, PS3, PS4, and PS10). Therefore, men may not be able to connect with and take care of the children in the classroom as deeply as women may. It is also mentioned that male teachers may not be as patient and instead be more strict, which according to PS2 is a characteristic that institutions search for more in secondary than elementary education. Besides, the stigma a male teacher carries due to the prevalence of educators' sexual abuse is also highlighted.

Then, it is evident that gender stereotypes are still present in other institutions and are the "common belief" according to the participants. Consequently, even if male and female teachers are perceived as equally qualified for the job, there are still gender stereotypes that contribute to the low number of them. This finding is related to Martino's (2008), who expresses that teaching at the elementary level is commonly believed to be a "woman's job" and men lack the nurturing abilities for it. Yet one of the institutions did make the assumption that a male presenter would be equal to a teacher whose sexual orientation differed from heterosexual (PS2). Therefore, it is inferred that there is no clear idea of the difference between gender identity and sexual orientation. What is more, the assumption of an "effeminate" male teacher can be inferred from

the participant's commentary. One of the institutions (PS1) noted that welcoming young teachers may bring change, and they may connect easier with the new generations. Perhaps the hiring of young male teachers at this level will provide schools with a more up-to-date perspective on issues such as gender. Moreover, the positive experiences some institutions have had with male teachers may help destigmatize some of the internalized ideas and prejudices they carry.

To sum up, for the part of the preservice teachers, there was an interest present in teaching at the elementary level, yet a majority still preferred teaching adults or university students. Age and personal preference were the defining factors, according to the participants. From the preservice teachers' point of view, limited job opportunities in institutions and fear of stigmatization or prejudice as sexual aggressors are some of the obstacles they foresee on their career paths. This differs from the institutions' point of view, which denied having a preference for the gender of the teachers they hire. Instead, they expressed their belief that both female and male teachers can be equally qualified for the job, depending on their educational qualifications and personal characteristics. They shared that they are aware of the stereotypes and stigmatization of male teachers at the elementary level and their positive experiences working with them.

However, a few of these institutions did affirm to avoid hiring male teachers because of the parents' wary attitude towards them. Nevertheless, what was found from the parents' point of view does not correlate with what the institutions express. since the majority also expressed perceiving teachers as equal. Thus, due to the possibility of not having a representative sample from the students' guardians, the point of view of institutions is seen as more reliable. In conclusion, according to the responses of preservice teachers and private elementary institutions,

the factors that may hinder their participation are: limited job opportunities due to the pressure and caution from parents; and the stigmatization of male teachers as possible sexual aggressors.

4.5. Limitations, Further Research, and Recommendations

Limitations

One of the biggest limitations this study encountered was that the sampling for the students' and parents' surveys were carried out using the snowball method, and therefore one had to trust that they would reach people through social networks. However, to make the survey aimed at parents successful, the researchers ended up going directly to the educational establishments and inviting people to participate in it. In order to have acquired a more significant sample, it would have been ideal to have a connection with an institution that would lend the researchers its means of communication or some space in their schedules to be able to contact parents.

Similar to the previous problem, another aspect that made data collection difficult was the limited time available for this step, which did not allow the researchers to establish a prior connection with the institutions that would ensure their participation in the study. Even if the sample of institutions was representative, it would have been possible to anticipate the participation of many more schools in the process of establishing relationships with them ahead of time.

Another limitation presented was the sensitive topic of gender issues, which led participants to think very carefully before expressing their honest opinions. This also occurred in the institutions when they had to refer to cases of sexual abuse since they did not go deeply into the subject and used euphemisms to avoid talking directly about it. But even so, this is something

that is simply taboo in society, and that could only be fixed if the government and the Ministry of Education promoted talking about these issues more openly to raise awareness about them and prevent any more cases.

Further Research

This study tried to collect perspectives from the three main active actors in the process of hiring teachers in primary schools. Testimonials from future teachers were collected since they are the protagonists of the lack of resources that occurs in primary schools. On the other hand, the testimonials of the parents were collected, as they are the ones who make the decision of where to enroll their children, so their preferences are an important influence in hiring decisions. The researchers also interviewed the schools, which are the ones that take into account the opinion of the parents and their own experiences, and then hire the teacher that seems most qualified. However, there is a future research opportunity here: the opinion of those who receive education as such, the children. This is how a topic that should be most important for institutions when establishing hiring parameters appears: Do children prefer male or female teachers, and what impact does this preference have on their learning outcomes and well-being? Furthermore, as institutions receive a vote of confidence from parents, they should not rely on rumors about other schools or unsubstantiated beliefs. These previous arguable perspectives could be noticed in the responses of the school administrators and it brings an enigma that needs to be clarified: How confident are the educational institutions of the type of teachers they hire? And also, what kind of follow-up of the teachers' performance do they do throughout their time working in those schools?

Recommendations

After having been in contact with this problem, there are certain aspects that are important enough to highlight and call for change. First of all, there are quite a few misconceptions about the work of a male teacher that appeared because of some other social misfits. For this reason, it is suggested that educational entities promote more campaigns about sexual abuse in schools and how to be alert to any signs. This would not only help to reduce the cases but would also make it stop being a topic "that should not be talked about," and the institutions, instead of ignoring it, would take more crucial actions to be safer, regardless of the gender of the people who work in them.

Another recommendation is not to ignore the fact that some male teachers are denied opportunities because of their gender. Moreover, it should be something that gets acknowledged to destigmatize their work and give them the opportunity to show their abilities and positive traits. It could be done through formative talks on the topic in different educational environments and the constant tracking of the teachers' performance to rate their quality with actual facts and not just beliefs.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, the purpose of this study was to look for specific factors that led to the lack of male elementary teachers in the specific area of Piedecuesta in Colombia. It was clear from the beginning of this paper that there is a shortage of male elementary-level teachers; this is not a new issue in the context of the country, nor is it one that is expected to go away immediately. This research tracked the points of view of the population involved with this matter and focused on male pre-service teachers, parents of elementary school kids, and private elementary

institutions. One of the factors contributing to this phenomenon is that many stereotypes have been imposed by society on the function of male elementary teachers. According to these, male elementary teachers are frequently perceived as more caring and effeminate than other male teachers, and they are frequently undervalued. These misconceptions have significantly contributed to the decline in male elementary instructors. Furthermore, cases of educator sexual abuse contribute to the stigmatization of male elementary school teachers. These cases relate more frequently to males as perpetrators of abuse than to females.

Another significant factor was the phenomenon of predominantly female primary and preschool teachers, which is related to work offers for women as the professional area was previously unequal and strongly dominated by men. As a result, women were less involved in the labor force than men, and prior to 1934, only a few technical schools permitted women to pursue very few options, including the nursing, odontology, and teaching careers. As a matter of fact, one crucial contributor to women's pedagogical training was Normal Superior Schools (ENS), which resulted in an increase in female instructors in rural areas because the schools' major goal was to make education for the new and upcoming generations accessible and structured enough to produce more educators who could eventually practice the profession. In addition to this, men were more often encouraged and preferred to take on higher-paying positions and, thus, to pursue a higher education in fields like medicine, law, engineering, and technical skills.

Furthermore, a mixed-method sequential explanatory design was chosen for the investigation. This research entailed collecting and analyzing data in two distinct phases of the same study, first quantitatively and then qualitatively. When applying this design, it was critical to consider methodological concerns such as the time assigned to each stage, their sequencing, and the stage(s) at which the data were integrated. In order to collect the necessary information

for this research, the authors used pre-made surveys in Google Forms and interviews with school administrators.

As for the context, this study was conducted in the city of Piedecuesta, and 10 private elementary schools were chosen to form the sample population. Besides this, a non-probabilistic sampling technique called "snowball" was used to collect data from pre-service teachers with a Bachelor's Degree in Foreign Languages with an Emphasis in English from the Universidad Industrial de Santander and from parents whose kids were attending any elementary school at the moment.

The initial results were from pre-service teachers, with more than half expressing a preference to teach at the university level or to adults. This is unsurprising given that men tend to favor higher-level instructional contexts. Nonetheless, almost half of the people chose the elementary school as their preferred grade level. Moreover, for most of the teachers, the age of the pupils is the most important element in their preference for teaching various courses, but half of them still cite personal experiences as their reason. As a result of gender stereotypes, parents' justified fear of sexual harassment, and the fact that most job advertisements specifically seek female teachers, the majority of survey respondents claimed that being male is a disadvantage when it comes to teaching elementary school. Besides that, this was not the case for all the surveyed teachers since an important minority believes that teaching is becoming more gender-neutral, therefore it is not necessarily an impediment.

As for the perceptions of students' guardians and institutions, they were tracked down, and it became evident that gender-related stereotypes and stigma are present in the context studied. Preservice teachers highlight the stigma towards male teachers by parents, whose "wary" behavior became evident from the private institution's point of view as well. From both sides, the

fear of parents leaving their children with male teachers is interpreted as an obstacle in the way of increasing the presence of male elementary school teachers. As mentioned before, the effect of these stigmas is related to the high rates of "teachers' sexual abuse" in the country. Hence, one out of the twelve SG interviewed expressed their preference for female teachers as a consequence of their fear for the safety of their child.

However, it was evident from the SGs' and PSs' perceptions that there should be gender equality. On the one hand, the majority of SGs (75%) state that what they value most is the quality of the teachers, not their gender. On the other hand, nine out of the ten PSs interviewed expressed no preference for the gender of the teachers they hire. Yet, even if they believe there is gender equality, only 22.9% of the total number of teachers at the elementary level were male. Therefore, the low number of male teachers present at the elementary school level in Piedecuesta is still worrying. Hence, the beliefs of institutions and the actual number of male teachers do not correlate with each other. Finally, these private institutions are not delivering an education to students where there is representation and de-stigmatization of female and male teachers. Unless school systems, institutions, parents, and especially male teachers take action to address and eliminate this problem, it will continue to happen.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix A.

Informed Consent Document

DOCUMENTO DE CONSENTIMIENTO
INFORMADO

Possible Factors that affect the Low Participation of Male Teachers in private Elementary Schools in Piedecuesta, Santander

I. INFORMACIÓN

Ha sido invitado(a) a participar en la investigación Possible Factors that affect the Low Participation of Male Teachers in private Elementary Schools in Piedecuesta, Santander. Su objetivo es investigar los posibles factores que contribuyen a la poca participación de profesores hombres en colegios privados en el área de educación primaria. Su institución ha sido seleccionada debido a que decidimos escoger instituciones privadas específicamente en Piedecuesta.

Las investigadoras responsables de este estudio son las estudiantes Laura Díaz, Michell Rueda y Mayerly Parra de la Escuela de Idiomas, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas de la Universidad Industrial de Santander. ***La investigación no está siendo patrocinada por ninguna entidad al ser una investigación con fines académicos.***

Para decidir participar en esta investigación, es importante que considere la siguiente información. Siéntase libre de preguntar cualquier aspecto que no quede claro:

Participación: Su participación consistirá en una breve entrevista que se llevará a cabo con el propósito de recolectar opiniones y perspectivas del respectivo tema de investigación. La entrevista durará alrededor de 15 minutos, y abarca preguntas sobre la participación de docentes hombres en la institución.

Para facilitar el análisis, esta entrevista será grabada. En cualquier caso, usted podrá interrumpir la grabación cuando quiera, y retomarla cuando se sienta cómodo(a).

Riesgos: Esta investigación no generará riesgo alguno, y en caso de que fuera así, se tomará total responsabilidad de ello

Beneficios: Usted no recibirá ningún beneficio económico directo por participar en este estudio. Sin embargo, su participación permitirá generar información para el campo de la enseñanza en la escuela primaria.

Voluntariedad: Declara que conoce esta investigación y ha autorizado su participación. Además, tendrá la libertad de contestar las preguntas que desee, como también de detener su participación en cualquier momento. Esto no implicará ningún perjuicio para usted.

Confidencialidad: Todas sus opiniones serán confidenciales, y mantenidas en reserva. En las presentaciones y publicaciones de esta investigación, su nombre y el de la institución no aparecerán asociados a ninguna opinión particular. Las medidas que serán usadas para proteger la confidencialidad son; total integridad y confidencialidad sobre los participantes y la información



FORMULARIO DE CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

Yo, _____, acepto participar voluntariamente en el estudio **Possible Factors that affect the Low Participation of Male Teachers in private Elementary Schools in Piedecuesta, Santander.**

Declaro que he leído y he comprendido las condiciones de mi participación en este estudio. He tenido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas y han sido respondidas. No tengo dudas al respecto.

Firma Participante

Firma Investigador Responsable

Firma Investigador Responsable

Firma Investigador Responsable

Lugar y fecha: _____

Este documento se firma en dos ejemplares, quedando una copia en poder de cada parte.

Appendix B

Survey for Pre-Service Teachers

13/8/22, 20:42

Encuesta a maestros practicantes sobre la participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias

Encuesta a maestros practicantes sobre la participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias

Esta encuesta forma parte de un proyecto de investigación / trabajo de grado por parte de estudiantes de la Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en Inglés en la Universidad Industrial de Santander. Esta investigación tiene como objetivo conocer los posibles factores que inciden en la baja participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias privadas. Por lo tanto, su punto de vista es de suma importancia.

Le recordamos que esta encuesta no va a necesitar de datos personales como su nombre o correo ya que respetamos su privacidad y la normativa de recolección de datos. Dicho esto, esperamos su total sinceridad y confianza a la hora de responder las preguntas debido a que las respuestas van a ser **totalmente anónimas**.

Su participación es totalmente voluntaria y puede darla por terminada en cualquier momento. Asimismo, puede plantear todas sus dudas respecto a la investigación antes, durante y después de su participación al correo mayerlyparramoreno@gmail.com, michellrueda14@gmail.com y/o arualcdiaz@gmail.com

Agradecemos de antemano su participación.

*Obligatorio

1. Al realizar esta encuesta usted nos brinda el consentimiento para utilizar sus respuestas para uso netamente académico. ¿Está usted de acuerdo con lo dicho anteriormente?

Marca solo un óvalo.

Sí

No

**Datos generales
acerca de los
maestros
practicantes**

En la siguiente sección le haremos preguntas acerca de su perspectivas como practicante y futuro docente.

13/8/22, 20:42

Encuesta a maestros practicantes sobre la participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias

2. Marque el género con el que usted se identifique *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Femenino
- Masculino
- No-binario
- Otros: _____

3. ¿Desde hace cuanto empezó sus practicas universitarias/experiencia laboral como docente? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- 3 - 6 meses
- 1 - 2 años
- 2 - 3 años
- 3 años o más

4. ¿En qué grados tiene experiencia enseñando? *

Selecciona todas las opciones que correspondan.

- 1° - 5° (5 a 13 años)
- 6° - 8° (10 a 15 años)
- 9° - 12° (13 a 18 años)
- Nivel Universitario o Adultos
- Preescolar
- Ninguno
- Otros: _____

13/8/22, 20:42

Encuesta a maestros practicantes sobre la participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias

9. ¿Cree usted que en el futuro su género influenciará su trayectoria como docente? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Sí
- No
- Tal vez

10. Respecto a su respuesta anterior ¿a qué cree que se deba? *

Muchas Gracias por su participación!

Google no creó ni aprobó este contenido.

Google Formularios

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1cMEAVgJxYjPjEm9gW4u3zjzrZbHRRcZmsLaqO823B90/edit>

4/4

Link to the Survey: <https://forms.gle/fd4Kpg1UAqFYtcep6>

Appendix C

Survey for Parents

13/8/22, 20:51

Encuesta a padres de familia y/o acudientes sobre la participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias

Encuesta a padres de familia y/o acudientes sobre la participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias

Esta encuesta forma parte de un proyecto de investigación / trabajo de grado por parte de estudiantes de la Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en Inglés en la Universidad Industrial de Santander. La presente investigación es llamada: "Posibles factores que inciden en la baja participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias privadas de Piedecuesta, Santander".

Le recordamos que esta encuesta no va a necesitar de datos personales como su nombre o correo ya que respetamos su intimidad y la normativa de recolección de datos. Dicho esto, esperamos su total sinceridad y confianza a la hora de responder las preguntas debido a que las respuestas van a ser **totalmente anónimas**.

Su participación es completamente voluntaria y puede darla por terminada en cualquier momento. Asimismo, puede plantear todas sus dudas respecto a la investigación antes, durante y después de su participación al correo mayerlyparramoreno@gmail.com , michellrueda14@gmail.com y/o arualcdiaz@gmail.com

Agradecemos de antemano su participación.

* Required

1. Al realizar esta encuesta usted nos brinda el consentimiento para utilizar sus respuestas para uso netamente académico. ¿Está usted de acuerdo con lo dicho anteriormente? *

Mark only one oval.

Si, estoy de acuerdo

Datos generales
acerca de los
estudiantes

En esta sección le haremos algunas preguntas acerca de su experiencia como acudiente.

13/8/22, 20:51

Encuesta a padres de familia y/o acudientes sobre la participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias

2. Tiene usted hijos y/o familiares cursando actualmente la escuela primaria? *

Mark only one oval.

- Si
 No

3. En que rango de edad se encuentra su hijo y/o familiar? *

Mark only one oval.

- 3 años o menos
 De 4 a 6 años
 De 7 a 9 años
 De 10 a 12 años
 13 años o más

4. El estudiante es *

Mark only one oval.

- Niña
 Niño
 Otro

5. Tiene usted una preferencia sobre el género de los profesores que le dictan a su hijo/a? *

Mark only one oval.

- Si
 No

13/8/22, 20:51

Encuesta a padres de familia y/o acudientes sobre la participación de docentes hombres en escuelas primarias

6. Con respecto a la pregunta anterior, usted prefiere que los profesores de su hijo/a sean: *

Mark only one oval.

- Mujeres
- Hombres
- No me importa

7. A qué cree que se debe su respuesta? *

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Link to the survey: <https://forms.gle/qLtay44JR6bJpKwt5>

Appendix D

Interview for Private Schools Administrators



Escuela de Idiomas

Licenciatura en Lenguas Extranjeras con Énfasis en Inglés

Trabajo de Investigación

Tutor: Laura Margarita Daza Murcia

Fecha de la entrevista: ____/____/____

Entrevistador: _____

Objetivo: Conocer la perspectiva de las instituciones privadas acerca de la presencia de profesores hombres en primaria.

1. ¿Qué tipo de características exige a la hora de contratar a un profesor/profesora nueva en los grados de primaria?
2. ¿Cuál es el número de docentes totales enseñando en el área de primaria en esta institución actualmente?
3. ¿Cuántos de esos docentes son hombres?
4. ¿Por qué cree usted que el número es tan bajo en primaria? (si ese es el caso)
5. ¿Cree usted que un docente masculino podría lograr un trabajo igual de "eficiente" que una docente femenina o puede presentar ciertas deficiencias?
6. ¿Tiene usted preferencia por profesores hombres o profesoras mujeres a la hora de contratarlos para los niveles de primaria?

Appendix E**Memo Example****MEMO 1**

DATE: 19/12/2022

CATEGORY OR CODE: Hiring criteria in private institutions (Q1)

SUBCODES OR SUBCATEGORIES:

- Charisma and ability to deal with young kids.
- To have teaching qualifications/education.
- To seem interested and willing to work.

QUESTION: What kind of criteria do you demand when hiring a new teacher in the primary level?

PS1: Okay, the essential characteristic is that the teacher is qualified to teach classes in those courses, yes? They must have at least been a senior normalist, yes? Or that they are currently studying for a degree to be able to perform in those courses. An additional thing is also, that they have an affinity with students of young ages, yes? Because it is something that should also be kept in mind among primary school students, since primary school children not only need the lecture, but they also need much more attention, yes? So it is important that the teachers who are in primary school have a lot of affinity with the kids in primary school.

PS2: Well, the characteristic is that, I mean, one always sees that they have a good character, initially like a good charisma, because since we are handling young children that influences a lot. The presentation, that they have charisma, that influences in that.

PS3: That they have the appropriate professional qualifications, yes. That they are in an age range above 35 years old. That would be, like... the most essential.

PS4: In elementary school, first of all, they must have the degree they are going to teach. That they have knowledge of pedagogy. That they have some... Eh course, or some degree based on pedagogy to teach the children.

PS5: The criteria that we take into account are their preparation, knowledge of their work, seriousness, responsibility, punctuality, that they are a cheerful teacher and open to change, patient and tolerant, with the ability to make decisions, leadership and communication skills.

PS6: Well, here we give the opportunity, for example, to people who come here without experience, because we have given them the opportunities in the past. With the people who have experience, yes, because many times those people are taught how to manage better, although many times it does not work well, but sometimes, I mean, most of the times it has worked for us. And what do we look for? Well, the degree in every case, even if they only have a higher education degree, as long as they are higher education students, we receive them. And if they have a degree, then yes, but the truth is that we do not look for whether they come with seniority and a lot of experience, no, we give a lot of opportunities to the girls who are just starting out.

PS7: Well, as a country institution we ask for every candidate to have a teaching degree.

PS8: Well, here in the institution who makes the hiring is the rector and has stipulated the pedagogical part, the training part, the part of characterization in the part of psychology, the part of creativity, and the part of the experience.

PS9: First of all the interest, the will. What they want to participate in, is to say that she has a positive attitude. That she is not going to be negative for any activity that takes place in the school.

PS10: First, he/she must be a professional in the field, right? Second, we look at the person's mood and how he/she relates to the children, because it is very important, especially for young people.

Findings summary

When the private schools were asked about the criteria they looked for when they hired a new teacher in the institutions, the majority of them responded that the most important aspect in a teacher was their charisma and attitude towards the class and the children as well. It was crucial for a new teacher to be engaging and to get along with the kids because when it comes to elementary school levels, patience and attitude are necessary to teach and have a positive influence for the kids.

The other prominent idea was that they need a degree and qualification for them to hire a teacher. Training in the pedagogic field is a constant criterion that they look for, even if it's only the Escuela Normal Superior degree, PS6 mentioned that even if they have no working experience with institutions, they can hire new contestants only based on their education.

Finally, PS9 was the only intuition to mention the importance of the passion for teaching in the work interview, because it will determine in the future how well they perform with the kids.

Analysis and discussion

We could say that, according to all of the participants, a degree is definitely required when applying for a job in one of these institutions. Nonetheless, not once is “gender” mentioned. Education and charisma seemed to be the only important factors. As for this, Martino (2008) talks about the importance of charisma and personality when it comes to the ability to engage little kids in the classroom and that, for what is worth, men and women are able to possess the skill because it is not related to gender but personal temper.