THE STATUS OF ELEMENTARY MEN TEACHERS IN MONTANA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	Statement of Problem	3
	Procedure of the Study	3
	Limitations	4
II.	REVIEW OF LITERATURE	6
	The Importance of Men Teachers in Elementary Teaching	6
	Why Men in Elementary Teaching Are Dissatisfied	11
	Methods of Obtaining and Retaining Competent Men Teachers	14
	Summary	21
III.	RESULTS OF STUDY CONDUCTED AMONG MEN TEACHERS OF MONTANA	23
IV.	SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	33
	Summary	33
	Conclusions	34
	Recommendations	37
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	38
	APPENDIX	41
	Appendix A: Letter and Opinionnaire Sent to Elementary Principals in Montana	42
	Appendix B: Questionnaire Sent to Elementary Men Teachers in Montana	44

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1.	Reasons for Preference of Men Teachers in Elementary Schools	24
2.	Amount of Professional Training and the Type of Teaching Certificate Held by Montana Men Elementary Teachers, 1964	25
3.	Type of Occupations of Wives of Men Teachers in Montana and Average Salary Earned	26
4.	Amount of Experience of Men Teachers in Montana Elementary Schools, 1963-1964	27
5.	Teaching Areas of Men Teachers in Montana Elementary Schools, 1963-1964	28
6.	Viewpoints of Montana Men Elementary Teachers in Regard to Teaching if They Had Their Lives to Live Again	29
7.	The Future Plans of Montana Elementary Men Teachers	30
8.	Reasons Given by Montana Elementary Men Teachers as to Why They Believe Men Are Leaving the Profession	31

ABSTRACT

THE STATUS OF ELEMENTARY MEN TEACHERS IN MONTANA

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM: This study determined the status of elementary men teachers in the State of Montana by answering the following:

1. Are men teachers important in elementary schools?
2. What are the dissatisfactions of men in elementary teaching?
3. What can be done to obtain and keep competent men teachers?

PROCEDURE: The status of men teachers in Montana elementary schools was measured by:

1. An opinionnaire was sent to 85 elementary principals in the State of Montana to find out their opinions regarding the importance of men teachers, percentage of men teachers on their staffs, and reasons why they preferred men teachers.
2. A questionnaire was sent to 300 elementary men teachers picked randomly from all parts of Montana and representing all size schools. This survey was conducted to find out personal data, amount of experience and training, views concerning their teaching position and reasons for dissatisfactions of men teachers. A section was also included in regard to their future plans.

CONCLUSIONS: About nine-tenths of the principals did not favor a local school policy limiting the number of men teachers in elementary schools. The majority of the principals approved men teaching in the lower grades. The principals felt that they had an insufficient number of men teachers on their staff. The principals felt men teachers were important because of:

1. Need of a male influence
2. Discipline
3. As a father substitute
4. Need for a training ground for future elementary principals.

The survey revealed that while seven eighths of the elementary men teachers had more than four years of college training, only 38 per cent had a degree in elementary education. One-third of the men were satisfied with their positions with only one-sixth planning on quitting teaching. Inadequate salaries and lack of social prestige were given as the most important reasons why elementary men left the teaching field.

RECOMMENDATIONS: More men should be hired, higher salaries must be paid, and the degree of social prestige must be raised. Some suggestions for raising social prestige are:

1. Higher standards of certification
2. A higher yearly salary which would allow them to attend college or to travel during the summer.
3. Education of the public to the importance of educators in the elementary field.

High schools and colleges must do a better job in recruiting.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The lack of men teachers in the public elementary schools is a matter of concern to administrators and to the general public. It seems to be the general opinion of people that the elementary students need more male influence. Cole has stated that "the American boy grows up under the domination of women and thus doesn't understand his role as a male."[1] Cole also believes that the presence of a man teacher in the classroom provides insurance against such misunderstanding.[2]

At the beginning of formal education the male teacher was the most common and influential. Plato, Aristotle, Socrates and Jesus Christ were important men teachers of centuries ago. Early teachers in the United States were male ministers who taught school in addition to their regular pulpit duties, as pointed out by Kaplan in this statement:

> "Prior to 1820 teaching was a man's job. Women were assigned the minor functions of instructing the younger children who were not prepared to enter the common school or they were given custody of the town schools during the summer months when the master was freed for other duties."[3]

According to Kaplan the factors responsible for the decline of men teachers involved the parceling out of town schools into district schools,

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[1]Belok, Michael and Dowling, Fred, "The Teacher Image and the Teacher Shortage," Phi Delta Kappan, March, 1961, p. 255-256.

[2]Ibid., p. 256.

[3]Kaplan, L., "Men Teachers Are Deserting Elementary Schools," Nations Schools, July, 1948, p. 46-47.

the rise of the infant school, the common school movement and finally the Civil War.[4]

The need for teachers was greatly increased along with our country's expansion in the 1800's and the economy minded communities turned to hiring women to teach their schools because they were willing to teach for lower wages than were acceptable to men teachers. Able men chose to leave the classroom and seek more remunerative occupations elsewhere. The call to adventure as our country expanded westward caused a reduction in the number of available men teachers. The resultant shortage of manpower was responsible for the hiring of more women teachers. According to Kaplan, 29 per cent of the elementary teachers in 1900 were men and this was reduced to 11 per cent by 1943.[5] By 1957-58 about 13 per cent of the elementary teachers were men.[6] In comparison, 46 per cent of elementary teachers in 36 foreign countries were men during the year of 1942.[7]

The number of men in elementary teaching had increased 90 per cent during the period of 1949-58 but in actuality there had been very little increase in the ratio of men to women teachers due to the fact that the elementary population had been increasing rapidly.[8]

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[4]Ibid., p. 47.

[5]Ibid., p. 47.

[6]Barnes, David H. and Lambert, Sam M., "The Guy in the Shiny Pants," Phi Delta Kappan, June, 1958, pp. 400-401.

[7]Kaplan, op. cit., p. 47.

[8]Barnes and Lambert, op. cit., p. 401.

The need and apparent shortage of men teachers in the public elementary schools at the present time was responsible for the writer's desire to investigate the status of men teachers.

Statement of Problem

The problem regarding the status of men teachers in the public elementary schools and the comparison of the status of men teachers in Montana elementary schools resolved itself into answering the following questions:

1. Are men teachers important in elementary schools?
2. What are the dissatisfactions of men in elementary teaching?
3. What can be done to obtain and keep competent men teachers?

Procedure

Literature was reviewed in order to become familiar with the status of the men teachers in the elementary schools of our country.

An opinionnaire was sent to 85 elementary principals in the State of Montana asking the following questions:

1. Do you favor a local school policy limiting the number of men teachers in your school?
2. Do you approve of men teachers in the lower elementary grades?
3. To the nearest 10 per cent, what percentage of your faculty are males?
4. The amount of men teachers in my school is about right, too many, or too few.
5. List reasons why you prefer men teachers as part of your faculty.

The opinionnaire was sent to principals selected randomly from the list of elementary principals as shown in the Montana School Directory.[9]

The questionnaires received by 300 elementary men teachers were distributed by the selected principals to any men teachers on his faculty at the discretion of the principal.

The information gleaned from these opinionnaires and questionnaires were compared with a similar study conducted by Robert Thurman[10] in which he surveyed many elementary principals and men teachers in our nation.

Limitations

The sample was limited to 85 opinionnaires and 300 questionnaires sent to all parts of the State of Montana which provided an adequate sample and a wide geographic distribution.

The questionnaires were limited to the State of Montana because of the writer's desire to compare the status of its men teachers in elementary schools with that of similar studies conducted on a nationwide basis.

It is recognized that the information received from these instruments will not be infallible because of possible misunderstandings

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[9]Published in September, 1963.

[10]Thurman, Robert S., "Men Teachers in Public Elementary Schools," Journal of Educational Research, October, 1960, pp. 54-58.

that the parties answering them may have had, but it is hoped that some reliable measure of the status of the men teachers in Montana elementary schools can be reached from this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature has revealed much about the importance, dissatisfactions and reasons of men teaching in the elementary school. Many ideas and methods were suggested to obtain and keep competent men in elementary teaching. The purpose of this review was to find out the following: (1) are men teachers important in elementary schools? (2) why are they dissatisfied with teaching? and (3) how can we obtain and keep competent men teachers?

The Importance of Men Teachers in Elementary Schools

How important are men in elementary teaching? One school superintendent summed it up this way:

> Every school building, no matter how small, should have at least one male teacher. Children tend to copy teachers of their own sex as an ideal. This factor for guidance is the biggest argument for men teachers in the elementary schools, especially in the upper elementary grades.[1]

Most administrators are in agreement that male teachers are more successful in the fields of science, shop, and physical education. Men are generally more successful in handling the disciplinary cases, especially those occuring in the upper grades. Men are in a better position to "lobby" for their schools because they can join fraternal and civic organizations closed to women.

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[1]"Administrators Want More Men Teachers in Elementary Schools," Nations Schools, May, 1954, p. 62.

The importance of the men teachers is expressed by Sternig in the following quotation:

> Men are as important in the school lives of children as they are at home. It is not enough to have a man principal as a rather remote head of the school. Such a father symbol does little toward a balanced development of children in the classroom. Men used to be in the classroom as teachers. Children need contact with men in school for about the same reasons that they need guidance of their fathers at home.[2]

Dr. Bolton, Superintendent at Park Forest, Illinois, said that his 29 men teachers have done so well from the 4th grade up that he would hire a man tomorrow to teach kindergarten or the 1st grade if he wanted the job.[3]

The importance of men elementary teachers is expressed by Gleason and Mathews as follows:

1. At this age level, children seek out identifying figures among teachers. If the large majority of teachers are women, the children, particularly boys, are likely to have difficulty finding suitable identifying figures.

2. The majority of authority figures in a child's life are teachers. It is not a normal situation when all authority figures are women.

3. Our society is frequently criticized because of the dominant role of the women. Here virtual complete dominance of the early years of formal education is possibly a contributing factor to this characteristic of our way of life.

4. In some fields such as science and physical education, men in elementary grades provide effective vocational models, particularly for the boys.

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[2]Sternig, John, "Fathers in the Home, Men in the School," Nations Schools, November, 1954, p. 51.

[3]Star, Jack, "Importance of Male Teachers," Look, February 17, 1959, p. 75.

5. The presence of men on an elementary school faculty is likely to be a favorable morale factor for all of the teachers in the school.[4]

It was pointed out by Topp that "a problem exists when children must spend their preadolescent years without close association with masculine personalities other than their fathers."[5]

Another factor to consider is the attitude children have toward certain subjects which are usually taught by women. Dr. Alice Miel recently said that:

> A common consequence of a strongly feminine orientation, according to some people, is the "sissy" role assigned to certain aspects of education. Some children regard "cultural" subjects such as art, music, and poetry as "unmanly" or "feminine" because they never see their fathers participating in them and because they are taught these courses by women teachers. A man teacher might dispell this unrealistic attitude.[6]

With men teachers scattered through each elementary school, the points of view of children toward people and things, about right and wrong, should show a better balance. Through more reasonable opportunities for contact with masculine personalities the most essential skill of all--skill in human relations--should have a better chance to grow.[7]

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[4]Gleason, G. T. and Mathews, T. H., "Preparing Men for Teaching in Elementary Schools," Phi Delta Kappan, April, 1959, pp. 285-287.

[5]Topp, Robert F., "Solving the Man Problem in Elementary Education," Nations Schools, November, 1954, pp. 49-51.

[6]Belok, op. cit., p. 256.

[7]Kaplan, op. cit., p. 47.

The following conclusions were reached by a research conducted by Kaplan based upon the information provided by the psychologists, educators and others that were contacted. He gave the following reasons of the importance of men teachers in elementary schools:

1. They are required in the elementary school to provide the paternal pattern of influence needed by the child for his normal social and emotional growth.
2. Men teachers give children experiences which supplement the influence of women teachers in promoting the socialization of children.
3. Men teachers exert a unique influence on the personality development of boys.
4. Men teachers promote the normal personality development of girls and assist them in achieving an adequate adjustment toward the opposite sex.
5. Men teachers enrich the educational experiences of children.
6. Men teachers contribute to the personal and professional growth of the teaching staff.[8]

One of the more important reasons for men teachers in elementary teaching is the male association and influence they have on children. This is brought out in an article in which Dr. Gordon Anderson gave the following statement:

> For years it was traditional that teachers in the lower grades be women. We are trying to change all that. Our children have a limited relationship with men in this suburban type life. The fathers work in Chicago, return late, and many don't see much of their children. We feel that if a child is put in a relationship with a man as soon as possible he is exposed to a more natural sampling of life.[9]

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[8]Kaplan, Louis, "Men Teachers Deserting Elementary Schools," Nations Schools, July, 1948, pp. 46-47.

[9]"Masculine Line," Newsweek, May 22, 1961, p. 33.

Another reason for the importance of men teachers in elementary teaching is that the experience gained here will be very helpful in the training of future administration leaders of elementary schools and as superintendents of school systems which contain both the elementary and secondary systems. We have many superintendents at the present time that have had little or no training or experience in the elementary field and this situation could be alleviated by increasing the number of men in elementary teaching of which a certain percentage will become elementary administrators.

It was stated by Brown that men establish more harmonius, balanced and "lifelike" faculty atmosphere which in turn should favorably affect the children. He also stated that men can make a unique curricular contribution.[10]

For many years, the majority of teachers for the elementary children has been women. Because of this many people have the opinion that teaching is a woman's job. Shannon disagrees with this quite vigorously as is seen in the following statement:

> Teaching is a man's job, timorous administrators not withstanding, and when we say men we mean MEN in capital letters. Strong men, strong in character, strong in will, strong in understanding and sympathy and kindness and self control, and, when it becomes necessary strong in physical force and stamina.[11]

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[10]Brown, G. I., "Recruiting More Men for Elementary Teaching," Phi Delta Kappan, April, 1960, p. 10.

[11]Shannon, J. R., "Teaching is a Man's Job," American School Board Journal, September, 1951, pp. 39-40.

Why Men in Elementary Teaching are Dissatisfied

According to many studies and statistics, men are leaving the elementary teaching field because they are dissatisfied. The reason most often given is the low income received for their services. The amount of salary received is much less than a comparative professional income when the amount of training, experience and service is taken into consideration. It is even less in many situations as compared to incomes earned by untrained employees in many other occupations. This is expressed in a letter received by the National Educational Journal from Mr. Murphy who says:

> If I teach for forty five years at the maximum salary for a Bachelor's of Education degree in this county, I will earn $28,094 less than the average lifetime earnings of a high school graduate and $206,121 less than those of the average college graduate in the United States.[12]

In an article written by Sam Lambert, Director of NEA Research, he states the following:

> One of the decisive factors in a man's decision to leave teaching is his deep concern for the welfare and future of his own children. The typical man teaching in today's schools is both angry and impatient. He thinks he is entitled to a better break in this era of two car families and electric can openers and he is fed up with working nights, week ends, and holidays trying to make ends meet on a teacher's salary. He is tired of sacrificing his family for his profession. While many people are sympathetic, the exodus of talented men from teaching goes on--and on--and on.[13]

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[12]"More about Angry Young Men," National Education Journal, May, 1963, p. 16.

[13]"Angry Young Men in Teaching," National Education Journal, February, 1963, p. 4.

The National Educational Research division conducted a survey among men teachers in public schools and learned that 47 per cent of the men worked at second jobs during the school term and that 60 per cent of them had jobs during the summer months.[14]

In an excerpt received from a Montana teacher, it was learned that 31 of the 34 male teachers in his elementary school system had at least one part time job during the school year, the summer months, or both. In the writer's survey, 38 per cent of the elementary men teachers had other jobs not related to teaching during the school term.[15]

In a study concerning 658 Air Force veterans who became teachers it was determined that more than 200 left teaching because of low salaries and took other jobs averaging a 25 per cent increase in income.[16]

Cooper says that men and women teachers who are supporting families need more money than a single teacher. In study after study evidence mounts that a family of four requires approximately double the income of a single person in order to maintain the same standard of living.[17]

In my survey of Montana elementary men teachers, 84 per cent of them listed inadequate salaries as the main reason men quit teaching. Nearly 24 per cent of all men teachers below college level are earning

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[14]"Angry Young Men in Teaching," National Education Journal, February, 1963, p. 4.

[15]"More About the Angry Young Men," National Education Journal, May, 1963, p. 16

[16]"Why Men Leave," Senior Scholastic, January 25, 1961, p. 22.

[17]"Moonlighting," Senior Scholastic, May 26, 1962, p. 17.

some of their income outside the classroom as reported by the United States Department of Labor during a certain week in 1960. The typical education service worker devotes seven hours a week to his second job, while 48 per cent of the "moonlighters" spend more than seven hours a week and 20 per cent spend more than fifteen hours per week.[18]

Another main reason for men teachers becoming dissatisfied in elementary teaching is the lack of social prestige. It was pointed out by Belok and associates that numerous studies in recent years have shown the teachers to be portrayed unfavorably in fictional literature. In 46 Broadway plays produced between 1920-50, teachers were characterized as maladjusted in 68 per cent of the cases, in economic trouble in 37 per cent of the cases, having sexual tensions in 33 per cent and poorly clothed in 19 per cent of the cases.[19]

Foff selected 62 novels that have been published since 1900, twenty-two since 1945, and found that the male teacher was pictured as solitary, effeminate and impractical and that the female teacher was young, unmarried or an old maid, who was a sexless creature devoid or depleted of femininity.[20]

Dergen and Gurko also stated that almost all characterizations of teachers were unfavorable.[21] Researchers agree that there is much in various communications media that is extremely unfavorable in the depiction of teachers. Economic factors and poor working conditions

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[18] Ibid., p. 17.

[19] Belok, op. cit., p. 256.

[20] Ibid., p. 17.

[21] Ibid., p. 17.

are important reasons for leaving the profession, but the teacher status in the community may be equally as important.

While low salaries and lack of social prestige seem to be the major reasons for dissatisfactions of men teachers in elementary teaching there are many other reasons voiced by these teachers. Some of the most common are (1) lack of pupil interest (2) disciplinary problems (3) schoolboard or community interference (4) difficulty in working with principal or supervisors (5) lack of opportunity for promotion and (6) lack of intellectual stimulation. In an article printed in a prominent magazine, the main reason for teachers quitting was summed up by one teacher's definition of the "system". The "system" included the know nothing schoolboards, insecure and inadequate principals, doting parents, rebellious or apathetic children and poorly trained teachers.[22]

Methods of Obtaining and Retaining Competent Men Teachers

Since it has been recognized that men teachers are deserting the elementary schools and that the men teachers are important in the education of elementary children the logical step is then to figure how to obtain such educators and more important yet, how to keep competent men teachers once you have secured them. Gleason and Mathews stated in their article as follows: If men are needed in the elementary school, and administrators are anxious to hire them, it follows that teacher education institutions have a responsibility to encourage men to enter elementary teacher education programs.[23]

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[22]Meryman, Richard, "How We Drive Teachers to Quit," Life, November 16, 1962, p. 41.

[23]Gleason and Mathews, op. cit., p. 285.

Topp suggested that in order to get men into the elementary teaching field and keep them there the following ideas would help:

1. High school counseling can be directed toward educating senior men students about opportunities in elementary school teaching.

2. Scholarships should be set up especially for men seeking college preparation for elementary school teaching.

3. Scholarships for men teachers trying to improve themselves professionally but unable to afford tuition and other costs during the summer school attendance might be set up by the school system.

4. Personal contact by the superintendent and other men in the elementary education with high school graduates. Visits to elementary schools could be scheduled to acquaint young men with the possibilities in elementary education.

5. Adequate salary schedules that would make of elementary school teaching a desirable lifetime career for young men should be continuously sought.

6. Professionalization of elementary teaching should encourage more men to enter and to remain in elementary teaching.[24]

Kaplan gives the following recommendations to keep men from leaving teaching:

1. The contributions of men teachers should be publicized so that the social and professional recognition they desire may be secured for them.

2. Men teachers should be assigned only to upper elementary grades and in their chosen fields of preparation and also to have men teachers work with men principals whenever possible.

3. Men teachers should be given added responsibilities in the school and salary increments which would distinguish their work from the functions of women teachers.

4. Men should be provided with opportunities for professional advancement in the elementary school field commensurate with those existing in the secondary school field.

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[24]Topp, op. cit., p. 50.

5. Teacher training institutions should differentiate their programs so that men would be prepared to accept the greater obligations which a reorganization of the position of the men elementary school teacher would entail.[25]

In order to professionalize the elementary school teacher, Topp suggests doing the following: (1) provide for elementary teachers' attendance at professional meetings, (2) bring them into decisions affecting their schools, (3) have a working toward status in the community and (4) encourage their professional study.[26]

Donald Super has outlined four basic satisfactions that a man must get from his job if it is to be a good job for him. He says it must provide a reasonable amount of money, must give prestige as the jobholder sees it, there must be good feeling about co-workers and the exercise of the activity must in itself bring satisfaction.[27]

A National Educational Survey reveals that new developments to obtain and keep men teachers is on the horizon. They list a single salary scale, respect for scholarship and special ability required by teachers in child psychology and that society is loosening its old restraints it laid upon teachers.[28]

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[25]Kaplan, Louis, "Status and Function of Men Teachers in Urban Elementary Schools," Journal of Educational Research, May, 1948, p. 703.

[26]Topp, op. cit., p. 50.

[27]Barnes and Lambert, op. cit., p. 401.

[28]"Comeback of the Male Teacher," Look, February 17, 1959, p. 88

In an article from Life magazine the following suggestions were given to improve the teacher shortage situation:

1. Tougher teacher certification.
2. Improve "how to teach" courses.
3. Rewrite public school curriculum for today's world.
4. Furnish part-time lay help to ease the teacher's housekeeping load in the classroom.
5. Make more use of technological help, such as educational television, film strips and movies.
6. Put team teaching into practice.[29]

While most teachers feel that the raising of salaries is the most important factor in getting men into education and then keeping them there they also listed the following in order of their importance:

1. An improvement in working conditions such as class size, materials and equipment, and fewer non-teaching duties.
2. Improved teacher "status".
3. Greater improvement for advancement.
4. More fringe benefits.
5. Higher quality of personnel in schools.
6. More time to work for an advanced degree.[30]

In Thurman's research he found that the two means of encouraging men to remain as classroom teachers were to help them see that men, as elementary classroom teachers need not be apologetic or fear being

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[29]Meryman, op. cit., p. 41.

[30]"Why Men Leave," Senior Scholastic, January 25, 1961, p. 22.

stigmatized and that they have a definite role to play and important contributions to make to elementary school children.[31]

Thurman also suggested the following ideas by which to entice men into the teaching profession:

1. Better salaries.
2. More active recruitment.
3. More publicity that would not only be designed to raise the status of all teachers but specifically point out needs for the contributions of, and the success of men elementary school teachers.[32]

In the review of Thurman's original study the following recommendations were concluded:

1. Men should not be restricted to teaching a particular grade or grades but should be assigned to teach children they are qualified to teach according to their preparation.
2. To encourage more men to remain classroom teachers, plans should be made to provide adequate salaries, to reduce the concept that elementary school teaching is a feminine occupation, and to increase the professional status of all teachers.
3. Boards of education should study carefully the necessity for providing out-of-school work with compensation.
4. Applicants for teaching positions at the elementary school level should be carefully screened to insure that they are properly qualified, in aptitude, interest, and professional preparation to teach children.
5. There should be no administration policy that would restrict the number of men teachers assigned to an elementary school.

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[31]Thurman, R. S., "Men Teachers in Public Elementary Schools," Journal of Educational Research, October, 1960, pp. 54-58.

[32]Ibid., p. 54-58.

6. Superintendents should become aware of the opinions held by members of their faculties, including men teachers, by parents; and by educational leaders regarding the status and role of men teachers in elementary school.

7. Teachers should be well informed on the issues of merit raises and they should inform their education association concerning their views.

8. High school and college personnel should be more active in selecting and encouraging young men to enter elementary education.[33]

Kaplan says that sometimes the methods used to attract men into the teaching profession are of a questionable nature. He cited cases in which it was a prerequisite to have elementary experience before being allowed to enter secondary appointments for which the teacher was trained. This situation will not keep men in the elementary field and will not do much to help the man shortage previously mentioned. In some cases the man teacher is promised easy and quick promotions if he will accept an elementary position. Later on he realizes that these promotions are not that plentiful or easy to come by.[34]

Brown discusses three possible approaches to attract men teachers:

1. National scholarship award system should be created to provide for the establishment of a number of Junior Teaching Fellowships. These would go to certain outstanding boys in the last year or two of high school in return for time spent assisting selected elementary school teachers in the classroom. This would not be routine clerical work but actually attempting to teach someone else to learn. Studies have

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[33] Ibid., p. 56.

[34] Kaplan, op. cit., p. 47.

shown that many who enter the teaching profession do so because they had such an experience. The Junior Teaching Fellowships would provide this opportunity for many potential male elementary school teachers along with status and material rewards.

2. A new professional role sequence should be developed whereby career men in the armed forces could, upon completion of a twenty year hitch, enter elementary teaching after appropriate training.

3. A direct attack upon the societal stereotype of the male elementary teacher should be made through mass media.[35]

The regard by which college students consider the male teacher is rather enlightening. In a survey conducted by O'Dowd and Beardslee, they found that the college undergraduate regards teaching as a profession in a higher status than is generally believed. The students mentioned the drawbacks to teaching as the financial and social status limitations of which men educators are well aware. College students recognize the teacher as an unselfish, wise, sensitive, thoughtful, and intelligent person whose material and social success is very limited. Teachers were ranked sixth in choice of profession by college men and ninth by college women.[36]

Wolf ascertains that the easiest way to recruit more men in elementary teaching would be to raise salaries, provide better working conditions and raise the status of the men teachers. He states that the more practical course of action would be to:

1. Formulate a more rigorous teaching program controlled by a body for accreditation.

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[35]Brown, op. cit., p. 286.

[36]O'Dowd, D. D., and Beardslee, D. C., "Student Image of the School Teacher," Phi Delta Kappan, March, 1961, p. 254.

2. Be selective of students who can be trained so that they will remain in teaching.

3. Make academic excellence a more important part of the selection of teachers.

4. Dispell the notion that the classroom teacher is the low man in the educational hierarchy.

5. Recruit men as elementary teachers.[37]

Summary

The review of literature showed that most investigators were quite consistent in their opinions of the importance of men in elementary teaching. Most of the studies that were conducted recognized the need for a masculine model in the classroom as the most important contribution by the man teacher. The superiority of men teachers in certain fields was mentioned often. Another need for men in elementary schools was the value of their elementary experience in their future elementary administration duties.

The dissatisfactions of men in elementary teaching was concentrated on two main issues, namely, low income and lack of social prestige. Other dissatisfactions mentioned were school board or community interference, disciplinary problems, poor working conditions and lack of advancement

There were many suggestions as to how to obtain and keep competent men in elementary teaching. Most common of the ideas expressed

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[37]Wolf, William C. Jr., "Teacher Dropouts; Still a Dilemma," School and Society, April 18, 1964, pp. 193-194.

were better salaries, better recruitment of teachers by high school and college counselors, scholarships, improvement of social prestige, allowing men to teach in their specialized fields, improvement of "education" courses and many others.

The review of literature showed that the public is becoming aware of this problem concerning the men teachers in elementary schools and that many groups are making a serious effort to do something about it.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF STUDY CONDUCTED AMONG MEN TEACHERS OF MONTANA

A review of literature has revealed a need for elementary men teachers and it was on this basis that an opinionnaire was sent to a random sampling of elementary principals in the State of Montana to obtain information regarding their opinions about their men teachers. When asked if they favored a local school policy limiting the number of men teachers in their school, 88 per cent replied no, while the remaining 12 per cent favored the policy. This compares quite favorably with a similar question that was asked of a group of administrators in a similar investigation.[1] In this poll, the affirmative answer was 16% and the negative view was 84%.

When the Montana principals were asked if they approved men teachers in the lower elementary grades (1-3), 52 per cent said yes and 38 per cent replied in the negative with the remaining 10 per cent voicing no opinion. These results compare closely to the study[2] just mentioned as statistics showed that 61 per cent were in favor of and 31 per cent against men teachers in the lower elementary grades. This attitude against men teachers in the lower elementary grades is borne out very strongly in the writer's survey which revealed only one man teaching in the primary (1-3) area out of the 154 replies received.

Two-thirds of the Montana principals felt that the amount of men teachers in their school was not sufficient. This compared with

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[1] "Administrators Want More Men Teachers in Elementary Schools," Nations Schools, May, 1954, p. 62.

[2] Ibid.

the nationwide survey in which about three-fourths of the administrators expressed a similar view.

Various reasons were given by the elementary principals for their preference of men teachers in their schools. Table 1 shows that 41.5 per cent preferred men for their disciplinary abilities, 81.5 per cent for the male influence on elementary children, and 27.7 per cent because a man teacher provided a substitute for absent fathers. Nearly half of the principals believed that the elementary experience was necessary for the training of future elementary principals.

TABLE 1. REASONS FOR PREFERENCE OF MEN TEACHERS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

	Frequency	
Reasons	Number	Per cent
Necessary for discipline	27	41.5
Male influence needed in school situations	53	81.5
Provided a substitute for absent fathers	18	27.7
Experience is necessary to train future elementary principals	27	41.5

It was learned from the questionnaire sent to the elementary men teachers that their average age was 32 years, 131 of them were married, the average size family was two children, 23 of the men teachers were single and two were divorced or separated. This personal data compared very closely with the data collected by Thurman in which he found that

the average elementary man teacher was married, had one child and was 34 years of age.[3]

The amount of professional training of elementary men teachers in Montana and the type of teaching certificate they hold are shown in Table 2. The statistics revealed that 13.8 per cent have less than four years of college training while only 31.3 per cent have a bachelor's degree in elementary education. It further shows that 38.1 per cent hold a bachelor's degree in some other field. It was also revealed that only six and four tenths per cent have a master's degree in elementary education while 10.7 per cent have a master's degree in some field other than elementary education. It was encouraging to note that 13.1 per cent were working toward an advance degree in elementary education.

TABLE 2. AMOUNT OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND THE TYPE OF TEACHING CERTIFICATE HELD BY MONTANA MEN ELEMENTARY TEACHERS, 1964.

	Frequency	
Amount of training and type of certificate	Number	Per cent
Less than four years of college training	22	13.8
A bachelor's degree in elementary education	50	31.3
A bachelor's degree in some other field	61	38.1
A master's degree in elementary education	10	6.3
A master's degree in some other field	17	10.7
Have earned credits toward an advanced degree in elementary education	21	13.1
Holder of a provisional certificate (V)	28	17.5
Holder of Class II certificate or its equivalent	129	80.6

[3]Thurman, op. cit., pp. 54-58.

Due to the lack of a bachelor's degree, 17.5 per cent were teaching with a provisional (Class V) certificate and the remainder were the holders of a standard (Class II) or other certificate issued by the State of Montana.

Because of low salaries, almost 40 per cent of the men teachers reported that they held other jobs during the school term which encompassed such occupations as athletic coaching, carpentry, clerking, sales, and many others. It was further revealed that 30 per cent of the wives

TABLE 3. TYPE OF OCCUPATIONS OF WIVES OF MEN TEACHERS IN MONTANA AND AVERAGE SALARY EARNED.

Occupations	Number	Salary
Teaching	21	$4162
Clerical nature	8	2443
Medical nature	4	1950
Others	7	1600
TOTAL	40	

held jobs so that the family might achieve an acceptable standard of living. It was interesting to note that one-half of the working wives held teaching positions while the remainder worked in offices or as nurses or in other types of occupations.

It was noted from the questionnaires that more than half of the men teachers of Montana had less than five years of experience. About

one-fourth had six to ten years of experience with the remaining fourth having taught longer than ten years.

The amount of experience of the men teachers of Montana is more clearly shown by Table 4.

TABLE 4. AMOUNT OF EXPERIENCE OF MEN TEACHERS IN MONTANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, 1963-1964.

	Frequency	
Amount of experience	Number	Per cent
Less than 5 years	79	51.3
6-10 years	36	23.4
11-15 years	20	13.0
More than 15 years	15	9.7
Information not given	4	2.6
TOTAL	154	100.0

While the majority of elementary principals, both in Thurman's[4] study and in the questionnaire sent to Montana elementary principals, approved men teachers in the lower elementary grades, only one man was found to be teaching in the primary (1-3) grades. The intermediate (4-6) grades claimed exactly 50 per cent of the men surveyed with the remaining (46.8 per cent) teaching in the upper grade level. Other studies have shown that the majority of men teachers in the elementary field are

[4]Thurman, op. cit., pp. 54-58.

concentrated in the intermediate and upper grade areas. It was interesting to note that 11 of these Montana men teachers were also serving in the administrational area and 43 of them were coaching athletics.

The teaching areas of men teachers in Montana elementary schools are shown by Table 5.

TABLE 5. TEACHING AREAS OF MEN TEACHERS IN MONTANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, 1963-1964.

	Frequency	
Teaching Area	Number	Per cent
Primary grades (1-3)	1	.6
Intermediate grades (4-6)	77	50.0
Upper grades (7-8)	72	46.8
Not given	4	2.6
TOTAL	154	100.0

One of the questions asked of the men teachers was in regard to the possibility of their teaching if they had the chance to live their lives again. In an article from Look magazine,[5] 53.9 per cent of the men indicated they would like to teach again as compared with the Montana survey in which 44.9 per cent stated they would become elementary teachers again. In the Montana survey, seven and one tenth per cent indicated they would not become elementary teachers again,

[5]"Comeback of the Male Teacher," Look, February 17, 1959, p. 88.

11.7 per cent said they would not teach at any level and the remaining 36.3 per cent were undecided as to what they would do if given another chance. The results of this survey are shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6. VIEWPOINTS OF MONTANA MEN ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN REGARD TO TEACHING IF THEY HAD THEIR LIVES TO LIVE AGAIN.

	Frequency	
Viewpoints	Number	Per cent
I would be an elementary teacher.	69	44.9
I would not become an elementary teacher.	11	7.1
I would not teach at any level.	18	11.7
I do not know.	56	36.3
TOTAL	154	100.0

When Montana men teachers in elementary schools were asked how they felt about merit pay for teachers, 81 were opposed to it, 29 favored it, and 41 were undecided. These statistics were in opposition to the Thurman[6] study in which he found that the majority were in favor of the merit pay salary plan. Quite a few of the Montana men teachers expressed the view that they might be in favor of it when a satisfactory device could be found to measure the merit of a teacher.

[6]Thurman, op. cit., p. 57.

It might be because of this feeling against the merit pay plan by the men teachers of Montana that a majority (55.2 per cent) favored a single salary schedule with 19.5 per cent against and 25.3 per cent undecided.

Data gathered by the survey further revealed that more than half (54.6 per cent) felt that they were accepted as well as women teachers by their students and the public in general with only 41.6 per cent stating that they had been accepted better than the women teachers. Only about four per cent of the men felt that they were not as well accepted by the public and students as compared to their women co-workers.

It was interesting to find out what the future plans of our men teachers in Montana elementary schools are. When asked this question, about one-third expressed a desire to remain as an elementary teacher and about one-sixth planned to move into secondary teaching.

TABLE 7. THE FUTURE PLANS OF MONTANA ELEMENTARY MEN TEACHERS.

	Frequency	
Future Plans	Number	Per cent
To remain as an elementary teacher	51	33.1
To change to secondary teaching	25	16.2
To become an administrator	57	37.0
To quit teaching	15	9.7
No plan stated	6	3.9
TOTAL	154	100.0

The data also shows that the largest amount of men teachers have future plans in the field of administration. Less than 10 per cent stated that they were quitting teaching. These statistics were in correlation with the Thurman[7] study in which one-fifth planned to remain as elementary teachers, one-fifth planned to enter related specialized fields, one-half expressed the desire to become an administrator and the smallest amount, one-eighth, were planning on leaving the teaching field altogether.

Even though the smallest percentage of men teachers in Montana elementary schools plan to quit teaching, it seemed necessary to find out why the men teachers were dissatisfied to the point of leaving the teaching field so that steps could be taken to alleviate the situation.

TABLE 8. REASONS GIVEN BY MONTANA ELEMENTARY MEN TEACHERS AS TO WHY THEY BELIEVE MEN ARE LEAVING THE PROFESSION.

Reasons	Number of men who checked this as an important reason.
Inadequate salaries	131
Lack of social status as compared to other men professionals	51
Poor working conditions	21
Lack of pupil and parent interest	29
School board or community interference	36
Difficulty in working with superiors	14
Lack of opportunity for advancement	49
Discipline problems	10
Stigmatized as doing "women's work"	7
Difficulty in working with women principals	12
Assigned extra duties and unpleasant tasks because of being a man teacher.	20
Others	7

[7] Ibid., p. 57.

It was found from the study that the large majority left due to inadequate salaries which correlates very closely with the review of literature and with other related studies in this field. The lack of social prestige was the second most important reason for quitting teaching and was followed closely by the lack of opportunity for advancement. These and lesser reasons are shown in Table 8.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

A letter containing an opinionnaire regarding the elementary men teachers was sent to 85 randomly selected elementary men principals in the state of Montana. Sixty-five opinionnaires were received from which data was tabulated.

These selected elementary principals were requested to distribute a questionnaire to some of their elementary men teachers. Three hundred of these were passed out of which 154 were returned in a usable condition.

The purpose of these questionnaires was to compare the status of the elementary men teachers of Montana with a similar survey conducted by Robert S. Thurman[1] in which he investigated the status of men teachers throughout the United States.

It was found from this comparison of studies that the elementary men teachers of Montana are important to the educational development of the students and to the entire elementary school system. The principals were in agreement that they need more men teachers in their schools. While it may be desirable to have men teachers in the primary field, almost all of our men teachers in the elementary field are teaching in grades 4-8.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 54-58.

While most of the men teachers have a degree in some field, not all of them have a degree in the teaching field which indicates that some of them are probably unprepared in the methods of teaching and probably in some of the subject areas as well.

It can be assumed from this study that the average man teacher is satisfied with elementary teaching and, if given the proper prestige and income, he will probably remain in the elementary teaching field.

CONCLUSIONS

The study brought out the fact that almost nine-tenths of the principals did not favor a local school policy limiting the number of men teachers in the elementary schools. It was also evident that the majority approved men teaching in the lower elementary grades even though only one man was actually teaching in the primary grades according to the tabulations from the 154 questionnaires received from the 300 men teachers that were sampled.

It was further brought out by the principals that two-thirds of them felt that the number of men teachers in their elementary schools was insufficient. This feeling was further strengthened by the fact that the average Montana elementary faculty contained about 10 per cent of men teachers.

The need of male influence in the school was given as the most important reason for men in the elementary grades according to the elementary principals. The ability of men in handling disciplinary problems was rated evenly with the need for elementary experience as

a pre-requisite for elementary school administration according to the principals. They also recognized the fact that in this modern day world the men teachers could provide a substitute for the children's absent and/or busy fathers.

The study brought out that the elementary man teacher was about 32 years of age, married, and the father of two children. This correlated very closely with similar studies that have been conducted in the United States prior to this study.

Statistics from the study showed that more than seven-eighths of the men teachers have four years or more of college preparation but only about 38 per cent of the men surveyed have an actual bachelor's or master's degree in the field of elementary education although 13 per cent of the others have earned some credits toward a degree in elementary education. It was interesting to note that of the 154 men sampled, more than four-fifths were the holder of a standard teaching certificate.

The study revealed that about 40 per cent of the men teachers were guilty of "moonlighting" during the school term. Because of the apparent need for more income, about one-third of the wives reported additional income produced mainly by a job outside of the home. It was interesting to note that teaching accounted for one-half of the jobs. The other occupations represented were in the fields of medicine, business, and public service.

The amount of experience of the men teachers in the elementary schools of Montana ranged from many with one year to a few with 25 or

more years of service with the average amount of experience being just a little more than seven years.

With the exception of one man teaching in the primary grades (1-3), all of the rest were teaching in the intermediate (4-6), or upper (7-8) grades. It was found that almost one-fourth of the men were coaching athletics.

When asked what they would do in regards to teaching if they could live their lives over, about one-half of the men teachers indicated a desire to teach in the elementary school again with only seven per cent definitely not becoming an elementary teacher again.

More than four-fifths of the men teachers were not in favor of merit pay for teachers. A little more than one-half of the men teachers favored a single salary scale for teachers. More than 95 per cent of the men teachers felt they were accepted as well or better than the women teachers with whom they were teaching.

The data of the study brought out that about one-third of the men teachers were satisfied with teaching in the elementary field. Only about one-sixth of them expressed the desire to move into the secondary teaching area. The larger amount of men teachers have plans of administration in their future. Less than one-tenth stated they planned to quit teaching.

The men teachers were asked why they thought men were leaving the elementary teaching field and the following reasons were pointed out as the most important: (1) inadequate salaries, (2) lack of social prestige or status, (3) lack of opportunity for advancement,

(4) schoolboard or community interference, (5) lack of pupil and parent interest, (6) assigned extra duties and unpleasant tasks because of being a man teacher.

RECOMMENDATIONS

I would recommend that the superintendents, principals, and boards of education think seriously of hiring more men in the elementary field. In order to hire and keep competent men in this field, it will be necessary to improve the salary schedule to the extent that the man can put forth his extra efforts in his job of teaching instead of working at additional jobs to supplement his income. This increased salary will bring about an improvement in the social status of the man teacher in elementary teaching so that he will be able to do a better job than has previously been accomplished.

The responsibility to encourage and select good teaching prospects falls upon the high schools and colleges. It is also their duty to give such prospects a good subject material background along with practical teaching methods in order that they can do a superior job of teaching which in turn will make them worthy of more income and social prestige.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A

Letter and Opinionnaire Sent to Elementary Principals in Montana

Bridger, Montana
April 21, 1964

Dear Fellow Administrator:

I am completing a research paper as a requirement in my Master's Degree program from Montana State College and am circulating a questionnaire concerning the status of men teachers in elementary schools. Please complete the administrator's opinionnaire and distribute the enclosed questionnaires to a cross section of your men teaching in the elementary field. Ask them to complete it at their earliest convenience, and collect these papers and mail them to me in the enclosed, stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Thank you and your teachers for this cooperation.

Yours truly,

Nickolaie T. (Ted) Langemo
Elementary Principal
Bridger, Montana

OPINIONNAIRE TO BE ANSWERED BY ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL

1. Do you favor a local school policy limiting the number of men teachers in your school?

   _____yes _____no _____no opinion

2. Do you approve of men teachers in the lower elementary grades?

   _____yes _____no _____no opinion

3. The percentage of elementary men teachers in my school this year is about _____per cent.

4. The amount of men teachers in my school is

   _____about right _____too many _____too few

5. List reasons why you favor men teachers in the elementary school.

   _____necessary for discipline
   _____male influence is needed in school situations
   _____provides a substitute for pupils for busy, absent fathers.
   _____experience is necessary to train future elementary principals
   List any others.

Appendix B

Questionnaire Sent to Elementary Men Teachers in Montana

QUESTIONNAIRE TO BE COMPLETED BY ELEMENTARY MEN TEACHERS IN MONTANA SCHOOLS

I. Personal data.

_____age _____married _____single

_____widower _____divorced or separated _____number of children

II. Amount of professional training.

_____Less than a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education

_____Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education

_____Bachelor's degree in some other field.

_____Master's degree in Elementary Education

_____Master's degree in some other field.

_____I am working for an advanced degree in Elementary Education.

Type of certificate held:

_____provisional (Class V) _____Standard (Class II) _____other

III. Teaching experience. I teach in: _____(1-3)_____(4-6)_____(7-8)

_____Number of years I have taught. _____I am an athletic coach.

_____I am a part time teacher and principal.

IV. Financial data.

My salary for teaching duties to the nearest $100 is _____.

Extra income earned during school term to nearest $50 was _____.

If married, does your wife receive an income? _____yes, _____no.

If so, how much per year? $_____

What is the nature of her job?_____

V. Opinions regarding merit pay for teachers.

_____in favor of _____do not favor _____undecided

VI. What are your feelings regarding a single salary schedule?

_____in favor of _____do not favor _____undecided

VII. If I had my life to live over, I

_____would be an elementary teacher _____would not teach at any level

_____would not become an elementary teacher _____do not know

VIII. How do you feel you are accepted by students and the public in general as compared to the acceptance of women teachers?

_____about the same

_____accepted better than the average woman teacher

_____not accepted as well as the average woman teacher

IX. My future objectives are:

_____to remain as an elementary teacher.

_____to change to secondary teaching.

_____to advance into administration.

_____to quit teaching.

X. Reasons why, in your opinion, men quit teaching in elementary schools.

_____inadequate salaries

_____lack of social status as compared to other men professionals

_____poor working conditions

_____lack of pupil and parent interest

_____school board or community interference

_____difficulty in working with superiors

_____lack of opportunity for advancement

_____discipline problems

_____stigmatized as doing "women's" work

_____difficulty of working with women principals

_____assigned extra duties and unpleasant tasks because of being a man teacher.

_____other - please list