Breaking the Pink Collar: Lived Experiences of Male Educators in Early Childhood Education

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ABSTRACT

The study looked at the experiences of male teachers working in the field of Early Childhood Education, where women are the main workforce. It focuses on the teaching experiences, their perception of gender stereotypes and societal expectations, challenges and opportunities, coping mechanism and support systems as well as professional identity. Guided by Social Role Theory and Self-Efficacy Theory, the researchers used phenomenological approach to gather detailed information and insights. Seven male teachers under the Schools Division Office of San Jose del Monte City, Bulacan, were selected through a purposive sampling. The use of semi-structured interviews for data collection followed thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke to extract the results. The results showed at first that the participants faced some difficulties, but later on they actually reached professional fulfillment, felt a genuine passion for teaching, and also had this kind of sense of purpose. They ran into gender stereotypes, social expectations and workplace bias, however they also said that professionalism, resilience, and confidence helped them to sort it out. In a way, the participants seemed to understand that there were opportunities to become positive role models, and to support the whole development of young children. Their professional commitment was greatly shaped by personal resilience, family support, supportive colleagues, and school administration. And over time, their personal and professional growth let them become caring, confident, and resilient, while at the same time challenging gender stereotypes in ECE too. The study recommends strengthening institutional support and policies to be gender-inclusive, and also, to foster increased involvement of men to become early childhood educators.

Keywords: Lived experiences, Gender stereotypes, Challenges and Opportunities, Coping Mechanism, Professional identity. City College of San Jose del Monte, Bachelor in Early Childhood Education

INTRODUCTION

Male teachers are one of the major gears of the system of education. In a profession where women prevail, male teachers are a factor of workforce diversity and their influence as role models on youth is huge (Marian University, 2025). World Bank statistics show that 88.3% of primary-level teachers in the Philippines as per 2024, are women which means the teaching profession, particularly in the elementary level, still remains predominantly male-exclusive and has not yet changed its structure significantly. Around the globe, male teachers are highly underrepresented in early childhood education even though their shares vary slightly for each country. In most European countries, male teachers amount to less than 5 percent of the early childhood education workforce. That is clearly showing how the gender imbalance in the area has remained unchanged till now (Bhana et al., 2022). Additionally, Women continue to make up around 70% of the world's teachers at all education levels, per the OECD's data (2022), which indicates that a teaching career is still predominantly a woman's profession.

The early childhood care and education (ECE) sector is like a deserted land for men. Across the country, only 3.2% of ECE and kindergarten teachers are males, and 44% of this group leave the profession within five

years. There are many barriers to men teaching young children. These include stereotypical ideas of gender roles, viewing ECE as a "low-prestige" occupation, lack of benefits and decent wages, as well as the distrust of families and colleagues who wonder why men would want to work with young children. Besides, the 'glass escalator' phenomenon usually gives men rapid promotion in mainly female occupations. Therefore, men in ECE mostly end up in administrative positions, although they love teaching and consider themselves teachers at heart (K-12 DIVE, 2023).

Due to cultural biases and financial constraints, women were often seen as the best choice to replace educators in various parts of the world, especially in Early Childhood and secondary school environments (Sunrise Children's Foundation, 2025). However, Reich-Shapiro et al., (2020), contend that male educators see their involvement in early childhood education not only as a great opportunity to support the social and emotional development of children but also as a means to challenge traditional gender stereotypes and create a more inclusive educational environment.

Men working as early childhood educators suffer from a lack of societal and cultural acceptance. One important aspect of discussing the lack of men in the early childhood education sector is the societal and cultural barriers in this area that discourage men from entering the profession. In general, the female role is assigned to teaching young children that is why even the capability of men to nurture and educate young learners is doubted. Besides, some men have been unfairly stereotyped and this includes being labeled as "unnatural" or "deviant" when working with young children (Louw & Tshelane, 2025). Gender bias is also perpetuated by parents and the wider community who at times doubt whether men are appropriate as carers or teachers in early childhood environments (Tshelane, 2022). These social stereotypes are some of the reasons why the number of male teachers in early childhood education remains significantly low due to both recruitment and retention problems.

Along with the social factors, male teachers face multiple work-related problems that put constraints on their professional involvement in classrooms. Usually, male educators are the last to be given teaching roles and are, in fact, pushed towards administrative or managerial positions, thus limiting their face-to-face work with kids (Ndlovu, & Mofokeng, 2024). In fact, inside schools, the peers may even perpetuate the gender stereotypes, to the extent some male said teachers laugh at them saying that men cannot be 'nannies' or questioning their professional capacities (Tshelane, 2022, Parantar & San Jose 2025). Besides that, the focus of the studies has mainly been on the female teachers and hence very little is known about the perceptions, passion and coping mechanisms of males in this career, which has been traditionally female, in dealing with the development of their professional identity, presenting their gendered expectations and managing the discriminations (Reich-Shapiro et al., 2021). Combining all these reasons further the disadvantage of men lacking teachers in early childhood education and accentuate the necessity of specific policies and interventions for their support and professional development.

The study focused on understanding the male teachers' experiences in the field of early childhood education. The study primarily aims to: (1) discuss their experiences in the field through their daily activities (2) investigate how male teachers interpret and tackle gender stereotypes and societal pressures (3) recognize the difficulties and advantages that come with their jobs as teachers (4) explore how male teachers build their image as professionals, especially when their roles are different from the norm of female-dominated ones. By doing these things, the study wants to show male education in early childhood and the main factors that affect their willingness, motivation and growth in professional ways.

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by offering a detailed analysis of male educators' experience in early childhood education, thereby shining light on the field that is one of the most proximate displays of gender discrimination. In investigating the strategies male teachers use to cope with gender stereotypes, social pressures, and workplace difficulties, the paper provides an understanding of the elements that shape their professional identity, morale, and choice to stay in the career. It points out that it is hard to change the deep-set cultural biases and the institutional restrictions that male participation in profession is limited at the same time male educators get recognized as role models as well as agents of inclusivity in the class. Besides, this paper's results might be used as the foundation for formulating new directives, systems of

assistance, and programs of intervention in which gender diversity can be enhanced, to an inclusive and fair environment in early childhood education can be created.

This piece of research intends to fill in the gap in the literature by presenting male educators' perspectives and calling for their greater representation and recognition in the area.

Objectives

The research study investigates how male teachers in early childhood education experience their teaching work and their teaching work experiences which includes their professional responsibilities and their challenges and their gender-based experiences and their coping methods to deal with their work in a field that women mostly occupy.

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of male educators working in early childhood education settings?
2. How do male teachers perceive and respond to gender stereotypes and societal expectations within the early childhood education profession?
3. What challenges and opportunities do male educators encounter in their teaching roles?
4. How do male educators cope to the challenges they experienced and what support system or strategies do they utilize to sustain their professional practice?
5. How do male educators construct and develop their professional identity within a female-dominated field?
6. What insights and implications can be drawn from the experiences of male educators in early childhood education to promote a more inclusive and supportive teaching environment?

Research Design

The researchers used a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experience of male teachers in early childhood education. Qualitative research explores and gives in-depth understanding to real-world problems (Tenny et al., 2022). Specifically, Phenomenology aims to describe the essential meaning of a phenomenon by exploring how individuals interpret their experiences (Delve, Ho, & Limpaecher, 2022).

The study aimed to deeply understand the experiences of male teachers in early childhood classrooms, especially their roles, challenges and stereotypes in a profession which they are usually considered as female educators by the society. Their stories were deeply listened to so the study was able to discover the emotion, social and professional significance of their experiences. Also, this strategy offers a detailed and genuine depiction of their lived experiences and also supports initiatives to create gender inclusiveness and to change stereotypical perceptions in the teaching profession.

By employing this design, the researchers could share detailed and comprehensive experiences that depict what it is like to be a male educator in early childhood education.

Population and Sampling

The study comprised of Seven (7) male educators from the Schools Division of San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan, who have extensive experience in working with Early Childhood. The researchers implemented purposive sampling to identify individuals who were directly or indirectly familiar with the subject matter being studied. Nikopoulou (2022), explains that purposive sampling is a non-random selection procedure where the units are chosen "on purpose" because they possess the specific traits required for the research. This sample size is appropriate for qualitative research as it supports a deep investigation of the participants' experiences. Current research shows that the number of samples for qualitative work depends on the saturation of the data, which is the point where no new themes are found in the data. As per Monique Hennink and Bonnie N. Kaiser (2022), saturation for rather homogeneous groups may be attained even after 7 to 17 interviews.

To ensure the relevance and depth of the data, the researchers came up with criteria to those take part in the study: participants must (1) be male educators who had experienced early childhood education (2) public school teacher in San Jose Del Monte Bulacan (3) they also had to have three years of teaching experience (4) have agreed to share their life experiences to take part in the study.

The researchers selected informants who can provide precise details about their work responsibilities and their workplace challenges and their experiences as members of their gender and their strategies for handling challenges in a female-dominated workplace. The participants in the study have participated in classroom activities and managed classrooms and interacted with both parents and peers while handling workplace situations that involved gender-based perceptions. The researchers have gathered personal accounts and viewpoints from male teachers to study their life experiences and work practices within early childhood education throughout the Philippines.

Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-developed semi-structured interview guide questionnaire as the main data collection. This instrument is given to seven (7) male teachers in early childhood education in selected elementary schools in Schools Division Office (SDO) of San Jose del Monte, Bulacan. It is thoughtfully designed based on the objectives and research questions of the study to maintain consistency with the Statement of the Problem. The first section of the instrument is the Pre-Interview Question which deals with the respondents' profile which is aimed at collecting basic data such as name (optional), age, years of teaching experience, current teaching level, and if the participant is the only male teacher in their teaching level.

The second part of the instrument is the Semi-structured interview that has six (6) sections which are matched to the research questions of the study. Section A has five (5) open-ended questions that probe deeply into the lived experiences of male educators in early childhood education. Section B has five (5) questions that delve into gender stereotypes and societal expectations faced by male teachers. Section C offers five (5) questions that mainly deal with the challenges and opportunities in their teaching roles. Finally, Section D has five (5) questions that take up the professional identity development of male teachers. Altogether, the interview guide has thirty (25) open-ended questions that were carefully designed to draw out thorough and insightful responses from the participants.

The researchers utilized a semi-structured format that gave them a chance to stick to their initial questions but at the same time they were free to uncover more insights based on participants' answers, which eventually led to obtaining rich and deep data. Delve, Ho, and Limpaecher (2022) pointed out that semi-structured interviews are a style where besides a list of prepared open-ended questions, researchers can also freely ask follow-up questions to get more detailed and meaningful responses. Besides, observation as a method is used in conjunction with the interview to help the informal capturing of non-verbal elements of the informants such as tone of the voice, facial expressions, pauses, gestures, or showing of emotions. These observations are recorded in the form of field notes. Besides aiding and strengthening the interview data, these notes also serve as a form of documentation. More so, to make certain that the instrument is both valid and reliable, the interview guide is given to the experts for the content validity and will be tested on people who have similar features as the ones of the participants but who will not be included in the study for the pilot testing.

Data Collection

The process of gathering data begins by ensuring the required consent is received from the chosen informants by the researchers. The request for consent is sent out with the view of seeking permission from them to participate in the interview being conducted by the researchers. After the consent letter is accepted by the informant, each one of them have their semi-structured interview in which the researchers explain clearly the objective of the research being conducted. After this, research interview questions are asked based on the experiences of male teachers in early childhood education. Moreover, interviews of some of the chosen teachers are audio-taped in order to ensure accurate transcription and comprehensive analysis of their experiences of teaching in early childhood education. Finally, after the interview process is completed, the transcribed information is analyzed to reveal emerging themes relating to experiences of male teachers when navigating and

challenging gender stereotypes in the teaching profession. Therefore, the findings of the study are used to come up with recommendations on ways to provide support systems, knowledge, and strategies to promote the involvement of male teachers in early childhood education.

After the participants have comprehended the research process completely and have consented by signing both general consent forms and video consent forms, the researchers scheduled the interviews at an appropriate time and place that suits the informants. After that, each participant is subjected to a semi-structured interview where the researchers refresh the purpose of the research and create rapport with the participants for a free communication environment.

In this regard, during the interview, the use of well-thought-out and designed questions are employed to facilitate an interview where the discussion would involve exploring the life experience of male teachers who work in early childhood education. Being a flexible format of the research process, the interview would provide an opportunity for the researcher to ask additional questions to understand some specific aspects of the experience. With the permission of the interviewees, the sessions would be recorded on camera.

After conducting all the interviews, the data collected are kept safely and transcribed. After transcription, the researchers conducted an analysis of the transcripts in order to find the underlying patterns and themes emerging out of the responses of the participants regarding how male teachers negotiate gender norms in the teaching profession. Based on the results of the study, the researchers provide some recommendations. The recommendations might include developing adequate support networks, increasing awareness and knowledge, and some other recommendations aimed at encouraging the involvement of male teachers in early childhood teaching profession. The recommendations could be applied through specific programs.

Data Analysis

The data that derived from the semi-structured interviews are processed by thematic analysis using Braun and Clarke's conceptual model (Ahmed et al., 2025). Data were recorded and then word-for-word transcribed. The researchers thoroughly engaged with the data by reading the transcripts multiple times and taking notes on their initial impressions in order to gain a deeper understanding of male teachers' experiences in early childhood education. Thematic analysis was selected as a method because it provides a precise, orderly technique for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterned meaning in qualitative data. Every interview was audiotaped and then verbatim transcribed to ensure a high degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness. The researchers thoroughly interacted with the data by reading the transcripts multiple times and taking notes on their initial impressions in order to gain a deeper understanding of male teachers’ experiences in early childhood education.

After the familiarization activity, the researchers coded the data initially by way of pinpointing significant quotes and designating them with labels that capture the essence of the ideas that are the focus of the research. The codes were formed based on the data through a bottom-up approach and were in line with the research questions. Then, codes that were similar in meaning are gathered together under categories, and these categories are used as the basis from which to create overall themes. With these steps, researchers are able to trace the emergence of repetitive patterns throughout participants' stories, mainly, but not exclusively, regarding their views on gender, their occupational roles, and methods of dealing with difficulties. Furthermore, the fact that thematic analysis is a highly adaptable method allowed for the provision of an insightful and thorough interpretation of qualitative data.

Following theme development, the researchers closely examined and further improved the themes while making sure that the collection of themes accurately represents the content of the data and that there is harmony between them. The central idea of each theme was captured in its respective title along with the highlighting of participants' quotes that are most relevant. The final themes were made available in a story-like form to illustrate to the reader the experiences that men in the teaching profession go through. In order to establish the reliability of the work, the researchers kept detailed transcription, did coding in a consistent manner, and cross-checked theme validation at different stages of the analysis.

Ethical Consideration

The researchers secured first the Ethical Clearance from the City College of San Jose del Monte then began to collect data for their study. With Ethical Clearance in hand, the researchers draft a formal request letter that is sent to the Office of the Schools Division of San Jose del Monte for permission to conduct the research study in public schools within the jurisdiction of that office. After receiving approval for the research study, the researchers went to the school principals of selected public schools to coordinate the actual implementation of the research study.

Understanding that male teachers are sharing their personal experiences and views on their work in early childhood education, the participants are treated with respect, care, and professionalism throughout the research process. The research acknowledges the fact that sharing their personal experiences in teaching, including their struggles in the teaching profession as a result of gender stereotypes, may require personal reflection on the part of the participants.

The participation of the subjects is entirely voluntary, and they are informed that they can decline to answer any of the questions at any point of time without facing any kind of negative implications. Informed consent is obtained by means of consent forms, and this is done after the subjects are made aware of the purpose of the study and their rights as subjects of the study.

The study adheres to the data privacy principles outlined in the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173) in the Philippines, which ensures that the confidentiality and privacy of the data collected from the participants are maintained. The participants in the study are not recorded during the interview unless they agree to the recording. Only the researchers have access to the recording, and the data collected are in the form of password-protected files. The data collected, including the names of the participants, are not included in the study, and instead, a pseudonym or a code word will replace the actual names to maintain the confidentiality of the data. In addition, the data collected during the study are properly disposed of in accordance with the data privacy principles outlined in the Data Privacy Act, as outlined by the National Privacy Commission.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings, discussions, and analysis of the data collected through interviews conducted by the researchers. The study primarily explores the lived experiences of male educators in Early Childhood Education. The data gathered address their motivations for entering the profession, the challenges and gender-related stereotypes they encounter, the coping mechanisms and support systems they utilize, and the personal meanings they attach to their roles as male educators in a predominantly female field.

1. Lived Experiences of Male Educators in Early Childhood Education Settings

Themes

Adjusting to Early Childhood Teaching
Experiencing Professional Fulfillment
Finding Purpose and Passion in Teaching Young Children
Embracing the Role of a Male Educator

1.1 Adjusting to Early Childhood Teaching

The study has found that male teachers slowly became able to handle the demands of early childhood education. They used their teaching experience, observation of lessons in the classroom and the constant interaction with small children to do so. Initially quite apprehensive and uncertain about how things would go, they gradually overcame these emotions as their direct contact with children helped them find their teaching style and grow both professionally and personally through motivation, confidence and resilience (Alegre et al., 2025; Syam et al., 2025; Parantar et al., 2025).

Through observation of the children's behaviors, traits, and development stages, the male teachers were able to better their teaching methods. In this way, they also managed to build up close bonds of mutual respect and respect of learners, thus, the findings are in line with research highlighting that play, caregiving, and giving emotional support are the keys to establishing good relations with young children (Alegre et al., 2025; Putri et al., 2025).

The participants also realized that professional competence, commitment and effort rather than gender define who gets teaching responsibilities. Male teachers, however, showed that even if the job environment is highly gender biased, they are able to do their job just as well by the example of those mentioned in Bhana (2022), Dadivas (2025), and Mofokeng (2024) papers.

Overall, the male teachers who took part in the study recognized their own classroom experience to be the main factor for the emergence of professional confidence, resilience and belonging. They gradually developed their identity as professional teachers by drawing on continuous learning, observation of the little ones and meaningful interaction with the latter and came to the insight that a good teacher is one who is competent and passionate irrespective of his or her sex.

1.2 Experiencing Professional Fulfillment

The results indicated that male educators achieve job satisfaction through deep emotional bonds and interactions they have with students plus the children's general emotional, social, and developmental growth. Helping children conquer their fears, giving emotional support, and forming good relationships with the child are among the factors that give them a sense of achievement and joy in their profession (Alegre et al., 2025; Reich-Shapiro et al., 2021).

In addition, participants found satisfaction in seeing the children progress and develop, especially when the child becomes comfortable, confident and takes part more actively in classroom work. Witnessing the children overcoming themselves difficulties, being accustomed to the school environment, and reaching their developmental milestones deepened their sense of purpose in education (Perales-Dolendo, 2025; Rodger et al., 2025).

The feeling that teaching could make a difference in students' lives was also a major source of job satisfaction, especially when former students attained great achievements and lives that were better off. These accounts illustrate that male educators consider their profession to be more than providing lectures they are aware very well of their roles in supporting guiding caring nurturing and shaping the growth of children towards their future. (Syam et al., 2025; Yang & McNair, 2021).

This summary shows that male teachers feel satisfied through a combination of personal transformations witnessed in their students, establishing deep relationships, and being the catalyst for growth and future success of their students. It is evident from their experience that male educators were more motivated and accomplished after these events, hence demonstrating the real essence of teaching which is about changing the life of children for the better forever (Alegre et al., 2025; Reich-Shapiro et al., 2021; Perales-Dolendo, 2025; Rodger et al., 2025; Yang & McNair, 2021; Alpad et al., 2025).

1.3 Finding Purpose and Passion in Teaching Young Children

The study findings indicate that male teachers' purpose and passion for Early Childhood Education were built through real interest in children and through meaningful experiences in the classroom. Although some of the participants anticipated facing quite a few challenges in teaching such young learners, over time, their experiences led them to see the teaching profession as pleasurable and fulfilling. They became even more devoted through their love and respect toward young minds and their yearning to be part of their growth and development (Usta et al., 2024; Alegre et al., 2025).

In addition, the study participants found purpose in their work as educators by adopting roles that are close to a parent's role, like giving guidance, being a source of discipline, offering love and support, etc. They saw themselves as not just teachers, but also as people who help mold children's behavior and character. This was found to be in agreement with Yang and McNair (2021) who said that male teachers support the development of children through caring, guiding, and being engaged in a meaningful way.

Making an effort to tailor their methods in order to meet the needs of various stages of a child's development also helped fuel their passion for classroom teaching. Male educators who empathized with children (putting themselves in their shoes), modifying their behaviors, and engaging children through games, for instance, were able to form close, emotional bonds and a nurturing atmosphere conducive to successful learning (Rodger et al., 2025; Putri et al., 2025).

On the basis of caring for children, developing teacher-child relationships, and a genuine wish to impact positively on learners' development, purpose and passion arose naturally. These experiences have served to enhance their sense of professional fulfillment and deepen the men educators' dedication to the teaching profession, thereby showing that their loyalty to Early Childhood Education comes from their love of teaching coupled with their motivation to bring about a lasting change in the lives of young children (Rodger et al., 2025; Perales-Dolendo, 2025; Syam et al., 2025).

1.4 Embracing the Role of a Male Educator

The research outcomes indicate that male teachers are not limited to the role of teaching because they act as father-figures, mentors, and reliable adults who play a role in the children's emotional, social, and holistic growth. The participants identified themselves as parental figures who offer guidance, discipline, affection, and emotional support to younger students.

These findings are in line with those of other researchers who argue for the significance of male teachers who are the good role models, through whom children get a broader and a more varied image of masculinity and who, in this way, also defy the male/female stereotypes prevalent within Early childhood Education (Dadivas et al., 2025; Mofokeng, 2024; Reich-Shapiro et al., 2021).

Male educators further acknowledged that their consistent presence together with the children and the kind of support they offer help children to create their own sense of trust, safety, and belonging. The fact that male teachers build positive and meaningful relationships with learners means they end up being the kind of trusted adults who positively influence children's well-being and development. The findings corroborate with those of Perales-Dolendo (2025) and Rodger et al. (2025) which point out the ways that male educators contribute to the nurturing of children and the establishment of supportive learning environments besides the teaching of subjects.

On the contrary, Lopez (2025) stressed male educators' struggle in communicating care and affection which might lead to misunderstanding as well as a legal issue.

In summary, the study found male educators who not only provided teaching services but also acted as father figures and male role models at the same time. Their fatherly or protective behavior was helpful in the development of children's sense of security, social and personal well-being.

2. Male Teachers' Perceptions and Responses to Gender Stereotypes and Societal Expectations in Early Childhood Education.

Themes

Experiencing Gender-Based Stereotypes
Overcoming Bias Through Professionalism
Developing Resilience and Confidence

2.1 Experiencing Gender-Based Stereotypes

The study results show that male teachers, by and large, are confronted with gender stereotypes based on which parents, school authorities, or the larger community assess their capacity and reliability to provide early childhood education. One of the reasons why parents, especially female ones, sometimes refuse to commit their young children's education to male teachers is that they fear these educators will not be tender or patient enough when handling very young learners. Besides, such stereotypes about male teachers as possible predators create a situation in which these teachers have to refrain from physical contact and gestures of affection to make sure no one interprets it as a sexual overture (Bonnett et al., 2022; McIntyre, 2024; Santos et al., 2022; Gonçalves, 2022; Louw et al., 2022).

Also, gender stereotypes bring forth different standards of expectations while teachers do their tasks. Male educators sometimes get limited from doing things related to personal care of children like accompanying them to the lavatory, tasks that are usually done by female teachers. In addition, they are pushed to do what is seen as male-typical jobs like being the disciplinary staff, sports officer, or someone who works with children's bodies. These illustrations depict how one's gender assumptions at work impact on an individual's workplace behavior and access to opportunities (Gabriel et al., 2026; Gómez et al., 2025; Bonnett et al., 2022).

Male teachers additionally find that they face some form or another of sexual stereotypes in employment and daily work. A few among the respondents were subjected to unequal treatment purely because the nature of their way of dress, look, or speech, others, however, noted that it is quite commonly held that women only are teachers in early childhood education. These outcomes align with past research indicating that the ways in which the society views and treats men in early childhood education is deeply affected by the traditional ideas and misunderstandings men have concerning their identity.

Overall, it found that, in the form of prejudice, stereotypes against men had, on the part of the male teaching staff, a considerable effect on their work life, job satisfaction levels, as well as the society's view towards them. Nevertheless, the respondents continued to prove themselves through quality teaching, being kind, and hard-working, in turn, getting more support from the parents and other school community members.

2.2 Overcoming Bias Through Professionalism

The male teachers in this study revealed that one of the reasons they kept questioning their gender is simply male gender-based doubt. They managed to overcome it by displaying professionalism, teaching competence, and commitment. Despite the fact that they were questioned and even had to deal with negative remarks about their choice to enter Early Childhood Education profession, they transformed these setbacks into a source of inspiration for improving their teaching performance and ultimately demonstrating that they were capable just like any other person.

Their commitment and professional skills turned out to be key elements in contesting the prevalent notion that Early Childhood Education is a female-dominated field (Bonnett et al., 2022; McIntyre, 2024; Santos et al., 2022; Reich-Shapiro et al., 2020).

Additionally, male teachers tackled parents' concerns through honest dialogue and explaining their tasks and abilities during parent meetings and orientations. In the process of forging healthy relationships and allowing parents to understand their teaching methods, they gradually won trust and lessened doubts about their suitability to cater for young children. These outcomes are in line with the observations of Moosa and Bhana (2020) who described how societal stereotyping of gender roles makes male teachers more visible and under closer scrutiny, and Noor et al. (2025) whose study revealed that the perception of parents can be altered when they get to witness the competencies, positive child interactions, and good communication of male teachers.

What is more, the interviewed educators highlighted the relevance of possessing such qualities as a high tolerance level, strong perseverance, and a sense of professional ethics while reacting to negative preconceptions. They did not let emotional responses to criticisms to become their way of reacting but let their work and

enthusiasm to speak for themselves. Such narratives indicate that with time male teachers can break down sex role expectations simply by their consistent evidence of skill and devotion (McIntyre, 2024; Deng et al., 2023).

In conclusion, gender-based stereotypes could be challenged through being professional, dedicated, patient, and open in one's communication with parents and school community. Experience shows that the male educators who manage to establish a trustworthy relationship and present their qualifications are well-placed to turn around people's opinions. Finally, being a successful and nurturing early childhood educator is more an issue of capability, dedication, and perseverance, regardless of one's gender.

2.3 Developing Resilience and Confidence

The results indicate that when male teachers deal with various societal expectations in Early Childhood Education, they are likely to gain confidence and resilience skills. Some of the participants mentioned they were seen as more powerful or naturally leaders just because they are men. Even though these stereotypes might be beneficial in some ways, they can also contribute to the traditional gender roles and expectations of manliness. It is in line with the McIntyre (2024), who argued that men's leadership assumptions might also be a product of Patriarchal ideologies. In the same manner, Deng et al. (2023) discussed that male figures were usually seen as role models for the boys and therefore, the presence of male teachers in nontraditional fields could expand the children's concept of boys and masculinity.

Also, when male teachers established good relationships with their children's parents, they were able to build trust and confront any stereotypes. The participants were of the view that the teachers should be parent-friendly, willing to work together, and be open to parents' concerns. By having open communication and demonstrating that they are on their side, the teachers were more accepted by the parents, which in turn, led to the teachers taking the role of educators more seriously. These points are in line with what Zulauf-McCurdy et al. (2024) argued that strong teacher-parent partnerships help in building trust, involvement of families, and the development of children. Hummel et al.'s (2022) statement, that consistent, respectful, and transparent communication are the ways to build the parents' trust in their male child's teacher, is also in line with these findings.

In general, building resilience and confidence was fostered through having positive relationships with parents, being a professional, and skillfully handling the gender-based expectations. Despite having some challenges because of their gender, the male teachers' commitment to good communication and strong partnerships helped increase the parental trust that has been shaken. Their story shows that through capability, hard work, and mutual trust, teaching and positive relationships can be effective and the gender of a teacher does not count for that.

3. Challenges and Opportunities Encountered by Male Educators in Their Teaching Roles.

Themes

Navigating Gender-Related Stereotypes
Recognizing Opportunities as Male Educators
Develop Effective Teaching Practices

3.1 Navigating Gender-Related Stereotypes

From the study results it was found out that in the field of early childhood education male educators face several genders-based hurdles that interfere with the way they go about their professional duties. Some interviewees mentioned that male teachers must be more cautious about touching children and especially when they have to help girls with bodily functions. Such limitations not only prevent male teachers from engaging in some caregiving activities due to fear of being mistaken or even accused falsely but also restrict their role to that of an observer. Santos et al. (2022) and Gonçalves (2022) corroborated this observation, stating that men who work as teachers usually modify their behavior towards the children to avoid getting into suspicious situations

or being accused. In the same vein, Deng et al. (2023) showed that the caregiving duties of changing diapers and helping kids with toileting are mainly female teachers who are associated with this.

In addition to that, the participants had to deal not only with questions of gender but also with stereotypical traditional ideas about what work that a man can do with young children. Many of us still feel that men in a baby-sitting or early childhood education context are less natural or a man should be a teacher who deals with older children because nurturing is more a feminine trait for most of us. Such gender prejudices put the male educators in a situation where they must demonstrate repeatedly how excellent they are and at the same time, create their own professional identities. Male educators are also challenged by the perception that their role is different, and this can be linked with the study of Sullivan et al., (2022), & Mofokeng, (2024) who found out how men face difficulties at their workplaces due to a sense of disconnection or isolation and lack of sufficient support in these environments. Mcfarlane (2024) further pointed out that male teachers should show qualities traditionally associated with being feminine such as showing compassion and caring, that is a way of breaking the mold of a typical man and challenging conventional ideas of masculinity by men teachers being gentle and displaying deep knowledge of emotions.

In general, dealing with gender-related stereotypes involves educators making sure that they keep their professional distances, showing that they are capable teachers, and challenging the old-style gender roles. They must work with the limitations and opinions of others, nevertheless, they do not abandon their duties and give children what they need for a good start in life through proper teaching and education. Their stories prove that what really matters to be a good kindergarten or nursery teacher is a professional attitude, dedication, and being a person who knows how to see what is needed by a child from the point of view of the child.

3.2 Recognizing Opportunities as Male Educators

Results suggested that not only male teachers in Early Childhood Education are able to demonstrate their skills and abilities, but they are also able to contribute significantly to the profession of teaching. A few participants said that being a teacher is not limited by gender because both genders can handle the roles and responsibilities similarly their presence further encourages the society to rethink the notion that preschool teaching is a women's job only. This is like the argument that McIntyre (2024) put forward when stating that male teachers can disrupt the gender stereotype by behaving in a nurturing and caring way. Therefore, by watching their behaviors at school, children understand better that different responsibilities and roles can be carried out independently of the person's gender.

Moreover, the participants acknowledged that being one of the few male teachers gave them a certain amount of attention and professional recognition. Some mentioned that people get more easily attracted to male teachers and that these are the only ones who get attention since the male educators are rare in the early childhood education field. While this appreciation can provide the possibility of climbing the career ladder it can also be an unequal advantage based on gender instead of genuine professional skills and achievements. These are the reasons behind the term glass escalator which denotes that men occupying female-dominated professions might enjoy higher visibility and chances for promotion.

The group of participants also believed that their presence in the class as well as their dissimilar personalities could make the teaching-learning process more interesting and positive. According to Silva et al., Syam, et al., and Gonçalves, these authors mentioned male teachers are great sources of changing the way people think about gender roles and masculinity to a more inclusive direction.Santos et al., Gao et al., and Silindile also commented on several male teachers" skills that could bring in early childhood classes the ability to calm down the kids, solving problems through different channels, inventiveness in teaching methods, etc.

At large, identifying the potential for a male educator mainly requires him to display the mastery of his profession, to be seen as an authority, and to present new angles about issues. The fact that male educators often belong to a female- dominated working field should not stop them from showing that the abilities they possess go way beyond the stereotypes that associate certain qualities and traits only with men or only with women. The

teachers are showing in their day-to-day lives that when educators are different, they can create interesting learning experiences for students and also build classrooms that are more inclusive.

3.3 Develop Effective Teaching Practices

According to the study results, male educators in Early Childhood Education develop and implement effective teaching practices by tailoring strategies to suit the diverse and changing needs and behaviors of learners. A small number of teachers stated that relying only on existing teaching methods and theories is insufficient because classroom situations require them to come up with their own teaching techniques. Their focus is to make sure that children understand the lessons, that they join the games and do activities, and that their participation contributes to the achievement of learning outcomes. This is also the opinion of Gómez et al. A major concern expressed by male teachers was whether their methods were suitable for boys as they were usually developed and tested for girls. On the other hand, they believed using different ways of interaction with learners helps in improving their teaching strategies. They stated that these methods were quite different from each other and they allowed teachers to adjust to varying demands in the classroom.

Therefore, the participants stated that a well-managed classroom was necessary for the learners to focus, learn, and take part in various activities. A participant mentioned that when he is the teacher, the children listen more to him and he feels that the teacher's presence and style can affect the whole class, so it will vary.This aligns with the findings of Silva et al. (2022), Syam et al. (2025), and Gonçalves (2022), who all pointed out that the positive impact of male teachers in the early childhood setting cannot be ignored because they challenge traditional gender roles.

Moreover, Santos et al. (2022), Gao et al. (2024), and Silindile (2025) highlighted male teachers as having several qualities, such as being calm in difficult situations, dealing with discipline problems in an efficient way, and being open to new ways of teaching. These points reflect that the male teachers' abilities to keep classroom in order and to bring a fresh perspective in teaching would enhance the learning conditions of children.

To put it simply, male teachers need to be open, imaginative, and ready to adapt to their students' needs in most cases, for developing good teaching habits. They can deliver meaningful educational moments by changing their methods of instruction and keeping discipline in the classroom even when they bump into hurdles. From their story, being a good teacher has nothing much to do with being male or female but one's capability to empathize with learners, lead a class, and offer them good learning opportunities.

4. Coping Mechanisms and Support Systems of Male Educators in Early Childhood Education

Themes

Employing Personal Coping Strategies
Relying on Family Support
Building Professional Support Networks

4.1 Employing Personal Coping Strategies

The results indicate that male educators in Early Childhood Education develop different personal coping strategies to manage the challenges and pressures they experience in a female-dominated profession. Some participants shared that they choose to ignore negative comments and gender-related criticisms rather than allow these experiences to affect their emotions and teaching responsibilities. By maintaining a positive attitude and focusing on their profession, they can continue performing their duties despite the judgments of others. This is consistent with Perales-Dolendo (2025), who explained that male teachers need flexible ways of responding to gender-based stereotypes, doubts about their abilities, and the challenges of working in a profession where they may feel isolated. Similarly, Putri et al. (2025) emphasized that emotional control, professional behavior, and the ability to handle work demands contribute to the resilience of male educators.

Moreover, the study subjects acknowledged the necessity of relaxing and stepping back from work to recharge after a long day of teaching. Among others, they pointed out that using their holidays or personal time to rest and engage in private hobbies was a way for them to replenish their vigor and emotionally and physically prepare for what lay ahead. Besides that, some of the study subjects described the use of simple relaxation methods such as deep breathing to calm down whenever they felt overworked, also they mentioned how they take a brief break to reset their state. These small practices enable them to control their emotions and concentration, and to be able to carry on with teaching even with a calmer disposition. The above-mentioned outcomes are in line with those of Putri et al. (2025) who elaborated in detail how a good understanding and awareness of one's own resilience can help male teachers overcome their work-related stresses and continue to provide high-quality services to their students. On another note, Alegre et al. (2025) emphasized, like the above, the essential elements of personal motivation and emotional durability for dealing with different challenges at work. At the same time, Parantar and Jose (2025) identified the role of one's desire for the improvement of children and a firm sense of professional self-worth in helping teachers cope with work-related pressure.

In general, employment of personal approaches generally includes managing ones' feelings, not letting oneself be affected by hostile comments, relaxing and finding peace within, and using basic methods for stress relief. Male teachers in the majority-female workplace do not let the stress weigh heavily on them, as they resort to individual means to keep themselves mentally healthy and physically active. Male teachers' stories show us how resilience is not only about dealing with hard situations but is also linked with understanding how significant individual well-being is and staying a fan of one's profession.

4.2 Relying on Family Support

The male participants acknowledged the importance of their family support towards them to cope and deal with the issues of working in Early Childhood Education. A few of them even mentioned that it is a support and encouragement to have a husband or a wife who is in the same or a similar profession so that they can talk over and share their experiences which in effect helps them in managing their work-related challenges effectively. This notion aligns with the findings of Dadivas et al. (2025) stating that male teachers mostly depend on their supportive relationships in family and friends outside the school to get rid of their stress related to work. In a like manner, Pasiningsih and Pancaningrum (2023) noted that family and peer support function as protective factors that enhance resilience and motivate educators to continue being devoted to their professions.

Additionally, the participants mentioned that their families are emotionally supportive to them when they are stressed and facing work challenges. They described that discussing their problems and experiences with family members help them express their feelings and gain encouragement. Besides emotional support, family members also offer practical assistance, like helping teachers prepare visual aids and other related teaching tasks. These ways of support make their work easier, and they can concentrate on Teaching. These conclusions are corroborated by the view of Dadivas et al. (2025), where they emphasized the role of family and friends in enabling male educators deal with work stress. In addition, Pasiningsih and Pancaningrum (2023) stated that having friends and family who are supportive can actually help a teacher's resilience and ability to keep moving ahead in his/her career.

In general, relying on family support involves receiving emotional encouragement, understanding, and practical assistance from loved ones. The participants' experiences show that family members serve as an important source of strength whenever they encounter difficulties in their teaching profession. Through their family's understanding and support, male educators become more capable of managing work-related challenges, maintaining their well-being, and remaining committed to Early Childhood Education.

4.3 Building Professional Support Networks

The findings suggest that building professional support networks is one of the important ways male educators can be assisted to meet the needs of Early Childhood Education. A few of the respondents stated that being in an environment where their fellow teachers are supportive enabled them to discuss ideas, experiment with a variety of different ways of running their classes, and as a result their classroom strategies improved. It is

through teamwork with fellow teachers that they come to know things they hadn't learned from their books and create their own ways of teaching. This is in line with Syam and Sulfianita (2025), who pointed out that men who are in the teaching profession can get advice and inspiration through their co-teachers, mentors and principals not only during the early stage but the whole career path. Similarly, Frigerio (2022) highlights that teachers' sharing knowledge and ideas with each other can reduce teachers' isolation, especially where there are very few male teachers present in one working environment. This is the same reason why the male teachers who took part in our study said that being surrounded by supportive colleagues is one of the things helping them feel less out of place.

Apart from that, the respondents underscored the significance of building positive relations with parents as well as keeping lines of communication open with parents through school community. It became clear during the discussions that when the teacher-pupil-parent relations are warm, honest and trustworthy, the teacher has more power to solve both the pupil's and the parent's side of the problem. Working together through understanding and cooperation, the male teachers' sense of confidence is developed, and their work-family trust is deepened. This observation was verified by Syam and Sulfianita (2025) who stated that the way a family and the teacher get engaged effectively and keep the flow of their communicating clearly can really make them feel confident of one another. Perales-Dolendo (2025) has equally highlighted the need to gain the trust of the family and preserve a friendly rapport with the other teachers to overcome the difficulties male teachers may face in their schools. Additionally, according to Wang et al. (2023), positive interpersonal relationships, supportive leadership, and inclusive school policies are all elements that together help a male teacher become more satisfied with his work and stay on the same job for a longer time.

Lastly, building professional support networks can, in most cases, refer to forming good relations with colleagues, parents, and others around the school community. Male teachers say that when they work together, communicate openly, and understand each other, they receive advice and encouragement from each other that helps their careers. They also believe that being in a friendly office setting allows them to feel secure, their lessons become better, and they are more likely to stick with Early Childhood Education.

5. Construction and Development of Professional Identity Among Male Educators in a Female-Dominated Field.

Themes

Developing a Caring Professional Identity
Strengthening Professional Confidence
Transforming Through Teaching Experience

5.1 Developing a Caring Professional Identity

The results demonstrate that male teachers in early childhood education construct their professional identity mostly through acts of caring and showing emotional closeness and love towards children. Some of them have described that they get renewed, stay cheerful and inspired and find it easier to display affection for children. Several participants pointed out and highlighted that it was very crucial to them that they developed relationships that would be meaningful and while they could adjust their educational styles or approaches to suit each child's requirements and abilities. This is also what Moosa et al. (2023) found when they described how male educators must find an equilibrium between the traditionally masculine stereotypes and the emotional and nurturing aspects involved in the work of caring for children. In line with these findings, Mburunga (2024) stated that having good ties with students and staff is instrumental in male teachers in shaping their identity as professionals and in making the classroom a friendly place.

Generally, fostering a kind and supportive professional image is mainly through showing the willingness to help others, knowing learners' needs, and being able to build trust and rapport with children. Their stories reveal that caring, compassion, and the ability to wait for other to take their time can be considered qualities of an excellent early childhood teacher regardless of a person's gender.

5.2 Strengthening Professional Confidence

Results suggested that with teaching experiences, good connections, and support from others, male teachers gradually develop professional self-assurance. Some respondents revealed that at one time they doubted very much whether they could teach young children but they got gradually used with their job duties and thus they felt more positive about being teachers. Besides gaining professional self-confidence, they also recognized that it was important to promote gender equality by means of showing to the children both men and women can be teachers and look after younger ones. This was explained by Parantar et al. (2025) as well as Usta et al. (2024) that the meaningful teaching experiences lead male teachers to form a sense of professional identity and belonging. In the same way, Mofokeng and Ndlovu (2024) pointed out that by male teachers' provision of quality education and care they could challenge the traditional gender stereotypes.

In fact, participants acknowledged support from colleagues, family members, and friends as a source of strength to keep going with the work that they have done so far. It can be said that this is in line with Mystri et al, (2022) and Wilkinson and Warin (2021), who have also pointed out that male teachers can deal with their gender-related problems if a mentoring system, inclusive leadership, and supportive workplace relationships are provided.

Overall, increasing professional self-confidence, one should gain experience, develop one's capability as a teacher, promote equality for both genders, and have the cooperation of other people. They have found that confidence gradually increases through having quality communication, one's own development professionally, as well as feeling accepted into the teaching group.

5.3 Transforming Through Teaching Experience

Male teachers continuously learn and develop through teaching and classroom interaction experience. Some of the respondents shared that over the years, they had changed the methods of classroom discipline from a punitive approach to an interactive, positive one that helps address children's behavioral issues in a compassionate manner. Others emphasized the role of being a responsible caregiver that extends beyond guiding and teaching them but also involving a deep care for their learners. These results have been substantiated by Perales-Dolendo (2025) who argues that teaching experiences help male educators not only enhance their teaching techniques but also reinforce their identities and make them better responding teachers. In line with the former views, Qin and Xiao (2026) highlight that professional identity entails how teachers see their roles as professionals, how these roles relate to other aspects of their lives, their personal values, and their level of emotional or professional commitment to their jobs.

Furthermore, the group of women understood that in addition to being patient and caring, teaching little kids also needs a lot of engagement. They showed that men too can give supportive direction and bring the joy of learning in a meaningful setting with a fun mix of interaction and activity. This view is endorsed by Falode (2026) and Rodger et al. (2024) through their works that stated patiently caregiving and positive relationships are essential aspects needed for a good early childhood educator be they male or female.

Generally, transforming through teaching experience means mainly to upgrade classroom management, to change teaching strategies to suit a different set of students, and to develop a stronger sense of professional responsibility. The male educators' experiences show that learning through continuous contact and interaction with children also leads to the growth of a more confident, caring, and effective teacher.

CONCLUSION

1. The lived experiences of male educators in Early Childhood Education revealed a process of personal and professional growth, characterized by adjustment, resilience, confidence, and steady commitment to the teaching profession. At first, the informants of the study were full of doubts and faced difficulties in a mostly female profession but slowly they attained self-esteem and a professional identity that is strong through their work and meaningful interaction with children. Their stories reveal that working satisfaction is manifested

by the development of children, the establishment of caring relationships, and the making of significant contributions to learners' development. Besides, male teachers took up their roles not just as instructors but also as male role models who show the way, give care, and offer emotional support.

2. Male educators still encountered gender stereotypes and all sorts of societal expectations, mostly because Early Childhood Education is often viewed as a female-dominated profession. Nevertheless, those stereotypes didn't fully stop them from completing their professional duties. By showing competence, strong commitment, and real kindness toward young children, male educators earned trust and recognition from parents, school administrators, and the wider community. Therefore, pushing for gender inclusivity still matters a lot, if the goal is to fade out stereotypes and guarantee equal opportunities for educators regardless of their gender.
3. The lived experiences of male educators demonstrated that challenges and opportunities coexist within the Early Childhood Education profession. Although they encounter challenges that require them to be cautious in performing their teaching responsibilities and to adjust a lot, they are still able to create a conducive environment for their students. Most importantly, their experiences told us that teaching competence is not determined by being a male or a female, but more by being devoted to what one does and being able to adapt to the circumstances.
4. Male educators sustained their professional practice through resilience, effective coping strategies, and strong support networks enabling male educators to keep their professional practice going, even with the challenges that show up at work. Emotional support from families, colleagues, and healthy relationships with parents and school administrators seem to have mattered a lot for both their overall well-being and their long-term professional dedication. These support systems help keep male teachers more resilient, reduce workplace stress, and also motivate male educators to stick with the whole commitment of offering quality Early Childhood Education even when things are a bit tough.
5. Male educators constructed and strengthened their professional identity through continuous teaching experiences, reflective practice, a sense of professional competence, and also those meaningful ties with learner's families, colleagues, and the wider community. Even though there are existing gender stereotypes, they still showed confidence, professionalism, compassion and a steady commitment to delivering quality Early Childhood Education. Their lived experiences affirm that teaching and caregiving are developed through knowledge, practical skills, deep dedication and experience more than by gender itself.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. School principals and DepEd Division Offices should establish structured orientation and peer mentoring programs for newly hired male educators to address the initial self-doubt and identity struggles of male educators. Under this initiative, principals and teachers will act as mentors to guide newly hired male teachers through the daily routines inside the classroom, help them build confidence in their care-giving roles, and support their professional development as a male teacher in Early Childhood Education. Furthermore, by providing this structured guidance throughout their teaching experience, these programs will help male educators transition smoothly into the profession, overcome their self-doubt, to feel recognized as an essential part in female dominated field, and to have a positive male role model in the Early Childhood Education, as well in the school.
2. To address the persistent gender stereotypes and gender inequality in male teachers, school's administrators and guidance counselors should implement a gender inclusion and diversity seminar in school that includes the parents and guardians of the student to highlight the valuable contributions of male teachers inside the classroom in a female dominated field. This session will directly educate the parents and community members that care-giving in Early Childhood Education are gender neutral responsibilities. Through this program it will help male educators earn the respect, trust, and the approval of parents earlier in their teaching career without being scared of criticism and misconception in the Early Childhood profession.
3. To help male educators carry out their duties while also dealing with gender related challenges in the classroom, school heads and school administrators should set up clear school policies, and standard operating procedures about child protection, professional limits, and proper teacher–child interactions. Schools should also arrange regular training on gender sensitive teaching methods and implement well-defined steps for caregiving routine, such as restroom assistance and hygiene related tasks, so the safety and protection of learners as well as educators is kept in place. With these kinds of steps, male educators are able to do their

responsibilities with more safety, more assurance, and professional discipline, while still keeping a secure, inclusive, and friendly learning space for young children.

4. To build long-term resilience and provide coping mechanisms for male teachers facing occupational stress and isolation, School health personnel and guidance counselors should implement a counseling program and wellness program that will provide male teachers with a safe and confidential space to discuss gender related workplace pressure and to receive a professional psychological support for their well-being in handling a female dominated field. Therefore, this support system will reduce the feeling of isolation, being left out, prevent burn out, and boost the retention of male teachers in the profession.
5. School administrators, Teacher Education Institutions (TIEs), and DepEd should provide continuous professional development that boosts male educators' teaching competence, care-giving abilities, leadership skills, and overall professional confidence. These chances might come as advanced training, coaching, sessions that encourage reflective learning, and career development programs, all of which help educators strengthen their ability to form genuine connections with children, parents, coworkers, and the community. When schools invest in continuous growth like this, they're reinforcing that excellence in early childhood education is reached through capability, tenderness, professionalism, and dedication instead of gender.
6. DepEd, school administrators, Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) and other educational stakeholders should develop gender-inclusive policies, professional development programs, and school-community advocacy initiatives that support the recognition, inclusion, and day to day professional participation of male educators in Early Childhood Education. Schools, in particular, need to make room for opportunities that push for equal treatment, cooperation and leadership regardless of gender while also sharpening partnerships among educators, parents, and the community so there is more respect for the real worthwhile contributions of male teachers. By using the insights that came out of this study and turning them into institutional policy and day-to-day practice, education sectors can build a more inclusive, supportive, and equitable teaching setting, one that also acknowledges teaching skill, caretaking, and professionalism as traits shaped by dedication and lived expertise.

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