Theme 8: Literature Review

**Writing the Research Questions Section**

The Research Questions section of your assignment will be marked according to the following criteria:

* Title is **clear**, appropriate and viable.
* Rationale is **persuasive** and well supported.
* Research objectives/questions/hypothesis are **clear, relevant, viable and testable.**

**TASK 1**

Explain the following words: *viable*, *rationale*, *persuasive*, *hypothesis*, *testable*

**TASK 2**

Below is an extract from a doctoral thesis completed in the Education subject area at the University of Glasgow. Read the text and answer the following questions:

Is the aim of the project clear?

Are research questions provided?

What kind of research will be required to answer the research questions? (primary/secondary; qualitative/quantitative; questionnaire/interview/observation/using existing datasets)

Is there rationale given for the research questions?

Is the rationale well-supported by a range of different sources?

Are hypotheses offered?

Xu, Y., (2018). A cross-cultural analysis of gender and practitioner-child interactions in early childhood education and care (ECEC) settings in Scotland, Hong Kong, and Mainland China. PhD thesis. The University of Glasgow.

The overarching aim of my PhD project is to question the popular discourse of calling for more men to work in the ECEC [early childhood education and care] workforce in both the UK and China. Framed by the poststructuralist theoretical framework of gender, this research is targeted at answering four research questions:

How do practitioners posit themselves as women/men working with young children in ECEC?

How do children view their practitioners’ gender in relation to their daily interactions?

What is the nature of interactions between practitioners and children in ECEC settings? How far and to what extent can these interactions be seen to be gendered, and in what ways?

How far and to what extent can culturally-specific gender discourses be seen to have an impact on practitioner-child interactions in Scotland, Hong Kong and Mainland China, and in what ways?

This research will be able to address several research gaps in academic literature. Firstly, it includes both male and female practitioners’ perspectives. There is extensive research on men in ECEC that relies merely on men’s self-reported subjectivities (Rohrmann & Emilsen, 2015; Rohrmann & Brody, 2015; Joseph & Wright, 2016), but the views of female ECEC practitioners are under-researched. Also under-researched are the views of children themselves (Harris & Barnes, 2009; Rohrmann & Brody, 2015). Therefore, this research seeks to explore children’s own constructions of gender and their perceptions of their relationship with their practitioners. Thirdly, observational data are significantly missing in findings about men’s (and women’s) contributions as practitioners in ECEC (Rohrmann & Brody, 2015). Most research is reliant on self-reported reflections to arrive at their conclusions. Last but not least, with an increasing recognition of cultural influences in the shaping of a gendered ECEC workforce in different parts of the world (Brody, 2014 & 15; Rohrmann & Brody, 2015), this research is one of the few that employs cross-cultural and comparative approaches to research about gender and men’s participation in ECEC. Finally, it also focuses on localities (Scotland, Hong Kong, Mainland China) that are under-researched in relation to this topic, with the majority of English publications in this field are concerned with contexts such as England, Norway, Belgium, New Zealand, Australia (see for example, Brownhill, 2014 & Warin, 2017 [England]; Børve, 2017 [Norway]; Peeters, 2007 & 2013 [Belgium]; Farquhar, 2007 & 2012 [New Zealand]; & Sumsion, 2000 & 2005 [Australia]).

**TASK 3**

A good way to structure the Research Question section is to provide the rationale for each RQ. Reorganise the paragraph above to complete the section:

RQ1: How do practitioners posit themselves as women/men working with young children in ECEC?

Rationale: There is extensive research on men in ECEC that relies merely on men’s self-reported subjectivities (Rohrmann & Emilsen, 2015; Rohrmann & Brody, 2015; Joseph & Wright, 2016), but the views of female ECEC practitioners are under-researched.

RQ2:

Rationale:

RQ3:

Rationale:

RQ4:

Rationale: