

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**FACTORS INFLUENCING MALE TEACHER TRAINEES' CAREER
CHOICE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT COLLEGES
OF EDUCATION IN THE UPPER WEST REGION**

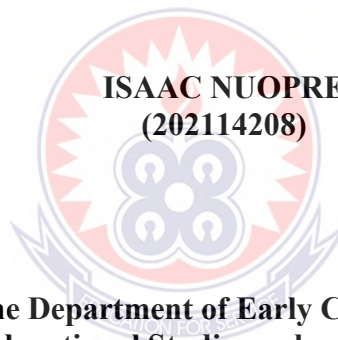


MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**FACTORS INFLUENCING MALE TEACHER TRAINEES' CAREER
CHOICE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AT COLLEGES OF
EDUCATION IN THE UPPER WEST REGION**



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**A thesis in the Department of Early Childhood Education,
Faculty of Educational Studies, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Early Childhood Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

MAY, 2023

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, ISAAC NUOPRE, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my original work and that it has not been submitted either partially or fully for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:.....

Date:.....



Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

MR. Samuel Richard Ziggah (SUPERVISOR)

Signature:.....

Date:.....

DEDICATION

To my wife and children



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development and completion of this work would have been impossible without the assistance of some important personalities. I wish to express my heartfelt gratitude to the following people for being the backbone in connection with my work. Mr. Samuel Richard Ziggah my supervisor. I say a very big thank to him for spending so much time on my work. His guidance and knowledge has brought me this far. To my family, I am very grateful for their time and moral support. I thank them so much for their help. I shall not forget my sweet and caring wife and children for their motivation and financial support. Again, I wish to thank my brother and mentor Mr. Thomas D. Sanortey and his wife, Madam Ajara Amadu for their immense support throughout this academic journey. I am also grateful to Dr. Mathew L. Arah for his diverse contribution towards the successful completion of this research work. Finally, I acknowledge my friends Hon. Loggu-Naa Mumuni, Gazali Mohammed and Mr. Mathew Bediako for their assistance during the course of this research work.

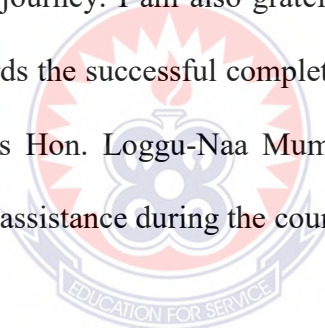
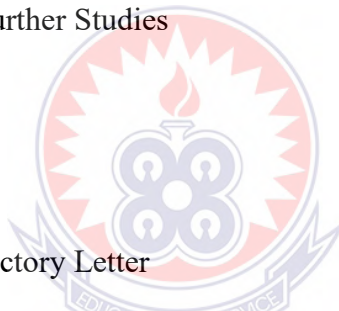


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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. The study employed descriptive survey design with quantitative approach. Using census technique, a sample size of 160 male teacher trainees was chosen for the study (with a return rate of 98.7%). A self-designed questionnaire was used to collect data. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations). The study's findings indicated that family, personal, peers, and outcome expectation factors influence the career choice of male teacher trainees for ECE in the Upper West Region. The results also show that if governments and other relevant stakeholders implement strategies like giving young men the opportunity to work with children, giving men who enter the early childhood field a motivational allowance, media campaigns, giving men preference when employing teachers for ECE, teacher education programmes increasing the quota for male applicants for ECE programmes, subsidising the cost of ECE programmes, among others, more young men will enter the field. It was recommended that the government, through the Ministry of Education (MOE), reconsider teacher remuneration and other working conditions in order to recruit and retain more teachers in general, and specifically male ECE instructors.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the introduction of the study which includes background to the study, the problem statement, the purpose of the study, the research objectives, the research questions, the significance of the study, the delimitation of the study, the definition of terms, and the organisation of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

It is impossible to underestimate the significance of education in the development and enhancement of human capital, economic growth and development planning. Through education, human talent or productivity becomes just as significant to the growth process as money, resources, and entrepreneurship (Adamu-Issah, 2020). According to Mwamwenda (2017), education is not only essential but also a solid foundation for Africa's rebuilding and growth. It implies that investing in education for Africans is an investment in economic growth because sustainable development requires the development of appropriate and continually expanding skill sets and knowledge bases, both of which are inextricably linked to education.

Additionally, as its graduates actively engage in the government of their society, education not only contributes to economic prosperity but also to a strong democratic society. Adamu-Issah (2020) provided an additional compelling argument in favour of education by pointing out that no nation can see long-term economic success without making large expenditures in human capital. People's perceptions of the world and themselves are widened by education. He stated once more that it improves their quality of life and has several social benefits for both individuals and society.

People become more productive and creative as a result of education, which also promotes entrepreneurship and technological growth. Additionally, education is essential for assuring social and economic progress as well as widening the income distribution (Adamu-Issah, 2020).

The essential pillar of any civilisation, education is a fundamental human right, not a privilege of the few, according to the United Nations as cited in Adamu-Issah (2020). If the United Nations' claim that early childhood education is essential is true, then early childhood education (ECE) should be the first step in any government's effort to provide children in this nation with high-quality education and care as well as free, universal, and basic education since it serves as the cornerstone for all other educational levels. This is especially true for Ghana. According to Mukamana and Mukamazimpaka (2022), the cornerstone for everyone's education, especially basic education, should be early childhood development.

Education for young children has advanced dramatically as a result of countries around the world realising that education reflects the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of children, families, communities, and nations as the most reliable route out of poverty and a crucial process towards healthy, more productive members of society, and stronger societies (Adamu-Issah, 2020). With the realisation that education goals and, consequently, the human development efforts expressed in the global education goals will only be achieved by focusing on the early years of children's lives, Early Childhood Education (ECE), and particularly Kindergarten (KG), has received significant attention as a result of global initiatives and interventions in education.

Different administrations of governments in Ghana have worked extremely hard to provide the young people of the nation with the services they need.

The Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS I) for the period of 2002 to 2005, the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) for the period of 2006 to 2009, and the Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS III) for the period of 2010 to 2013 all state that ECE services will be provided to all children in Ghana and act as a key strategy for poverty reduction, particularly in relation to education (Republic of Ghana, 2015). Early childhood education, in the opinion of Adamu-Issah (2020), is more than just a stage in a child's transition to formal education. The context of early childhood has been placed in terms of social development, gender justice, and the reduction of poverty.

The benefits of taking part in high-quality early childhood education and care in terms of economic, social, educational, and developmental outcomes, as well as the clear significance of early childhood education for a child's later life, have been pointed out by scientific research in a variety of fields including education, neuroscience, and sociology (Vandenbroecka, Lenaertsb & Beblavy, 2018).

Early childhood education has undergone, and continues to undergo, changes in its name, as well as variations in its nomenclature in various situations and countries. For instance, the phrase has undergone numerous changes in Ghana, going from early childhood care and development to early childhood education, preschool, and finally early grade education. Since the emphasis was placed on the element of care, which was historically associated with women, it may be believed that its previous name may have contributed to the feminisation of the early years of schooling.

Early childhood education in Ghana marked a turning point as a result of the 2007 Education Reforms. According to Mumuni (2019), Ghana's early childhood education was impacted in two different ways by the policy push for educational reform. First,

the early childhood curriculum was developed when the kindergarten component of early childhood education was integrated into the formal schooling system. Second, the policy led to the establishment of degree and certification programmes in early childhood education within several Ghanaian universities and Colleges of Education with the aim of educating teachers in the subject matter and pedagogy to enhance their practices in kindergarten classes (Akyina, 2019). Two Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region boast of early childhood education programmes, and some male teacher trainees have enrolled in those programmes.

Four categories make up Ghana's early childhood education programmes: creche (0–1 years), day care (1-2 years), nursery (2–3 years), and kindergarten (4–5 years). However, the country's formal educational system only initially included the kindergarten portion of early childhood education. As a result, the private sector is in charge of a number of early childhood programme components (Mumuni, 2019). The majority of early childhood educators are female, despite the fact that there is no gender restriction on who may teach at this level of the educational ladder.

Studies have demonstrated that having males in this sector has several advantages despite the low interest and number of men accepting careers in it. Forson (2020) for instance, contended that male teachers make an equal contribution to children's growth as do female teachers. Young children should be exposed to both genders since the personality qualities and gender roles of male and female educators vary (McGrath, Moosa, Bergen & Bhana, 2019). McGrath et al. went on to add that because male early childhood teachers represent non-traditional masculinity, exposing children to them helps them to question the conventional and constricting understanding of gender and expands their possibilities and opportunities.

Additionally, in order to dispel the idea that only women should take care of young children, Xu, Schweisfurth, and Read (2022) suggested that children should see both male and female caregivers. Zhang (2021) had a similar perspective and suggested that male teachers might also act as good role models for a positive gender identity and gender issues in society. Both boys and girls need a strong male role model. The final criterion, in Zhang's opinion, is gender equality. Children could form better habits both inside and outside of the classroom if the ratio of male to female instructors could be balanced. According to Xu (2020), male practitioners are seen as crucial and are expected to give children who might not have father figures in their life alternative (and good) male role models. Xu emphasised that men teachers might contribute just as significantly to the field of early childhood education as female teachers. Xu further contended that making sure there is enough representation of male and female models in a child's milieu is one method to guarantee that the right environment is made available for the child. This is crucial because children require gender-appropriate role models to aspire to in order to develop a balanced gender type.

According to Rohrmann (2016), children with single mothers require a male role model so that males may understand what it means to be a man and girls can understand how to interact with men. According to Rohrmann, the lack of male professors in ECE in particular has a negative impact on men. According to a research, boys may be at a disadvantage since female teachers favour girls and reinforce feminine traits. Early childhood education should thus get special attention, with a focus on maintaining a gender balance in the teaching team.

While some studies have suggested that it is important to have both a male and a female teacher working together with young children because children learn the differences from the different traits that both male and female teachers bring to the classroom, Zhang (2017) noted that it is interesting that other studies challenge the idea that the presence of male teachers always results in better performance from the students. Despite this opposing viewpoint, Warin (2018) explained that there is still a growing demand for more males in ECE.

Zhang (2017) asserted that even though schools are supposed to promote democratic and egalitarian ideals, many pupils don't have a male instructor until middle or high school. Zhang continued by stating that it is believed that when boys see more male teachers in the classroom, they are more likely to consider teaching as a career, especially early childhood education.

Male instructors play important roles in the lives of young children, yet data reveal that they are underrepresented in early childhood settings globally. For instance, according to Gulcicek (2017), the ratio of male preschool teachers was 6% in Sweden, 3% in the U.S.A., less than 1% in New Zealand, and 9% in Norway, the highest percentage in Europe. In contrast, 5.3% of preschool teachers in Turkey and less than 1.0% of all pre-primary school teachers in 11 of the 27 European countries were men.

According to statistics from Ghana's Educational Management Information Systems (EMIS) (2019/2020) data, at the national level, 16% of kindergarten teachers are male, while 13% of kindergarten teachers are male in the Upper West Region as against 84% and 87% of their female counterparts respectively. In Ghana, like in the majority of African nations, raising traditional children is seen as the responsibility of women (Abdulai, 2016). Despite this, Abdulai asserted that there is no regulation

preventing men from engaging in early childhood educational activities in Ghana, where early childhood education is a component of formal education, despite the fact that the profession is severely gender-biased in favour of women.

Forson (2020) asserted that during the past few decades, there has been a considerable change in social attitudes regarding the extent to which men contribute to childrearing. Forson claimed that males are increasingly acknowledged as having a significant impact on children's learning and development. According to Forson, many nations and international organisations have started a number of policies and initiatives about gender equality. When starting national reforms in educational policies and planning, it is crucial to prioritise policies that seek to ensure a gender balance in teaching roles as well as retention and support for teachers.

Forson (2020), who previously noted that most nations have not particularly made policies that would focus on dealing with gender imbalance or inequality between male and female teaching professionals in the pre-school level, reiterates this point. Ghana's situation is similar in that there do not appear to be any established policies to ensure that the gender gap is closed. The fact that there are so few men employed in early childhood settings in Ghana does not appear to have attracted the attention of those involved in the field of education. There is the need to institute measures and strategies to encourage more males accepting to teaching at the ECE level.

This gender disparity in early childhood development is related to a variety of problems. Males who choose to work in early childhood education may encounter obstacles relating to gender both in the classroom and in the field. The following are some barriers outline by various studies: the possibility that one's sexuality may be called into question (due to negative perceptions of male early childhood teachers in

society and the media; Reid, Palmer, Drummond and Cruickshank, (2019), social isolation in classes with a majority of female students, and uncertainty expectations of male teachers as role models (e.g., Cruickshank et al., 2020); and discouragement from family and friends; (Pollitt & Oldfield, 2017). Male trainee instructors sometimes have more difficult and time-consuming jobs than their peers in the higher levels, although they get equal—and occasionally the lowest—salaries, according to Cruickshank et al. (2021). This could be attributed to the difficulty involved in handling children at that tender age.

Abdulai (2016) brought out possible obstacles to male engagement in early childhood education in his study on men in Ghana's early childhood education programme. These include the fact that early childhood education is a female-dominated field, low pay as a barrier to male enrollment, tradition and culture, societal preconceptions, and the fact that early childhood education is a non-teaching profession.

It is interesting to note that in Ghana, despite the feminised nature of early childhood education and the small number of male ECE teachers with the attendant difficulties, the career choice of the few has not received enough attention. According to Eremie and Okwulehie (2019), choosing a career is a difficult decision, especially when one's livelihood is at stake. In their opinion, the constantly evolving nature of technology and the information industry has made choosing a job among students a challenging process. Numerous factors, such as personality, interest, self-concept, identity, globalisation, socialisation, role model, social support, and the availability of resources like information and money, affect career choice. Eremie and Okwulehie conducted further research into additional factors that may influence career choice and identified religion, peer group and some environmental factors. However, they

cautioned that all careers have their requirements, personality characteristics and personal abilities and must be fully assessed before an individual can be verified to be qualified into a specific career. Before someone can be deemed qualified for a particular vocation, he/she must first be completely assessed for his/her subject knowledge, personality traits, and personal talents. In order to adapt to the changing socio-economic situations, one must not only conduct thorough career study before choosing a career but also conduct adequate career planning. Okojide, Adekeye and Bakare (2018) reiterated that each person going through the process is impacted by a number of factors, including his/her living situation, personal skills, social contacts, and academic success. Hewitt, as cited in Okojide et al. (2018) claimed that factors that affect career choice might be internal, external, or both.

Okojide et al. (2018) asserted that the majority of people are influenced by the jobs that their parents like, while some pursue the careers that their educational choices have made possible, others choose to follow their passions regardless of how much or how little money they would make from them, and still others choose well-paying professions.

Although these findings reveal the reasons for few males working in the field of early childhood education, it is yet to be established the factors that influence the few males' choice for training in early childhood education in colleges of education. This study focused on two Colleges of education offering early childhood programmes in the Upper West Region and as per the time of study, a total of 160 male students were pursuing bachelor's degree in ECE.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Early childhood instructors should be both male and female, as this is essential for the complete development of young children. However, according to the Global Education Monitoring Report Gender Review (2018), the teaching profession has become more feminine in the majority of countries. This, in turn, has a detrimental impact on teaching methods and boys' academic achievement. According to other studies by Mmamwenda (2017) and Mukamana and Mukamazimpaka (2022), both male and female teachers have a substantial influence on how the children they interact with develop their personalities. Again, According to Osei (2020), a frequently encountered problem in our contemporary societies is single mother parenting. It represents approximately 13.4% of total families. Single mother parenting in Osei's view, has far reaching consequences on the development of the boy child. Further, Osei explained that children nurtured in single mother parent homes have a higher risk of low educational levels, twice fold likelihood to drop out of school, among other risks. Osei's findings call for the involvement of male teachers at the ECE level. Female instructors provide the warmth and gentle touches of a mother, whereas male instructors are symbols of authority, strength, and security.

Additionally, the studies reveal that the social, emotional, and cognitive development of young children is impacted by the presence of both genders in pre-school (Zhang, 2018; Xu, 2020; Rohrmann, 2016). However, in my routine monitoring of ECE activities in the Wa East district as the ECE coordinator, I observed that very few males taught at the ECE level. As a result of that, most at times, learners in those schools were often left with no teacher(s) because of maternity leave issues and that affected learners in their learning. Similar problem was reported during a training workshop organised for early childhood teachers in the region from 20th - 23rd

December, 2021, where the regional director of education Mr. Abdul Razak Korah in his opening address, recognised the need for more male teachers at the kindergarten level to avert the situation which severally forced some district directorates to temporarily close down some KGs as a result of female teachers going on maternity leave at the same time. The situation if not tackled, would seriously affect learners' academic progress.

It is well documented that there are more female teachers than male teachers in ECE. Therefore, children's overall development may likely suffer as a result of the situation because both genders should play father and mother figure roles in the lives of children. Children frequently exposed to a variety of female teachers tend to encounter a diversity of role models for femininity and womanhood. In contrast, when young children are not exposed to masculinity models, their understanding of what it means to be a man or boy may be insufficient (Giese, 2018). Children would have a wide variety of role models to look up to, especially at this crucial period when they are developing their gender identity, if gender equality in the pre-school education workforce were to be improved.

The low numbers of male teachers in early childhood education, is a cause for concern. Some studies on male early childhood educators focused on males in Ghana's early childhood education programme in general by Thompson and Abroampa, 2019; Twum, 2016; and Abdulai, 2016 examined potential barriers to male enrollment in early childhood education. Additionally, some studies on male early childhood educators have looked at teachers who are already in the field. For example, Laryea, Aduna, Owusu, and Addai (2020) examined the experiences of Ghanaian male early childhood educators and discovered that, despite the difficulties

they faced, male teachers thought their work was very rewarding. Laryea et al again reported in their study that participants indicated seeing their students' academic and behavioural improvements had made them feel fulfilled. Despite the society questioning their choice of profession, they are confident that they will remain as Early Childhood educators because of their passion for teaching children.

Surprisingly, in all the studies alluded to above, there has been far less attention paid to researching the factors that can influence men's decision to become early childhood teachers and developing initiatives to recruit more men into the field in Ghana.

Male teachers' involvement in early childhood education may be influenced by factors like family, personal, academic performance or abilities, interest, role models, and job opportunities, among others, as suggested by Eremie and Okwulehie (2019) and Okojide et al. (2018) and Laryea et al's (2020) study. Again, Cruickshank (2017) contended that in order to increase the number of men working in the early childhood field, it is important to comprehend the reasons why men, despite the difficulties they encounter, choose to pursue careers as early childhood educators. To the best of the researcher's knowledge, little is known why some men in Ghana defy all odds to choose early childhood as a career choice. Two Colleges of Education; NJA College of Education and Tumu College of Education, which are among the over twenty Colleges of Education in Ghana that provide degrees in early childhood education, are in the Upper West Region. Therefore, understanding what motivates these trainee-teachers will potentially provide solutions to the problem of low recruitment of male teachers at the early childhood level, which is critical as the issue of males' participation in ECE seems not to have received much attention by stakeholders in Ghana. The fact that there is the absence of father figure in kindergarten classrooms

and the fact that there little seems to be known about the relevance and participation of male teachers in kindergarten education, prompted this study. It is in light of this that the researcher set out to investigate factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. identify family factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region
2. find out personal factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region
3. determine the influence of peers on male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region
4. determine the influence of outcome expectations on male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.
5. identify strategies to be put in place to encourage males to choose a career in early childhood education.

1.7 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What family factors influence career choice of male teacher trainees for early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region?
2. What personal factors influence male teacher trainees to choose early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region?
3. What influence do peers have on male teacher trainees' career choice in early childhood education at the Colleges of Education at the Upper West Region?
4. How do outcome expectations influence male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region?
5. What strategies can be put in place to encourage more males to choose a career in early childhood education?

1.8 Significance of the Study

The study's findings would be useful to stakeholders, non-governmental organizations, curriculum designers, Ghana Education Service, and the Ministry of Education because they would be informed about the inadequacy of male teachers in ECE and the effects it has on children's holistic development and put in policy interventions to increase the number of males in ECE. This would make it possible for the stakeholders and policy makers to develop and apply the conclusions as long as this problem affects us as a country.

The study's conclusions might be utilised to step up efforts to recruit more male early childhood educators. The results of this study may help in the improvement of

recruiting processes and policies for early childhood teachers in Ghana, as well as the attraction of more men to the profession.

The research would also add to the body of knowledge on male early childhood educators and the factors influencing their career choice.

1.9 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited in scope and geography. The study focused on only male teacher trainees who were enrolled in early childhood education programmes at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

Geographically, this study was delimited to two Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

Also, the study was delimited to public Colleges of Education.

Again, even so many factors might influence an individual's career choice, in this study, the factors were delimited to family, personal, peers, and outcome expectations.

1.10 Operational Definition of Terms

Early Childhood: Refers to pre-school education, pre-primary education, early childhood education, and kindergarten. They have been used interchangeably in this study to refer to the two years of education that come right before a child starts primary school. The official age associated with this time period in Ghana is between four and five years old.

Career choice: choosing one career path or employment in a person's life while excluding others.

Peer factors: These are peer group-related variables. Role models and the availability of professional information among the peers are a few of them.

Family influences: A person's profession selection may be influenced by a number of elements from their family. The expectations of the family and the availability of support and encouragement within the family are among others. In this study, the terms "family" and "parents" are used interchangeably.

Personal factors: These are characteristics of an individual that may have an impact on his/her decision to enroll in an ECE course for training. They include personal experience, interest in ECE, among others.

Outcome expectations: These are the benefits one anticipates from the career they have chosen.

1.11 Organisation of the Study

The study was organised into five chapters. Chapter one deals with the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation, and organisation of the study.

Chapter two deals with the theoretical framework, conceptual framework as well as review of the related literature. The third chapter discusses the methodology of the study which includes the research paradigm, research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection instruments, validity, reliability, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and ethical considerations. The data analysis, and discussions of the study are covered in chapter four and finally, chapter five deals with the findings, summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

This chapter looks at the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, concept of career, the concept of Early Childhood Education, historical perspective of Early Childhood Education in Ghana, importance of Early Childhood Education, males participation in ECE, advantages of male teachers in ECE, related studies on Factors Influencing Career Choice: familial factors, personal factors, peer influence, influence of outcome expectations and strategies to recruit and retain male educators in ECE, conceptual framework and a summary of the review of the related literature.

2.1 Theoretical Framework of the Study

The Krumboltz Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making and the Social Cognitive Career Theory are theories that guided the study.

2.1.1 Social learning theory of career decision making (1976)

The Krumboltz Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making was propounded in 1976. The Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (KSLTCDM) and the Krumboltz's Learning Theory of Career Counseling are the two components of this theory, according to Njogu (2019). Njogu explains that the second section of the KSLTCDM focuses on how career counselors could address issues linked to careers. The first portion of the KSLTCDM examines the reasons behind decisions to enroll, modify, or show interest in educational programmes or vocations.

The KSLTCDM was used in this study because it has four factors—genetic endowment, unique talents, environmental conditions and events, learning

experiences, and task approach skills—that impact a person's choice of vocation. The interplay of these four elements leads to the development of self-observation and generalisations about the world (Njogu, 2019). The generalisations and abilities acquired according to Njogu, lead people to engage in a number of activities that direct admission into a career. This theory applies to this study since it examines factors that influence the choice of a career. According to Mtemeri (2017), the KSLTCDM acknowledged the impact of elements including genetic endowment, specific abilities, contextual circumstances, task approach skills, and educational experiences on job choice. According to Mtemeri, these factors—namely, the type of professional services and programmes offered to children, parental ambitions, mass media, and school policy on students' subject choice—were essentially the same as the factors taken into account in this study.

Additionally, Siddiqui (2020) made the case that a school's subject selection policy can benefit from knowing a student's genetic endowment and special abilities, particularly in cases where the school mandates that students taking a particular subject have a certain annual mean grade in a particular subject. According to Njogu (2019), the factor of learning experiences was useful in identifying the people who were significant in a person's environment, such as parents, teachers, peers, and family members, in influencing a person's choice of career, in this case, the choice of early childhood education for male teacher trainees. It suggests that exposure to role models, peers, and other individuals, as well as male teacher trainees' interactions with them, would greatly influence their understanding of professional alternatives and prospects.

2.1.2 Social cognitive career theory (SCCT)

The Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), developed by Lent (1994), is an additional theory for this study. This theory examines three elements of career development: the emergence of professional interests, the formulation of professional judgments, and the achievement of professional success. Meader (2017) claimed that SCCT takes into account the interactions between self-efficacy, expected outcome, and objectives as well as individual and contextual characteristics including gender, social supports, and obstacles. Meader went on to say that SCCT implies that when people have the required skills and supportive environments, they will become interested in and pursue jobs that are consistent with their self-efficacy beliefs. According to Siddiqui (2020), people are exposed to a variety of activities during their upbringing in school, the home, and the community. Cultural norms could be based on these behaviours. Boys and girls may benefit from participating in activities that are gender- different. Young children develop their self-efficacy and expectations for the results of activities via prolonged exposure. Through more engagement in an activity, which results in mastery or failure, self-efficacy is changed. People will, therefore, become more interested in the activities they perceive to be their strengths. SCCT highlights how compromises are a part of choosing a profession.

The SCCT emphasises that environmental influences including family pressure, culture, economy, possibilities accessible, and education that become supports and sources of encouragement determine career choice, according to Mtemeri (2017). However, in Dos Santos' (2020) opinion, the same factors may also act as impediments for many children, discouraging them from pursuing their professional aspirations. This is meant to imply that teenagers are more likely to follow their interests than to make compromises for more socially or culturally acceptable or

practical alternatives when there are more positive supports available. Simply put, SCCT contends that when environmental conditions are more favourable than otherwise, interests will predict job choices. According to Lent (2017), in the absence of enabling conditions, a young person's interests may need to be bargained or compromised, resulting in a career choice that is limited to realistic or socially acceptable possibilities.

There seems to be benefit in learning more about how males become interested in teaching young children, as well as the barriers that men may face when considering a career in early childhood education. This is based on Lent's Social Cognitive Career Theory, which aims to explain how young people acquire their career preferences.

The social cognitive career theory, which is built on the idea that learning correlates to the observation of role models, is thus pertinent to the current study. For instance, while choosing a job, certain professionals serve as role models for students. Students are influenced by effective modeling to choose some careers over others. Because social aspects including peer and family relationships that influence decision-making were taken into account, the theory also applied to the current study.

Here, the two theories outline the process of choosing a career as well as the variables that affect the decision. It is important to remember that choosing a job begins with enrolling for training in a particular course.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1 gives the relationship between the various variables that influence the male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE. These include the independent variables, the dependent variable, extraneous and the intervening variables. The conceptual

framework as presented in figure 1.1 was developed after the review of related literature.



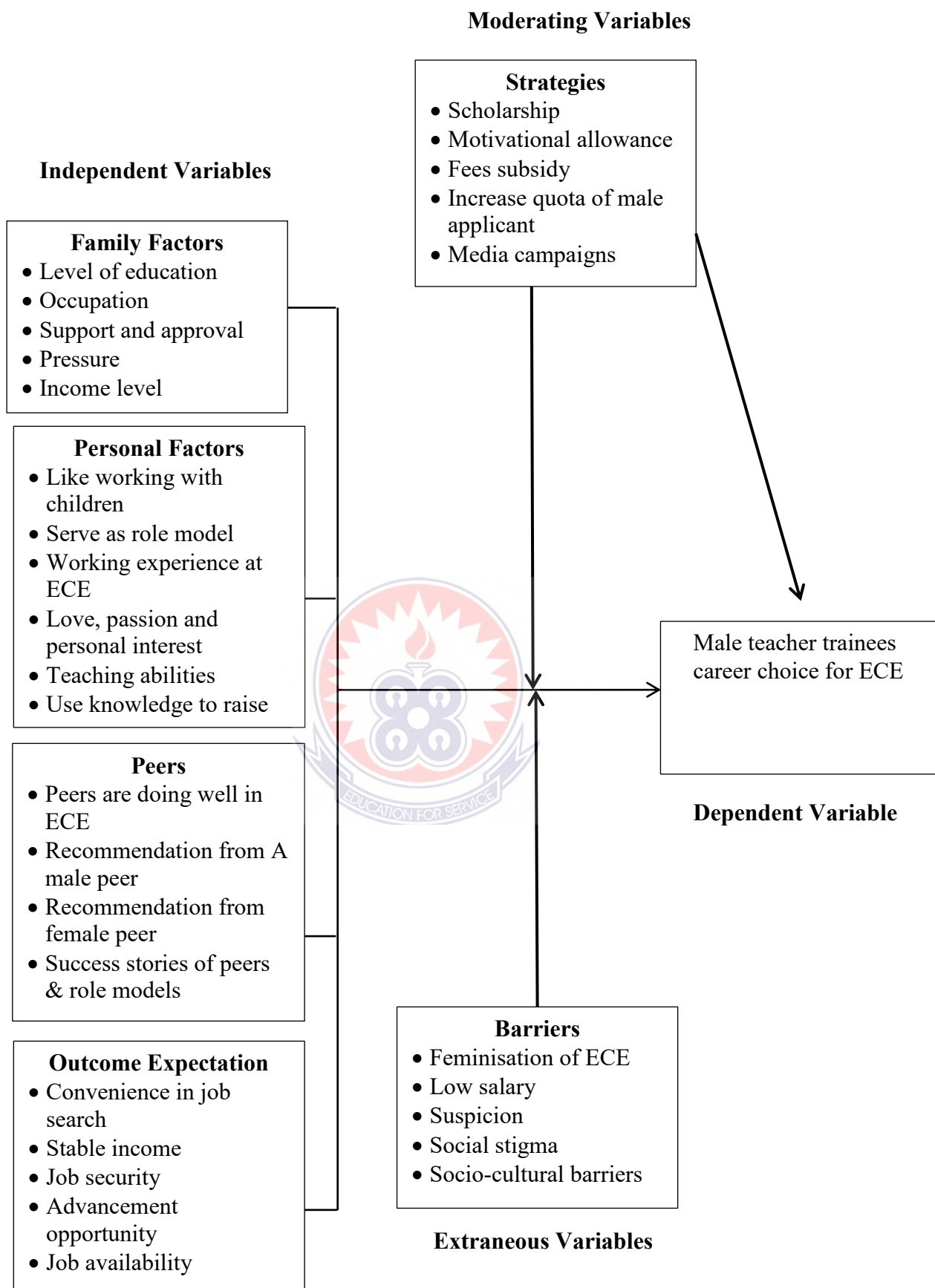


Figure 1.1: Conceptual framework

Source: Mwaa (2016) adapted and modified in (2023).

From Figure 1.1, the independent variables are the family factors which include; parents' level of education, parental occupation, income level, support and approval, family pressure and encouragement which might have had some level of influence on the male teacher trainee's choice for ECE. Personal factors include; like working with young children, a role model for children from single mother families, working experience with children, love, passion and personal interest, use knowledge in ECE to raise my children, personality type and ECE courses are easier. Peers' factors in the form of peers who are doing well in ECE, recommendation from a religious leader and a teacher, male friends success stories and my friends are offering ECE.

Finally, outcome expectations factors include; convenience in job search, stable income/ salary, job security, opportunity for advancement and availability of opportunities. Extraneous variables are barriers deterring men from teaching in ECE but which have been defied by some men. Some of these barriers include, feminisation of ECE, social stigma, low salary, suspicion among other barriers. These variables however, were not the focus of this study.

The intervening variables include strategies and policies that can be put in place to encourage more males to accept teaching at the ECE level including; giving work opportunities to men after graduating from ECE programme, motivational allowance, media campaigns, scholarship, increase quota for men in colleges of education among other strategies.

The dependent variable is the male teacher trainee's career choice for ECE influenced by several factors despite the barriers therein; and more men will choose ECE if deliberate strategies are put in place.

2.3 The Concept Early Childhood Education

Both Boakye (2021) and Deku (2018) highlighted the difficulties in defining early childhood education (ECE) as a concept, but they both concur that, in terms of a child's life, ECE is thought to cover the years from birth to age eight. Deku clarified this notion further by defining it as the period between 0 and 8 years of age. However, Boakye asserted that group settings are a part of early childhood education for infants through third grade. In other words, early childhood education is a unique area of education that works with children from birth until the third grade (Deku).

The numerous facilities that care for children at this age go by different names; examples include daycare, creches, nursery school, and kindergarten. However, Djarbeng (2019) said that in Ghana, kindergarten is the main focus of preschool rather than the earlier phases. According to Djarbeng, the ECCD policy specifically mentions kindergarten education, despite the fact that it is intended for children aged 0 to 8. This is due to the fact that formal education in Ghana begins at age 4 when children enroll in kindergarten for two years in a row: kindergarten 1 at age 4 and kindergarten 2 at age 5. Early childhood is defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 1993) as happening before the age of eight. A child goes through the fastest stage of growth and development at this time (Chepsiror, 2020). These are crucial years according to Chepsiror because children's brains develop more quickly throughout these years than at any other time in their lives. A child's brain is 90% developed by the time he/she is five, according to research, and early experiences are no different (Rose & Hewitt, 2017). These years also see the growth of cognitive skills as well as the establishment of their moral orientation, worldview, self-esteem, and social skills. Children must be given ample

time to expand their brains and reach their full potential. Children require high-quality care, which includes play, safety, nutrition, and early learning.

2.4 Historical Perspective of Early Childhood Education in Ghana

Twum (2016) traced the history of early childhood education in Ghana to the time before independence, when missionaries, local communities, or a group of two to three patriotic citizens established preschools. The White Paper (1995) also noted that it has been challenging to trace the history of how early childhood education has changed over time in Ghana because it was formerly seen to be the responsibility of parents and families rather than the state. At that time, the main focus was on giving young children care before they started first grade. In that situation, the government made no promise to funding preschool education. What was accessible in terms of early childhood education was what persons and groups of people could offer.

According to Twum (2016), individual participation in the delivery of KG education became possible in the 1920s, and the history of ECE may be traced back to the activity of the Basel missionaries in 1843. Again, according to Twum (2016), the Conventions People's Party (CPP) women's wing started six daycare centers to celebrate the accession of queen Elizabeth II to the British throne at the time Ghana (Gold Coast) was a British colony. The Department of Social Welfare (DSW) developed the day centers at the regional centers.

Daycare facilities received the same level of consideration as other primary classes. They were expected to look after children whose parents worked during the day or whose parents felt their children needed some sort of care before entering the formal education system. According to Djarbeng (2019), the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and later the Ministry of Education (MOE) had oversight responsibility over

all day nurseries. As a result, kindergarten (KG) instruction in Ghana has developed over time to become a component of the nation's formal education system. This process gained momentum after the 2002 Educational Review Committee recommended integrating KG education into the formal education system, and it was subsequently approved by a government White Paper in 2004. As a result, a two-year KG education was included in the free, compulsory universal basic education under the 2007 New Educational Reforms.

Preschool in Ghana appears to be geared more toward kindergarten than the levels that come before. Although children aged 0 to 8 are the focus of the ECCD policy, kindergarten education is specifically mentioned in the policy's educational section. In light of this, there are Early Childhood Education and Care (ECCE) programmes for children 0 to 2 years old that are overseen and organised by the Department of Social Welfare (Djarbeng, 2019).

However, Oppong Frimpong (2020) warned against overemphasising ECE participation without focusing on its quality, reiterating that when discussing ECE provision, quality must be stressed as a key factor in maintaining the positive effects and impact of early childhood education on children's future development. In addition to infrastructure, Cardichon, et al. (2020; UNICEF, 2018) found that teacher quality is often regarded as the most critical aspect of establishing high-quality ECE services. In this way, hiring skilled teachers, providing quality instruction, competitive pay, and ongoing learning are just a few ways to ensure high teacher quality (Darling-Hammond, 2017). In the sense that aspiring male teachers possess these qualifications equally and should be encouraged to provide their skills and contribute to the quality of service at this level of education, I cannot but concur with Darling-Hammond.

2.5 Rationale for Early Childhood Education in Ghana

The Republic of Ghana is the first African nation to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, according to Bago et al. (2019). The National Early Childhood Care and Development policy (ECCD), which Ghana enacted in 2004 in light of the Millennium Development Goals, intends to enhance child development and protection by funding kindergarten facilities accessible to at-risk children. According to Wolf, Aber, Behrman, and Tsinigo (2019), this programme strives to provide high-quality ECE to all children in order to lessen disparities in children's developmental outcomes. For children between the ages of 3 and 4 in Ghana, a two-year pre-primary education was formally established in 2007.

Furthermore, Wolf et al. (2019) pointed out that Ghana is one of the few African nations to have created a national early childhood development policy intended to support the development of children from birth to age 8 and to coordinate stakeholder activities in the field. The 2004-enacted policy establishes institutional duties for public and private partners and creates a plan for implementation. The National Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) policy, among other things, emphasises access to high-quality KG education as essential to enhancing early childhood development and learning, as well as a promising means of preventing developmental delays and encouraging early learning despite hardship.

All children must undergo two years of compulsory ECE at the ages of four (KG1) and five (KG2) before beginning primary school, according to Ghana's 2007 expansion of the Free Compulsory and Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) to kindergarten (Wolf et al., 2019).

2.6 Importance of Early Childhood Education

One cannot overestimate the importance of early childhood education. Because the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of young children directly influences their overall development and the type of adult they will become. Educators and policymakers around the world are now paying greater attention than ever to the quality of education provided to young children (Chepsiror, 2020). The healthy growth and nurturing of the critical foundations for preparing children for formal education and the development of human capital is encouraged by early childhood education. According to Chepsiror, this stage establishes a child's social competence, cognitive skills, emotional well-being, language, literacy skills and physical abilities that affect the next stage of human development, as well as the later stages. The first five years of a child's life are crucial for their development and lay the groundwork for lifelong learning. Early disparities in early childhood education are a long-lasting problem.

Boakye (2021) asserted that ECE benefits children from low socio-economic backgrounds more so than other children when it comes to the issue of inequality. Children who attend a high-quality early childhood programme, preschool, or pre-primary school are more likely to start primary school on time, drop out less frequently, and finish more years of education (World Bank, 2018). Investments in early learning have the potential to increase the efficacy and efficiency of educational institutions by lowering repetition rates and improving learning outcomes in primary schools (Crouch, et al. 2020; Gove, et al. 2018).

ECE is favourably correlated with children's language, early mathematics, and social development, according to a study by Bago, et al. (2019). Additionally, Schaub, et al.

(2019) found that early education, even when parents serve as teachers, enhances children's adaptive behaviour, developmental status, and language abilities. This finding was based on a randomised controlled trial conducted in Switzerland.

Rao, et al. (2019) also argued that children's participation in ECE is favourably correlated with their cognitive, linguistic, and socio-emotional development and that children who participate in ECE have greater rates of promotion to the first grade and higher rates of school retention between kindergarten and the first grade, according to a different study conducted in the United States by Conger, et al. (2019). Also, according to Boakye (2021), longitudinal studies in Ghana have revealed that early childhood education occurs during the child's phase of rapid development and cognitive growth, suggesting that educating the child during this critical period leads to significant development.

2.7 Concept of Career Choice

According to Owusu (2020) a person's career is the sum of all the labour he/she does throughout his/her lifetime. Owusu further explained career as a variety of work and non-work situations which usually span through the entire life of an individual. As a result, a person's career is typically linked to a pattern of choices, actions, and changes that influence his/her roles in employment, education, families, communities, and leisure. A person's selection regarding his/her career will determine how he/she will live his/her life in the future (Humayon, Raza, Khan & Ansari, 2018).

Similar to this, choosing a career may be viewed as a process that entails the decisions that an individual makes. Humayon et al. (2018) argued once more that the profession decision needs to be made as early as in the secondary and tertiary levels. A person's profession decision is incredibly important to their life. According to Humayon et al.,

choosing a career involves choosing a path of study that leads to a particular job based on one's interests, passions, and skills as influenced by factors like parental considerations, peer pressure, and role models. In the 21st century, choosing a career has grown increasingly challenging, which has a significant impact on personal decisions (Humayon et al.). Career goals, in the opinion of Dudovitz, Chung, Nelson and Wong (2017), may offer fast insight into how teenagers view themselves and their future. Therefore, adolescent career aspirations may represent their developing identity or values. The appropriate career choice for students engaged in professional school is vital, according to Omar, Zaman and Aziz (2021), since it has a significant impact on their future success and professional lives. In order to choose a career that suits them and that they enjoy doing, an individual must exercise due diligence by taking into account a number of facets that this study attempted to examine. A crucial life decision that most individuals do not take lightly is choosing a career. It seems too simplistic to subscribe to the idea that, based on evolution, men are biologically suited for professions that we perceive as masculine, and women are suited for positions that we perceive as feminine. Why are there female police officers and firefighters, or male nurses and male ECE teachers, if everything is so predictable and based on biology? A career decision must have more facets than this.

2.8 Factors Influencing Career Choice

According to Kerka, as mentioned in Afful (2019), a variety of factors influence employment choice, including personality, interests, self-concept, cultural identity, globalisation, socialisation, peers, social support, and accessible resources. Furthermore, the reviewed literature mentions a variety of criteria similar to those described by Afful as impacting occupation choice.

Studies by Muyalo (2017), Hooley and Rice (2018), and Mundi (2017), among others, found that the support, expectations, and financial assistance of families as well as the educational backgrounds of parents can all have an impact on students' career decisions. According to other studies, a student's personal interests, misconceptions about the subject, the media, the teachers who teach it, parents' aspirations, employment prospects, peer pressure, academic performance, the students' knowledge, and the contribution of career guidance teachers all play a significant role in the process of choosing a career (Mberia & Midigo, 2018). The present study examined the factors that influence male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at colleges of education in the Upper West Region, including family, personal, outcome expectations, as well as peer/role model influences.

The literature review includes many qualitative studies that looked at various factors like family, personal, job opportunities/opportunity for advancement, and role model/peers, whereas the present study adopted quantitative study focusing on factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at colleges of education in the Upper West. Due to the limited number of studies on career choice of male teacher trainees, very few quantitative data studies are accessible. Additionally, the majority of these factors largely applied to teachers' overall career decisions. The researcher included studies from many different countries which have been discussed in detail in the subsequent sub-themes as well because he considered it vital to note that there are common concerns and findings surrounding this problem which has become common worldwide.

2.8.1 Family factors influencing career decision making

The effect of one's family can be either positive or detrimental, depending on one's level of awareness and exposure to the outside world. When it comes to career guidance for their children, parents have proven to be a priceless resource.

The family may play a variety of roles, from selecting the particular job that the family values to where and how each individual member learns a skill. Even while teenagers actively start to show their parental independence after high school, these young adults are still incredibly reliant on their parents for their job paths. Parents' influence on work choice can be either positive or detrimental. Parents can have a beneficial or bad impact on a child's job decision; for instance, when forcing male teacher trainees into ECE careers that they are not interested in, they are less likely to like those occupations in the long run. However, children are more likely to love their employment in the future if their parents support them in pursuing careers in which they are interested (Murage, 2016).

Numerous studies have shown that young people and students believe their families have a great impact on their choice of careers (Yunusa, Jaafar, Ismail & Othman, 2022; Yang, Lau, Wong & Su, 2022). In Owusu, Owusu, Fiorgbor and Atakora's (2021) study on high school students, with 196 students, 50 parents, and 30 teachers, it was revealed that parents significantly influence students' career decisions. In a similar vein, Mtemeri's (2017) research found that parental education influences children's job decisions in a number of favourable ways. He asserted that this was in line with a study done in Australia, Germany, Albania, and Nigeria that indicated parental education has a favourable impact on children's professions.

Another study on the impact of family and parents on people's profession choices by Kocak, et al (2021) also showed that parents have a stronger influence on students' career decisions. This suggests that parents are keenly interested in their children's professional lives. A study report by Asantewaa (2020) on the impact of families on people's profession choices in South Africa and Chinese-American, however, rejects the idea that families always have an impact on students' career choices. For instance, a study in South Africa found that families have little bearing on professional decisions. A study in Chinese-American teenagers also found that family values were not a significant predictor of future employment aspirations, plans, or expectations. According to the latter study, when children get older, making professional decisions for themselves as opposed to doing so to please their families can have an impact on adolescents. A study on why students chose their jobs was undertaken in Kenya, according to Akyea-Boakye (2020). After studying 400 students at technical and teacher training colleges, he found that 56% of technical college students and 66% of teacher training college students said that their parents had influenced their decision to enroll in a particular career programme.

The present study examined the effects of family members' educational backgrounds, occupations, socioeconomic status, support, and encouragement on male teacher trainees' decisions to pursue careers in early childhood education.

According to Fenu, Amponsah and Nkum (2021), young adults who have teacher parents are more likely to have an interest in teaching. This is because of the relationship between parents' occupation and the influence it has on children's career choice. Parents' professions have varying effects on their children's career and/or educational choices (Safarmamad, 2019). Given that they receive long-term direct

exposure to those occupations, which allows them to develop motivation and aptitude, it is normal for some children to pursue their parents' careers. When parents run a family business, this trend is especially obvious. Safarmamad, however, observed that if a parent's work is tiresome and/or stressful, necessitates more years of education, or does not offer enough for the family, it deters their children from participating in those activities. On this point, it is not unexpected to hear parents of teachers or people in other professions advising their children against pursuing a career in those professions, even though such advice can be disregarded once the child develops a genuine love and enthusiasm for such professions, and in this case, ECE. According to Fenu, Amponsah and Nkum (2021), the household is where interest in a certain career first develops. They also emphasised how an individual's choice of profession is influenced by the occupation of his or her parents and other significant family members.

Again, a study by Tillman; as referred by Priyanka (2020) investigated the “parental influence on college students’ career aspirations”, found that parents belonging to teaching field had a high level of influence on their children’s career decisions as compared to the others. The data was gathered through survey and interviews. Participants included parents belonging to academia and also who were not from the academia. Meanwhile, it is worth nothing that if their parents’ jobs give them great satisfaction or provide a comfortable lifestyle, children see the incentives early on, and may favour these careers over others. In contrast, if parents complain about their jobs or struggle to support the family on the income their jobs provide, children are more likely to seek more fulfilling or higher-paid jobs.

Hernandez (2020) noted that studies on the educational and economic backgrounds of those interested in becoming teachers have been conducted in a number of nations, and they frequently show that those interested in teaching come from households with a lower socio-economic standing. The characteristics of students entering teacher-training programmes in Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, and Trinidad and Tobago were also revealed by Hernandez's study. These characteristics included age, religious affiliation, ethnic group, mother tongue, parental occupations, academic success, and educational background. They discovered that the teachers hailed from lower socioeconomic backgrounds than those in the wealthy nations of the UK and the US.

Asantewaa (2020) asserted that a person's career decision during a particular period of their lives—choices that will define a significant portion of that student's future—may be influenced by the family's financial level. Some students will have to allocate money for their education based on their family's means.

Family financial limitations frequently prevent students from adopting their intended careers. For instance, if a student is interested in studying medicine but his parents are socioeconomically disadvantaged and cannot afford it, he may select a different science course as a result of his parents' financial limitations. Asantewaa (2020) reiterated that students from low-income families have to choose less expensive courses simply because they cannot afford some of the more expensive ones. These students are prevented from enrolling in specific courses, not because they lack the necessary academic skills, but because they cannot afford the cost.

Asantewaa's (2020) claim is supported by a study by Famolu (2020) whose study found that students are motivated to choose a vocation by their parents' finances. This suggests that students' profession choices are influenced by their parents' money and

resources. This, according to Famolu, suggests that a person's socio-economic background and the development of his or her education and job are related. High-income students frequently expect they will attend college. Can this circumstance persuade male teacher trainees to choose ECE over their preferred programmes?

Through a sample size of 381 participants Priyanka, (2020) did a study on the topic of "the impact of family influence and involvement on career development." The presented data was gathered using semi-structured interviews and a survey. The examination of the qualitative data revealed that families with strong financial foundations and educational backgrounds had a beneficial influence on the decision-making process regarding their children's careers, whereas families with weak capital structures had a negative influence. In a similar vein, Amoako, Danyoh, and Buku (2020) discovered that parents with higher socio-economic status are more likely to have completed high school. Amoako et al. also claimed that while young adults from less privileged homes tend to struggle with careers that are within their parents' financial ' means regardless of their own interest or capability, young adults from wealthy families tend to choose careers that they believe are appropriate to their family's status even when such a career is against their own personal interest or capabilities.

The educational level of parents and guardians is another familial factor that may have an impact on male teacher trainees' decision to pursue a career in early childhood education. According to Eremie and Okwulehie (2019), a person's career choice will undoubtedly be influenced by the educational level of his or her parents. The employment options for their children would eventually be limited if the parents and guardians are not properly educated. Amoako et al. (2020) also believed that families

with high occupational goals are more likely to value their children's careers and have higher professional aspirations for their own children. According to the study, some students' job decisions are influenced by the type of profession in which their parents are employed. This primarily occurs on Vocation Day, when students are permitted to dress as they would for that career. Some pupils decide to dress in the same type of uniform they observe their parents wearing to work. Similarly, parental general psychosocial support actions could fall under the category of family/parental impact (e.g., emotional support, encouragement, expectation, and general guidance). Parental expectations, parental encouragement, parental role modeling, parenting style, family socio-economic situation, and parent-child relationships are just a few examples of family characteristics that were taken into consideration. Amoako et al. (2020) discovered once more that parental support (i.e., verbal support or behavioural support from parents on the domain-related activities) improved people's self-efficacy by making people think they could deal successfully with what had previously overwhelmed them, thereby influencing their learning experience. The same idea was put up by Wachira (2018), who claimed that parents who are eager to give their children the finest assistance possible enable them to find countless opportunities to explore careers and employment settings in both formal and informal settings. Children can be inspired to take on difficult activities by being given the opportunity to learn new skills, be given chances to develop confidence in family circumstances, and be given informal contacts for the purpose of exploring potential career paths.

Meader (2017) utilised Cushman's study to examine how a man's decision to pursue ECE may be influenced by his personal ties. The 17 men revealed a common theme: their families' responses to their desire to become teachers at the ECE level ranged from being supportive to amused or worried. Meader reports that many of the

participants also expressed concern over how others might react since they believed that because they were men, their masculinity would be called into question. Many of the participants talked about how their choice to teach at lower levels led people to suggest that they would do better working in secondary education, which was seen as having a higher reputation than primary education. Meader discovered, however, that males were more inclined to teach, particularly at the ECE level, if they had support and encouragement from their family and friends.

2.8.2 Personal factors

Hernandez (2020) investigated the motivations of new teachers' choice for teaching at Saskatchewan University in Canada. Hernandez's study set out to:

(1) Explore the entry motives of Saskatchewan's new teachers; (2) ascertain if those entry motivations changed over time; and (3) look for any changes in entry motivations caused by demographic factors. With 279 participants, this mixed-methods study included questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The trainees and teachers in service motivation most commonly cited as significant, according to the trainee teachers who took part in the survey, included "making a difference in people's lives," "working with children or adolescents," and the "chance to teach subjects that were of interest." Male teacher trainees' decisions to enroll in early childhood programmes at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region may be influenced by their personalities, interests, skills, teaching experiences, and love of children, among other factors.

According to Gwelo (2019) and Raveenther (2017), students' characteristics have an impact on the careers they choose. Similar to this, Kemboi, Kindiki and Misigo (2016) asserted that a person's personality has a great impact on the career they pick,

with the reasoning being that people select the profession they like the most because it best suits their particular character and personality. According to Gwelo, students are more likely to select a career that complements their personality in order to find fulfilment and love studying. According to Omar et al. (2021), students should be aware of their unique traits and connect them to the vocation that best fits them. The kind of job a student chooses is influenced by how he/she rates himself/herself in respect to a personality attribute.

Omar et al. (2021) went on to say that a person's personality significantly influences the job path he/she takes, as people tend to select the field of work that best expresses their distinct identities and personalities. Students are more likely to select a job that best fits their personality, according to Gwelo (2019), so they can enjoy studying and feel satisfied.

In order to examine attitudes and motivations to teach at the ECE level at the beginning of the teacher training programme, Almulla (2020) presented a research done on a sample of three in Australian universities using their own FIT-Choice scale. Perceived teaching abilities was one of the most significant motivational elements reported by 1,653 pre-service teachers, according to the researchers, and they were substantially connected with job satisfaction. Similar findings were observed in a qualitative UK research by Younger as cited in Almulla's study, comprising trainees of newly certified secondary teachers found that over 80% of respondents rated the ability factor and strong teaching confidence as among the attributes most associated with aspiring teachers. According to reports from various countries, one of the common intrinsic driving elements for choosing teaching as a profession is confidence in one's own capacity to instruct (Almulla). A person's impression of his

or her competence to handle the demands of teaching, such as managing the classroom, having the information to transmit, and having the capacity to convey this knowledge to pupils, is referred to as perceived teaching ability.

Interest is a personal trait that male teacher trainees for ECE may use to guide their career decision. According to a number of studies (Humayon et al., 2018; Meddour et al., 2016; Razali et al., 2018), interest has consistently been cited as a key factor in determining profession choice. Humayon et al. further (2018), opined that students who had a strong interest in a certain career path were more likely to pursue that field. Interest was similarly listed as the most significant predictor of profession choice in 2016 research by Meddour et al. The degree to which students participate in a topic will depend on their interest in that subject. Additionally, because they are more likely to pick occupations based on personal preferences, these students work harder to accomplish their professional objectives (Tey, Moses & Cheah, 2020). Male teacher trainees may opt to work in early childhood education settings because they are passionate about and love working with children, despite all the apparent restrictions that exist for them (Anderson, 2019; Xu, 2019). Additionally, according to Owusu (2020), scholars think that the more interested individuals are in their job, the more probable it is that they will be successful.

Similar to what Enache and Matei (2017) said, professional interest is one of the factors that goes into a person's decision regarding his/her job. In accord, Abe and Chikoko (2020) came to the conclusion that career interest plays a significant role in students' decision-making and has implications for policy decisions. Similar to this, Siddiky and Akter (2021) revealed that students' profession selections and choices are greatly influenced by their personal interests. Additionally, Anovunga, N-yelbi, and

Akpadago (2021) revealed that a person's chosen occupational choice or growth is significantly influenced by his/her job interest.

According to Low, Hui, and Cai (2017), teaching experience can have a good or negative impact on how someone views the teaching profession. This finding was also supported by Watt and Richardson's study, which Almulla (2020) cited. They noted that prior teaching experience, along with teaching ability, intrinsic career values, and social utility values, was a highly rated influence and was positively related to choosing the profession (with a mean above five on a seven-point scale).

In a study, all the men said they liked to work with younger children, which was one of their motivations for selecting early childhood education, according to different research by Xu (2019). In Xu's study conducted with 12 male student teachers in the early childhood education, they admitted that they loved working with younger children and that they wanted to help them in a positive way. The inference is that some males who decide to become early childhood educators are passionate about their chosen profession and have prior experience dealing with children. The identification of men with experience dealing with children in organisations like churches, clubs, societies, and community centres may thus aid in the recruitment of males into the field.

Wang's (2019) study found that respondents highly ranked prior teaching and learning experiences as crucial in their decision to undertake a teaching career, which supports this viewpoint. Opportunities to work with children in a non-traditional educational context include teaching, coaching swimming or sailing at a summer camp, or becoming a classroom assistant. Some claimed to have had prior experience instructing English as a foreign language in classrooms in nations other than those

where the language is spoken natively, including China, France, and Italy. Wang cited this score as evidence that the development of the desire in pursuing a teaching career was aided by the favourable feelings from the earlier teaching, mentoring, or coaching experiences.

In Ghana, particularly in the private schools, the sex of the teacher is not taken into account when hiring instructors to teach at the early childhood level and the majority of the teachers are untrained. Male instructors, many of whom are WASSCE/SSSCE graduates, may be inspired to pursue professional training in order to teach at the early childhood level based on their teaching experiences at that level. Additionally, Lindsay's (2021) ethnographic study examined why students decided to become teachers. The results of Lindsay's ethnographic and survey study with 270 college instructors in Jamaica showed that the ability to make a positive impact on society, a love for or desire to work with children, a love for teaching, or simply the profession were the primary key factors that influenced their decision to become teachers. Similar factors could have influenced male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE.

In qualitative research on male pre-service teachers, Xu (2019) noted that participants discussed their own motivations for deciding to pursue a career in early childhood education. All participants responded that they liked to deal with younger children and wanted to assist them positively in their reactions to the reasons outlined. Additionally, it seems that the participants wanted to provide their future children the best educational experience possible. While one participant said: he wanted to teach children, another participant said, he wanted to offer the greatest instruction in teaching that he could and further stated that he liked working with children and imparting knowledge to them. It appears apparently clear that many people including

male teacher trainees are probably motivated by a deep-seated love and concern for children. The above findings show that personal factors could have motivated male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE.

The influence of role model and peers on male teacher trainees' choice for early childhood education can be viewed from two perspectives, thus, in one breadth, the male teacher trainee could be influenced by a role model and the desire to model others, especially male pupils who might not have male/ father figures in their lives. The latter becomes a personal factor in the career choice of male teacher trainees for ECE.

According to Brownhill, Warwick, and Hajdukova (2021), there are a number of reasons why men choose to become teachers at the ECE level, and one of those reasons is that they may be drawn to teaching young children because they believe that a lack of male role models in that age group will disadvantage the learners.

A more thorough assessment of the literature revealed that some males chose to teach at the early childhood level because they think they have unique traits to give or because they regard themselves as role models. These males frequently take a special interest in issues like student behaviour or absent fathers.

The findings of a different research by Tokic (2018) done in Croatia revealed that one of the factors contributing to male student-teachers' preference for early childhood education is their perception that there aren't enough men working as preschool instructors. Additionally, they choose this line of work because they consider themselves to be father figures and role models. The participants in Tokic's study also expressed similar worries about issues with students' behaviour and absent fathers.

Research done in South Africa by Ravhuhali, et al. (2019) investigated the attitudes of males in early childhood education on why they decided to become teachers. One of the reasons some of the study's participants gave was that they chose teaching at that level because they wanted to make sure that children had male instructors who could serve as role models for fatherhood. These men considered themselves role models, especially for children who lack a father figure.

Meanwhile Hedlin, Aberg and Johansson (2019) contended that the saying that men should be role models belongs to common sense discourse and further argued that it is not the teacher's gender, but the teacher being perceived as a genuine person that is of importance in relationships with children. Despite this opposing viewpoint, I agree to the many research findings, such as those of Bozkurt (2021) that male instructors may serve as role models for youngsters. For instance, Bozkurt maintained that it was dangerous for youngsters to attend school when there were no male role models. According to Moosa and Bhana as referenced in Bozkurt, one of the motivations for the male role modeling hypothesis is the potential for female teachers to misjudge how young boys act.

The perception that ECE course is less easy or challenging than others may be another personal element that influences the career decision of male teacher trainees for ECE. According to a study by Murage (2016) conducted in Kenya to determine the factors influencing male students' enrollment in early childhood education training, 58% of the respondents enrolled because they believed ECE was an easy course to pursue. The students indicated that ECE is a relatively easy course, which influenced the respondents. Accordingly, it is predicted that male teacher trainees would select the choice they consider to be simple.

2.8.3 Peers influence

Peer may be seen as a group of people with shared traits especially culture and ways of doing things. Peer influence is the influence resulting from such a group encouraging one to either change or strengthen his or her attitudes, values, behaviour and general way of thinking in a bid to conform to the group's norms.

Children's connection to their parents as a model for compliance and a reference group starts to weaken when they start to interact with external people. Nwobi, Uzoekwe, Ojo and Odo (2020) claimed that as soon as students enroll in school, their friends tend to assume control. According to Nwobi et al., this peer group includes playmates, friends, or others who fall into the same age ranges and hold similar beliefs. Peer pressure also plays a big part in how people choose their careers. In their gatherings, these peers talk about a wide range of subjects that might affect their decision about a career. Some of them could persuade people, particularly their group mates' acquaintances, to adopt a particular profession. According to Kumazhege (2017), who concurred with Nwobi et al. (2020) some students are influenced by their classmates while making decisions that have an impact on their lives today. In their gatherings, the majority of these peers talk about topics including sexuality, career choice, and interpersonal connection skills. When they talk, they can influence one another's decisions about things like career paths and subject combinations.

Some empirical studies have demonstrated the influence of peers on a person's profession choice (Gwelo, 2019; Zhang & Wang, 2018) claimed that students may seek what their peers desire in order to fit in with them, and that as peer influence increases, so will students' job choices. Murage (2016) established that peers have a significant impact when it comes to choosing a vocation, which is consistent with

previous research. It is yet to be determined if these peer variables have a direct impact on male teacher trainees' decision to enroll in an ECE programme. Peer relationships have an impact on peers' job decisions. Peers have been shown to have an impact on students' job decisions in Kenya (Walaba & Kiboss, as cited in Mtemeri, 2020) and Uganda (Okiror & Otabong, 2015). The students converse while exchanging career-related information. The social learning theory of Krumboltz, which emphasises the value of students interacting with one another in their surroundings, is in accord with this.

2.8.4 Outcome expectations

When choosing a career, people frequently anticipate certain advantages, like the potential for promotion, the availability of jobs, work stability, and the possibility of self-employment, among others. Additionally, people are looking for a career that may provide excellent pay rates, a fulfilling lifestyle, and career advancement to meet their social and esteem demands. One of the issues that arose from Xu's (2019) qualitative study, which explored the perspectives of male early childhood teacher trainees, was job opportunities. Since there aren't many male instructors in ECE, Xu found that the participants felt quite positive about their future job prospects. The following were excerpts from the participants which suggested their very positive feelings about their job prospects in Xu's (2019) study: One participant stated that *as far as getting a job was concerned, it was easier for male teachers to be employed since they were few in the ECE field as compared to female counterparts. Similarly, another participant expressed similar optimism as the first participant stressing his gender difference in the so-called feminised field. Yet another participant also echoed the advantage of limited quantity, but expanded to include gendered diversity and fatherly influence on children as an added advantage over his female peers. He further*

argued that male ECE teachers have that advantage because they can provide that fatherly figure to some of these students and help with the diversity of the teacher population and diversity is always an advantage in any company any type of jobs because you have many different minds thinking.

The aforementioned reasons by participants make it abundantly evident that, despite the fact that the study was carried out in a different setting, male teacher trainees in the Upper West Region in particular, and Ghana as a whole, may have made the same career decisions given the high rate of unemployment in the nation as well as gender disproportion in the ECE field.

Students' expectations, expected earnings, job opportunities, and other factors are significant determinants of career choice, according to a study conducted by Ahmed and Farooq (2022) in Pakistan to examine the primary determining factors of career choices of youth selected from Post Graduate Colleges. According to Ahmed and Farooq, the likelihood of finding a job is an important consideration when making a big decision since it will reassure students that there is hope for the future.

Using a mixed methods approach and the FIT-Choice subscale, Wang (2019) investigated why pre-service teachers choose teaching as a career. The study's findings showed that job stability was cited by the majority of participants as a key factor affecting their decision to become teachers. About 76% of survey respondents concurred with the FIT-Choice statements that teaching will give a secure career path and a reliable wage. Participants in the interview expressed optimism on the job stability of teaching, which is consistent with Wang's questionnaire findings. Practical concerns like work stability, employment demand, and job prospects were frequently taken into account while choosing a vocation, as shown in Xu's (2019) study.

In terms of job security, participants expressed that they could always come back to teaching anytime they happen to leave the teaching service since could take various leaves such as study leave and come back again to the service.

Once again, Xu (2019) reported on male pre-service teachers in a research on their motivations for ECE, and the results revealed that male pre-service teachers were optimistic about getting employed in the future owing to the dearth of male instructors in the field of early childhood education. The inference made was that, men in pre-service thought getting a teaching job would be simpler than their female colleagues. This opinion of male pre-service teachers was supported by Cushman and Smith, as cited in Xu (2019). According to the findings, 35% of principals in New Zealand would hire the male applicant over a female if the two had comparable qualifications. Because of the public's need for male role models or gender equity, there may be a possibility that men will be employed in the ECE.

Regular source of income is another factor considered by potential job seekers. The choice of any vocation should take into account the salary and, for that matter, a reliable source of income. According to Wang (2019), males who decide to pursue a career in early childhood education are most definitely not the exception. More often, men are forced to choose between having a satisfying work that they enjoy and being able to support their family financially. Salary, as a consistent source of income, may influence the decision of male teacher trainees to choose a career in early childhood education. However, the projected pay for a job might either inspire or deter students from pursuing it. Due to the high unemployment rate in Ghana and the demand for teachers at this level of education, early childhood education is regarded as an important rung on the educational ladder. As a result, there has been much attention

paid to the field, which may give male teacher trainees hope of finding employment after graduation. Additionally, there is no pay disparity when it comes to teaching in Ghana because the same rank/grade and qualification justify the same compensation level regardless of the level you teach.

Surprisingly, opportunity was not one of the important considerations in choosing a job, according to Omar, et al's (2021) study. The study also discovered no connection between profession choice and financial factors. Omar et al's study, which emphasised that factors relating to money or economic aspects are not a primary concern for young adults in choosing a vocation, supports this finding. These results seem contentious in a manner since, in my opinion, students would most likely focus on a professional path that they believe will put them in a better position to get employment in society and earn a steady income. According to this line of reasoning, more male students will be drawn to ECE if there are career prospects in the field among the general population.

Despite the aforementioned contrary findings, one can argue that the perceived negative impressions held by society toward males in the field of early childhood education in Ghana could be an obstacle for prospective ECE male teachers. Yet, taking into account the socio-economic conditions of the country, the level of unemployment as previously mentioned, the male teacher trainee is prepared to enter into ECE, at least insofar as their employment opportunities and regular income source are concerned, as in Xu's (2019) study.

2.9 Males Participation in ECE

According to Mathwasa and Sibanda (2020), females have predominated in the field of early childhood education for ages all over the world. For them, this is a result of

the public's trust in women because they are seen as more nurturing than men, which has also made it harder for men to pursue jobs in early childhood education. More so, there is a belief that teaching young children is a job just for women or a mother's function because women have controlled this field for a long time and there aren't many men working in it. Su (2017) came to the same conclusion as he noted that there are roughly the same numbers of male early childhood educators everywhere. Meanwhile, many of our early childhood foundations are directly tied to men who have made major contributions over the years. Leaders in education who understood the value of the early years and how it relates to later development include Plato, Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Owen, and Dewey. Prior to the female leadership in early childhood education that we witness today, these men studied, developed, and wrote about the practice for years, but the field of ECE has been seen as best suited to women.

Women make up 93% of the childcare workforce in the United States as of 2017 according to (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as cited in Junga & Geist, 2022). Male teachers are underrepresented in early childhood education (ECE) globally and have been for a long time (Junga & Geist). As a result, gendered skewedness in ECE has reportedly prompted concerns, according to Junga and Geist, which means that children have been denied equal opportunity to learn from persons who represent all genders (Husam, Abraham & Imad, 2019).

Numerous studies have linked poor pay, low social standing, the gendered structure of the field, and negative public perceptions of male teachers to low recruitment and retention of early childhood (EC) male instructors (Shpancer et al., 2019; Ottaviano & Persico, 2019).

Additionally, one of their worries regarding men working at ECE centers is the possibility of social isolation due to a female-dominated environment. As a result, male teachers in early childhood have been marginalised as "others" (McGowan, 2016; Zhang & Wang, 2018). This nonetheless, in Ghana, Abdulai (2016) noted that as early childhood education exists and practiced in its present form, there is no policy against males' participation in early childhood educational practices, yet the profession is overly gendered- skewed towards females. However, what Abdulai failed to acknowledge is the fact that there are no conscious policies put in place to bridge the gender gap in ECE by successive governments and other significant stakeholders hence the trend continues to exist.

Male students in EC teacher education programmes, where the majority of the students are female, are forced to deal with feelings of isolation and difficulties of standing out while trying to find a place for themselves in the community (Xu, 2019). Despite the difficulties, male teachers who choose to work in early childhood education settings do so because they are passionate about working with children and teaching (Anderson, 2019; Xu).

Researchers recently looked into the traits shared by male teachers who work in early childhood education centres. Quality male teachers are said to share traits with quality female teachers, according to Junga and Geist (2022), in that they are child-centered, sensitive, responsive, caring, loving, compassionate, trustful, patient, playful, and enthusiastic about children's learning and curiosities. Forson (2020) observed that there has been an effort to expand the number of male teachers in EC education and care as awareness of male teachers in ECE has improved recently. Over the past

decades, there has been a significant transformation in social attitude about the rate at which males participate in children's upbringing.

Male educators are now valued and seen as having a positive impact on children's learning and growth. According to extensive study from numerous nations throughout the world, female employees and parents welcome males into the pre-school education settings for a variety of reasons (Forson, 2020). According to Ottaviano and Persico (2019), males may (and must be) encouraged to take care of children, even the youngest ones, not only as new "caring fathers" but also as experts in early childhood education who carry out tasks that are traditionally regarded as female responsibilities (changing, feeding or putting babies to sleep). The impression that women are the only ones capable of nurturing and caring for children will change when males participate in pre-school education and training, signaling to other genders that men are also capable of doing the same.

2.9.1 Need for men in ECE

The imbalance of males in the field of ECE is well known. Many studies conducted emphasised the dearth of male teachers in the early childhood level. Since then, a number of studies have been published that demonstrate the low proportion of male teachers (Ingersoll, Merrill, Stuckey, & Collins, 2018). Researchers looked into the need for men in the field of ECE as a result of the low number of males in ECE instructors. Male teachers' ability to relate to boys, male teachers' function as role models, and growing staff diversity were among the factors investigated to determine the importance of male instructors and their impacts on young children (Santos & Amancio, 2019).

2.9.2 Ability to relate to male students

One advantage of having male teachers is their capacity to connect with their male students (Santos & Amancio, 2019). Because men can serve as role models for boys, Santos and Amancio advocated for a balance between male and female ECE teachers. They also suggested that male teachers can connect with males more effectively than their female counterparts. According to Ritter (2022), a disproportionate number of female teachers has made teaching overly gendered, which is bad for boys.

In contrast to more active subjects like creating and building, the feminine side of education frequently places an emphasis on particular disciplines like reading and writing (Ritter, 2022).

Male and female pre-service teachers who participated in Hedlin and Aberg's study as cited by Ritter (2022) claimed men offer a different dynamic to the classroom because they play differently (more daringly), see things from a boys' perspective, and respond to events differently. Teachers (male and female) research participants also observed that some male teachers could relate to the students' interests better than their female counterparts since some male teachers share the same hobbies as many boys, such as sports and creating things (McGrath et al, 2019).

The advantages of being of the same gender extend beyond extracurricular activities. Boys prefer to communicate to males than to females when addressing personal or emotional concerns, according to Ritter (2022). Similarly, according to McGrath et al's research, male students preferred to speak with male teachers on issues that uniquely affected men, such as puberty. It's interesting to note in McGrath and Sinclair's study that female students also mentioned a benefit to having male teachers personally. Female elementary school students talked about how having male teachers

helped them develop their ability to converse politely with boys who are not in their immediate family (McGrath et al.). Male ECE instructors gain from being able to connect with both boy and girl learners.

2.9.3 Males as role models

Male role models for young children in ECE have long been recognised as having advantages. According to Ritter (2022), the primary reason for many initiatives calling for more male teachers is the need for male role models for children, especially children from single-parent homes. In fact, statements of the advantages of males serving as role models in the ECE classroom can be found in practically all research including male ECE teachers (Bozkurt, 2021). Again, Ritter observed that many parents from single-parent families expressed joy when learning that their male child will be in a class with a male teacher since their child required a positive male role model. In a similar vein, parents in Lindsay's (2021) study claimed that male teachers might serve as a father figure in the classroom and serve as positive male role models for both their male and female children. Similar reasons were expressed by participants in the research conducted by Joseph and Wright (2016), who wanted to make a difference in the lives of others and fill a role for male pupils in their elementary school classroom.

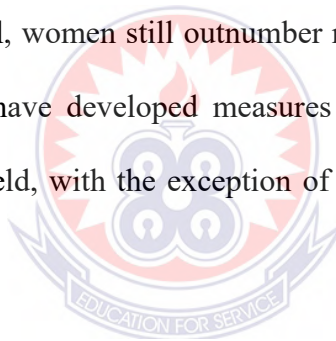
2.9.4 Diversity in staff

It is common knowledge that male teachers bring a unique perspective to the classroom. Ritter (2022) postulated that men and women are thought to think and reason in distinct ways. Staff members and students value the inclusion of both gender viewpoints in the school. Males are perceived as being more balanced in the school environment since participants in Santos and Amancio's study (2019) showed that

they thought men were less reacting to situations and more objective in their thoughts. The necessity for gender balance in schools, analogous to the mother/father balance at home, was stated by McGrath and Sinclair (2016). McGrath and Sinclair further noted that it is crucial to have both men and women mentor and instruct pupils at the foundation level. Male ECE teachers in Ritter's view, also help in eradicating pre-conceived notions in the classroom. It implies that when pupils observe males and females working side by side on the same tasks, it helps eliminate the notion that females are the proper gender for teaching in pre- schools.

2.10 Strategies to Recruit and Retain Male Educators in ECE

Even though there is widespread recognition of the positive impacts that male teachers have at this level, women still outnumber men in early childhood education. A number of countries have developed measures to increase the number of male instructors in the ECE field, with the exception of Ghana, which doesn't seem to be aware of the issue.



According to Rentzou (2017), measures should be put in place to recruit and retain male teachers enrolled in ECE programmes as well as to attract men for the pre-school level. According to research, no country in Europe has succeeded in increasing the number of men working in ECE without the support of government programmes and initiatives (Rentzou). Meanwhile Rentzou reported that the Ministry of Education in New Zealand worked with a new promotional strategy that was adopted and focused on raising the status of teaching and diversifying the teaching workforce, including the proportion of men, in order to increase male participation in ECE education.

Forson (2020) corroborated Rentzou's finding, revealing that the United Kingdom embarked on gender-specific recruiting for men in ECE and provided financial incentives. As a result of these efforts, the United Kingdom saw a steady rise in the proportion of male ECE instructors. Similar to this, Zhang (2017) noted that nearly every nation in the world is pushing to increase the number of men in ECE. Some nations take the lead in developing policies that are tailored to the end result.

The desired percentage of male employees in early childhood services in Norway is 20%. For instance, Zhang mentioned Germany, which invested 13 million euros in the "More Males in Early Childhood Certification and Care" project, with a long-term goal of 20%, and New Zealand, which developed a programme granting 10 \$4,500 scholarships for men attending its ECE teacher education programme. A less gendered ECE workforce has been established in these nations, notwithstanding Zhang's claim that the results have had mixed consequences.

Forson (2020) on his part, makes the case that governments could help pre-school education succeed by assisting with the support, recruitment, and retention of men in pre-school settings, as well as by raising the status of pre-school education, launching national advertising campaigns, ensuring safe and healthy working conditions, and using indirect advocacy.

In the framework of gender equality, responsible ministries and national agencies frequently present ideas for more male engagement in ECE with encouraging outcomes. According to Rohrmann (2019), it is the result of extensive government-funded initiatives, and there are currently 9.1% and 6.2%, respectively, of male employees in ECE in Norway and Germany. Rohrmann went on to highlight Denmark, which has also been effective in establishing a greater gender balance in

ECE institutions, even if the percentage of male employees is still less than 10% in all the nations listed (Rohrmann,). In Turkey, the proportion of male preschool instructors rose dramatically to 5.8% as a result of attempts to improve gender equality in ECE during the past ten years (Sak, 2018).

According to Xu and Waniganayake (2018), the main barrier that prevents men from becoming early childhood educators is the widespread misconception that men are less qualified than women to care for and educate young children. In order to disprove this notion, according to Xu and Waniganayake, recruiting techniques that include all education stakeholders must be developed in order to encourage more males to become ECE instructors. They suggested the following:

- Enhancing employer of choice status for men desiring to pursue careers in teaching in ECE
- boosting the representation of male instructors,
- raising the level of work satisfaction among male teachers,
- increasing the number of men applying for teaching positions.
- creating a culture that honours and recognises the needs of male teachers; and enhancing working circumstances (p.24).

Zhang (2017) suggested that enhancing financial incentives, such as improving teacher wages, enacting interest-free loans programmes for male ECE instructors, and offering graduate school stipends, would be helpful to draw more male teachers into ECE. However, Richardson and Watt (2016) issued a warning that simply increasing teachers' pay is likely to have the unintended result of luring in candidates who are more motivated by financial gain than by a love of school teaching or a desire to work with children. If this isn't done sparingly, more men who want to be teachers will

select ECE only for the financial or possible good salary compensation, paying less attention to the nature of teaching itself.

In a qualitative research, Lindsay (2021) noted that most of the participants stressed the need of providing scholarships and incentives to attract more males to the field. They acknowledged that other men; could have chosen the programme in ECE, but they opted for other specialisations that offered scholarships. They also underscored how assisting and meeting the needs of males will motivate them to participate in the programme and continue working in the field. According to the participants' responses, scholarship may be crucial in luring males into the field, thus policymakers may want to take this into consideration when trying to recruit and retain young people. However, he made it clear that men and women should have equal chances and that the recruiting of men should not hinder the recruitment of women.

According to the conclusions of the same study, recruiting efforts or teacher training programmes should not just target males but also men who are passionate about their profession, enjoy interacting with children, want to be great role models, and want to affect social change. According to Lindsay (2021), the government in the United Kingdom collaborated with universities to conduct a recruiting push to entice more males into ECE. The research findings also suggest that socially accepted views may act as obstacles in boys' or men's pursuit of their ideal careers. These stereotypes are ingrained in people from a young age (Lindsay, 2021). This is one of the reasons that men in ECE are required in order to refute such gender-stereotypical beliefs, according to Lindsay's results. Therefore, in order to recruit more male student-teachers in early childhood and primary education, the government must promote behaviours and attitudes that are not stereotypical. However, there won't be a gender

balance in the profession unless the unfavourable responses, discouragements from others, and misconceptions are addressed.

2.11 Summary of the Related Literature Review

Global awareness has been given to the problem of gender (sex) imbalance in the early education workforce. Male teachers confront discrimination in the workplace due to factors including poor status, mistrust, and the perception that they lack the abilities necessary to care for young children. Some male teacher trainees nevertheless, express interest in working with young children despite these obstacles.

This study looked at how factors such as family, personal, outcome expectations, role model/peers, and other factors influenced male teacher trainees' motivation for choosing ECE as well as strategies that could be put in place to attract more males to go in for ECE. Understanding what motivates them will go a long way to encourage more males into the field.

Furthermore, studies have shown the value and advantages of having more male instructors in early childhood settings, which argues for initiatives to increase the number of male teachers in this field. According to the literature, several countries have employed a variety of strategies to raise the recruitment of males in ECE. Some of these strategies, which were successful, included funding scholarships for male teacher trainees and developing recruiting campaigns to boost the proportion of men working as ECE teachers. Therefore, it is necessary for other countries, including Ghana, to implement some of these strategies as well as others in the local context in order to attract more male instructors to pursue careers in early childhood education.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methodology of the study which includes the research paradigm, research approach, research design, population, sample and sampling technique, instruments, validity, and reliability, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Paradigm

This study was underpinned by the positivist paradigm. According to Adamu-Issah (2020), this paradigm enables the researcher to use quantitative approaches, allowing for the generalisation of the study's findings. Positivism is a philosophy that holds the view that only factual information learned by observation, including measurement using impartial procedures, is reliable (Banini, 2020). The positivist school of thought, according to Banini, holds that, all phenomena and situations under study have a single, objective reality independent of the researcher's perspective or worldview. The positivists, according to Johnson and Christensen (2014), try to work under the presumption of objectivity. They assume that there is a reality to be observed and that rational observers who look at the same phenomenon will basically agree on its existence and its characteristics. Johnson and Christensen further asserted that positivists make an effort to maintain as much objectivity or value-freeness as they can and that they make every effort to minimise the influence of human bias. Quantitative researchers make an effort to observe things that interest them "from a distance" (p.80).

To carefully quantify what is observed, for instance, standardised questionnaires and other quantitative measuring techniques are frequently utilised.

According to Adamu-Issah (2020), a positivist approach to research limits the researcher's responsibility to data gathering and analysis using impartial techniques. According to Adamu-Issah, research findings are often visible and rely on quantitative observations that are amenable to statistical analysis. The key benefits of positivism, according to Armstrong (2010), include broad coverage of a variety of scenarios, speed and efficiency, and utility in large samples. However, one of the criticisms leveled at positivists, according to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018), is the idea that people have a limited conception of themselves when social scientists focus on the person's repetitive, predictable, and invariant characteristics; on externalities to the exclusion of the subject; and on the person's parts in an effort to comprehend the whole.

The assumption that there is a single "truth" that exists and is independent of human experience is another way that quantitative approaches are usually characterised (Lincoln and Guba as cited in Konadu, 2018). Additionally, according to Walliman (2018), positivist research aims to give a naturalistic account of any part of the universe that is independent of human thought, often through logical reasoning. This paradigm was utilised for this study because the researcher wanted to be objective, reducing human feelings, emotions and behaviour into quantifiable variables and to measure these variables by quantitative instruments.

This study set out to determine the factors influencing male teacher trainees' decision to pursue a career in early childhood teaching at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

3.2 Research Approach

In this study, a quantitative research approach was used. The primary method used in quantitative research is the collection of discrete data. The purpose of the quantitative research technique is to gather and analyse data in an unbiased manner. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), the use of quantitative tools like descriptive and inferential statistics in describing the study's key issues is made possible by the quantitative approach. As a result, the study used this methodology since it needed to apply quantitative techniques to evaluate the link between the dependent and independent variables.

Quantitative research is a technique of inquiry that, according to Creswell (2014), is effective for defining patterns and understanding the link between variables identified in the literature. The objective is to create generalisations that add to the theory and help the researcher foresee, explain, and comprehend the problem. Quantitative research, according to Creswell, is an organised empirical exploration of observable phenomena using statistical, mathematical, or computational methods, all of which were used in this study. Similar to this, Olusoji, Adetokun and Akaighe (2017) claimed that using a quantitative method allows the researcher to comprehend the connections between the phenomena being studied. Quantitative method can produce results that are prescriptive, explicative, and confirmatory.

Last but not least, quantitative research, according to Muijs as described in Mtemeri (2020), gives data from a vast number of units, enabling the generalisability of conclusions. It was practical for the researcher to utilise a quantitative technique at this time due to the size of the sample used and the generalisability of the findings. The fact that multiple prior studies on the male's career choice in ECE, employed

qualitative technique, and produced comparable factors, was a significant consideration for the choice of the quantitative approach. The earlier studies, which were mostly conducted in western countries like the UK (Wang, 2019), Canada (Osborne, van Rhijn & Breen, n.d.), Ontario), California (Carrasco, 2019), Jamaica (Lindsay, 2021), South Africa; (Ravhuhali et al., 2019; Murage, 2016, Kenya), were unable to use large samples to generalise their findings. However, the researcher was not aware of any studies in Ghana that have used the methodology of this present study. Because past studies were mostly done in western countries, using the qualitative approach, this present study aimed to employ a wide sample hence the choice of quantitative approach.

Additionally, after reading the literature, the researcher conducted preliminary interviews with a group of male teacher trainees studying early childhood at the NJA COE. These interviews revealed a variety of factors that influenced the trainees' decisions to enroll in ECE, all of which were documented in the literature. As a result, the researcher decided that in order to get a reliable data, a sizable sample—or, for that matter, the entire population—was necessary.

3.3 Research Design

The study in line with the positivism philosophy, adopted the descriptive survey design. This design according to Nyonator (2017) allows researchers to easily describe and provide an understanding of a phenomenon using simple descriptive statistics. Cohen, et al. (2018) outlined the relevance of this design - such as gathering data on a one-shot basis and hence it is economical and efficient; representing a wide target population; generating numerical data; providing descriptive data. Cohen et al again opined that descriptive survey allows inferential and explanation of information;

of response in the targets of focus; and gathering data which can be processed statistically. This view of Cohen et al influenced the choice of the design for the study. In Nyongator's (2017) view, it is a method which involves observing and describing the behaviour of a subject without influencing it in any way. The choice of this design as the most preferred design is because it helps to obtain accurate information from a population based on samples drawn from the population. This is manifested in the present study as the researcher attempted to describe the existing situation by asking the respondents to complete questionnaire in order to obtain data to draw meaningful conclusions from the study. The descriptive survey design was considered appropriate because the present study involved the collection of data in order to answer research questions vis-a-vis factors influencing career choice for ECE among male teacher trainees in Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

3.4 Population

The population comprises all male teacher trainees pursuing B. ED in ECE from level 100 to Level 400 of the NJA and Tumu Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. The study was conducted in the Upper West Region because it is among some ten regions in Ghana with low number of male teachers at the kindergarten level (EMIS, 2019/2020). Also, the region boasts of two Colleges of Education offering degrees in ECE. The two Colleges of Education were chosen for the study because they were the only institutions which offered programmes in ECE in the region at the time of the study. The target population of the study, therefore, constituted 160 male teacher trainees; 38 male teacher trainees of NJA COE and 122 of Tumu COE (Assessment office, NJA COE & Tumu COE, 2022). NJA COE had up to only level 200 because the College had run the ECE programme up to the second (2nd) year at

the time of data collection. The distribution of respondents by institution and level is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Population distribution of the Colleges of Education

College	Level 100	Level 200	Level 300	Level 400	Total
NJA CoE	20	18	-	-	38
TUMU CoE	64	26	18	14	122
Total	84	44	18	14	160

Source: (Assessment offices, NJA COE and Tumu COE, 2022)

3.5 Sample and Sampling Procedures

Census technique was used. Census technique ensures that all members in a population participate in the data collection exercise and as such no sampling technique is used. With this approach, every unit in the population is used and as such, data is collected from every member in the population. The census technique was used because according to Banini (2020), it is very easy to achieve validity and reliability. Ansah (2020) asserted that the census approach makes it possible to obtain data from every segment of the population. Once more, Ansah made the case that census technique assures the collection of accurate and trustworthy data for use in various survey analysis. As all factors are taken into account without any risk of being overlooked, census technique ensures the maximum precision and concrete representation of a phenomena without any element of prejudice (Ansah). The census, according to Ansah, is also simpler to run because it is capable of producing representative results and it is apparent to everyone who will get the instrument. Also, Asare (2021) opined that in using census technique, the researcher would not be concerned about sampling errors yet, it gives statistical power to the data. The

researcher chose this sampling method because it affords true representation of the population. The sample size for the study is 160 male teacher trainees.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

A self-designed structured questionnaire drawn from the literature served as the data collection tool for this study. This instrument was chosen as the means of gathering data since according to Asantewaa (2020), it gave respondents a higher assurance of secrecy and anonymity.

The structured questionnaire was developed in a systematic procedure in accordance with the study's objectives. A questionnaire is a list of items to which respondents are asked to reply, typically in writing. The researcher can assess the variables of interest by using questionnaires, which are creative data gathering tools. It is simple to conduct and analyse questionnaires (Andiema, 2017).

The questionnaires were personally distributed by the researcher to the respondents, and the completed forms were then promptly collected for data processing. The questionnaire included a total of forty (40) items and was divided into six (6) parts, A to F. Respondents were asked to provide demographic data in Section "A" questions. Questions in Section "B" addressed the impact of family variables. Section "C" questions sought to determine the personal factors influencing career choice for early childhood education among male teacher trainees at the Colleges of Education. However, section "D" questions focused on the impact of role models and peers on male teacher trainees' decision to pursue a career in early childhood education at Colleges of Education, while section "E" questions focused on the impact of outcome expectations, on male teacher trainees' decision to pursue a career in early childhood education at Colleges of Education. The final section, "F," looked at strategies that

was used to encourage more males to show interest in early childhood education. The survey questions were graded using the Likert scale, which has five possible outcomes: 1 for strongly disagreeing, 2 for disagreeing, 3 for neutral, 4 for agreeing, and 5 for strongly agreeing.

3.7 Pre-testing of Instrument

This study's instrument was pre-tested with 30 respondents at Aswaj College of Education, Manwe, a private college in the Upper West Region that runs diploma in Early Childhood Education programme. The College was deemed appropriate because despite it being a private College, the respondents there, shared similar characteristics to those in the main study. The pre-testing was done to enable the researcher check the following: (i) that instructions and questions were clear, and (ii) that potential respondents would understand questions and respond appropriately.

3.8 Validity of Instrument

The questionnaire was sent to colleagues on the master's programme to check for face validity. Colleagues' corrections to the instrument's grammatical, typographical, and ambiguous issues made it good. The questionnaire was given to my supervisor for review, who made sure the items accurately reflected the themes under study and that the specified range of questions was appropriate to guarantee content validity. The researcher was guided by the supervisor in making changes to the questionnaire.

3.9 Reliability of Instrument

In quantitative research, the questionnaire must be well understood by the respondents since there are no close contacts with the researcher. This will increase the high possibility of obtaining a valid and reliable answer (Ansah, 2020). Cronbach's Alpha was used as a measure of reliability and internal consistency. Cronbach's Alpha is a

reliability coefficient that indicates how well items in set are positively correlated to one another. It measures the inter-correlations among test items, with a measure of being higher in terms of internal consistency and reliability, and 0.7 to 0.9 being acceptable (Ansah, 2020). A Cronbach's coefficient alpha value of 0.79 was obtained. According to Quansah (2017), this reliability value was a good indicator of excellent internal consistency, and the researcher concluded that the instrument was reliable.

3.10 Data Collection Procedures

An introduction letter from the Head, Department of Early Childhood Education at the University of Education, Winneba, was used to request permission from the two Colleges of Education for the data gathering. After receiving authorisation, one tutor from each of the two institutions helped the researcher to distribute and collect the questionnaire from the respondents. To build rapport with the respondents and ensure a greater recovery rate, the questionnaire was also personally administered by the researcher in order to clarify any technical issues that could be related to their completion. Respondents were given sufficient time to answer the questionnaire. On the same day, the completed questionnaire was obtained. The respondents were informed of the study's objective, which made it easier to successfully retrieve the respondents' questionnaire.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Key ethical considerations, including voluntary involvement, the right to privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality of information, have been outlined by Patten and Newhart (2017). As a result, the researcher took all necessary steps to ensure that all of these ethical considerations were achieved.

3.11.1 Confidentiality

According to Cohen et al. (2018), confidentiality is the act of not revealing any information about the participant that may be used to trace or identify that person. In order to protect the confidentiality of the respondents, the researcher coded abstracted data instead of using names and masked characteristics of particular instances, institution, or situations that would make them identifiable even without names. Once again, the researcher made sure that the material was secure against unauthorised access. Data in soft copies was likewise secured using passwords.

3.11.2 Harm to participants

Every researcher must find a way to balance the needs of each respondent with respect to preventing loss of ownership while also safeguarding respondents from damage by concealing their identities (Adamu-Issah, 2020). In this study, the researcher took precautions to prevent participants from suffering any physical, psychological, or emotional damage. The participants received enough information to enable them to make informed decisions.

3.11.3 Informed consent

Informed consent, according to Akafia (2018), is the decision to engage in research after learning about the study's potential risks and benefits. It indicates that the participants must be informed of the nature of the research and how they would profit from it. The study's objective was explained to the students, and they were offered the option of participating or not.

3.11.4 Anonymity

The next ethical issue concerned anonymity. The "right to privacy" of the respondents was protected by using anonymity. Therefore, when the researcher or another

individual cannot identify the respondents from the information supplied, the respondent was considered anonymous (Akafia, 2018). The respondents were informed that the data would be destroyed after the responses are used to write the thesis. The questionnaire did not provide space for respondents' names, ensuring participant anonymity. In this study, the information gathered was assigned codes rather than names of the respondents.

3.12 Data Analysis Procedures

In analysing the data collected, the researcher coded the data and processed it with the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS) version 23.0. After the data entry, each data file was reviewed three times before any analysis was conducted. In addressing the research questions 1 – 5, descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations were computed. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their responses. The results were presented according to the dimensions on which the respondents' views were evaluated. The questionnaire items were scored on the following 5-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the data analysis and the discussion of the results. This chapter presents the results of the analysis of the questionnaire data based on the purpose of the study. The analysis and interpretation of data were carried out based on the results of the five (5) research questions and two (2) research hypotheses set for the study. The analysis was based on the 98% return rate data obtained from 160 male teacher trainees for the study. This implies that out of 160 trainees, 158 were available to respond to the questionnaire.

4.1 Demographics of the Respondents

The respondents' demographic information is covered in this section. The respondents' demographic data is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of students

Variable	Subscale	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	Below 20 Years	29	18.4
	20-24years	82	51.9
	25-30years	42	26.6
	Above 30 Years	5	3.2
Marital Status	Single	144	91.1
	Married	14	8.9
Level of Student	Level 100	87	55.1
	Level 200	39	24.7
	Level 300	18	11.4
	Level 400	14	8.9

Previous			
Teaching	Yes	82	51.9
Experience	No	76	48.1
Source: Field Data, 2022			n= 158

4.1.1 Age of respondents

The age range in table 2 indicate that 29 (18.4%) of the trainees were below the age of 20. Also, it emerged that 82 (51%) of teacher trainees between the ages of 20 and 24 outnumbered everyone else. Again, 42 (26.6%) of respondents were in the age bracket of 25-30 years. In fact, just roughly 5(3.2 %) of the population was over 30 years old. It suggests that the respondents were typically young and fit the criteria for pursuing post-secondary education.

The fact that children in Ghana typically start kindergarten at age five or six years and that most trainees for training will be eligible to enter colleges of education at age 17 or 18 if their education continues uninterrupted may be the cause of the high number of teacher trainees in the 20–24 age range. This points to the fact that these male teacher trainees perhaps did not have to re-sit for their SSSCE/WASSCE, and this goes to dispel the perception held by some people that teachers at the ECE level are low academic achievers.

4.1.2 Marital status of respondents

Majority of the respondents, numbering 144 (91.1%), were young men who were still unmarried. According to Table 2, 14 (8.9%) of the respondents were married but the majority of the male teacher trainees in the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region were unmarried.

4.1.3 Educational level of respondents

With regards to male teacher trainee's level of study as indicated in table 2, level 100 students outnumbered all the other levels (200, 300 and 400) put together. Level 100s represented 87 (55.1%) percent while level 200s represented 39 (24.7 %) percent. Again, while level 300s represented 18 (11.4 %) percent, of the total male teacher trainees, level 400 trainees constituted the least number representing 14 (8.9%) percent. The data show that more male teacher trainees showed interest for ECE each year at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. The percentage of admission rises with each academic year as evidenced by the increase in number of male teacher trainees in the various levels as shown in table 2 above.

4.1.4 Previous teaching experience of respondents

From Table 2, the data show that most of the respondents 82 (51.9%) had prior experience teaching at the ECE level before beginning their training as ECE practitioners at Colleges of Education. 76 (48.1 %) of the respondents had no teaching experience at the ECE level before enrolling for the programme. The 82(51.9%) probably decided to pursue formal training to become certified ECE teachers after realising they enjoyed working with children and wanted to teach young children as a result of their experiences.

4.2 Analysis and Discussions of the Research Questions

Data was analysed using mean and standard deviation. In order to gather evidence for the study, the respondents were required to rate their responses using Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagrees. Using means, the scales were scored as (Strongly Agree (S A) =5, Agree (A) =4, Neutral (N) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1). The criterion value of 3.0 was established for the scale.

To obtain the criterion value (CV=3.0), the scores were added together and divided by the number scale ($5+4+3+2+1= 15/5=3.0$). To understand the mean scores, items/statements on the factors that scored a mean of below the mean of 3.0 was regarded as low factor influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education in Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. Items/statements that scored mean from 3.0 and above was regarded as high factor influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education in Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

4.3 Research Question One

What family factors influence career choice of male teacher trainees for early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region?

This research question sought to find out the family factors that influence the choice of career of male teacher trainees for early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Family factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice in ECE

Variable	Mean Statistic	Std Deviation	Kurtosis
1.Are your parents teachers	1.70	4.58	-1.197
2. Which of your parents is a teacher	2.35	.726	-872
3. If no, what is the occupation of your father	1.91	.655	-.648
4. If no, what is the occupation of your mother	1.30	.671	2.158
5. Father's Educational Level	2.91	1.058	-.918
6. Mother's Educational Level	3.03	1.127	-.837
7. Guardian's Educational Level	3.00	.535	3.500
8. My parents being teachers influenced my career choice for ECE	2.08	1.204	-.410
9. My parents encouraged me to choose a career in ECE	2.77	1.388	-1.312

10. My parents' income level influenced my career choice for ECE	1.96	1.110	1.053
11. Family pressure influenced my career choice for ECE	2.04	1.222	.660
12. My parents' support and approval influenced my career choice for ECE	3.23	1.402	-1.224
13. I have other immediate family members who are also educators that have influenced my career choice for ECE	2.65	1.433	-1.198
14. My parents' educational level has relation with my career choice for ECE	2.38	1.487	-1.002
Average of Means & Standard Deviations	2.38	1.03	
Source: Field Data, 2022			(n = 158)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, N=Sample Size

The data on family factors that influence the career choice of male teacher trainees for ECE in the study as shown in Table 3, reveal that the average mean rating for the impact of family on the profession choice of the male teacher trainees was 2.38, with a standard deviation of 1.03, which is below the benchmark of 3.0. By implication, the male teacher trainees often did not give in to family pressure while making career decisions. However, a few familial factors had some bearing on the career choice of the male teacher trainees at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. Majority of the trainees said their parents' support and approval influenced their decision to pursue an ECE career ($M=3.23 > TV (3.0)$, $SD=1.402$, $K=-1.224$, $n=158$). It demonstrates that the male teacher trainees' career decisions were influenced by their family's support and approval.

Similarly, preference for ECE among the male teacher trainees was found to have been influenced by the mother's educational level ($M=3.03 > TV (3.0)$, $SD=1.1227$, $K=-.837$, $n=158$).

Another intriguing conclusion was that the male teacher trainees' ECE ratings similarly predicted their guardian educational level ($M=3.00 > TV (3.0)$, $SD=.535$,

K=3.500, n=158). This might also suggest that they had female guardians who were educated to a higher level.

The data show that the father had a lower education than the mother ((M=2.91 >TV (3.0), SD=1.058, K=-.918, n=158). Just as the education level of the mothers and guardians had an impact on their decision about a career, according to the findings, even if the father's educational attainment is one of the major family variables influencing the career choice of the male trainees in ECE at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region, the mother's educational attainment is rated higher. The study also found that the other aspects of the family, such as the parents' occupations, their income levels, and family pressure, appeared to have no bearing on the career choices of male teacher trainees for ECE at COE in the Upper West Region.

It is evident that selecting a career is a significant life decision that requires extensive consideration and that most individuals do not take for granted. The family, which is a child's initial point of contact, is crucial in many aspects when making decisions about one's entire life, including one's work. Therefore, it was predicted that parents and family have some influence over the job choice of the male teacher trainees. It is consistent with findings from other research in the review of the literature (Amoako et'al, 2020, Wachira, 2018) indicating males who received support and encouragement from their families were more likely to teach at ECE. Their motivation to teach at that level was greatly influenced by the encouragement and acceptance they received. For instance, a study by Amoako et al. found that parental support (verbal support or behavioural support from parents on the domain-related activities) improved people's self-efficacy by convincing people that they could deal successfully with what had previously overwhelmed them, thereby influencing their

learning experience. Also, Wachira suggested that parents who are eager to give their children the best assistance available enable them to explore a wide range of career and employment choices, both in the formal and informal context. The most significant encouragement and support from parents may also take the form of financial assistance.

The results of the study also showed that mothers and guardians of male teacher trainees had greater educational levels than fathers. The respondents' assertion that parents' educational background has little bearing on their decision to pursue an ECE career is unexpected, nonetheless. It implies that parents' educational backgrounds would not significantly affect their children's employment decisions. The male teacher trainees have parents and guardians who may have completed some form of education, but this does not necessarily dictate the career choice of the students because they are young adults and have a greater say in what is best for them despite possibly being financially dependent on their parents. However, the result contradicts with the findings of Nwoke (2017), Adewale et al. (2017; and Karfe and Ojo (2019), who found that parental educational background seemed to affect and dictate the kinds of courses their children study in higher institutions and their ensuing career choice. It also conflicts with the works of Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) and Safarmamad (2017), which advocate for the idea that parents' educational attainment is related to their children's career choice and that it is the most important factor in students' career decisions. Again, Eremie and Okwulehie (2019) found that if parents and guardians are undereducated, it eventually restricts their children's career options.

The study did, however, also show that the family's income level did not significantly affect the choice of male teacher trainees for early childhood education. In contrast, a

study by Asantewaa (2020) found that a person's profession choices during a particular period of his/her life may be influenced by his/her family's financial level, decisions that would have a significant impact on that student's future. This is an interesting result because some children will actually need to budget for their education based on their family's income. Family financial limitations frequently obstruct students from choosing their preferred career choices. One explanation could be because regardless of the programme of study, all teacher trainees at COE pay the same or almost the same costs.

Another finding of the study indicated that the career choice of male teacher trainees at COE in the Upper West Region was not affected by the fact that their parents were teachers. It implies that students' career choices would not be influenced by the jobs held by their parents. In other words, male teacher trainees make their job decisions independently of their parents' choices. A possible explanation is that male teacher trainees at this level would not automatically take on their father's or mother's line of work, and they would not be forced to choose a career that goes against their interests and preferences. This finding agrees with Ooro's (2017) assertion that, if the parents' line of work is onerous and/or demanding, require longer years of study, or doesn't pay enough to support the family, it deters their children from pursuing it. More so, tertiary students like male teacher trainees are assertive and know what is best for them and therefore, will not choose a career simply because their parent is in that profession. This could also be attributed to higher independence of college students as compared to secondary school students who still look at their parents as role models when it comes to career choice. The results confirm Famolu's (2020) study, who found that undergraduate career choice in Kwara State, Nigeria, was not affected by parents' occupations.

4.4 Research Question Two

What personal factors influence male teacher trainees to choose early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region?

This research question sought to find the personal factors that influence male teacher trainees to choose early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. Table 4 presents the data.

Table 4: Personal factors influencing males teacher trainees' career choice for ECE

Variable	Mean Statistic	Std Deviation	Kurtosis
1. I chose a career in ECE because I like working with young children	4.03	1.061	1.666
2. To serve as a role model especially for children of single mothers influenced my choice for ECE	3.84	1.084	.550
3. My working experience with children influenced my choice for ECE	3.81	1.086	.140
4. I chose ECE because of the love, passion and personal interest I have in it	4.16	.974	2.148
5. My teaching abilities and skills influenced my choice	3.26	1.161	-.834
6. The opportunity to bring up my own children with knowledge in ECE influenced my choice of the programme	4.11	1.153	1.086
7. Courses in ECE are relatively easier as compared to others	1.52	.967	3.959
8. My personality type influenced my choice for ECE	3.53	1.157	-.031
Average of Means & Standard Deviations	3.5	1.08	
Source: Field data, 2022	(n = 158)		

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, N=Sample Size

The data in Table 4 indicate that various personal factors significantly influence the career choice of male teacher trainees in the Upper West Region for ECE. This became clear when the responses from the students had an average mean ($MM=3.5$) higher than the test value of 3.0. For example, majority of the students indicated that they chose ECE because of the love, passion and personal interest they have in it ($M=4.16 > TV (3.0)$, $SD=.974$, $K=-2.148$, $n=158$).

Another personal factor that influences employment choice among the male teacher trainees in the Upper West Region is the potential to bring up their own children with knowledge in ECE ($M=4.11 > TV (3.0)$, $SD=1.153$, $K=-1.086$, $n=158$). The majority of students also stated that they enjoy working with young children, which is why they chose an ECE career ($M=4.03 > TV (3.0)$, $SD=1.061$, $K=-1.666$, $n=158$). Similarly, favourable experiences working with children motivated the male teacher trainees, choice for ECE. This is not surprising considering that the majority 82 (51.9 %) of the trainees stated in their demographic data that they had taught ECE before enrolling in the ECE programme at the colleges of education.

The least personal factor that influenced the male teacher trainees' career choice was courses in ECE are relatively easier as compared to others ($M = 1.52 < TV (3.0)$, $SD = .967$, $K = 3.959$, $n = 158$).

The respondents agreed that personal factors had a significant role in the professional decisions made by the male teacher trainees at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. The results demonstrated that all but one of the questions addressed were factors that influenced the male teacher trainees to choose a career in early childhood education. Their decision to pursue a career in early childhood education

was influenced by their passion, enthusiasm, joy of working with children, teaching skills, and personality types.

These results are consistent with Hernandez's (2020), assertion that working with children or young people, having the chance to teach things that interest them, and making a difference in people's lives were the main factors in people choosing ECE as a career. James and Denis (2015) found that personal experiences and interests were relied upon by 30.2% of students in their study on the determinants of career choice among undergraduate students in Uganda.

Similarly, Christophersen et al. (2015) also pointed out that someone would select early childhood education mostly because his/her desires to play a significant impact in young children's lives. Some people want to make sure that children have a successful start in life and in school. The results are consistent with Tokic's (2018) study, in which participants expressed concerns relating to learners' behaviour and missing fathers. Also, Ravhuhali, et al's (2019) study, carried out in South Africa, investigated the perspectives of men working in early childhood education on why they decided to become teachers. The reasons given by participants include, to ensure that children had male teachers who might serve as role models for father figures, among others, informed their decision to teach at the ECE level.

These male teachers consider themselves role models, especially for children who lack a father figure. They get to impart lifelong lessons to these children. Children are able to explore and flourish with their assistance, and they get to see amazing successes like the final "I did it!" Another driving force is that early childhood educators get to witness these young children develop, assist them in realising their potential along the way, and watch them become independent adults. Male teacher

trainees may also want to be seen as positive role models for children. Having both male and female teachers in ECE is crucial in this situation because female teachers in particular would act as role models for female learners, and male teachers would do the same for male learners. Therefore, children require instructors of both sexes. This is important as children need gender appropriate role models to emulate.

Perceived teaching abilities was one of the most significant motivating variables that highly connected with happiness with the teaching profession, according to a study by Almulla (2020) utilising a sample of 1,653 pre-service teachers. The results of this study also support those of Suryani et al., (2016) in Indonesia, Salifu et al., (2018) in Ghana, and Hennessy & Lynch (2017) in Ireland, which found a positive correlation between prior teaching and learning experiences and deciding to pursue a career in teaching. It is consistent with Bandura's Social Cognitive theory, which emphasises self-efficacy. Self-efficacy, according to Social Cognitive Theory, is the conviction that one can do a task. Therefore, male teacher trainees are more likely to select jobs in ECE based on their potential for success in such fields. Additionally, Gwelo (2019) stated that, students are more likely to select a vocation that complements their personality so that they can enjoy learning and find fulfillment. The joy and personal rewards it offers are likely the main factors in male teacher trainees choosing to pursue careers in early childhood education. Early childhood educators have a very real chance to change the lives of children and have an impact on future generations.

According to Wang (2019), the thought of maintaining the pleasures that were the driving force behind choosing to become a teacher arise from the positive emotions that come from coaching others or working with children. The appreciation of previous real teaching experiences or activities that are similar to teaching is what

sparks an interest in a teaching vocation. Therefore, in this study, male teacher trainees chose ECE based on their own teaching experience or working with children rather than just having the intuition or the vision of teaching at the ECE level. In this regard, the respondents in this study seem to have chosen to pursue careers in ECE on purpose and for practical reasons.

The results also corroborate a study by Enache and Matei (2017) that a person's job decision-making process takes his/her career interest and preferences into account. Consequently, Abe and Chikoko (2020) came to the conclusion that career interest plays a significant role in students' decision-making and has implications for policy decisions. The primary drivers of job choice for male teacher trainees are their interests, hence facilitating male trainees' interest in ECE will go a long way toward addressing the gender gap in ECE given its current state.

Furthermore, the study demonstrated that choosing the right career is greatly influenced by personality, interest, values, and temperament are examples of personality factors that have an impact on career choice. A self-evaluation of one's personality is a component of a clearly defined professional plan. Due to a role model or mentor, one may aspire to a certain vocation, yet internal and personal characteristics (personality type) may suggest otherwise. In the present study, the male teacher trainees demonstrated that choosing an ECE programme was greatly influenced by their personality types. The results are consistent with Kemboi, et al's. (2016) assertion that an individual's personality plays a key part in his/her choice of career in that he/she selects the career that best suits his/her personality traits. The results support Gwelo's (2019) claims that students are more inclined to select a vocation that best suits their personality in order to enjoy studying and find

fulfillment. Therefore, in order for students to make wise career options, they must have a solid understanding of who they are (personality characteristics).

The fact that ECE courses are relatively easier as compared to other courses was the least important factor. This finding largely contradicts the perception by society that ECE courses are simple and that instructors at this level are typically low academic achievers. As evidenced in the findings, the claim that the apparently easier nature of ECE courses was hugely rejected as an influence by the majority of respondents in this study to enroll in ECE programmes at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. The finding contradicts the finding of Murage (2016) conducted in Kenya to find out factors influencing male students' enrolment for training in early childhood education which revealed that the students indicated, ECE is a relatively easy course which influenced the respondents with 58% of them enrolling for ECE because they felt it was an easy course for them to pursue. The finding further dispels the long-held impression by some individuals of the Ghanaian society that ECE and its related activities are simple and that those who work there are seen to be underachievers in the classroom, which may deter individuals, particularly men, from pursuing a career in ECE.

4.5 Research Question Three

What influence do peers have on male teacher trainees' career choice in early childhood education at the Colleges of Education at the Upper West Region?

This research question sought to assess how peers influence male teacher trainees' career choice in early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. Table 5 presents the data.

Table 5: Influence of role peers on male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE

Variable	Mean Statistic	Std Deviation	Kurtosis
1. My career choice for ECE has been influenced by my peers who are doing well in ECE	2.75	1.331	-1.254
2. My choice for ECE came from a recommendation from my female peer	2.21	1.120	.301
3. My choice for ECE came from a recommendation from a male friend on job prospects in ECE	3.34	1.257	-.931
4. Male teachers in ECE success stories have influenced my choice for ECE	3.19	1.290	-1.018
5. Some of my male friends are offering ECE programme	2.93	1.308	-1.273
Average of Means & Standard Deviations	2.9	1.3	

Source: Field Data, 2022 (n = 158)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, N=Sample Size

The data in Table 5 reveal that 'recommendation from my teacher (M=3.34 >TV (3.0), SD=1.257, K=-.931, n=158)', 'male teachers in ECE success stories (M=3.19>TV (3.0), SD=1.290', K= 1.018, n=158)', and 'some of my male friends are offering ECE programme (M=2.93>TV (3.0), SD=1.290', K=-1.018, n=158)', were the variables that significantly influenced the male teacher trainees' choice for ECE.

According to Haider, Snead and Bari (2016), having a positive role model may have an impact on young people's career decisions and overall life goals. Students learn from and develop their professional identities with the aid of their peers. Role modeling is relational and has a big impact on bridging generational gaps among people (Haider et al.). The finding of the present study is consistent with Haider et al. and also with KSLTCDM which underpinned this study, stressing the influence of people in an individual's environment such as peers on the career choice of those individuals. Peers share the same qualities as role models. The study found that while

male teacher trainees were inspired by their colleagues' achievements in the ECE field, some of them were unmoved by the simple fact that their peers were enrolled in ECE courses. It makes sense because they are more discerning and able to determine what career best meets their preferences at that level. The results of this study suggest that the effect of role models is significant in influencing the choices of male teacher trainees to enroll in ECE training. The study found that the success stories of male teachers and teacher recommendations had the greatest impact on the students' decisions to pursue careers as early childhood educators. This result is consistent with Murage's (2016) study, which looked at factors influencing male students' enrollment in early childhood education training in Kenya. In that study, 63% of the students reported that a teacher role model had a significant impact on their decision to enroll in an ECE course.

Similarly, it confirms Joseph and Wright's (2016) finding, which revealed that male teachers had an impact on student teachers' decision to become teachers. The study's participants acknowledged that the male teachers they had during their own education served as mentors and role models who had an impact on their choice to pursue a career in teaching. Providing information about ECE as a course and connecting the students with various schools that provide it are some examples of the support that they provide.

The study also showed that peers had an influence on the job choice for ECE of the male teacher trainees. Even while some of the respondents claimed that some of their male friends were offering ECE programmes had an impact on them, the success stories of male teachers who offered these programmes were the most significant peer influence. Unlike their ECE classmates, they did not ask their peers for feedback on

how they contributed to validating their careers. Another possibility is that the success stories of males who are already enrolled in the programme and who chose to specialise in ECE may have inspired the male teacher trainees. It confirms studies of Murage (2016); Mtemeri, (2020); Kumazhege (2017) that found that peers have a significant impact on career decisions.

4.6 Research Question Four

How does outcome expectations influence male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region?

This research question sought to evaluate the factors associated with outcome expectations that influence male teacher trainees' decision to pursue a career in early childhood at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. Table 6 presents the data collected in answer to this research question.

Table 6: Influence of outcome expectations on male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE

Variable	Mean Statistic	Std Deviation	Kurtosis
1. I find the course I chose convenient in looking for job in the future	3.92	1.134	613
2. Stable source of income/salary is a factor I considered in choosing ECE	3.26	1.307	-1.150
3. Job security in ECE influenced my choice for ECE	3.74	1.132	-086
4. Opportunity for advancement is a factor which influenced my choice for ECE	3.99	1.013	-.679
5. Availability of opportunities in ECE	4.16	.971	1.216
Average of Means & Standard Deviations	3.8	1.1	

Source: Field Data, 2022 (n = 158)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, N=Sample Size

Interestingly, male teacher trainees' response indicates that all the variables that were asked to assess how job opportunities influenced their career choice in ECE were significant (all the mean values were greater than 3.0) but availability of opportunities in ECE ($M = 4.16 > TV (3.0)$) was considered the most influential factor which influenced the male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

The results from the respondents show that outcome expectations have a significant impact on the career choices made by male teacher trainees in ECE. As shown by the results, each expectation outcome factor (the availability of opportunities in ECE, the opportunity for advancement, the convenience of looking for a job in the future, the stable source of income/salary, the stability status for the job, and job security) recorded a mean score above the 3.0 average mean. The findings show that before making career decisions for ECE, the male teacher trainees weigh various work options in that field. On the other hand, the fact that a male teacher trainee is offering ECE does not disprove the financial and other advantages that come with it.

The results corroborate with those of Xu (2019) and Wang (2019), who found that due to the dearth of male early childhood educators, pre-service male instructors were optimistic about finding employment in the future. The findings also echoed the work of Ahmed and Farooq (2022), who investigated the primary determinants of career choices of youth selected from colleges in Pakistan. They discovered that expectations of students, expected earnings and job opportunities are significant determinants of choice of a career. The findings, however, runs counter to that of Omar, et al's (2021) study, which found that job opportunities were not a major determinant of profession choice. However, this conflicting result is not surprising because receiving training

would be useless if there was no hope of finding employment. In the Ghana educational setting, ECE has been recognised as the foundation for further education and has since been receiving attention from government and non-governmental organisations. According to Almulla (2020) and Hsiao and Nova's (2016) studies, this is the reason why the male teacher trainees thought it would be simple to find employment once they completed their training. The few males who have opted to start their careers as ECE professionals are likely to have an advantage in terms of finding employment on the premise that ECE is perceived as a career for women and that there aren't many men in the field.

This perception is further influenced by the current identification of ECE as a significant developmental period. More precisely, a number of NGOs are putting early years learning and literacy promotion projects into action, which has provided many ECE graduates with work opportunities. Among these NGOs that work in the field of ECE are Plan Ghana, Unicef, Lively Minds, World Vision and Right to Play to mention just but a few. Additionally, there has been a rise in awareness of ECE since its integration into Ghana's Education System in 2007. As a result, there is now a greater need to train instructors, and roughly twenty (20) of Ghana's more than forty (40) public colleges of education are now training ECE teachers. Additionally, several private and public colleges have recently incorporated ECE into their academic curricula, which may serve as inspiration for these trainees who see these institutions as promising places to work as lecturers and tutors. The ever-growing gender gap in the provision of ECE services must be addressed, to enable the realisation of these expectations.

The study also discovered that the job security and stability in ECE influenced the career choice for ECE of the male teacher trainees at colleges of education in the Upper West Region. The respondents' mean scores on these issues were 3.74 (SD=1.132) and 3.75 (SD=1.011), respectively, which made this evidence to be consistent with those of Almulla (2020) and Hsiao and Nova's (2016) studies, which found that job security, income potential, and ease of job availability are important considerations when choosing a career path. Similarly, it is important to take into account a steady source of income or pay while planning and preparing for a specific career. With a mean score of 3.26 (SD=1.307), the respondents showed that it was one of the most important factors they took into account while choosing ECE, as the study's data revealed. This result is not unexpected given the unpredictability state of employment prospects and the high rate of poverty in Ghana, particularly in the northern part of the country, which forces job seekers to take into account both the ease of finding employment and receiving a steady income/salary. These results confirm Okyere's (2021) study who discovered that everyone wants to work in an environment with efficient working conditions, including efficient machinery for negotiating salaries or salary increases because doing so will guarantee a regular, predictable, or steady salary. In this situation, male teacher trainees will give careful consideration to any decent source of income. Teachers in Ghana receive salaries and enjoy an automatic annual pay rise awarded by the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC) under the single spine salary structure (SPSS), as well as pension benefits after retirement (as with other state sector jobs).

The evidence supports the studies of Wang (2019), Akosah-Twumasi, et al. (2018) which found that male student teachers valued financial benefits more than their female counterparts. All the male participants in Akosa-Twumasi et al.'s study stated

that when making career decisions, determining if a job can provide a good wage was crucial. It implies that people typically look for professions that can guarantee them a steady income so they may meet both their immediate demands and those of the future. It is well known in Ghana that each year, hundreds of graduates leave tertiary institutions in search of jobs that don't exist, so it would be wise to think carefully about choosing a course of study that can guarantee you employment and a reliable source of income.

Finally, the study discovered another factor that influenced the male teacher trainees' decision to pursue an ECE career was how convenient it would be to look for a job in the future. The majority of the respondents said it would be simple to get work as an ECE expert. Every student has different expectations for his/her time in school, thus it is to be expected that the majority of their thoughts will be focused on finding employment. The result is consistent with those of other investigations by Hsiao & Casa Nova (2016) who stated that work stability, income potential, ease of finding employment and job availability are important considerations. Opportunities for employment and career progression, according to Jaradat and Mustafa (2017), have a significant impact on the decision of major course of study.

4.7 Research Question Five

What strategies can be put in place to encourage more males opting to choose a career in early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region?

In order to increase the number of male teacher trainees in early childhood education at the Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region, this research question sought

to identify strategies that may be implemented. Table 7 presents the data collected to that effect.

Table 7: Strategies to recruit more males in ECE

Variable	Mean Statistic	Std Deviation	Kurtosis
1. Providing work opportunities for male teachers with ECE certificate to work with children would persuade more males to become early childhood teachers	3.91	1.006	1.948
2. Providing men who enter the early childhood profession with motivational allowance would recruit more males into the profession	4.19	1.001	.1161
3. Media campaigns would help recruit more males to become early childhood teachers	3.87	1.001	.284
4. Giving employment priority to males when employing teachers for ECE would encourage more males to enroll for ECE	4.20	.940	2.804
5. Teacher education institutions increasing intake quota for male applicants for ECE programmes would encourage more males to go in for ECE	4.12	1.033	1.532
6. Subsidising the fees of male ECE trainees in COE would encourage more males into ECE	4.08	1.225	.749
7. Giving scholarship to male ECE teachers will encourage more males to prefer teaching at ECE level	4.45	.966	3.148
Average of Means & Standard Deviations	4.1	1.0	

Source: Field Data, 2022

(n = 158)

Key-M= Mean, SD =Standard Deviation, MR=Means Ranking, N=Sample Size

All the male teacher trainees indicated that all the strategies were measures that can encourage more male teachers in taking career in ECE. However, ‘giving scholarship to male ECE teachers will encourage more males to prefer teaching at ECE level’ was the most significant $M=4.45 > TV (3.0)$, $SD=.966$, $K=3.148$, $n=158$) and ‘media

campaigns would help recruit more males to become early childhood teachers' was the least significant ($M=3.87 > TV(3.0)$, $SD=1.001$, $K=.284$, $n=158$).

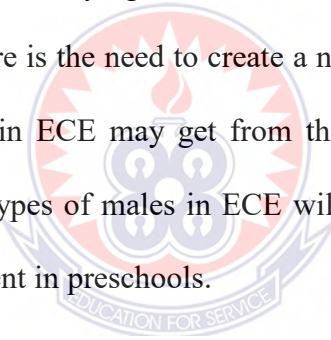
According to Rohrmann (2019); Rentzou (2017); Zhang (2017) and Forson (2020) numerous nations, including Norway, Denmark, New Zealand, and Germany, have made concerted efforts and established particular goals to increase the involvement of men in ECE. All of the aforementioned nations are western countries with no African and particularly, Ghana, emulating these strategies. Findings from the present study also show that respondents indicated that all the strategies; providing scholarships to male ECE teachers, giving men preference when hiring ECE teachers, providing men who enter the early childhood profession with motivational allowances, teacher education programmes increasing admission quota for male applicants for ECE programmes, subsidising the fees of male ECE trainees in COE, providing opportunities for young men to work with children, media campaigns, were measures that can encourage more male teachers in taking career in ECE.

The results of this study is in line with Lindsay's (2021) qualitative study on the issue of providing scholarships to male teacher trainees in ECE. As a result, policymakers may need to take this issue into consideration in order to recruit and retain young male recruits. This suggests scholarship is important in attracting men into the profession, and therefore, policy makers may need to consider this factor in attracting and retaining young male recruits. Similarly, findings of this study confirm findings from Zhang's (2017) study which revealed how New Zealand introduced a programme offering 10 \$4,500 scholarships for men entering its ECE teacher education programme and Germany also put 13 million euro to the "More men in

Early Childhood Education and Care” initiative, which showed there has been progress to establish a less gendered ECE workforce in the country.

According to the study's findings, these nations' strategies are worth imitating if the government wants to encourage more men to pursue ECE. However, male and female applicants should be given equal opportunity, and the engagement of men should not affect that of women. The study also found that encouraging men to enter the field of early childhood education and offering motivation allowances to them would be effective to increase the number of men who choose to work in this field.

Again, the study results showed that media campaigns would be an effective way to increase the number of men studying ECE. It confirms Okeke and Nyanhoto's (2021) recommendations that there is the need to create a national recruiting effort as well as the advantages that men in ECE may get from their increasing engagement in the industry. Negative stereotypes of males in ECE will be reduced through adverts that emphasise male engagement in preschools.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. The study was guided by five research questions. Literature was also reviewed in the study. Regarding the theoretical framework, two theories—specifically, Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory and Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory—were examined. Additionally, reviews of related literature from other studies were done.

The study employed a descriptive survey design with a quantitative approach. All male teacher trainees pursuing a B. ED in ECE at the NJA and Tumu Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region (levels 100 to 400) were the study's target population. 160 male teacher trainees studying B. Ed. in ECE at the two Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region made up the study's total population. The study used all the 160 students, through census method. However, only 158 trainees fully participated in the study. Data were gathered using a self-designed questionnaire. Reliability and validity of the instrument were guaranteed through pre-testing. Prior to the actual data gathering, ethical considerations were also guaranteed. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to analyse the data.

5.2 Key Findings

It was established that male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at colleges of education in the Upper West Region was generally influenced by some familial factors. The educational level of the mother, the educational level of the guardian, and family support and approval were some of the important family elements.

On personal factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region, many of the respondents strongly agreed that they like working with young children, to serve as a role model particularly for children of single mothers, having positive working experiences with children, love, passion and personal interest in ECE, teaching abilities and skills, opportunity to bring up their own children with knowledge in ECE, personality type were of greatest influence on their career choice. However, ECE being an easy course was totally disagreed with by the male teacher trainees.

Again, majority of the male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE was significantly influenced by their peers' successes and recommendation. Peers' success in ECE, recommendation from peers and some peers offering ECE were some of the peer factors. Consistent with the Social Cognitive Theory that informs this study, peer education is critical to secure desired outcomes in learning.

The study further showed that outcome expectations such as the availability of ECE opportunities, the potential for advancement, the convenience of looking for a job in the future, a stable source of income/salary, the stability status for the job, and job security were outcome expectations that influenced male teacher trainees' choice of career for ECE at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

The findings also showed that strategies like giving young men the chance to work with children, giving men who enter the early childhood field a motivational allowance, media campaigns, giving men preference when hiring teachers for ECE, teacher education programmes increasing the quota for male applicants for ECE programmes, subsidising the fees of male ECE trainees in COE, and providing scholarships to male ECE teachers would encourage more males to go in for ECE.

5.3 Conclusion

Based on the findings above, the following conclusions were drawn from the study.

First, it is concluded that family influences play a significant role in male teacher trainees' decision to pursue an ECE career. Because of this, the male teacher trainees valued their parents' support and approval of their career decisions.

Again, on personal factors, the study concluded that personal factor is a key consideration by male teacher trainees in choosing their career choice in ECE.

On peers' influence, it is concluded that peers determine to a large extent the decisions that students make concerning the careers they may want to pursue. Students value the views and opinions of their friends and as such develop interest in specific careers because of the views of their friends. In connection to the larger conversation on peer pressure, it can be inferred that the influence of peer pressure on students extends beyond academic work and behaviour and encompasses career decisions.

It is again concluded from the findings that, male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE was informed by the benefits they would gain, after graduating from the programme at the Colleges of education.

Finally, the study concluded that more males would pursue careers in ECE level if motivational packages are put in place. From all the conclusions, it was evident that the study confirmed most of the previous literature.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were made in the light of the findings of the study.

1. Parents should not choose careers for their wards but allow them to look within them and choose a career that best fits them. For this to get to parents, education by counsellors of career choice can educate parents through the mass media on the importance of allowing their wards to choose their careers themselves.
2. There is a need to encourage students to conduct career research that would they personally have interest in, as well as careers that would match their personality. This should be done through career counselling at all levels of education.
3. The choice of a career for male teacher trainees in ECE is found to be significantly influenced by peers. It is recommended that career counselling for all students in school could place peers in a good position to do advice each other when the need arises.
4. The study reveals that outcome expectations played a significant role in male teacher trainees' decision to pursue an ECE career. In order to attract and retain more male teachers at the ECE level, it is advised that the government, through the Ministry of Education (MOE), re-evaluates the compensation and other working conditions of teachers in ECE within the Ghana Education Service (GES).

5. The study recommends that governments and other significant stakeholders emulate the success stories of other countries by making conscious efforts to encourage more male teachers in ECE through motivational packages.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The timeframe of data gathering had to be extended since the Colleges of Education now run the tracking system and different levels were on the campuses at various times. The duration of the data gathering exceeded the anticipated time period. This was a drawback because it extended the study's timeframe which consequently affected the return rate.

Again, the results could not be applied to the entire country because the study was restricted to only male teacher trainees offering early childhood education programmes at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. Thus, the extent to which the results could be generalised was affected. As a result, the study's findings and suggestions mostly applied to the Upper West Region.

The methodological approach is another drawback. First, data were gathered and analysed quantitatively. This method of data collection requires respondents to choose predefined answers, whereas open-ended questions could let respondents express themselves freely and reveal variables that were not previously studied.

The cross-sectional nature of the study, which leaves no possibility to examine any longitudinal changes in male teachers' (in-service) motivation to pursue ECE after graduation, is another methodological disadvantage.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Studies

1. The current study examined the factors influencing male teacher trainees' decision to pursue an ECE career at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. Future studies on this subject might be conducted at more than the twenty (20) public colleges of education around the nation that offer ECE programmes in order to collaborate the findings of the present study and to ensure their generalisability.
2. The cross-sectional study design was used in the present study. In order to assess any long-term changes in the motivation of male teachers (in-service) to pursue a career in early childhood education, it would be helpful to conduct a longitudinal study to track the motivations and views of potential male ECE teachers after they graduate.
3. This study used a quantitative research methodology. Future research should consider adopting a mixed methods approach to study the relevant factors that influence male teacher trainees' career choice for ECE.

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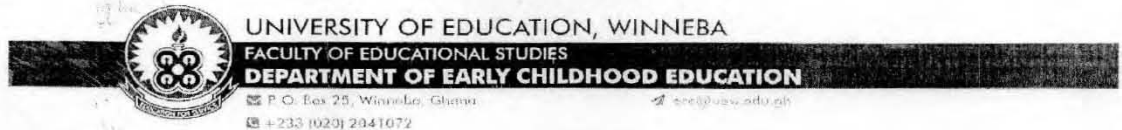
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Introductory Letter



FES/DECE/I.1/02

9th February, 2023

The Principals
NJA and Tumu
Colleges of Education
Upper West Region

Dear Sir/Madam

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

We write to introduce to you **Mr. Isaac Nuopre** with index number **202114208** who is an M. Phil student in the above department. He was admitted in 2020/2021 academic year and has successfully completed his course work and is to embark on his thesis on the topic: *"Factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region"*

Mr. Nuopre is to collect data for his thesis, and we would be most grateful if he could be given the needed assistance.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

DR. MICHAEL SUBBEY
AG. HEAD OF DEPARTMENT



APPENDIX B

Questionnaire for Male Teacher Trainees in ECE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Factors Influencing Male Teacher Trainees' Career Choice for Early Childhood Education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region.

Dear Respondent, this is a study which seeks to investigate factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education at Colleges of Education in the Upper West Region. The study is being conducted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for Master of Philosophy Degree in Early Childhood Education. You are kindly requested to respond to each item of the questionnaire as candidly as you can by ticking (✓) the appropriate answer. Be assured that it is purely for academic purpose and your confidentiality is assured. Please do not disclose your identity anywhere on the questionnaire. Thank you for consenting to be part of this research.

SECTION A

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF MALE TEACHER TRAINEES IN ECE

Please answer the questions by choosing the best option that applies. In responding to the questions, please mark the appropriate box using a tick (✓).

1. Please indicate your age

Below 20 years [] 20- 24 years [] 25 – 30 years [] above 30 []

2. Marital status: Single [] Married [] Others []

3. Level of student : level 100 [] level 200 [] level 300 []

4. Do you have some previous experience teaching children at age 2-8 years?

Yes [] No []

SECTION B: Family factors influencing male teacher trainees' career choice for

ECE

1. Are your parents teachers? Yes [] No []
2. Which of your parents is a teacher?
3. If no, what is the occupation of your father?
4. If no, what is the occupation of your mother?.....
5. Father' educational level:
6. Mother's educational level:.....
7. Guardian's educational level:

Instruction: In the table below, for each statement mark how much you agree with a tick $\sqrt{\quad}$ in the box to the right of each statement. The responses are on the scale of **1-5**, where **1** = Strongly Disagree (**SD**), **2** = Disagree (**D**), **3** = Neutral (**N**), **4** = Agree (**A**) and **5** = Strongly Agree (**S A**).

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	SA
8	My parents being teachers influenced my career choice for ECE					
9	My parents encouraged me to choose a career in ECE					
10	My parents' income level influenced my career choice for ECE					
11	Family pressure influenced my career choice for ECE					
12	My parents' support and approval influenced my career choice for ECE					
13	I have other immediate family members who are also educators that have influenced my career choice for ECE					
14	My parents' educational level has a relation with my career choice for ECE					

SECTION C: Personal factors influencing male teacher trainees to choose early childhood education

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	SA
16	I chose a career in ECE because I like working with young children					
17	To serve as a role model especially for children of single mothers influenced my choice for ECE					
18	My working experiences with children influenced my choice for ECE					
19	I chose ECE because of the love, passion and personal interest I have in it.					
20	My teaching abilities and skills influenced my choice					
21	The opportunity to bring up my own children with knowledge in ECE influenced my choice					
22	Courses in ECE are relatively easier as compared to					
23	My personality type influenced my choice for ECE					

SECTION D: Peers influence on male teacher trainees' career choice in early childhood education

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	SA
24	My career choice for ECE has been influenced by my peers who are doing well in ECE					
25	My choice for ECE came from a recommendation from my male peer					
26	My choice for ECE came from a recommendation from a female peer					
27	Male teachers in ECE success stories influenced my choice for ECE					
28	Some of my male friends are offering ECE programme					

SECTION E: Outcome expectations influence on male teacher trainees' career choice for early childhood education

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	SA
29	I find the course I chose convenient in looking for a job in the future					
30	Stable source of income/ salary is a factor I considered in choosing ECE					
31	Job security in ECE influenced my choice for ECE					
32	Opportunity for advancement is a factor which influenced my choice for ECE					
33	Availability of opportunities in ECE influenced my choice for ECE					

SECTION F: Strategies to encourage recruitment of more male teachers in early childhood education

S/N	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
		SD	D	N	A	S
34	Providing opportunities for young males to work with children would persuade more males to become early childhood teachers					
35	Providing men who enter the early childhood profession with motivational allowance would recruit more males into the profession					
36	Media campaigns would help recruit more males to become early childhood teachers					
37	Giving employment priority to males when employing teachers for ECE would encourage more males enroll for ECE					
38	Teacher education institutions increasing intake quota for male applicants for ECE programmes would encourage more males to go in for ECE young children					
39	Subsidising the fees of male ECE trainees in COE would encourage more males into ECE					
40	Giving scholarship to male ECE teachers will encourage more males to prefer teaching at ECE level					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION