

The training and development agency for schools education essay

[Education](#)



One argument against targeting men for teaching is that gender is irrelevant, as women are quite capable of performing typical male activities with children such as kicking a football. However, without male teachers children will continue to maintain the stereotypical view that teaching is a female occupation. A staff consisting of both male and female teachers is better able to support equal opportunities for both boys and girls, and to create environments that respect every individual (Coulter & McNay, 1993). Martino (2008) states: " In particular, the classification of the art of teaching as " women's work" has really hurt the position of male teachers in our education system and kept them out of the field. However, " Recuperative Masculinity Politics" introduces bringing back masculinity in order to combat current stereotypes. The term refers to the fact that males must be present in the classroom at the elementary level in order to deal with the current feminization of the field" (p. 192). Most young children develop and learn through observing the actions and words of those around them and research has shown that a male role model is essential in the school system."

According to a Norms and Values Report 2011 commissioned by the Ministry of Social Development in Trinidad, and done by the ANSA McAL Psychological Research Centre, 69 per cent of women said they had children, as compared to 53 per cent of men" (Baldeosingh 2011). This underlines the fact that some children may not have a solid male figure to emulate. Children need a significant and positive role model to assist in teaching them the norms and values needed in society as well as to fill a father role for the six hour day that they spend together, a task which female teachers cannot accomplish. They need to interact with male teachers when they are young and growing

emotionally. " Children need male role models between the ages of seven and thirteen to help them grow and identify themselves." (Erickson, 1950). As such, it is believed that male figures in our school system are required to guide, protect, enhance and influence students in a positive and resourceful manner so that they can become successful young adults. The factors that have encouraged the recruitment of more male teachers surfaced from the diverse teaching styles between male and female teachers. Emphasis is placed on the teacher's perspective on internal and external methods of control and how humor and freedom fits in to it (Kesici, 2008). For example, male teachers are often humorous and encourage freedom of speech and appropriate behavior in comparison to female teachers. They commonly tell jokes, and integrate drama and discussions in the classroom which make the students laugh generating a higher level of interest in the subject being taught. " The notion that teachers' classroom behavior and interaction with pupils may be predicted on the basis of their gender underpins recent controversial campaigns to recruit more male teachers" (Francis 2008). " Male teachers are more likely than female teachers to respect and cater to children's' interest and needs, such as for more boisterous play" (Farquhar, 1997). Robinson (1988) adds however, that while there is little variation in the work that male and female teachers actually do, they tend to be different in their interactions. Male and female teaching styles take into account the various needs of each student and create a balanced teaching and learning environment where children are allowed to develop holistically. Mac Donald (2007) suggested that due to the decline in male teachers, the developmental years of boys (considered to be from two to twelve years)

have been affected gravely. Furthermore, he explained that boys gain more than just academic achievement from male teachers, as they also act as role models of manhood and masculinity. This has led to the idea of "' Gender Match' which can be defined as the assumption that children learn at a faster rate when being taught by those of the same sex" (Sokal & Katz, 2008). Staff (2008) quoted Dr. Tanya Byron, a clinical psychologist and broadcaster, by saying: " Male primary school teachers can often be stable and reliable figures in the lives of the children that they teach. They inspire children to feel more confident, to work harder and to behave better." As a consequence, boys learn at a faster rate when they are educated by male rather than female teachers. Additionally, Holland (1996) suggests that a key issue surrounding academic failure in boys is the fact that they are surrounded primarily by female teachers; for that reason it is embedded in their psyche that " school work" is to some extent for girls to do. They seldom observe males in their environment engaging in academic activity; therefore, conflict with their masculinity arises. Boys respond more positively and effectively to correction and discipline imposed by male teachers as opposed to female teachers. It is argued that this might be simply incidental. However, if a female teacher does not exhibit certain masculine authority styles or extreme vigor, they seem to achieve minimal or short-term results when dealing with particularly disorderly and delinquent boys (Francis 2008). Therefore, boys tend to be generally disconnected from academia due to the fact that most female teachers do not have the competence, will or energy to deal with their exuberance behavior. Clark (2009) points out that:"

Research conducted by the Training and Development Agency for Schools

(TDA) claimed that boys taught by women are more likely to disrupt lessons and neglect their studies. Fifty-one per cent of boys in primary schools said they would be more obedient in class if taught by a man and 42 per cent said they would work harder." It is argued that the predominant authoritative figures present in the lives of young boys who have developed into a nuisance in schools are mainly female teachers and/or single mothers, grandmothers or aunties. This possibly will indicate that even with a combination of hard work and good intentions, young boys seem to be impervious of these influential women in their lives. There are a number of arguments for and against the presence of male teachers in the education system. Research has suggested that a balance of male and female teachers in the school system is desirable for children. More over a sense of self-worth, morality and self confidence is encouraged when a child has a masculine role model he/she looks up to model and interact with. Therefore, the relevant administration should attract, recruit and retain male teachers. The inclusion and expansion of the number of male teachers in the school system will positively influence, create, mould and produce better all rounded students especially with respect to young male students.