

Implicit Messages in Pakistani ESL Course Books: A Corpus-Based Study of Gender Representation

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Abstract

The present research seeks to determine the gender representation in English course books in different textbook boards in Pakistan. The corpus-based quantitative study is conducted on the corpus of seven intermediate-level English books. It aims to investigate gender discrimination through gender representation as the Cambridge Dictionary defines gender discrimination as the act of treating a person, usually a woman, unfairly because of their sex. The study explores five dimensions of gender representation: gendered-marked general nouns, pronouns, professional terms, adjectives, and address titles. The study found that gender discrimination exists in the ESL course books, depicting 50% of male general nouns and only 29% of female general nouns. Additionally, gendered-neutral nouns are in lower percentages than male and female nouns. Male pronouns constitute 83%, a more significant percentage than female pronouns. The textbooks predominantly contain male professional terminologies without any feminine or gender-neutral professional terms. Additionally, adjective-based gender discrimination is also obvious in the fact that adjectives are used more often to describe masculine nouns than feminine nouns, about the number of times each word occurs and shows females as inferior. In addition, the percentage of male address titles is three times higher than that of female and neutral words, depicting that ESL textbook content writers show a male-dominated society. If students repeat gender disparities in textbooks, they may accept gender stereotypes via socialization (Tabatadze & Gorgadze, 2022). The current research work enables authors, educators, and policymakers to write in generic language, create an inclusive learning environment, and add generic lessons to course books, respectively.

Keywords: Sexist language; gender; corpus; intermediate-level; course-books

Introduction

In Pakistan, English is the principal language of learning and teaching in higher education. It is a widely used medium in the broadcast spectrum and is considered the language of elite people (Rahman, 2020). It is the official language of all government and private organizations (Mujtaba, 2021). It is also used to publish various newspapers, periodicals, and books in Pakistan. In Pakistan, English language proficiency is seen as necessary for getting desirable jobs in public and private sectors, as assessments and interviews for important professions such as civil services and the military are handled primarily in this language (Coleman, 2010).

Language functions as a communication system that may be used to express cultural attitudes and values (Bonvillain, 2011). The English language is vital in developing and sustaining gender discrimination through social relationships (Hall, 2014). Gender is a sociocultural construct (Pawar, 2016) that defines the traits and behaviors associated with males and females, focusing on their relationships with one another (Yieke & Baumangasse, 2001). It captures the socially created aspects of their connection and goes beyond individual identity. Gender, in its most fundamental sense, refers not only to the characteristics that distinguish women and men, but also to the complexities that are involved in the formation of their social interactions and roles (Coffman et al., 2018). Enfield and Levinson (2020) stated that language plays a crucial role in shaping the framework of human societies, and linguistic variations based on gender are examples of how language works in social circumstances. Language is crucial in forming and maintaining gender norms and expectations in society.

The English language, through its powerful linguistic system, reflects the ideas and attitudes of society toward gender (Lakoff, 1973, 2005; Pérez & Tavits, 2019). The English language is certainly not an exemption from the rule that all languages include some degree of gender discrimination; in fact, gender discrimination and sexism in any language is a mirror image of its socially constructed counterpart (He, 2010). Zheng (2018) examined the misogyny in English proverbs from five different viewpoints: intelligence, behavior, social status, marriage, and personality. Misogyny in English proverbs is a clear manifestation of the degraded position of women, the disdain for women, and the bias against women.

Gender Discrimination in Language Course Books

Textbooks are not just sources of information; they are powerful tools that help to shape societal norms, beliefs, and identities (Amerian & Esmaili, 2015). Textbooks play a vital role in molding children's everyday experiences and their future ideas about society (Peterson & Lach, 1990; Pingel, 2010). Thus, textbooks play an important role in the students' identities, interests, attitudes, and experiences that impact their outlook. They play a significant part in gender socialization, influencing children's adoption of behaviors associated with their genders through this educational medium (Kereszty, 2009). Language in textbooks creates a virtual gender bias, and these textbooks as a course of study, play a vital role in the construction of gender discrimination in society.

Thomas and Wareing (2004) stated that gender-biased language unfairly portrays females and males with unequal significance, implying that one sex is inherently less fully human, less complicated, and possesses fewer rights compared to the other sex. Language plays a crucial role in creating gender-biased beliefs. Using the English language as a teaching and learning tool within course books notably impacts students' perspectives and dispositions towards themselves, their peers, and the broader society (Ndura, 2004). If gender differences are present within textbooks and are repeated by learners, this could lead to their adoption of distinct gender roles through socialization (Akers & Sellers, 2011). Mkuchu (2004) claims that textbooks affect attitudes through imparting a society's culture. Gender representations and roles are crucial aspects of every society; hence, how genders are portrayed in textbooks shapes a learner's mental picture.

Gender Discrimination in Pakistan

Regarding the topic of gender construction in Pakistani society, particularly focusing on the female gender, it is crucial to note that culture exhibits a pronouncedly hierarchical and patriarchal framework of associations and beliefs concerning individuals of different genders. Members of Pakistani society, particularly females, are expected to conform to traditional gender norms in their thoughts, behaviors, and actions. Traditional beliefs in Pakistan outline specific patterns of behavior and activities linked with each gender category (Ali et al., 2010; Hameed, 2012). Women frequently encounter gender inequality in the world as well as in Pakistan;

females are seen as "sex objects," "a means of physical attraction" (Ali et al., 2022, p. 16) and are not allowed to make decisions for themselves or their families. On the other hand, men are perceived as influential figures in a society marked by male ownership (Ali et al., 2010). Stereotype-based gender discrimination refers to how societies expect people to act based on their sex. Stereotypes are simplified beliefs about what roles and characteristics are suitable for each gender in a society. Gender-based discrimination arises when these attitudes give rise to discriminatory attitudes or interventions. Discrimination based on gender may hinder people from realizing their full potential and rights in almost all areas of life, including employment, education, social interactions, and opportunities.

Pakistan is a developing country in many fields, including education. The educational system is also under evaluation. Pakistan's educational system needs help with both quantitative development and qualitative assurance. One of these challenges is the equality of gender representation in the course books of the educational system (Ullah & Skelton, 2013). In Pakistani ESL textbooks, there is a noticeable gap in knowledge about gender representations that contribute to students' perceptions of the sexist and gender-discriminated language. This study seeks to address this gap by conducting a corpus-based analysis of Pakistani ESL course books to investigate how ESL course books at the intermediate level represented the sexist language. The exploration, explicitly and implicitly, reveals how females are given importance in the course book and society by analyzing data from a considerable text.

Significance of the Current Study

The study will be helpful in the following ways:

- The findings are important for various stakeholders, including writers, educators, and policymakers. It helps them to know about how gender is represented in Pakistani ESL course books.
- The findings will help textbook authors avoid gender stereotypes or biases, ultimately contributing to a more balanced and fair representation of gender in educational coursebooks.
- The study also helps them know how the words create gender bias, and authors need to use gender-neutral terms, especially professional terms and address titles.

- The findings will help the educators by providing them with information about how gender bias and discrimination are represented by the repetition of male-dominant themes.
- The findings will also be helpful for policymakers to develop and implement new strategies to eliminate gender bias from the content of educational course books.

The present Study

Gender studies and the sexist language in the English language explore how the words we use reflect and reinforce ideas about what men and women are like. The English language and all other languages have specific words related to a particular gender, such as gender-specific nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and gender-specific occupational and role terminologies (United Nations, 2017). The English language often discriminates against single-sex by using terms associated with males (Montoro, 2015). Mills (2008) proposes a feminist paradigm for examining language patterns and structures at three levels: the word level encompasses sexism in language and sexism in its meaning; the sentence-level relates to issues such as naming, harassment of women, mercy, stunting, and smoothing; and the discourse level includes characters, roles, fragmentation, vocalizations, and schemata. This perspective allows us to examine how language can support or question societal ideas about gender bias. The current study investigates the gendered representation in textbooks through a corpus-based study at the word level. So, only gender-represented word count is considered in this study, as adjectives are specified for one gender.

Mills (2002) looks at how language may create and maintain a particular viewpoint on women via the use of gender-specific pronouns, improper use of broad phrases, addressing individuals, and derogatory portrayals of women in language. She called the generic pronoun 'he' as 'he-man' language (p. 65). She also argued that the phrases "mankind" and "man" are frequently employed when discussing all of humanity (p. 66). Mills stated that male-related words are perceived as unmarked terms and female-related words as marked terms (p.70). The gender theory implies that gender is independent of biological sex and purely determined by society or the individual (Hill, 2006). Gender is the expression of social construction, not an inner essence. Gender socialization is to determine how and why males and females act differently, and then these differences are repeated and internalized by generations (Carter, 2014).

To analyze the representation of genders in contemporary Pakistani ESL course books taught at the intermediate level, the following research questions need to be answered.

1. What is the male-to-female gendered-marked noun ratio in course books?
2. What is the male-to-female gendered-marked pronoun ratio in course books?
3. What is the gender-marked and gendered-neutral professional terms ratio in course books?
4. What are the most commonly used adjectives that describe one gender in course books?
5. What is the ratio of male and female address titles in course books?

Literature Review

The study of language and gender relationships started in the 1960s as a disputed topic in sociolinguistics (Hall, 2014). Gender construction and representation, founded on cultural and social structures (Risman, 2018), is a human production and manipulation (Lorber, 2018) and influences people's views, behaviors, and goals through the process of socialization (Wood & Eagly, 2012). During the 1970s and 80s, a significant part of research was carried out to examine how gender was portrayed in foreign language textbooks (Pawelczyk et al., 2014). The study undertaken in these investigations provided some similar observations about how men and women are portrayed in English language textbooks throughout the world, as women are frequently represented as docile, dependent, typically deficient in strength, and valued largely for their physical attractiveness. Men, on the other hand, are portrayed as being busy, self-sufficient, and strong (Smith-Rosenberg, 2012). It is hypothesized that students may unconsciously internalize behavioral norms from the stereotypical depictions presented in these educational resources (Aljuaythin, 2018).

Textbooks may be considered gender discriminated if they exclude the activities and accomplishments of women, use condescending language towards women, or depict women and men only in stereotypical roles that do not include the whole spectrum of human interests, characteristics, and skills (Concordă, 2018). Textbooks serve as the primary instructional resource within educational curricula and play a crucial role in facilitating students' acquisition of knowledge (Esen, 2007). Therefore, it is imperative to improve the quality of textbooks, and efforts are being made to authorize textbooks to ensure adherence to the updated courses of study

(Lee, 2014). Evidence of gender equality was found during Lee's (2014) examination of gender representation in modern Japanese textbooks using WordSmith as a corpus tool. The study found the everyday use of gender-inclusive language and the neutral address title "Ms." for women. However, the male-first issue is still prevalent in these textbooks, suggesting that women will always be treated as second-class citizens.

Hall (2014) utilized a dual analytical approach to investigate the gender representation present in locally created English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks taught in the Iranian schooling system. The first step was to conduct a comprehensive quantitative analysis that evaluated the visibility of gender in text and graphics and the presence of female- and male-oriented subjects in talks and reading passages. In the second, four gender-role modeling domains were qualitatively examined. These included family chores, the allocation of free time and leisure activities, gender-linked vocational chances, and male-centric language characteristics. The content-based research found a disparity in gender in these textbooks. The researcher implies that state-operated schooling systems are adapted to align with the nation's cultural and religious ideologies. Gharbavi and Mousavi (2012) investigate the depiction of gender in four Iranian high school English textbooks through mixed methodology. The research investigates gender representation in three categories: male or female, pictures, texts and careers. Content analysis was utilized to calculate and analyze the frequency of these categories, which revealed gender differences. The data and chi-square test showed language sexism in textbooks. This led to sexism in language and ideology in the educational context. Moreover, it shows the stringent anti-imperialist philosophy of the English language in Iran (Borjian, 2013).

Aljuaythin (2018) analyzes gender inequity in two Saudi primary school EFL textbooks using Fairclough's three-dimensional model. The study demonstrates that men are preferred and women are marginalized and stereotyped. This underrepresentation may promote sexist rhetoric by emphasizing the risk of misperceptions about women. EFL texts for grades 1–12 in UAE public schools were investigated through randomly selected parts in eight dimensions – pictures, text visibility, topic dominance, occupations, grammatical functions, character qualities, character actions, and general references to males – and were studied to determine how textbooks represent gender. Critical discourse analysis and content analysis yielded quantitative and qualitative results. Seven of the notions examined had a statistically significant male

predominance, supporting the claim that many EFL textbooks promote stereotypes and gender prejudice. It also suggests that gender equality was not addressed while publishing and adapting the EFL textbook series (Tahan, 2015).

The study in Mexico reveals how three first-grade public primary school EFL textbooks represent men and women. One technique examined male and female visibility in photos and drawings, while the other examined gender-specific work duties in visual material. Drawings reveal an imbalance in character representation, with masculine figures overrepresented. Even if both genders' visual looks are comparable, all three textbooks preserve gender prejudices regarding various careers (Aguilar, 2021). The research examines gender in Indonesian EFL classrooms. The study uses transitivity analysis to investigate a few reading passages and finds that male characters are often "adventurous," "risk-takers," "active," "independent," and "capable." Female characters are more "passive," "expressive," "nurturing," and "unassertive" than male characters (Emilia et al., 2017, p. 206). The study of the duties assigned to males and females in EFL textbooks in Jordanian high schools reveals gender role stereotypes. The textbooks were produced by a collaboration between Jordanian and British writers. The study's primary aim was to analyze the frequency of pronouns and the syntactic roles of males and females in the textbooks. According to the survey, male representation counts for 70%, and female representation is no more than 25%. Male characters are more often the initial narrators, as compared to female characters (Al-Taweel, 2005).

When female characters are underrepresented relative to male characters, it might be interpreted as gender discrimination and shows that women's achievements or characters are not worthy of attention (Ceci & Williams, 2011; Hamilton et al., 2006). The corpus-based research examining gender representation in ten textbooks from the 1990s (not in use) to contemporary books in Hong Kong reveals that the later textbooks contained a higher percentage of women and that gender-inclusive pronouns were employed more frequently. The researchers found that the female-to-male ratio had increased, although it varied greatly per book. However, they found that the ratio had moved closer to equality (Lee & Collins, 2008). One of the most common forms of gender-specific discrimination in the English language is the use of generic pronoun "he", which is also known as "he/man" language (He, 2010, p. 334).

Adjectives have the potential to convey hidden gender prejudices through the association of particular attributes with specific genders (Moon, 2014). Honorifics are titles that precede a person's name. Traditional female titles Mrs. (Missus) and Miss (Mistress) refer to married and unmarried women, respectively, unlike Mr. (Mister), which refers to males without giving any information related to marital status. The term "Mrs." gives information about the woman's marital status with her husband. As a result of the non-parallel address titles, criticism is raised regarding the reasons why women are characterized in this manner with males (Lee, 2014).

Corpus-based research on gender-specific terms (like father and mother) is conducted using Sketch Engine in the Japanese language. A meticulous examination of linguistic use will uncover concealed gender representations inside language. In Japan, it might be said that "parents," "family name," and "legal status" seem to have more significance than individual characteristics. Language accentuates and makes gender stereotypes more prominent and observable to its users. Furthermore, the study indicates that Sketch Engine is an online language analyzer that utilizes language data for linguistic research (Ishikawa, 2011).

Exploring Gender Studies in Pakistan

The elementary-level English textbooks published by Oxford University Press and the Punjab Textbook Board were investigated compared to those related to gender representation in Pakistan. Through a content-based analysis, the research found a bias towards gender in both sets of textbooks; however, Oxford Modern English had better gender representation in ratio compared to Punjab textbook board textbooks. Thus, textbooks with gender discrimination in text and images mold children's gender views (Hameed, 2012). Khan et al. (2014) examined how language affects gender identification in Pakistani textbooks by qualitatively analyzing 42 English, Urdu, and Pashtu educational books used in Pakistani public and private schools from grades 1–10. The study found that textbook language promotes masculinity and male dominance in decision-making, division of labor, and home and public participation (Khan et al., 2014). The textbooks from different grades even show male dominance in decision-making and public dealing, which shows that society is rigid in male dominance or society is only for males. Rasool et al. (2019) explore sexism in primary English textbooks in Punjab. Gender theory was used to analyze five textbooks used in grades 1-5 using mixed methods research. Although the

Government of Pakistan has committed to eliminating gender bias in education, the study material contains discourses that reinforce sexist constructions and contribute to gender inequality and stereotypes.

Rind (2015) investigated the gender identities and learning experiences of female ESL students at Pakistani universities. Following interpretive epistemology, the research used a qualitative technique to gather and analyze data. The results suggest that female students' gender identities may limit their textbook engagement, class interactions, and professor connections. However, female students challenged their social identities. Respondents defied conventional traditions by using their decision-making and self-determination under restrictions and environmental effects. The BNC was examined for 15 gender-discriminated job titles in Pakistan using Sketch Engine as a corpus tool. The results indicated a substantial disparity in the frequencies of male-representing and female-representing job titles. Furthermore, following gender-marked male and female professional terminologies, male-specific pronouns are more frequently used than female-specific ones, resulting in discrimination against females in terms of using gender-marked pronouns (Ali & Khan, 2021). Weak legal frameworks, cultural barriers, and deeply ingrained patriarchal norms typically rationalized by religion make gender discrimination common in Pakistan. This gender discriminated language usage intersection shows how social norms shape communication and perpetuate inequality (Ali & Khan, 2021; Alvi & Rasool, 2013). In another study, AntConc was used to investigate gender representation in Pakistani writer Nadeem Aslam's work *Maps for Lost Lovers*. The research uncovered instances of physical and verbal aggression perpetrated by males against women. The frequency study of taboo words, adjectives, and verbs revealed that male characters were shown as more dominant, strong, and resourceful landlords, while female characters were portrayed as struggling, inferior, and malevolent objects (Mumtaz, 2022).

Methodology

Corpus Data

The corpus data for this study was taken from the course books of English taught at the intermediate level (11th and 12th) classes in Pakistani educational institutes. To develop the corpus, data was retrieved manually from seven English course books. These seven-course books

are published by four different textbook boards in Pakistan. These books include English Book-1 (Short Stories), English Book-2 (Modern Prose and Heroes), English Book-3 (Plays and Poems), and Mr. Chips (Bopok-4). Moreover, a Textbook of English Language (11th Class), Comprehensive English Books One (11th Class), and Intermediate English for Class 12 were included in the corpus with minute details, as listed in Table 1 below. The corpus size of this study is 149,006 words and 177,249 tokens. The data is collected manually from the textbooks, and only lessons are selected, while exercises are omitted from the collected data.

Table 1*Metadata details for corpus*

Book Name	Textbook Board Name	Words Count
Book 1 (Short Stories)	PCTB ¹	22,125
Book 2 (Modern Prose and Heroes)	PCTB ¹	30,438
Book 3 (Plays and Poems)	PCTB ¹	15,060
Book 4 (Good-Bye Mr. Chips)	PCTB ¹	16,418
A Textbook of English Language (11 th Class)	BTBB ²	15,769
Comprehensive English Books One (11 th Class)	STBB ³	16,264
Intermediate English For Class 12	KPTBB ⁴	33,248

1. PCTB (Punjab Curriculum and Textbook Board); **2.** BTBB (Baluchistan Textbook Board); **3.** STBB (Sindh Textbook Board); **4.** KPTBB (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Textbook Board)

This study does not include the foreign textbooks taught in Pakistan at the intermediate level; only seven intermediate textbooks are included. At the same time, the other three books (KPTBB 11th class, STBB 12th class, and BTBB 12th class) are not added to the study.

Data Analysis Tools

The Sketch Engine tool is used to analyze the corpus data. Sketch Engine is the ultimate tool to explore how language works. The reason to use the Sketch Engine tool is that it determines what is familiar and uncommon in each language corpus. It analyzes the linguistic data in the corpus (Ishikawa, 2011). The Sketch Engine was selected in this research for many reasons. It gives advanced and custom corpus creation, management, and execution options. Its advanced and custom research features, from a single word to a list of words in any form, from lemma to nouns or adjectives, help the researchers explore the precise information in the corpus. It also gives options to illustrate the data in the figure. It also has options related to Corpus

Query Language (CQL) to do specific and complex searches through advanced patterns from different perspectives.

The gender-related keywords are selected by target-based searching in Sketch Engine, and then the research analyzes the selected gender-related keywords from the corpus on a frequency basis to explore the gendered representation. The study aims to investigate gender-marked nouns and their role in gender discrimination in ESL textbooks. Through predefined target words, the researchers investigate the target gender-marked nouns, pronouns, professional terms, adjectives, and address titles. The aim is to explore gender-marked nouns, pronouns, and professional terms because these words show which gender is dominant in the textbooks and to what extent there is equality in the gender roles. The adjective and address title investigation explores how gender discrimination is evident in textbooks in status as superior or inferior and marital status respectively.

Data Analysis

Gendered-marked (male & female) and gendered neutral noun ratio

The findings reveal that general gendered nouns, as shown in Fig 1 below, show a wide range of differences between male and female-gendered marked nouns in the English textbooks at the intermediate level. The screenshots, taken from Sketch Engine, through a deductive approach, give raw data with frequencies of general nouns present in the corpus. In this study, the issue of gendered nouns is grounded in numerous studies that examine the assumption that the male form is considered the default and applicable to both genders in various instances (He, 2010; Montoro, 2015). The present study examined the frequency at which gender-specific general nouns were included in the textbook. Through careful consideration, a table is created for a better comparative analysis of gender representation with frequencies and percentages, as shown below. The seven most used nouns are selected and compared to their opposites and generic nouns like "man," "woman," and "person." Many of these, in comparison, are not directly opposite in meanings but a close opposite with not perfect antonyms.

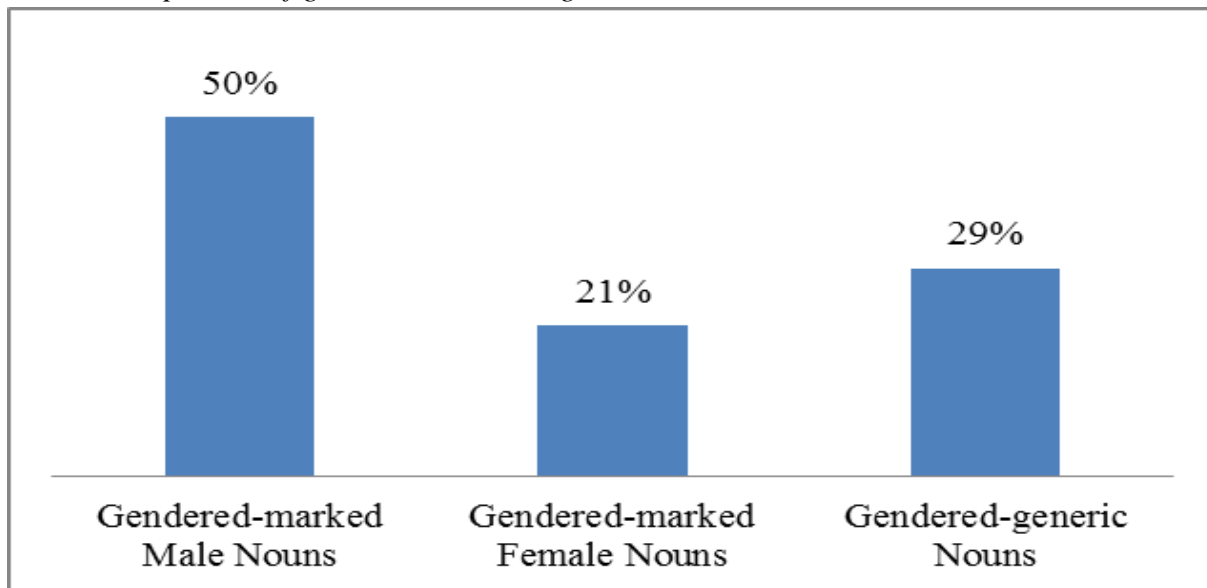
Figure 1*Gendered-marked Nouns and their frequency in the corpus*

Noun	Frequency ? ↓	Noun	Frequency ? ↓	Noun	Frequency ? ↓	Noun	Frequency ? ↓
1 Man	458 ***	12 Husband	25 ***	23 Aunt	1 ***	34 Sisters	0 ***
2 Boy	324 ***	13 Daughter	21 ***	24 children	1 ***	35 Parents	0 ***
3 Child	236 ***	14 Brother	15 ***	25 girls	0 ***	36 Spouse	0 ***
4 Girl	135 ***	15 Sister	7 ***	26 Siblings	0 ***	37 Uncles	0 ***
5 Woman	118 ***	16 Uncle	6 ***	27 Fathers	0 ***	38 Sibling	0 ***
6 Father	83 ***	17 Individual	6 ***	28 daughters	0 ***	39 Wives	0 ***
7 Mother	61 ***	18 men	5 ***	29 Husbands	0 ***	40 offsprings	0 ***
8 Wife	51 ***	19 Women	3 ***	30 Brothers	0 ***	41 Aunts	0 ***
9 Son	46 ***	20 boys	2 ***	31 Sons	0 ***		
10 Parent	42 ***	21 Partner	2 ***	32 Uncle	0 ***		
11 Person	37 ***	22 offspring	1 ***	33 Persons	0 ***		

Table 2*Gendered marked and generic general noun comparative data with percentages*

Male Nouns	f	%	Female Nouns	f	%	Generic nouns	f	%
Man	463	74%	Woman	121	19%	Person/ Individual	43	7%
Boy	326	47%	Girl	135	19%	Child/children	237	34%
Father	83	45%	Mother	61	33%	Parent	42	23%
Brother	15	68%	Sister	7	32%	Sibling	0	0%
Husband	25	32%	Wife	51	65%	Spouse/ Partner	2	3%
Son	46	15%	Daughter	21	7%	Child/offspring	237	78%
Uncle	6	86%	Aunt	1	14%	Auncle	0	0%

The findings in Table 2 show that five out of seven words show a higher percentage of masculine words than feminine and generic. These are "man," "boy," "father," "brother," and "uncle" (with comparatives). The situation of "husband" and "wife" is exempted, and "wife" is used more than "husband" and "spouse". The gendered-neutral nouns "child/children/offspring" are used more than counterparts gendered-marked nouns like "son" and "daughter". Figure 1 comprehensively compares gendered-marked male, female, and neutral words. The graph shows that the male proportion is higher than female and gendered-neutral nouns in seven gendered-marked nouns (Fig 2).

Figure 2*Overall comparison of gender marked and generic nouns***Figure 3***Top 10 Nouns in the corpus*

	Noun	Frequency	?	↓
1	man	458	...	
2	boy	324	...	
3	time	300	...	
4	ralph	251	...	
5	thing	247	...	
6	child	236	...	
7	day	234	...	
8	people	233	...	
9	year	220	...	
10	world	200	...	

The Sketch Engine corpus's noun frequency list starts with "man" (f=458 & rank=1). The noun "boy" ranks second in frequency. Not even one female-gendered general noun comes in the

top 10 frequency list, as can be seen in Fig 3. Only "child" (f=236 & rank=6) and "people" (f=233 & rank=8) are gendered-generic general nouns that come in this list.

This is how English courses expose gender inequity to mind-setting intermediate pupils. Most lessons are about males, like book 4 ("Good-Bye Mr. Chips"), which is entirely about a male character, Mr. Chips. Most topics revolve around a male-dominated society. Although they are both part of the human race, English does not treat men and women as equals. The term "man" may mean a specific male human being or the whole human species. Using the term "man" in its broadest definition hides women (He, 2010). The examples are (1) All men must die. (2) Man is a social animal.

Gendered-marked pronoun ratio

Pronouns denote proper nouns in a text. Thus, through the frequency of pronouns (Fig 4), one can find the ratio of proper nouns for males or females in a huge text (some exceptional cases are also there/limitations of the study).

Figure 4

Gendered marked pronouns in the corpus with frequencies

Pronoun Frequency ? ↓			
1	He	2,087	...
2	His	1,240	...
3	Him	602	...
4	She	477	...
5	Her	336	...
6	Himself	129	...
7	Herself	10	...
8	Hers	3	...

The pronouns of gender representation are analyzed in this study as "he" and "she" in their forms, while "they," "you," and "I" are excluded from the study due to the anonymous nature they give to their subject (proper nouns). Mills called the pronouns "he" as "he-man"

(2002, p. 66). The frequency of male and female pronouns is analyzed in their forms like "he," "him," "his," and "himself," as all these forms directly or indirectly show the proper noun as their subject. For a better understanding of gender representation in the corpus, a table is created with frequencies and percentages, as shown below in Table 3.

Table 3

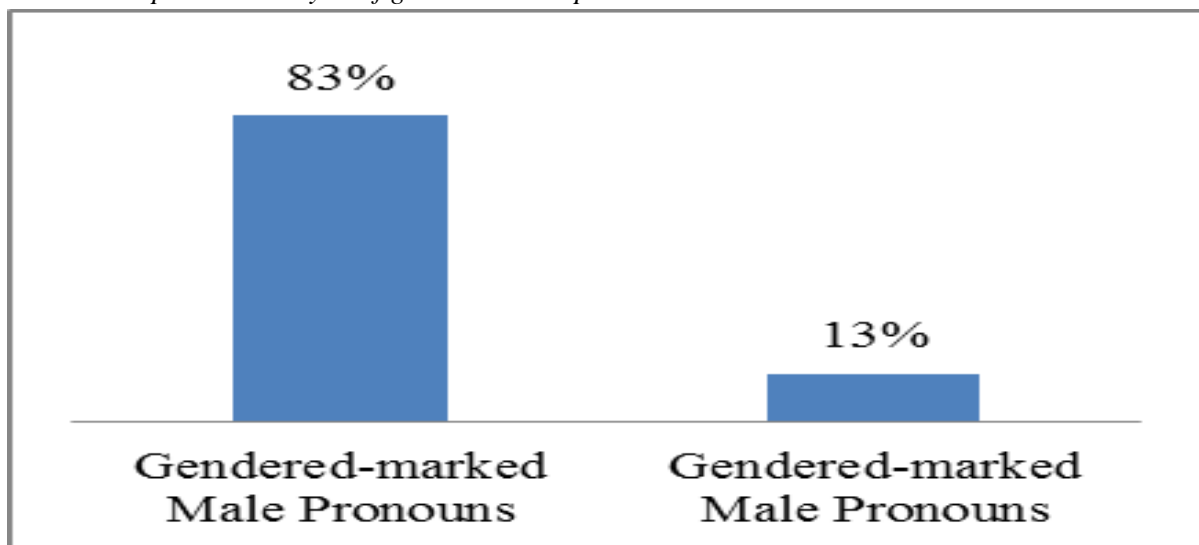
Gender-marked pronouns comparative data with percentages

Forms of Pronouns	Male Pronouns	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Female Pronouns	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Nominative	He	2,087	81%	She	477	19%
Genitive	His	1,240	79%	Her	336	21%
Accusative	Him	602	99%	Hers	3	1%
Reflexive	Himself	129	93%	Herself	10	7%

The study results indicate that the male-gendered pronoun "he" appeared more frequently, at 81%. Whereas the gendered-marked female pronoun "she" was used much less often, at only 19%. The table shows that "him" occurred 99% while "hers" was only 1%. Meanwhile, "himself" occurs at 95% compared to "herself," which is only 5% in all seven-course book data.

Figure 5

Overall comparative analysis of gender marked pronouns



The data shows that proper masculine nouns are primarily used in the text (Fig 5). The textbooks gave the concept of a male-dominated society as compared to equality in gender. It creates a concept of male-dominant society in the developing minds of intermediate-level students as they mainly read about males as professional personalities and females as underrepresented.

Furthermore, the accusative "Him" should not be grouped with the pronoun "Her." It allows for the ambiguity of genitive and accusative usage of "her," but the context determines its meaning. However, the current research examines gender, and in both instances (genitive and accusative utilization of "her"), gender discrimination is evident. Despite this, the investigation is not precise, and the study is limited.

Moreover, the study compares the male and female pronouns by comparing all the forms of "he" to "she". The results show that all of the two gendered-marked pronouns, 83% are the forms of male pronouns as "he", "his", "him", and "himself" as compared to feminine pronouns forms "she," "her", "hers", herself" which is only 13%.

While analyzing the top ten occurred pronouns by their frequency list (Fig 6), the gendered-marked pronoun "he" occurred second with 2,087 frequency, while "I" came first. The second gender-marked pronoun, "his," occurs at number 5th and "him" at number 7th, whereas only one female gendered-marked pronoun, "she," occurs at number 10th in the frequency list. The results indicate a significant gendered inequality in the representation of females compared to males in textbooks. It demonstrates a notable gap with which female personalities or individuals are portrayed, showing a lack of gender balance in textbook materials. Addressing this discrepancy is crucial for promoting gender equality in educational curricula.

Figure 6*Top 10 pronouns in the textbooks*

	Pronoun	Frequency ? ↓
1	i	2,301 ...
2	he	2,087 ...
3	it	1,920 ...
4	you	1,745 ...
5	his	1,240 ...
6	they	693 ...
7	him	602 ...
8	we	584 ...
9	my	521 ...
10	she	477 ...

Gender-marked and gendered-neutral professional terms ratio

The comparison of gendered-marked and gendered-neutral professional terms explores how much the textbooks consist of gender equality regarding female professional rights as a constructed way as well as a learning way. The professional words present in the textbook are searched and then only those represented in this study that have any one form (gendered-marked/gendered-neutral) term frequency as shown below in Fig 7.

Figure 7*Gendered-marked Professional terms in the corpus*

Noun	Frequency ? ↓	Noun	Frequency ? ↓
1 Policeman	22 ...	11 Saleswoman	0 ...
2 Gentleman	14 ...	12 Chairperson	0 ...
3 Salesman	2 ...	13 Gentleperson	0 ...
4 Chairman	2 ...	14 Gentlewoman	0 ...
5 Businessman	2 ...	15 Salesperson	0 ...
6 Fireman	1 ...	16 Police-officer	0 ...
7 Firewoman	0 ...	17 Policewoman	0 ...
8 Businesswoman	0 ...	18 Firefighter	0 ...
9 Businessperson	0 ...		
10 Chairwoman	0 ...		

Table 4*Gender-marked and generic professional terms comparative data with percentages*

Male Professional Terms	f	Female Professional Terms	f	Gendered-generic Terms	f
Salesman	2	Saleswoman	0	Salesperson	0
Policeman	22	Policewoman	0	Police officer	0
Chairman	2	Chairwoman	0	Chairperson	0
Gentleman	14	Gentlewoman	0	Gentleperson	0
Fireman	1	Firewoman	0	Firefighter	0
Businessman	2	Businesswoman	0	Businessperson	0

The analysis reveals that the word “salesman” is mostly used in the corpus compared to its feminine word “saleswoman” and the gendered-neutral term “salesperson”, which does not occur in all seven intermediate course books. Other masculine terms like “policeman,” “Chairman,” “gentleman,” “fireman,” and “businessman” also appeared. Table 4 shows that the above words are present in the text, but their counterparts for feminine terms like “saleswoman,” “policewoman,” “chairwoman,” “gentlewoman,” “firewoman,” and “businesswoman” are not present in the text even no single time.

Figure 8*Gender marked professional terms (collective data)*

On the other hand, in the gendered-neutral table, only one term is present, “police officer”, while all the other gendered-neutral professional terms are not present in the textbooks. Thus, it shows that textbooks consist mostly of masculine characters in the text, and gendered inequality is present in the intermediate English course books of Textbook Boards of Pakistan. The plotted graph in Fig 8 revealed that the overall gendered-marked and neutral professional terms used in the text are gendered-marked and masculine compared to gendered-neutral terms. Gendered-neutral terms are 4%, while masculine terms are 96%. It shows that the textbooks

exploit the gendered inequality to the readers by writing about only males as compared to females in all the works and professions.

Common adjectives used to describe female and male

The study compares the most used adjectives for any specific feminine or masculine nouns. For comparative analysis, the mostly used gender-marked general nouns are selected, one from feminine and one from masculine. The results show that some adjectives are specific to masculine or feminine nouns. The comparative analysis of two nouns, "man" and "woman", by using CQL (corpus query language) with a searching code of [tag= "J.*"] [lemma= "man"] and find fixed adjectives. The study found 68 adjectives used with the noun "man". Whereas only 16 adjectives were used with the noun "woman" with a code of [tag= "J.*"] [lemma= "woman"], which means most of the adjectives are specific to males. As previously observed, the adjective counts of "man" are anticipated to be high, as it is used more frequently (463 vs 121) than "woman." In this context, adjective analysis necessitates a normalization procedure. The normalized value in this aspect facilitates the acquisition of additional insights from the adjective specific to gender in terms of count. The normalized counts of 0.147 for "man" and 0.132 for "woman" allow the researchers to examine the frequency with which adjectives are employed to the number of times each word occurs

Table 5

Common adjectives to the gender marked nouns

Sr. No.	Adjectives	Man	Woman
1	Wise	7	0
2	Serious	2	0
3	Great	2	0
4	White	2	0
5	Young	32	1
6	Old	9	5
7	Nice	3	1
8	Beautiful	0	1
9	Charming	0	1
10	Large	0	4

Although there are fewer overall instances of the word "woman," it is possible to draw the conclusion that adjectives are employed somewhat more often associated with the word "man" than they are with the word "woman" (Table 5).

The data shows that adjectives like "Beautiful" and "Charming" are used with feminine nouns such as "woman." Moreover, these adjectives are used to show females as sexual objects (Bergdahl, 2009). It means that specific adjectives are attributed to specific masculine and feminine nouns. It demonstrates a notable gap in the association of adjectives that are used with female personalities as compared to male personalities. It reveals a lack of gender balance in the text (Fig 9).

Figure 9

Visualization of adjective used to specific gender-marked nouns



Table 6*Usage of common adjectives to "boy" and "girl" in textbooks*

Sr. No.	Adjectives	Boy	Girl
1	Small	5	0
2	Nice	3	0
3	Bright	2	0
4	Brilliant	1	0
5	Dark	1	0
6	Little	11	2
7	Old	11	1
8	Little	2	1
9	Young	1	1
10	Beautiful	0	1
11	White	0	1
12	Bad	0	2
13	Lively	0	2
14	Pretty	0	2

The comparative analysis of adjectives' relations to two nouns, "boy" and "girl", is done by using the CQL coding [tag="J.*"] [lemma="boy"]. The results revealed that 43 adjectives are found for masculine nouns and only 13 adjectives related to the feminine noun "girl" with CQL coding of [tag="J.*"] [lemma="girl"]. The normalization count of "boy" and "girl" (f=326 and 135, respectively) is necessary to gain insights into how frequently adjectives are used relative to the number of times each term appears. The normalized counts of 0.132 for "boy" and 0.096 for "girl" imply that adjectives are more frequently employed and associated with the word "boy" than they are with the word "girl". It indicates a more significant disparity in how language describes each gender. Table 6 above shows that the majority of the adjectives are used with masculine words, and adjectives like "nice," "bright," and "brilliant" are used with masculine words and give a meaning of positive quality. In contrast, only one adjective, "dark", has a negative sense. Four adjectives are equally used for masculine and feminine nouns (but with different frequencies).

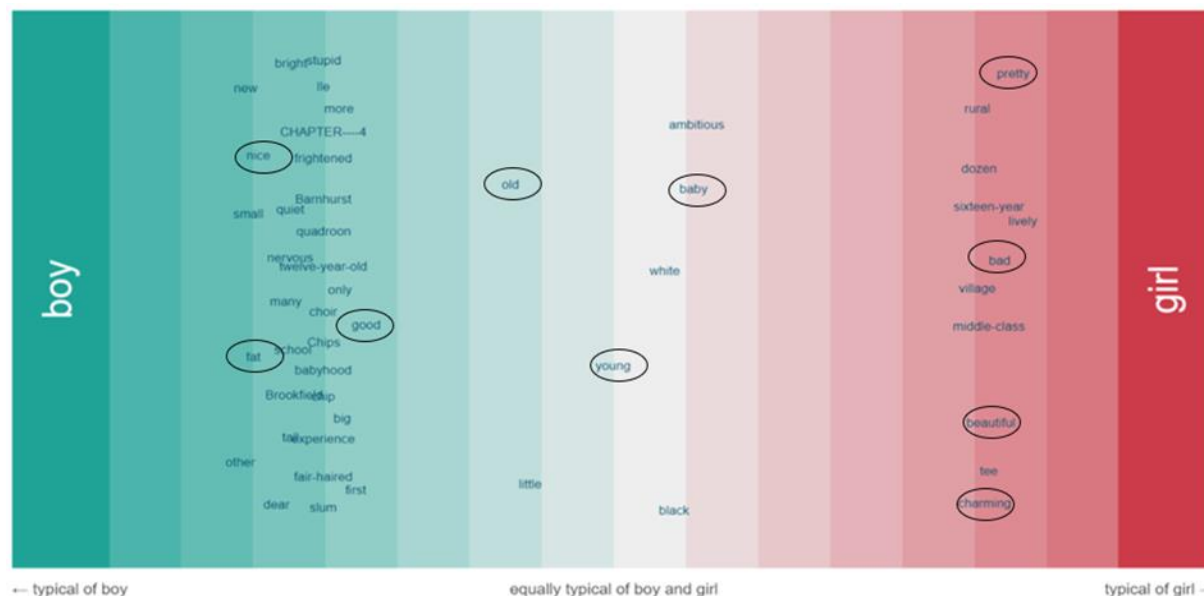
On the other hand, "beautiful" and "pretty" type adjectives are used with feminine nouns as well, and a negative adjective "bad" is also used with the feminine noun girl. It shows how females are given inequality in intermediate-level English textbooks (Fig 10). The disparity in

the frequency of adjectives used to describe female personalities or individuals compared to male personalities highlights an apparent and concerning lack of gender balance in textual content. This imbalance perpetuates and reinforces gender stereotypes and biases, as it suggests that certain qualities or characteristics are more commonly associated with one gender than the other. Achieving gender-neutral and balanced language is essential for promoting equality and combating gender-based discrimination. Gender inequality in employment is perpetuated by societal norms reflected in educational materials.

Mobility restrictions, the promotion of sex-segregated career options (Laiqat, 2022), and the lack of female role models in textbooks in Pakistan (Khokhar, 2020), all contribute to the formation of social views. Moreover, the use of gendered-marked professional terms in educational materials further reinforces traditional stereotypes and hinders efforts to establish a more inclusive and equitable workforce. These textbooks have an impact outside of the classroom, influencing societal perceptions and limiting opportunities for individuals based on gender (Alvi & Rasool, 2013; Perlmutter, 1997). Consequently, in Pakistan, gender discrimination is pervasive owing to inadequate laws, cultural obstacles, and a patriarchal interpretation of religion (Ali & Khan, 2021).

Figure 10

Visualization of adjective difference to gender-marked nouns "boy" and "girl."



Ratio of male and female address title

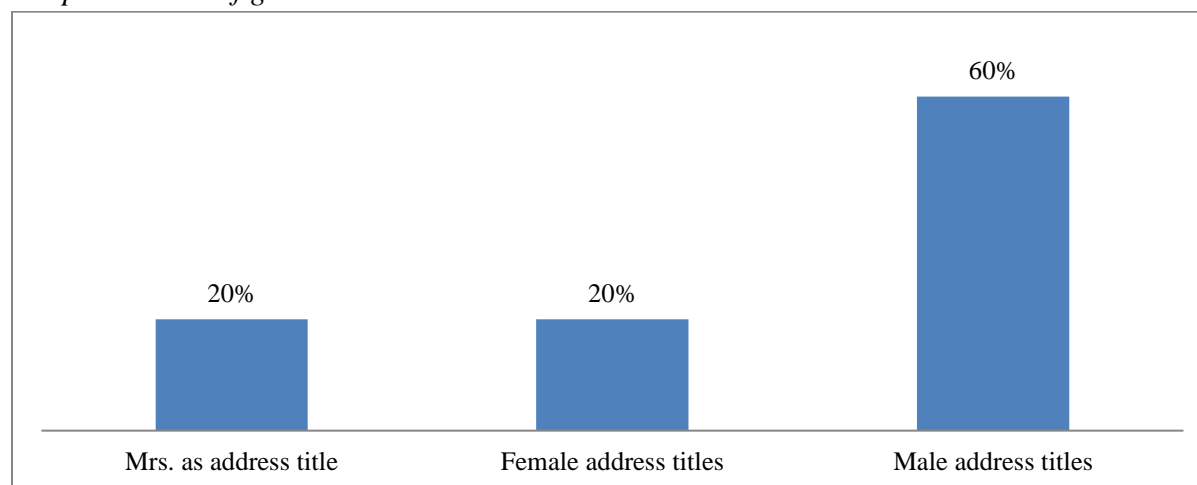
The address titles are of three types: gendered-marked male address titles, gendered-marked female address titles, and “Mrs.” – the third most used address title which is used to address a married woman, and there is no counterpart to “Mrs.”.

Figure 11

Gendered marked address titles in the corpus with frequencies

	Lemma	Frequency	?	↓
1	Mr.	129	...	
2	Sir	125	...	
3	Mrs.	86	...	
4	Miss	76	...	
5	Mr	1	...	
6	Madam	1	...	
7	Ms.	0	...	
8	Ma'am	0	...	

The analysis of the text reveals that gendered-marked male address titles such as “Mr.” and “Sir” are mostly used in the textbook as compared to feminine address titles such as “Miss/Ms.” and “Madam/Ma’am.” Figure 11 shows that the word “Mr.” is mostly used in all the seven textbooks. It also shows that the text is mostly about males and putting females aside as a minority in society. The study reveals that the majority of the topics’ themes are around males as compared to females. The graph below (Fig 12) shows that male address titles represent 60% of the total number of female address titles. The word “Mrs.” is the same in frequency as the female address titles (20%). Moreover, the overall percentage of these (female address titles and “Mrs.”) are less than male address titles. It explores that most of the course books’ lessons and themes revolve around the male-gendered society, thus creating a male-dominant society by putting females aside as a feeble creature. The language used in books has the potential to impact public views, hence contributing to the safeguarding of gender-based social standards. As a result, a critical evaluation of how titles are used in literature is necessary for understanding how books contribute to and perhaps fight current social concerns relating to gender prejudice.

Figure 12*Graphical view of gender-marked address titles used in textbooks*

Discussion and Conclusion

The gender inequality is a clear sign of gender discrimination and sexist language. Scholars have criticized the widespread use of exclusively masculine names and pronouns to refer to all people, arguing that this practice has the potential to marginalize women further and limit their professional opportunities. This way of speaking makes women less prominent and may restrict their freedom of choice in the workplace (Hellinger & Pauwels, 2008; Swim et al., 2004). There is a growing trend of using gender-neutral or unmarked terminology and paired pronouns as substitutes for gender-exclusive phrases.

While the study of gender representation in textbooks in Pakistani context by different researchers, like Hameed (2012), Khan et al. (2014), Rasool et al. (2019), and Rind (2015) shows gender discrimination in different aspects, the gender studies of textbooks showed that females are discriminated against through a low ratio of presentation in the texts, images, jobs, job opportunities, and firstness in conversation. The study shows gender discrimination as a concept that causes more issues of gender discrimination socialization due to gender inequality in the textbooks taught at the intermediate level.

Five important questions about gendered-marked terms show how intermediate English course books in Pakistan influence students to build a gendered society. The first two questions

are about gendered-marked nouns and pronouns analysis, and the results show that all seven textbooks have a high percentage of gendered-marked male nouns and pronouns compared to female and neutral. Text analysis indicates the preponderance of masculine terms like man, boy, uncle, father, and brother, showing that most teaching and learning material and themes involve male gender. It illustrates a male-dominated society in intermediate English textbooks.

The third question examines the use of gendered-marked professional terms to determine society's status regarding equal rights for all in terms of gender roles, and careers, and the results show that textbooks manipulate students to create a gendered society by using more male-related professional terms than female-related ones. The textbooks predominantly contain male professional terminologies without any feminine or gender-neutral professional terms. Male-related professional terminologies also outnumber gender-neutral ones. The fourth question is related to adjectives, and according to many previous studies, some adjectives are gender-specific (Rasul & Irshad, 2008; Zasina, 2019). Still, to use adjectives to discriminate against any gender in textbooks implies the sexist language. The adjectives investigation of two gender-marked general nouns in paired (man/woman, girl/boy) explores that adjectives are more frequently employed and associated with masculine words than they are with feminine words. It indicates a more significant disparity in how language describes each gender. The fifth and final question examines textbooks that utilized male address titles more than female ones, including a word for "married woman" but not for men. The words "Sir" and "Mr." are the most used ones in textbooks 110 and 115, respectively.

Thus, the research confirms Lakoff's (1973, 2005) findings that authors' language and words degrade women. The study recommends that educators and content developers alter and diversify textbook material to provide all students, regardless of gender, with a more inclusive and balanced education. Educational officials are increasingly aware of the need to adopt reforms and standards that enable the design and implementation of gender-inclusive and balanced teaching materials in schools and institutions.

Gender discrimination and sexism in language has its origins in the persistent gender gap in Pakistani society. It could not have a linguistic but a social basis (He, 2010). Societal basis can

be changed only through an inclusive educational system. As long as social injustice persists, efforts to create true equality via language will not be successful.

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