

# Exploring the Perceptions of Male Teachers in the Elementary Grades

Undergraduate Research  
Annual Conference  
April 18, 2017

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## Purpose of the Study:

- Examine perceptions of male and female teachers, related to gender, in elementary schools.
- Obtain knowledge on how my gender may potentially affect my future.

## Research Questions:

- What are similarities and differences in perceptions of male and female teachers towards male teachers who teach in the elementary grades?
- What themes, if any, might emerge from open ended participant responses to the survey?

## Literature

Recent attention has been placed on the underachievement of male students in elementary schools. To counteract this deficit countries such as the U.S. and Canada have hired more male teachers. However, this solution has not been effective and there is no evidence to support that male teachers enhance the educational performance of boys (Carrington, Tymms, Merrell, 2008).

Characteristics of female teachers that students wanted to emulate include “nice, generous, and helpful” (Hutchings, Carrington, Francis, Skelton, Read, & Hall, 2008, p. 152). Characteristics of male teachers that students want to emulate include “authority, knowledge, and intelligence” (Hutchings et al., 2008, p. 152).

Male teachers are perceived to be both laid back (Woods, 2012) and disciplinarians (Hjalmarsson & Löfdahl, 2014) when managing their classroom. This contradictory perception of male teachers may be related to the low number of males in the teaching profession (Woods, 2014).

## Methodology:

### Design

- Mixed methods (Quantitative/Qualitative)
- Convenient and snowball sampling
- Cogenerative Dialoguing: (Tobin & Roth, 2005).

### Sample

- 20 participants
- Current and former elementary school teachers.

### Instrumentation

- 22 item Likert scale survey including written responses
- Survey questionnaires are strong with reliability (Woods, 2012).
- Peer review analysis, recognition of subjective views, and piloted by a group of current and former elementary school teachers (Woods, 2012).

## Findings:

- Participants perceived that more males are needed in elementary schools to teach and serve as male role models.
- Both genders are appropriate for the same positions in elementary schools.
- Male and female management styles are perceived to differ.

**Table 1**  
Nurturing and Sensitive to Students:

	Strongly disagree/ disagree	Neither	Agree/Strongly Agree
The male teachers I have worked with are nurturing and sensitive to their students.	15%	25%	55%
The female teachers I have worked with are nurturing and sensitive to their students.	10%	10%	80%

## Conclusion

- The low number of male teachers in elementary schools may potentially be linked to the perception that more male teachers are needed.
- Stereotypical perceptions of male and female teachers may still persist.
- Perceptions of classroom management styles varied between male and female teachers.

## References

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