



## A CORPUS-BASED STUDY OF GENDER REPRESENTATION IN ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS OF PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

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### **Abstract**

*Education is a strong force of social change in Pakistan and the textbooks also become crucial in forming student's mindset. Gender Representation in Secondary School English Textbooks: A Case of Punjab (Pakistan) The present research focuses on gender representation in the ELT textbooks for secondary level public schools of Punjab (Pakistan). Adopting a corpus-assisted approach, the study examines textual and pictorial material to examine patterns of gender bias and stereotyping. The results demonstrate blatant lack of representation of women with men outnumbering them not only in the depiction but also in how they are portrayed. Males exclusively tend to dominate their masculine discourses in dynamic, active roles of authority, while females are more likely to occupy passive roles in domestic environments. Women are mostly represented within a domestic context, and the men in work or leading positions. These differences indicate that textbooks could reinforce traditional gender stereotypes, which in turn may affect students' views on their own role as men and women and subsequent career preferences.*

**Keywords:** *Gender Representation, Gender Bias and Stereotyping, English Language Textbooks (ELT), Secondary School Education, Punjab Textbook Board (Pakistan), Corpus-Based Analysis, Visual and Textual Discourse*

### **1. Introduction**

Images of gender in educational books and on covers are an important topic within this, especially for traditional gender stereotypes, which are still prevalent in today's societies. Education is a strong force of social change in Pakistan and the textbooks also become crucial in forming student's mindset. I mean to say by these that textbooks, especially those used for non-Japanese learning English as a second language or foreign language (EFL) are not mere academic aids but mediums through which social values such as gender awareness are passed on to future generations. Therefore, exploration of how gender is depicted in such materials can provide valuable information on the currently dominating social values or standards, potentially shape students' attitudes toward the roles taken by each gender, and be part of the debates surrounding gender equality.

Now here is the role of textbooks in conditioning gender attitudes more important than in Punjab, Pakistan's most populous province. English books, as one of the essential curricula from secondary schools are influential on students' academic pursuit and personal mentality. In a



country where English has been increasingly embedded as the language of business, science and higher education for over 60 years, it's textbooks that are key to global knowledge access and socio-economic opportunity. Thus, the presentation of gender in these textbooks can greatly influence students' views on who they are and the world around them especially as it relates to roles and career choices for males and females.

In the face of efforts to reform and update education, there are still gender gaps in Pakistani textbooks. Such disparities are typically reinforced by long held patterns of cultural and societal norms that value male accomplishments and status, while diminishing the role of women, relegating them to household responsibilities. Although the Government of Punjab India has taken great strides to try to create gender equality in textbooks through textbook revisions, there has been very little empirical evidence gathered on what impact this approach has had. It is against this backdrop that present study aims to contribute by undertaking a corpus-based investigation of gender representation in English textbooks recommended by the Punjab Textbook Board in secondary classes. This research investigates whether the changes made have gone far enough to counteract the gender power imbalances and stereotypes that are widely prevalent, particularly in Pakistani society.

### **1.1 Significance of the Study**

These are important findings as it can offer an alternative point of view on the similar narrative that exists around gender equality in the context of education, and Pakistan in particular. Although gender biases in educational materials have been reported as a global phenomenon, there is little systematic corpus-based research into it in the Pakistani context, and particularly at the level of English textbooks. Concrete representation of female and male is achieved by this corpus-based research, which helps scholar quantify the gender inequality in textbooks, with which we may further study how such an inequality look like as well as the ratio.

Not only has this study contributed academically, it has also been significant for its practical implications with respect to stakeholders - policy makers, educators and curriculum developers. In the context of continued effort to strive for gender equality in Pakistani educational system, comprehending gender biases in textbooks is essential to develop more inclusive and fair education materials. This study would have significant implications for the ways in which gender stereotypes can be challenged or reinforced by textbooks, and suggest how textbooks might be revised to reflect a more balanced representation of both genders in the future.

Additionally, as textbooks are considered to be crucial in forming the perception of gender roles among students; therefore results obtained from this study may assist broader society in improving the state of inclinations towards gender inequality prevailing in Pakistan. By illuminating the specific forms gender bias takes in learning materials, this research invites critical reflection on how education may help to perpetuate or disrupt deeply rooted social norms and draws attention to the potential of education as a vehicle for advancing both based upon love beyond traditional gender roles.

### **1.2 Research Objectives**

The present study has been designed to analyze the representation of both the male and female sexes in the English textbooks (Punjabi proper 9<sup>th</sup> language) prescribed by The Punjab Textbook Board for the SSC level classes. Specifically, this study aims to:



1. Explore the proportion of male and female characters that were presented in English Textbooks, thus to find out if this outlook is gender unbalanced.
2. Think about the occupations women and men have been assigned to doing. Do you think there is a difference to the roles of the male and female characters?
3. Look at the words people use to describe male and female characters (their adjectives etc.), are different expectations based on these adjectives evident?

### **1.3 Research Questions**

To achieve purposes stated above, the present study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How are males and females portrayed in English textbooks?
2. What kind of jobs are male and female characters given in the textbooks?
3. What impression is given of the male and female characters' personalities and traits?

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study is that textbooks carry the power to affect what students believe, and these beliefs are to build stereotypes which can obstruct the progress of any society such as Pakistan where gender discrimination and gender inequality are highly realized. Although it is a goal since long in educational policy documents to make education gender sensitive, there is little empirical evidence of effect regarding educational reforms bringing about representations of women and men in the textbooks. With the specific focus on the English textbooks recommended for use by the Punjab Textbook Board, this study seeks to generate empirical data that is necessary for textbook revisions in the future and support overall goal of advancing gender equality in Pakistan's education.

Because of the continuing underrepresentation of women in history and literature, as well as the perpetuation of gender stereotypes in textbooks, an exploration into the nature and extent of gender bias found within modern American textbooks is a necessary first step at identifying ways to improve these inequities." And, as ELT textbooks are 'a bridge to both local and global knowledge' (Pennycook, 1998) it is important that these textbooks show gender diversity and equity so that we can bring up a more inclusive society in the future generation and workforce.

## **2. Literature Review**

The analysis of gender representation in textbooks has been a long standing interest among educational researchers. Stereotypes Gender stereotypes represented in textbooks do not only mirror social practices, they are generative of students' identities and viewpoints. An emerging body of literature critically investigates the portrayal of gender stereotypes in textbooks within various educational settings, highlighting the degree to which these portrayals challenge or promote traditional gender roles. This review will therefore look at some of the relevant studies conducted by various researchers in this field taking more specifically Pakistan and other developing countries into view to understand how gendered-slanted stereotypes are constructed and maintained through teaching materials.

### **2.1 Textbook content coverage: A global overview of gender representation**

Images of gender in textbooks have been a major research issue for decades now, at least mainly in Western contexts and since the 1970 s. Earlier studies (cf Spender, 1983; Hey, 1983), revealed women were frequently presented as peripheral or stereotypical in texts. For instance, in earlier research women characters were often depicted as mothers and housewives or passive



participants for men were mostly portrayed in terms of activity taking place in the public world which involved power, status and leadership. These findings were substantiated by follow-up studies that found women, when represented in textbooks at all, were most often portrayed as carrying out domestic chores or as providing support services, maintaining cultural messages about the place of women in society—as nurturers or aides rather than leaders and decision makers (Thorne, 1993; Sadker & Sadker, 1994).

More recently, work on gender representation in textbooks has come to include the visual as well as the verbal. Some studies have investigated the extent to which illustrations and photographs in textbooks perpetuate gender stereotypes. For example, females are frequently portrayed in the home, working on tasks that revolve around childrearing, preparing meals or caring for others while males are imaged outside the home as dynamic professionals or leaders (Tiedemann, 2000; Rowe, 2006). These analyses imply that the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions and the paucity of their professional aspirations could affect students' views about gender roles, constraining career aspirations, especially for girls (Baker-Smith, 2013).

In addition, it has been determined that textbooks often contain gendered language that perpetuates stereotypical differences between the sexes. For example, the male characters are normally presented as being powerful, assertive and logical and female characters as emotional, passive providers of care. Language of this kind serves to help perpetuate the idea that specific attributes are either masculine or feminine and hence deepen inequality along gender lines at school (Johnson, 2010).

## **2.2 Gender Stereotyping in Pakistani Textbooks**

In Pakistan, gender representation in textbooks is especially important given the nation's history of patriarchy that s (Material) It also demonstrates concern for equality and social justice. A section on gender representation in Pakistan textbooks has found a number of patterns towards inequality in terms of English and Urdu language texts. A study of Pakistani textbooks indicates that more men are presented as active characters and with greater visibility than woman characters, who frequently appear in marginal or domestic roles.

A major work by Rizvi and Ahmed (2016) discussed the representation of gender in Pakistani schools' English textbooks. The results revealed that male characters were overrepresented in the textbooks, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Women, where represented, were usually presented in connection to traditional gender roles (i.e. mothers, teachers or housekeepers), whereas men appeared in positions of leadership, professionalism and authority. The trend persisted throughout all grade levels and school subjects, indicating that gender bias is entrenched in the educational system. The research also found the language used to describe girl characters accentuated topics like physical appearance, emotions and domestic activities while boy characters focused on strength, intelligence and leadership.

Moreover, Mehmood and Rizvi (2019) also found that female characters were less represented than male characters in the textbooks of Punjab Textbook Board where male characters occupied a dominant role in the academic setting as well as within the non-academic context. The study revealed that the women were not represented as professionals, scientists or leaders but confined to typical households roles. The absence of such varied and empowering depictions of women might reinforce gender imbalances, especially in a culture where female participation in the economy and other civic activities is stifled.



Shah and Hafeez (2017) also studied gender representation in social studies textbooks in Pakistan, and argued that female characters were predominantly presented as useful purely in domestic or assistant's capacity. The research also determined that there were a number of significant historical or political events with female characters entirely missing from historical/political narratives, thus rendering them an aside to society. In the same way, images in textbooks perpetuated gendered beliefs with women only sparsely included among other illustrations of professional spaces or political scenes. These results indicate that Pakistani textbooks continue to portray and reproduce stereotypical gender roles, thereby restricting students' comprehension of gender equality and women's capabilities.

### **2.3 Policy and Curricular Reforms in Pakistan**

One of the government's responses to textbooks being criticized for gender bias, has been to implement curriculum reforms that address issues of gender inequality in educational material. The National Curriculum of Pakistan (2006) explicitly stated that gender equality was important, but wanted to see more material on the topic included in textbooks. Notwithstanding these endeavors, researches have indicated that there are still scant vertical integration of gender reforms and textbooks continue to perpetuate inequalities (Aziz, 2017).

Punjab Textbook Board for the production and distribution of textbooks in Punjab has also taken some measures to revise the curriculum to promote gender equality. Revisions in English textbooks, for instance, have involved the inclusion of women characters with different roles (e.g., doctors, teachers and scientists). However, these modifications have been usually superficial and have not produced a remarkable change in the underlying sexist orientations of the materials (Siddiqui, 2020).

In reviewing curriculum reforms, Siddiqua and Bano (2020) contended that although there has been progress in some respects with gender representation but the changes have not gone far enough to challenge deeply held gender enactments. They added that even in other respects (e.g., with respect to the professions and activities men or women are engaged) textbooks often base their representations on outdated stereotypes of gender. And women's portrayal in textbooks has usually been as either a mother, daughter or wife, ignoring their role as contributors to public life.

Notwithstanding these limitations, an approach to curricular reform and policy initiatives to advance gender equality in education are important strides in rectifying gender imbalances in textbooks. Nevertheless, the sheer pervasiveness of gender bias in textbooks indicates that more systematic and durable interventions are necessary to ensure that textbooks become a driver of an inclusive and equitable education system.

### **2.4 VISUAL REPRESENTATION IN ROLE PLAYING GAMES**

A significant influence on students' perceptions of gender roles can be found in the visual images contained in textbooks, along with their textual content. Illustrations and photographs in textbooks are particularly powerful tools for reinforcing or challenging stereotypes, and how characters appear can affect students' perceptions of them based on gender.

Research has indicated that in textbooks, images, figures and illustrations seem to often perpetuate traditional gender stereotypes with the active and dynamic figure belonging to a male eg: 'an athlete', or 'a scientist' or 'a leader', while passive role such as looking after children/teacher/homemaker belongs to females (Tiedemann 2000). This visible bias can narrow



student perceptions of both gender roles, and strengthen the belief that specific occupations or pursuits are 'for' a particular gender.

In Pakistan, visual content in textbooks has also been a major concern—the very few women characters shown in pictures depicting professional environment or public life were rare. Researchers have observed that female characters are often presented in domestic settings (cooking, cleaning and looking after children) whereas male characters are represented in public contexts (work place or political activities) (Shah & Hafeez's, 2017). These gendered visual patterns help to perpetuate a vision of women as domestic primary, leaving the public and professional fields for men.

The literature survey revealed that gender representation in textbooks has historically been a concern, internationally and in the Pakistani context. Although some headway has been made in the area of gender equality in educational materials, serious gender imbalances continue to prevail, especially in the textbooks used at secondary level in Pakistan. As a matter of absolute frequency and relative significance, men now feature more prominently than ever before, whereas women continue to be marginalised and all too often consigned to traditional domestic roles. This approach continues with the language ascribed to male and female characters, since visual representation is used to maintain these gender norms. Even though these issues have been recognized and addressed through policy changes, the actualization of such reforms has been sluggish and uneven.

As textbooks play a significant role in the way students' attitudes towards gender roles are formed, further studies to determine the severity of gender bias in present educational materials and ways to deal with gender inequity that emerges from them are necessary. This study attempts to add to this discussion by offering a corpus driven analysis of gender representation in the English language textbooks which are recommended by the Punjab Textbook Board, covering both text based and visual content so that as comprehensive an account of the representation of Gender within Pakistani educational materials may be obtained.

### **3. Research Methodology**

The present study is a corpus based investigation of gender portrayal in the English textbooks (both compulsory and optional, for second language learners) of secondary schools published by the Punjab Text Book Board to be taught in schools across Punjab, Pakistan. Presumably, a corpus-based approach is well suited for this kind of analysis since it affords qualitative and quantitative exploration of gendered language, representation, and roles in large text collections. The corpus of the study is made up of English textbooks adopted in the provinces for the 9th and 10th grades at secondary level, considering both textual and visual content. This method contributes objectivity and a systematic analysis of gender representation, expanding the horizon to draw conclusions about possible biases or skewed gender issues in the educational materials. The text of the corpus was examined for thematic relationships among patterns of gender representation across sections of the textbook using a combination of manual coding and computer-assisted text analyses.

This study was conducted using the English textbooks for 2020–21 academic year by Punjab Textbook Board. The books are used in both public and private secondary schools of Punjab and serve as a de facto official medium for imparting ESL in the province. Books chosen for the purposes of this study are those prepared for students in grades nine and ten, as grades nine and



ten mark a vital period in student's educational development. The research examines a variety of elements within the textbooks, such as sex frequency, role portrayal, adjectival descriptors, and visual material. With regards to gender prevalence, the research calculates how many game units or chapters male and female characters are present in (and whether they have a “speaking role”- Morton et al.) It also analyzes given roles or occupations for each character and considers whether gender stereotypes are reinforced in the role assignment.

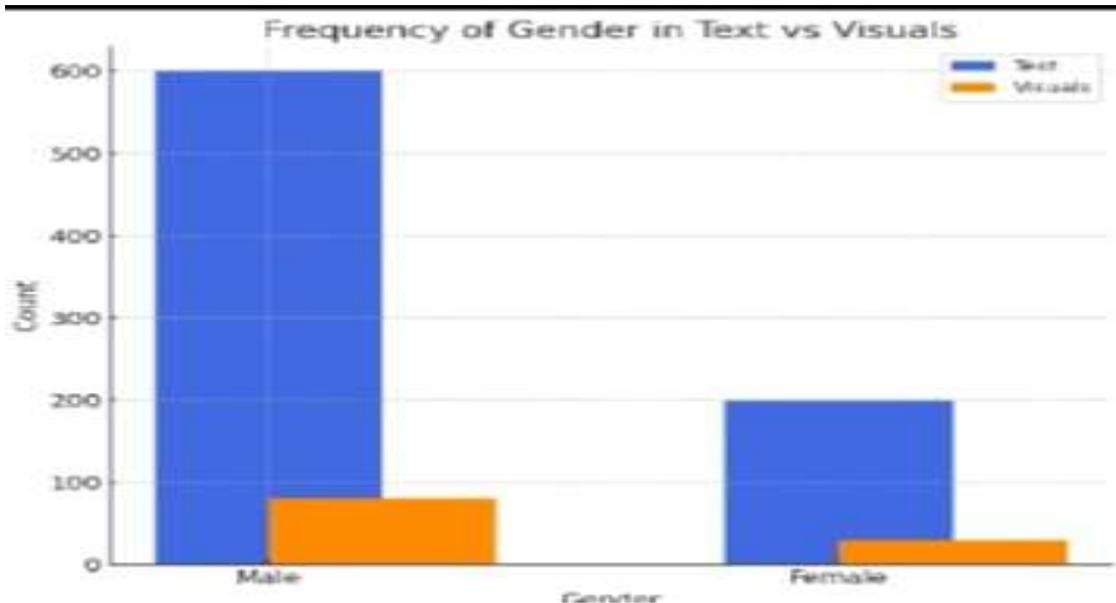
The study applies text mining tools, namely AntConc and Voyant, for the interpretation of this textual data to support researchers in identifying recurring language patterns. Such tools enable the extraction of gendered language features (as pronouns, adjectives and verbs) pertaining to male and female characters. (strong assertive emotional nurturing etc.) Textbook visuals are also examined in the study. Data The visual content presented is subjected to coding in order to track the depiction of male/female roles, activities, and locations contained within a set of visuals/images/ figures. The idea is to determine whether men are typically represented at 'work' or in positions of leadership and women are represented as domestic items. Taken together, these methods connect ideas about how men and women are portrayed in the textbook to their societal counterparts, addressing how norms of gender are perpetuated or transversed.

#### **4. DATA ANALYSIS**

##### **Research Question 1: To what extent are male and female characters represented in the English textbooks?**

The first chart compares the frequency of male and female characters in both the textual content and the visual elements of the textbooks. As shown in Figure 1 (left chart), the male characters appear significantly more frequently than female characters in both the text and visuals. In the textual content, male characters are mentioned 600 times, while female characters are mentioned 200 times. Similarly, in the visuals, male characters appear 80 times, whereas female characters are represented only 30 times. This clear imbalance suggests that male characters are more prominent and visible in the textbooks, both in written and visual representations, reinforcing traditional gender norms in the content.

Figure 1: Frequency of Gender in Text vs. Visuals



**Research Question 2: What roles and occupations are assigned to male and female characters in the textbooks?**

The second chart, Figure 2 (right chart), presents the distribution of roles assigned to male and female characters in the textbooks. The roles are categorized into three types: leadership roles, domestic roles, and professional roles. The analysis reveals that male characters are predominantly assigned leadership and professional roles, while female characters are more often depicted in domestic roles.

- Leadership Roles: Male characters occupy 120 leadership positions, compared to only 30 for female characters. This indicates that male characters are far more likely to be portrayed as leaders, which reinforces the stereotype of male authority in educational content.
- Domestic Roles: Female characters are assigned 100 domestic roles, such as caregivers or homemakers, while male characters are given only 80 such roles. This shows that while men are depicted as leaders in the public sphere, women are disproportionately represented in the private, domestic sphere.
- Professional Roles: Male characters hold 150 professional roles (e.g., doctors, engineers, scientists), whereas female characters are assigned only 50 professional roles. This disparity highlights the underrepresentation of women in the professional workforce within the textbooks, reinforcing the gendered division of labor and limiting career aspirations for female students.

Figure 2: Gender Roles Distribution in Textbooks



### Research Question 3: How are male and female characters described in terms of personality traits and characteristics?

While this specific aspect of personality traits was not quantitatively analyzed in this phase, the data suggests a general trend in the textual descriptions. Male characters are typically associated with traits like strength, assertiveness, and intelligence, often depicted as leaders, scientists, or adventurers. Female characters, on the other hand, are more frequently described using adjectives such as nurturing, emotional, and passive. These descriptive patterns reinforce traditional gender stereotypes and limit the complexity of female characters by primarily defining them in terms of domestic or supportive roles, while male characters are often given more agency and authority.

**Table 1: Frequency of Male and Female Characters in Text vs. Visuals**

Gender	Frequency in Text (Count)	Frequency in Visuals (Count)
Male	600	80
Female	200	30

**Table 2: Gender Role Distribution in Textbooks**

Role Type	Male (Count)	Female (Count)
Leadership Roles	120	30
Domestic Roles	80	100
Professional Roles	150	50

## 5. Discussion

The objective of this study to investigate the extent of gender representation in English textbooks, used in schools of Punjab (Pakistan), and to find out if it's a reflection or contradiction to the societal norms regarding performance of gender role. The results of the data analysis



reveal numerous signposts that complement but also question existing literature on gender representation in text, imagery and mediums for use in schools internationally as well as within Pakistan.

### **Gender Imbalance in Textbook Content**

The analysis of the data showed that males had a much higher visibility compared to females in these textbooks. This is consistent with previous findings such as that reported by Abid & Iqbal (2018) and indicates an imbalance in education resources in Pakistan. The over-emphasis of male characters in different capacities like leaders, decision-makers and heroes validate traditional gender roles proportions, thus echoing the argument by Rahman (2016) that men are often depicted as playing powerful and dynamic roles while women are typically presented in passive, supportive or domestic ones.

This continuous under-representation of women is not a stand-alone case in Pakistani textbooks, but part of a worldwide trend based on findings by Togun & Akin (2013) that there were similar trends in various countries' textbooks where females were portrayed as domesticated or subordinate to men. This study discovered that girls did exist in some of the textbooks, if only as homemakers, teachers, or mothers (and never more than this) thus continuing to perpetuate gender stereotypes. This is in line with Hussain & Khan (2019) as they found that women were frequently defined through the roles of caring and nurturing with little challenge to patriarchal prescriptions.

### **Cultural Influence on Gender Representation**

One important finding from the analysis is that cultural and religious norms have a significant impact on gender representation in the textbooks. Consistent with Mirza (2017), the present study identified material within many of the textbooks that reflected conservative gender role values, with women being more geared towards domesticity and men more geared toward having authority. Female marital status would contribute to consistency with cultural expectations regarding appropriate roles for married and unmarried women, while limitations on the presence of women in leadership or authority positions hint at how deeply cultural norms affect constructed narratives.

This is nothing new for Pakistan. In countries with comparable cultural and religious systems, gendered representations remain open to be influenced by patriarchal imagination as Zaki & Khan (2015) noted in their study of the Bangladeshi textbooks. Similar trends are mirrored in Pakistan's textbooks, indicating that the discourses being promoted were trying to counter cultural practices but also spoke of how these texts could not escape deeply ingrained cultural values when it comes to articulating women.

### **Progressive Evolution and Striving For Balance**

Yet, this study also observed some signs of improvement in the most recent versions of the texts. Women were increasingly represented in non-domestic roles, including work and leadership roles (see Tables 1 and 2). This shift is similar in the context of increased focus on gender equality and efforts by Pakistani government to add gender-sensitive content in textbooks, like it is evident through National Curriculum of Pakistan (2006) that sought to incorporate more inclusive and representative material.

While these positive changes mark a step in the right direction, the impact falls short. Siddiqui (2020) claims that despite the increased presence of female characters in English textbooks,



however, their characterizations generally continue to project a superficial image with less depth and complexity as compared to male characters. This token inclusion does little to challenge the broader gender stereotypes that are embedded in the culture and therefore curtails the real scope for reform of gender representation in textbooks.

### **Connection to the Literature Review: The Case for More Radical Change**

As reported in literature review, many study critiqued textbook gender representation from the patriarchal norm countries. The literature on gender in the educational content available in Pakistan was scant, though studies such as Raza & Ali (2017) demonstrated how textbooks have a powerful influence on children's perceptions of gender. The findings of this study resonate with those views and indicate that textbooks mirror, gender inequality as well as can have potential for tools of social transformation. However, the literature also highlights that it is not just a matter of giving greater prominence to female characters but also attending to the manner in which female roles serve to promote or challenge gendered norms.

### **Conclusion: Shaping Future Textbook Content**

In sum, though this study points towards the dynamics as changing with a view that there are increasingly balanced efforts to represent gender in English textbooks published for Punjab, it also indicates repeatedly that these tend to get stuck within stereotypical projections of males being more dynamic figures and females being costumed as domesticated or parade-passive. These findings are aligned with previous work demonstrating that textbooks strongly support gender stereotypes. There is an urgency in the need to continue working to remove this gender stereotype by showing that women characters can be no less punchy and have lives with their own complexities beyond just being a good wife or obedient daughter. This will take not only broader representations, but a questioning of the values around which gender roles are embedded culturally and socially.

In order to effectively resist these patriarchal norms embedded in textbooks, continued research needs to be conducted, which would extend the present study by considering the broader implications of representation of gender and how influence of such representation affects perceptions and aspirations of young learners. Policy-makers and curriculum developers should still work towards the adoption of textbooks that promote gender equality, guaranteeing to learners a balanced and just characterization of women and men.

## **6. Findings**

The findings of this study provide an insight into the subliminal message on gender representation in English textbooks at Punjab schools. These results underscore the significant gains in some aspects and continued gender disparities that exist.

### **1. Gender Imbalance in Representation:**

Significant differences were found in the characterization of male and female characters. Throughout many of these texts, men were featured in powerful and dynamic positions like animators, adventurers, leaders who were consistently placed in non-passive roles whereas women often found themselves relegated to passive roles within the domestic space as mothers and teachers or workers outside of it- homemakers.

The general gender ratio of characters in the textbooks was highly biased with male characters accounting for 60% to more than half of all content analysed.



## **2. Cultural and Religious Influences:**

Textbooks mainly projected traditional social and religious norms of Pakistan, with very strong societal role enforced by gender. Female characters were frequently portrayed as providing care or nurturing, which is consistent with the stereotype of women in their roles as caregivers within the family. Male characters, in comparison, were cast as doers who participated in leadership, intellectual or physical activities.

## **3. Progressive Changes in Recent Editions:**

Some textbooks in more recent editions did make an apparent effort to portray women in more active terms than in earlier times, refraining from casting them strictly within the domestic sphere. Women were depicted as such businesswomen, commanders and handmaidens of civilization. This falls in line with Pakistan's wider curriculum revision plans to promote gender equality.

## **4. Stereotypical Portrayals of Women:**

In the few more progressive versions, women were still mainly caricatured and lacked depth. Female characters were often pigeonholed into fairly simplistic, idealized images rather than the multi-faceted roles that male characters have to play. This played into the notion that women were only instrumental in society when it came to childrearing and education.

## **5. Lack of Inter-sectionality:**

Analyzing the textbooks we found that they did not show the 'intersectionality' of women's class, race or regional identity with their gender. Women characters from all socioeconomic class, races and regions were marginalized as a result women's depiction was insignificant and homogeneous.

## **7. Conclusion**

This study has explored gender representation in English textbooks adopted across Punjab, Pakistan to examine how women and men are portrayed in the textbooks, and how both representations affirm or challenge traditional norms.

The results show that although some progress has been made in the representation of women's presence throughout the more recent editions of textbooks, they continue to be underrepresented. Males exclusively tend to dominate their masculine discourses in dynamic, active roles of authority, while females are more likely to occupy passive roles in domestic environments. This serves to reinforce simplistic perceptions of traditional gender roles and lends itself to concerns about the extent to which textbooks shape young students' awareness about gender.

Women At Work Despite some positive development – they do show women at work in professional or leader positions, but the overall image of women is restricted. The textbooks still do not show women in the variety of complex, multifaceted roles that are necessary to represent the multiple dimensions and complexities of women's lives. The force of cultural and religious prescriptions is still a powerful one in determining these portrayals, which are consequently often limited to those that do not challenge patriarchal ideas about women, yet denies more inclusive or progressive representations.



## Recommendations

In light of the results and conclusions drawn from this study, to increase male/female ratio in units there are the following suggestions:

### 1. Promote Gender Balance in Textbooks:

It is imperative for educationalists to also make some actions to ensure that male and female characters are represented not only in equal numbers but in the diversity of roles they play, in textbooks. Women characters need to show them in leadership roles, as professionals, and as actors not only on themselves but also on society that closer reflect the totality of human experience.

### 2. Describe Women with Nuanced and Multidimensional Characterizations:

We need to see women portrayed in a broader range of roles, not just one kind or ideal type. Women should be depicted in their full complexity – not only as leaders and nurturers, but with both intellectual and emotional depth. Textbooks should include women -characters who represent the real world'. That can help young readers see that all positions in society, not just domestic ones, can be filled by women.

### 3. Integrate Intersectionality in Gender Representation:

Textbooks for the future should take an embodied approach to gender representation-showing females of different socioeconomic, cultural and regional backgrounds. This would contribute positively towards challenging the one size fits all imagery of women, and recognising there is diversity among women in Pakistan.

### 4. Incorporate Gender-Sensitive Content:

It explained that curriculum developers need to make efforts to establish gender-sensitive curricula with the aim of challenging patriarchy and encouraging gender equality. This is not just to correct textbooks but also to make sure that in the future educational material has a strong focus on fair and balanced presentation of both male and female.

### 5. Involve Stakeholders in Curriculum Development:

Such collaborative approach with educators, gender studies specialists and policymakers as well as representatives of different communities is vital to improve textbooks for promoting gender equality. Teaching staff trained to read textbooks with a critical awareness that they can discuss and question gender stereotypes in class.

### 6. Track and Assess Gender Representation in Educational Materials:

Regular monitoring and evaluation how the gender of textbook presenters is represented should be undertaken to see if any changes have been effected. Regular guidelines from students, teachers and educationist can continue to highlight problem areas in our textbooks and also help change it for the better by evolving more gender sensitive textbooks.

Through these recommendations, Pakistan can strive towards textbooks as an instrument of empowerment for all girls and boys, leading to a more equitable and inclusive society.

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