

EXAMINING INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC FACTORS THAT IMPACT MEN'S DECISIONS TO TEACH YOUNG CHILDREN

Jean Yves Plaisir, Kirsten Cole, & Mindi Reich-Shapiro
Teacher Education Department, Borough of Manhattan Community College, CUNY

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018) reports that less than 3% of all preschool and kindergarten teachers are self-identified men. Thus, young children in early education environments are systematically deprived of the opportunity to experience a healthy range of gender role models. Increasing the participation of male educators who identify with a broad range of masculinities would enhance the diversity of voices in the early childhood classroom, challenge stereotypes, and foster a more equitable and just classroom environment and society. The purpose of our research was to provide actionable policy and practice recommendations that can support the cultivation of a more gender-balanced ECE workforce.

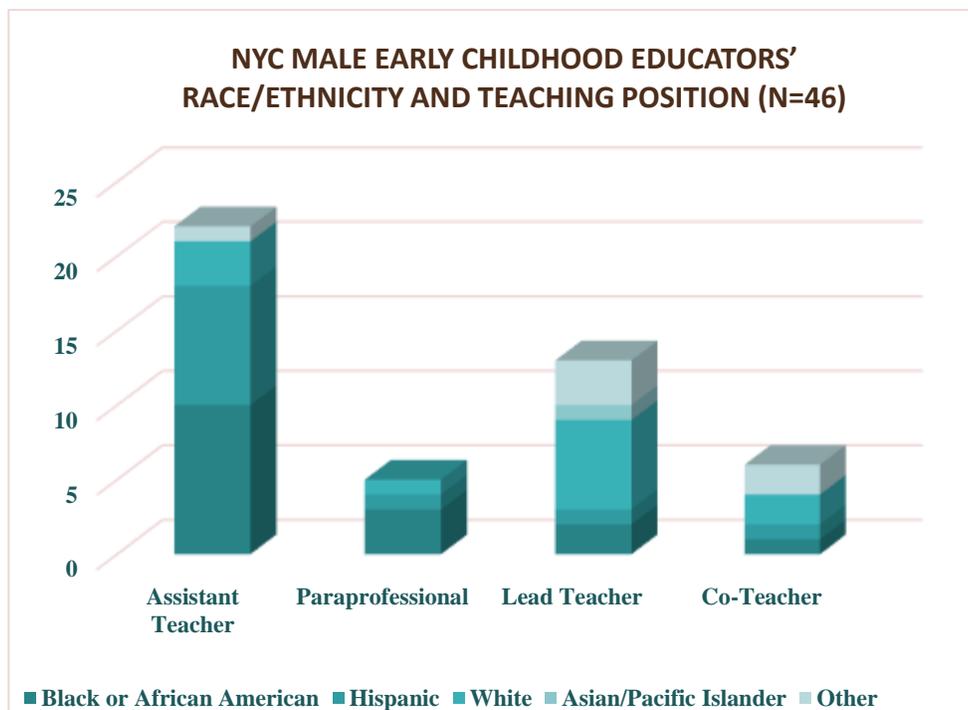
METHODS

This study is part of a place-based investigation of the factors that influence men's decisions to pursue and remain in a career in early childhood education. The research was funded by the Foundation for Child Development (FCD), working in partnership with the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (PDI). Participants included New York State licensed lead teachers, paraprofessionals and assistant teachers, family advocates, and administrators who supervise male educators at early childhood sites.

Research Protocols

A variety of instruments were used to collect qualitative and quantitative data.

- Questionnaires:
 - 46 ECE participants. (81 distributed. Response rate of 57%)
- In-depth Individual Interviews:
 - 14 male and female administrators supervising male ECE educators.
 - 14 self-identified male educators from publicly- and privately-funded ECE sites throughout NYC.
- Two Focus Groups:
 - Men's Cohort from a multi-site agency: 3 teachers, 1 administrator, 2 family advocates.
 - Member-check of policy and practice recommendations with 6 ECE administrators.



**EXAMINING INTRINSIC AND EXTRINSIC FACTORS
THAT IMPACT MEN'S DECISIONS TO TEACH YOUNG CHILDREN:
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY & PRACTICE**

RECRUITMENT:

- Strengthen the pipeline through intentional outreach:
 - Provide *Careers in ECE* sessions for:
 - Young men working in HS internships, afterschool programs, summer camp, and other community service sites.
 - Older men contemplating career change, especially fathers of children in ECE sites.
- Expand outreach through existing programs with a focus on working toward gender-balance in the ECE field:
 - NYC Men Teach
 - NYC Teaching Fellows
- Target career counseling and support for African American and Latino males
 - Support for advanced teacher education coursework and credentialing

RETENTION:

- Reinforce the capacity of ECE administrators to recruit and retain male ECE educators
 - Document and demonstrate the benefits of a gender-balanced workforce
 - Provide strategies for supporting the specific needs of male ECE educators
- Offer intentional mentoring and professional development (PD) experiences for male ECE educators, including affinity/support groups for male early childhood educators
- Provide career counseling for male assistant teachers and paraprofessionals working at ECE sites to grow their careers
- Advocate for pay equity in the field and continue to professionalize the field
 - Design teacher education curricula that is more inclusive of male educators
 - Continue to support efforts to achieve pay equity across different program/site types and ECE educators v. educators working with older children

REPRESENTATION:

- ECE workforce development and outreach materials should include images of diverse (age, race, etc) men working in the field
- ECE sites/classrooms should include images of men in nurturing roles

CONTACT US:

Jean Plaisir: jplaisir@bmcc.cuny.edu

Kirsten Cole: kcole@bmcc.cuny.edu

Mindi Reich-Shapiro: mreichshapiro@bmcc.cuny.edu