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## EXPLORING THE GENDER REPRESENTATION IN TEXTBOOKS OF BALOCHISTAN AT SECONDARY LEVEL: AN EXAMINATION

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
<b>Gender Representation, Curriculum Analysis, Textbook Bias, Gender Stereotypes, Educational Policy</b>	<p>One of human right that is essential to the fulfilment of all other rights is education. It empowers people, encourages the personal liberty, and makes a substantial contribution to general growth. In contrast, textbooks are vital to the educational process because they act as guide for knowledge transfer from more experienced people (teachers) to students and as medium of change. The depiction of gender in Balochistan secondary school textbooks is critically examined in this study, with an emphasis on locating and evaluating gender biases in the course materials. Gender representation in the curriculum was investigated using exploratory research design &amp; qualitative content analysis were used as research approach. Text in context approach was considered to explore gender representation in the study. Research shows stark imbalance and gap between male and female representations, with males being portrayed as intelligent, capable, and in leadership roles and women mostly restricted to caring for the home and children. Additionally, this study demonstrates how these stereotyped narratives influence that how society views and thinks, and how they uphold established gender standards that limits chances for young students. Thus, the data collected highlights the pressing need for curricular changes that result in a more equitable and inclusive gender representation, guaranteeing that the male and female students are equally represented in the instructional materials.</p>
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## INTRODUCTION

Education is methodical process, usually overseen by instructors, that aims to indorse learning and the acquisition of information, skills, ethics, principles, and practices. According to United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2019) education is vital to realization of all other rights and is essential human right. It empowers people, increases personal freedom, and makes substantial contribution to general growth. Textbooks, curricula,

and education all work together to shape the learning process. Effective education is built on a solid curriculum, which gives instructors a framework for creating captivating lessons and assessment. In turn, textbooks are essential to curriculum because they provide well-organized and logical way to deliver information, which helps students learn. [Zahra, Inawati and Ariffin \(2024\)](#) confirms that textbooks may be a strong tool in development of gender identities. This is due to fact that they not only teach subject information but offer social and gender norms over their content. [Abatar \(2021\)](#) and [Xenofontos \(2024\)](#) contend that textbooks are instructional tools that supply knowledge and greatly affect students' views, shaping individual and social conduct.

According to [Shakir \(2020\)](#) the curriculum of an academic program provides basic guidelines for process of teaching and learning. The processes of planning, carrying out, and evaluating are numerous. Actually, whether directly or indirectly, curriculum plays a major part in every facet of the education. A good curriculum is even more important if it is being developed for a course that teaches second language learners. [Goyal and Rose \(2020\)](#) and [Bachore and Semela \(2022\)](#) explained that in the teaching and learning process, educational resources are crucial learning aids. The learners' opinions and perceptions, particularly with regard to gender roles, can be significantly shaped and reinforced by material. The international literature on gender in education has covered a wide range of gender-related topics, such as gender representation, gender stereotyping, and under-representation of women in textbooks. Gender is a social and cultural construct that varies among countries and changes over time, in contrast to biological sex, which is based on physical characteristics Gender, according to [Wharton \(2009\)](#) is a system of organized and pervasive practices that operates independently of individuals. This suggests that social interaction and gender are influenced by cultural standards that people are expected to follow.

According to [Wafa \(2021\)](#) the learners' perceptions of gender and its functions in society, as well as their expectations for both themselves and other people, can be influenced and shaped by persistent gender stereotypes in educational materials. [Dejene \(2017\)](#) approved that gender imbalances that exist in society, textbooks may assist to tackle social problems. As a result, textbooks are considered powerful social change agents since they teach pupils universal ideas. Similarly the Textbooks frequently represent gender in stereotyped ways. Women are shown as weak, compassionate, empathetic, caring, and selfless, whereas males are portrayed as the head of the home, in charge of finances, and supposed to be assertive, self-sufficient, daring, as well as career-oriented challenged within the educational system, particularly in a region like Balochistan. Thus, [Lee and Mahmoudi \(2020\)](#) states the persistent gender preconceptions in the learning materials, postulating how biases might impact and influences students' knowledge of gender and its roles in society, and their outlooks of themselves and others based on gender representation. The textbook board of different levels in Pakistan have emphasized necessity for accessible components of education to be portrayed in curriculum along with functional capacity.

The research presented in this article had found that sexual preference themes and stereotyped depictions of men and women are prominent in instructional materials and neglecting females

and their roles in textbooks while keeping them boundless and restricted up to the household chores. [Bader et al. \(2023\)](#) and [Hamdan and Jalabneh \(2009\)](#) confirm that gendered acumen of the school administrators and educationists within that situation seems to be a fundamental issue to think about. Thus, research that analyzed gender bias in textbooks throughout years have consistently shown representation of gender prejudice in educational materials ([Ahmed & Tian, 2023](#)). The study aims to explore gender representation in secondary level textbooks of Balochistan Board. [UNESCO \(2019\)](#) emphasize that addressing gender representation is crucial for promoting growth and ensuring project sustainability. The significance of this study stems from its ability to assist policymakers, educators, and curriculum developers, providing them with useful insights and better knowledge of gender biases prevalent in educational resources. This knowledge may be used to create inclusive curriculum, finally fostering gender equality in education.

### **Objective & Question**

1. To explore the gender representation in secondary level curriculum.
2. How secondary level curriculum represents gender?

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A study was done by [Durrani \(2008\)](#) to investigate how Pakistani identities and gender were produced in relation to one another in textbooks and the national curriculum. The research approach was focusing on a specific interpretation of Pakistani identity. Research uncovered a variety of complex issues, such as culture diversity, inequality, and national identity. Research found that, when it came to military and leadership duties, men were shown in superior roles, whilst women were only allowed to play subordinate roles as part of her study on gender discrimination. In addition, girls were only depicted by two female icons, but many religious reformers, conquests, and martyrs were used to symbolize boys. Moreover, it was discovered that women were not allowed to work in paid positions and that their only duty was that of the ideal mothers and caregivers. Thus, in a study on females and education at university level in Pakistan, [Malik and Courtney \(2011\)](#) draw the conclusion that "course book present major chance for bridging gender gap. Commissioning textbooks that address the noted discrepancy appears the desirable. In a similar study it was found that male characters predominate in the textbooks.

According to study, because women are portrayed in textbooks as conforming to traditional gender norms, the patriarchal family system is further supported ([Ullah & Skeleton, 2014](#)). A study conducted by [Nofal and Qawar \(2015\)](#) examined procedure of gender in a Jordan-used ELT curriculum. They found that there was excess of masculine figures in terms of communal, artistic, and verbal representation. With both images and phrases, there were about equal the numbers of male and female characters. Men dominated more societal roles than women, they discovered. Based on these findings, they came to the conclusion that the "Action Pack 10" did not accurately represent current Jordanian society, in which women were highly regarded and given outstanding jobs. [Ullah and Haque \(2016\)](#) examined twenty-four textbooks used in Pakistani public schools and discovered that the content and illustrations were gender skewed.

Boys' and girls' activities were discovered to be stereotyped. Dialogues and conversations also contained gender bias. Males were depicted as main protagonists. They discovered that trips and excursions are gendered as well. Based on their research, authors contend that children's understanding of socially acceptable behavior is enhanced by the representation of gender in textbooks.

Ullah and Haque (2016) examined Social studies, Urdu, and English textbooks for grades 1–8 from a feminist perspective. They came to the conclusion that the aforementioned school textbooks were full of gender-biased illustrations that could have a negative impact on the children's identity formation process with the aid of the qualitative content-analysis technique. When it relates to visibility, sexual identity is crucial. There seems to be research upon sexual identity portrayal concerns and the unequal treatment of women in curriculum as significant educational difficulties (UNESCO, 2017). This essay focuses on how males and females are portrayed in curriculum of Balochistan and how it affects students' perceptions of gendered and people. Masud (2017) came to opinion, that the course book used did not fairly represent men and women after reviewing a number of studies and publications. She recommend that it as significant concern that needed to be addressed right away for benefit of future generations. Dejene (2017) discussed that gender biases that still exist in society, textbooks help to solve societal issues. As a result, textbooks are seen as effective social change agents since they teach students universal ideals as early years of school are when students are able to instill vital beliefs.

The elementary level curriculum is crucial for forming children's personalities and training their minds. That was the major factor that why scholars from many civilizations have been interested in the elementary school textbooks. According to Demira and Yavuz (2017), the "Yes You Can" course book series featured a strong balance of male and female representation in terms of the graphic visibility, domestic role distribution, assignment of activities and sports, participation in conversations and text writings, primness in the dialogue initiation and text mention, and gender emphasis in writings. There were positive and negative relationships between the vocations allotted to men and women in the course book series. As compared to men, the women were given noticeably more unorthodox and less conventional employment assignments. As a result, the "Yes You Can" unorthodox course book series was praised for the caliber of the occupations offered. This can affect learners' attitudes, career choices, and social behavior. In general, the course book series was thus found to feature extremely extravagant wording and graphics that were inclusive of all genders. Similarly, this continued stereotype reinforcing appears to have exacerbated the possible risks to achieving gender equality in textbooks.

The gender representation in the English "Unlimited Special Edition/level 1" textbook used in a "Kingdom of Saudi Arabia" university was examined by Sulaimani (2017). The study adopted a quantitative methodology, using descriptive statistical analysis to look into the distribution of male and female frequencies. The gender representation in the EFL textbook was examined, and it was discovered that women were underrepresented. The male characters outnumbered female characters by a wide margin. In the "course book," about half of the conversations were

between men. Even when men and women were both present in one of the talks, the overall number of the male-female dialogs was found to be pointedly lower than that of conversations between only one genders. In order to find the traditional sexual characteristics in secondary education English publications across Dhaka, Australia, Malaysian, as well as Pakistan, [Islam and Asadullah \(2018\)](#) employed twenty-one variables of portrayal and absence in regards to equally excellence and capacity. Their study's findings demonstrated textbook bias in favor of men. It was noted that female representations were of lower quality. Their jobs were seen to be more traditional and less prestigious, and they tended to have meek along with introverted personalities.

According to [Aivelo et al. \(2022\)](#), transition of gender conversations in educational materials is typically shallow, alternating between outmoded preconceptions and muted portrayals. This implies that while some textbooks are moving towards fair depictions, significant prejudices exist, influencing portrayal of gender in STEM education worldwide. According to [Gumilar et al. \(2022\)](#), women are usually depicted as passive viewers or assistance in scientific endeavors, as opposed to active participants. This supports conventional gender norms and fosters idea that women are less competent of science, which can harm girls' enthusiasm and performance in these disciplines. The portrayal of gender in textbooks has a significant impact on students' conceptions of gender roles and own scientific ability. The study examines gender bias in three ELT Indonesian textbooks for three levels of education, revealing despite global efforts to help gender equality, gender bias persists. The textbooks depict men in leading roles and women in passive positions, reinforcing stereotypes about gender roles. Results suggest that developing educational materials free of gender-based stereotypes & reflecting balanced share of genders requires concerted efforts from policy makers, educators, authors, and publishers ([Zahra et al., 2024](#)).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In an exploratory research design, a qualitative content analysis approach was used to examine the how gender is represented in curriculum. Content analysis as an autonomous qualitative descriptive approach is mainly described as “method for knowing, examining and presenting patterns (themes) within data” ([Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79](#)). Thus, during content analysis, the researcher quantifies the frequencies of specific words, expression, or concepts. While various forms of texts can serve as research resources, written documents remain most utilized ones ([Leary et al., 2014](#)). Based on convenience two textbooks of Baluchistan board i.e.: English and Pakistan studies of secondary level were used as sample to analyze. Internationally recognized gender terminologies include variety of identities that go beyond traditional male and female categories.

These terminologies were recognized by reputable organizations like the United Nations (UN), World Health Organization (WHO), and the American Psychological Association (APA). [Jaffar et al., \(2023\)](#) employed the content analysis approach in exploratory study design to determine how responsive the curriculum is to address disaster risk reduction. The researchers used list of frequently discussed terminologies related to main theme of study in order to investigate

how responsive textbooks, curricula, and policies are to DRR. For analysis text in context were used as strategy to explore the gender roles discussed in curriculum. For trustworthiness the text was recognized and cited (document, page numbers). Thus, the frequency of the term's usage and its occurrences were recorded, along with the interpretation of text in the context reference.

**Table 1**

*Interpretation of Text In Context Reference*

Gender Identity	PCT	RRO	Reference
Male	Yes	Yes	WHO: Gender and Health
Female	Yes	Yes	WHO: Gender and Health
Non-binary	No	Yes	UN: Living Free & Equal
Genderqueer	No	Yes	UN: Living Free & Equal
Agender	No	Yes	UN: Living Free & Equal
Bi-gender	No	Yes	UN: Living Free & Equal
Gender-fluid	No	Yes	UN: Living Free & Equal
Cisgender	No	Yes	APA
Intersex	No	Yes	UN: Fact Sheet: Intersex

**Table 1A**

*Interpretation of Text In Context Reference*

Gender Identity	PCT	RRO	Reference
Man	Yes	No	-
Woman	Yes	No	-
Boys	Yes	No	-
Girls	Yes	No	-
Gender Expression	No	No	-
Masculine	No	No	-
Feminine	No	No	-
Homosexual	No	No	-
Heterosexual	No	No	-
Sexuality	No	No	-

## ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

### IX-X Pakistan Studies & English Textbooks

The textbooks of Grade XI and X were analyzed to determine the gender-related content in the textbooks. The different terminologies were used to explore gender representation within the textbooks.

#### Male

A male individual refers to a man or a boy, belonging to the sex that is generally capable of producing small, usually mobile reproductive cells (sperm or spermatozoa) which fertilize the eggs of female. "It is observed that males and females work as professional nurses but females



are in majority." (English IX-grade, Chapter 08, 79). The term male was used in framework of a gender in this unit. The essential meaning in the above cited illustration is that female's nurses are in majority, whereas males are very less. Why? Because for the males there are number of professions including engineering, businessman, officers, but for females there are just specific professions highlighted in textbooks; teacher or nurses. The word male was used in context of a gender in this unit, accent population of male. Point here is not about that nursing profession is not a good profession, indeed it's a very noble profession for females as it means serving for humanity, but the point of view is that along with this, no other profession is highlighted in Textbooks.

The goal of the textbooks is to educate pupils about a certain function that is entirely ignored for girls (and males) in the society. "For instance, emigrants usually happen to be male, which cause to increase male population of host country." "According to 1998 census, population of the country was 132.4 million in which 68.9 million were males and remaining 63.5 million were females." "It means, that with every 100 females there are 108 males." (Pakistan Studies X-grade, Chapter 05, Page 85 and 86). The above examples clearly identify the ratio of males, that male's population is more than the female population according to 1998 census. (Weiss, 1999). This unbalanced proportion is partly a result of sex-selective abortion and "gendercide," referring to the deliberate elimination of female newborns, in several nations where males are more desired. Today, still in some local areas, killing female infants is one of the most common acts by their locals. This shows that textbooks are embedded with such stereotypical facts and is not promoting any kind of positivity for females and this is what our children learn from textbooks.

## **Female**

A female individual refers to: a woman or a girl, belonging to the sex that is generally capable of bearing young, producing eggs. "It is observed that males and females work as professional nurses but females are in majority." "This profession is more suitable for females because they are more sensitive, caring, and tolerating." (English IX-grade, Chapter 08, Page 79 and 80). The term female was mentioned in reference of a gender in this unit, highlighting the profession of nursing for females. The fundamental meaning in the above quoted example is that female's nurses are in majority, whereas males are very less. Why? Because for males there are number of professions including engineering, businessman, officers etc., but for females there are just specific professions highlighted in textbooks; teacher or nurses. "Now our females at homes enjoy benefits of modern technology in form of refrigerator, ovens, juicers, blenders, freezers and washing machines." (English X-grade, Chapter 02, Page 20). In this unit, the word "female" was utilized in reference to a gender. The text example above makes same point very obvious. The example given above is a good illustration of stereotypical role identification; its purpose is to raise pupils' awareness of and train a certain character aimed at ladies (besides boys) in social order.

The fundamental meaning is that since men stand only employees in the household, women are therefore dependent on men. If a male family member is not there, an exception may be established, allowing women to leave the house to attend to their needs. Females are primarily

shown in the study's textbooks engaged in interior and domestic tasks like cooking and child care. Their mobility is only depicted in terms of grocery buying. "According to 1998 census, total population of country was 132.4 million in which 68.9 million were males and remaining 63.5 million were females." "It means, with every 100 females there are 108 males." (Pakistan Studies X-grade, Chapter 05, Page 85). The word female was mentioned in relation to a gender, emphasizing the male population. According to the 1998 census, the number of males exceed that of females as evidenced, by the examples above. This skewed ratio is partially caused by selective abortion based on sex and "gendercide," which is the death of infant females in some nations where males are desired. This demonstrates that information our children receive from textbooks is filled with such stereotypical facts and does not support any kind of optimism for women.

### **Man**

A mature male human; a person classified within specific group based on factors such as (birth, residence, affiliation, or profession) – usually used in combination. "He was a pious man and led pure life." (English IX-grade, Chapter 01, 7). The term man was mentioned in reference of a pious man in this unit. The Muslim sahaba like Hazrat Abu Bakr R.A were represented as the Muslim role model. Men were expected to labor hard, and their strongest traits were bravery, courage, strength, and wisdom. In contrast to these female Muslim philosophers, there were none mentioned in Pakistani textbooks for Pakistan studies and English classes. In both the English and Pakistani studies topics, which are seen to be most essential subjects, not a single chapter featured the female role model from Muslim history. It is assumed that school-level textbooks as well as instructional materials play significant role in inspiring children to adopt societal standards, civilizations to support them in becoming attired people and contributing associates of society. By emphasizing greater number of male figures, gender prejudice in textbooks reduced the chances for girls. Not only were male characters more dominant, but they also had distinctly male personality traits. The sentences that follow are instances of these actions.

The textual examination of the narratives shows that the stories centered on men presented the role models. These individuals were depicted as exemplars by displaying both outdated masculine traits and exceptional characteristics. Male personalities, especially Muslim Caliphs and philosophers, were represented as an ideal in textbooks. "Patriotism means "love for the country, willingness to defend it." It is a noble sentiment and a national virtue which motivates a man to do whatever he can for solidarity and development of his country and a commitment to serve it in all conditions." "It also makes us behave patiently and sensibly with our country men." (English IX-grade, Chapter 07, Page 66 and 67). In this unit, the word "men" was used in a broad sense without respect to gender. Only men are portrayed as soldiers in the textbooks and as having the duty of defending the country from adversary when it comes to a country's sovereignty. The idea of female soldiers does not exist. Females are subjected to discrimination by placing restrictions on their play in terms of what, how, and where they may do it indoors), as well as by the requirement that female children (a girl child) be in charge of their younger siblings.



Male effort and struggles for nationwide basis and distinctiveness are recognized, but female work and efforts are not shown nor recognized anywhere. "Discipline results in suitable behavior which requires training and self-realization. This training enables a man regulate and control his thoughts and actions to lead a balanced life." (English IX-grade, Chapter 09, Page 91). The core meaning in above-mentioned illustration that women are not valuable members of the social order or are not as significant as men. It is abundantly obvious that only men are able to manage and control their thoughts and behaviors, leading to a balanced life. "The man of upright, Whose guiltless heart is free? Man whose silent days. In harmless joys are spent, That man needs neither towers, Nor armor for defense, He only can behold, With unafrighted eyes," "What are qualities of man of life upright?" (English IX-grade, Chapter 10. Page 99). As this poem was completely based on a man, his life, and his strengths. Also, pronouns like "his, he" were reflected many times. Term man was used in general context, regardless of gender, in this unit.

Mostly men are portrayed as fighters including as possessing the duty of serving constitution since adversary when it comes to a national action. The idea of feminine troops does not exist. Women are therefore subjected to discrimination over and done with imposition of limitations on whatever, in what way, and wherever girls engage (playing with dolls inside), and from the need that female children (a girl kid) be in charge of their younger siblings. The focus of "The Man of Life" is a morally upright man with a positive outlook on life. It is devoid of impiety and conceit. His days of silence are filled with joys that do not damage others. The guy who lives an ethical life never loses hope, and no amount of grief can make him unhappy. Towers or armor are not necessary for his defense. Not even vaults could hide his sin from God's raging wrath. He observes the terrifying ocean depths and the trembling sky with unafraid eyes. He despises ease. He uses the skies as his source of inspiration and looks to heavens for guidance. His money is a life well lived, and his friends are good thoughts. The earth is also a sober inn and a peaceful pilgrimage for an "A healthy man can make the best use of his abilities and capabilities.

He is always fresh, active and ready to compete. On other hand, an unhealthy man is always sad, gloomy and lacks self-confidence." "The competitive instinct is natural in man." (English IX-Grade, Chapter 11, Page 103 and 104). The narratives convey the idea that the sole holiday fun for girls is found in the domestic activities like attempting to cook or offering to help their moms clean the house. Female youngsters are not offered a space for outside play or just for their own delight and easing during holidays. Male and female youth participate in different sports and games. Male children are seen participating in outside sports, such as football, cricket, and hockey, while girls are yet again kept inside the house and portrayed participating in interior pastimes, like crafting dolls, having doll weddings, socializing with peers at home, etc. Boys performed sporting and tournaments like football, cricket, badminton, hockey, tennis and swimming; girls did not partake in these activities. As unit of Sports and Health different sports, games, activities related to females should have been mentioned in is chapter but the curriculum completely disregarded the inclusion of females and teenagers throughout game or event.

"The old man and his grandson." "Once the old man threw up on its supper, the husband and the wife thought it was nasty. They couldn't matter how many years it because the old man practiced it too regularly." "Henceforth, the old man could not get enough food to satisfy his hunger." "At once, they rushed to the old man." "From then onwards, the old man always shared their table." (English IX-Grade, Chapter 12. Page 112 and 113). The word man was used in context of a gender in this unit. "Once upon a time, there lived a wealthy man named Naeem in a big town." "He was a sensible and wise man who always felt and realized the hardships of the poor and needy people." "But in adversity' the inner man wakes up and we come to know our real strength and weakness. History tells us about that all great men are brave people who worked their way up through difficulties and obstacles." (English X-grade, Chapter 03, Page 27, 28 and 36). The word man was used in context of a gender in this unit. The above example is the story about a man named Naeem, who is represented wealthy, a sensible and wise man who has the feelings for poor and needy people and in the same context it is being mentioned that "all great man are courageous beings who drove their way up through hardships and challenges."

Why only men? Why not women can be one of those brave people who struggles hard and works through every obstacle? Why the textbooks had only focused on men's strengths and difficulties that are only faced by men. History also highlights women roles in every context of life whether in Islamic context, or professionally or in any other framework. These are the textbooks that plays a very central role in preference with neglecting females in every aspect of life. "The Muslims of the subcontinent struggled hard for the creation of Pakistan. They had to sacrifice the lives of thousands of men, women and children." "All the men, the women and children stood up like a solid rock which the enemy could not break through." "The soldiers, the engineers, the doctors, the businessmen, the poets, the artists, the students, the laborers'; in short all Pakistanis worked bravely in their own fields and defeated the enemy." "Although, we were fighting against an enemy that was five times more powerful in men and arms, the powers of unity, faith and discipline helped us in the successful defense of our homeland." (English X-grade, Chapter 06, Page 59-61). Mostly men are portrayed as fighters including as possessing the duty of serving the constitution since the adversary when it comes to a national action.

The idea of feminine troops does not exist. Women are therefore subjected to discrimination over and done with the imposition of limitations on whatever, in what way, and wherever girls engage (playing with dolls inside), as well as from the need that female children (a girl kid) be in charge of their younger siblings. "Any lay man can be trained to administer first aid." A word man is used in context of a lay man in this unit. (English X-grade, Chapter 10, Page 107). Word "man" reflected only once in this unit, page no. 107. Whereas, no women worker was represented or mentioned in the whole unit. "Happy is the man who acquires the habit of reading when he is young." The term man was used in general context, regardless of gender, in this unit. "Poor indeed is the man who does not read, and empty is his life." "That is why a civilized man is drawn to a good book more than he is drawn towards any other form of entertainment like movies, television, football and cricket." (English X-grade, Chapter 11, Page

114). The term man was mentioned in reference of a happy man, poor man and a civilized man in this unit.

The text's context suggests that boys learned outside of school and that they did not just learn from materials. Individuals moreover gain knowledge via proficiencies, for example when they perform unskilled activities to understand the self-worth of hard work or go on field trips with teachers to explore diversity of the world. Men are presented as the only good citizens in society whereas, in reality it's quite different. "The seeking of knowledge has been emphasized in the Holy sayings of Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ to the extent that it has been declared obligatory for all Muslims men and women." "Education makes a man civilized, i.e. embellish him/her with high moral values, like sympathy, sacrifice, truthfulness, sincerity, patriotism." "In many areas, men wear turban." (Pakistan Studies X-grade, Chapter 05, Page 85-98). The text's context suggests that boys learned outside of school, they did not just learn from course. Individuals moreover gain knowledge via proficiencies, when perform unskilled activities to understand the self-worth of hard work or go on field trips with teachers to explore diversity of the world. Men are presented as the only good citizens in a society whereas, in reality it's quite different. Men are known for their manual labor, and qualities include compassion, ambition, strength, and knowledge.

## **Woman**

A mature female individual; belonging to a specific group based on various factors such as birth, home, affiliation, or profession) usually used in combination. "When a woman becomes a nurse, she enters a very noble profession, which requires great commitment and dedication." "Why is nursing a suitable profession for a woman?" (English IX-Grade, Chapter 08, Page 80 and 81). The term woman was mentioned in reference of a nurse, in this unit. The word female is used in context of a gender in this unit, highlighting the profession of nursing for females. The illustration shown above has the core theme that female's nurses are in majority, whereas males are very less. Why? Because for males are number of professions including engineering, businessman, officers etc., but for females there are just specific professions highlighted in textbooks; teacher or nurses. In the textbooks. The objective is to educate kids about and instill in them a certain role for women (and men) in society. The material review of the manuals too indicated that women as well as the daughters are trained sacrifice, humanity, and politeness precepts, whether consciously or unconsciously. The idea of caving in to pressure from others is deeply ingrained in their brain from a very young age, and they are specifically groomed to compromise.

All of the man's character were discussed in English and Pakistan studies textbooks, and their courage and bravery qualities were magnificently portrayed, but no female figures from the Pakistani history were given any attention. Because women have still been marginalized and the function they fulfilled as the Girl Guides was not described in any texts, guys contributors were shown in assisting positions in many tragic scenarios. "Women were treated like animals. Illiteracy ruled everywhere and in every sphere of life." "Women got their due rights and respect." (English IX-grade, Chapter 01, Page 9 and 10). The word woman was used in context

of a gender, in this unit. In this unit, Gender equality should be reflected, the women role and status in Islam was mandatory to be reflected in this unit. Women Islamic role models should have been reflected at these levels but those were also neglected. With the exception of a few exceptional positions, girls accept outmoded title role and only see and see themselves in those characters. The males were emphasized as the primary providers of income. Thus, muslim and Sub-Continent history is replete with instances of male members performing extraordinarily well. History demonstrates that the Muslim philosophers played a significant role in guiding people toward the right path in the subcontinent, with no women participating in this effort in textbooks.

Apart from highlighting Muslims men history, it has to be made mandatory to highlight brave women roles in Islam and for Islam. For example; Hazrat Khadija bint Khuwaylid (RA), Prophet Muhammad ﷺ first wife. Khadijah RA is renowned for leading a prosperous Silk Road business and trading in a sector that was almost entirely dominated by males. Even when she was running a business, she continued to invest her money and work tirelessly for the common good. "This work is done by the women and girls." "Women, young and old girls take part in production of embroidered handicrafts." "The women folk spend hours in doing embroidery work as a means of earning for the family." "The 'Kowchik' stitching has its own pattern which is embroidered on shawls and shirts for the women." "The Afghan women are especially good in embroidery and they most of rich and colorful designs seen at the handicrafts shops in Quetta." How do women find time for embroidery? "How does embroidery and needle work help women?" "How have Afghan women donated to embroidery of Balochistan?" (English X-grade, Chapter 07, Page 72-75). Again, here women girls were shown in traditional roles. Apart from rare circumstance, girls accept gender values, only perceive and see themselves in such roles.

In other occupations for women were completely disregarded, and they were excluded from such characters and positions in the book. Because men's positions in the workforce shaped both who they are and what they become. Boys must obtain an education if they are to mature into men and fulfil their responsibilities. The text excerpt that follows supports this fallacy about women's careers. They spend their time indoors reading children's literature, making traditional clothing, and cleaning the house. "The establishment of separate police stations for women also started during Benazir government." "Every Union Council comprised 21 members, including reserved seats for women and minorities." "In addition, 33% of the seats were reserved for women and 5% for laborers', farmers and minorities each." "In addition, there were 60 reserved seats for women, and 10 seats for minorities." "Thousands of Kashmiris have been martyred so far, women and children are harassed on daily basis, and the houses are set on fire." (Pakistan Studies X-grade, Chapter 01, Page 16-22). Thus, her money and work tirelessly for the common Recognizing the achievements and contribution of women nurtures self-respect in every human being, which is vital for all children and adults, in present and in the future.

Teaching women's history should be made an integral part of textbooks, as textbooks are the main source of learning for children's, but as analyzed in Balochistan textbooks, such concepts

were ignored from the very initial level. "Due to economic awareness the women are now more inclined towards employment." "The seeking of knowledge has been emphasized in the Holy sayings of Hazrat Muhammad ﷺ to extent that it has been declared obligatory for all Muslims men and women." "women cover their body with sheet or veil called "dopatta". "Embroidery is the favorite pastime business of Baloch women." "The women enjoy special respect in every corner of our society." "Among women also, wearing shalwar kameez and sheet, etc. are very popular." (Pakistan Studies X-grade, Chapter 05, Page 85-101). In other occupations for women were completely disregarded, and they were excluded from such characters and eminences in book. Because men's positions in workforce shaped both who they are and what they become. Boys must obtain an education if they are to mature into men and fulfil their responsibilities. The text excerpt that follows supports this fallacy about women's careers. They spend their time indoors reading the children's literature, making the traditional clothing, and cleaning the house.

### **Boy**

A boy is a young male individual . The term is usually applied to a child or a teenager. When a male human matures into adulthood, he is referred to as a man. "It has also been observed that young boys and girls are tempted to take the drugs either by their friends or by keeping bad company into men and fulfil their responsibilities." (English IX-grade, Chapter 02, 20). Word boy was used in context of a young boy. The text above shows attitudes towards drugs among school youths.

### **Girl**

A girl is a young female individual, generally a child or a teenager. Upon reaching adulthood she is properly referred as a woman. "It has also been observed that young boys and girls are tempted to take drugs either by their friends or by keeping bad company." (English X-grade, Chapter 02, Page 20). Word girl mentioned only once in this unit, page no. 20. Word girl was used in a context of a young girl. "This work is done by the women and girls." "Women, young and old girls take part in production of embroidered handicrafts." (English X-grade, Chapter 07, Page 71 and 72). Word girl mentioned several times in this unit, page no. 71 and 72. Again here women and girls were shown in traditional roles. Girls accepted conventional duties and, but apart from few unique situations, exclusively saw, imagined themselves in stereotypical families. In other occupations for women were totally disregarded, they were excluded from such characters and eminences in book. For reason that men's positions in workforce shaped both who they are and what they become. Boys must obtain an education if they are to mature into men and fulfil their responsibilities, text excerpt that follows supports this myth about women's care.

## **FINDINGS & DISCUSSION**

Through content analysis, dominance of males in school textbooks reflects a gender imbalance, where male figures are often portrayed more frequently and in authoritative roles, leading to limited representation of the female perspectives and experiences. [Amini and Birjandi \(2012\)](#) confirm depiction of men & women in many activities, women are stereotypically represented as homemakers, spending majority of their time managing domestic responsibilities, such as

cleaning, cooking etc. with occasional breaks for studying or watching TV despite the fact, that girls academically outperform boys in every aspect of school life and demonstrate a more optimistic approach to learning, their achievements are not mirrored in the way their peers and educators shaped perceptions of them, which continue to be very traditional and conventional (Marmani, 2022). Subsequently, the depiction of gender roles and the representation of male and female characters in literature likely play crucial role in shaping children's understanding of gender identity and self-image (Hamilton et al., 2006). The textbooks highlight that woman actively participates in the public domain, it has been observed that the roles within the public domain are reinforced, recognized, authenticated, along with the simulated using a variety of illustrations.

Chavatzia (2017) confirms the studies on gender bias in the education also include UNESCO's review of 110 national curricula from 78 countries. It discovered evidence of gender biases and prejudices, with photos of the women being severely under-represented in textbooks. Similarly research also confirm that the suggested career options for women remained insufficient, while the variety of professions for the men had augmented (Nurlu, 2021). Further, the graphics and discussions in both sources plainly show gender prejudice against males and girls. Thus, the pictures and discussions may appear common and free of the prejudice because they represent typical settings in the social milieu, namely, females are expected to handle the home activities such as cooking and cleaning the house, as depicted in Figure 1a. Males, on the other hand, are shown as participating in outdoor and 'manly' activities like camping and automobile repair (Zahra et al., 2024). In similar way Demir and Yavuz, (2017) confirm that majority of textbooks seldom feature women inside of the home, whereas males are primarily depicted in public locations and professional settings also, stereotypes and gender prejudice against women were obvious.

Female characters were under-represented in numerous ways, including visibility, speaking opportunities, representation in family, other social and vocational positions home obligations, and active engagement in recreational and leisure activities. Besides, it has been confirmed that traditional responsibilities, such as parenthood, raising children, sewing, and embroidery are associated with women's gender roles (Pamuk & Muc, 2021). The existence of gender biasness in academic textbooks and instructional materials can have substantial impact on how students and teachers perceive gender roles (Tyarakanita et al., 2021). Women are commonly found in nurturing professions such as education and healthcare within public sector. Consequently, an analysis of the three textbooks indicates that male figures dominate the selected texts, whereas female figures remain significantly underrepresented (Ali & Hussain, 2019). Research find that there was not single lesson or statement which highlights position and difficulties or matters contiguous to women in Pakistani civilization and their representation with Islamic reference. The inclination to favor one gender over another is simplest definition of gender bias (Reiners, 2021).

According to UNESCO (2019), defined it as discrimination, assumptions, and treatment that people experience as a result of gender disparities or gender-based roles. Stated differently,

gender prejudice pertains to the roles and expectations that are socially built for men, women, girls, and boys. It could possibly be argued that they had given attention to female's concerns in particular, but this is only making a "minimal effort" and does not satisfy the need of fair representation. The research by [Ivgin et al., \(2021\)](#) found that majority of scientists publicized in science textbooks were male. Contrary, over half of students expressed lack of interest and uncertainty in pursuing scientific career due to their disappointment with scientific research and a perceived disconnect between their personal attributes and those of scientists. Moreover, textbooks depicted men as powerful, respected, and affluent, whereas women's occupations were generally traditional, domestic, and less admired, e.g., housewife, mother, and secretary ([İncikabı & Ulusoy, 2019](#)). Textbooks have long been instrumental in transmitting knowledge and values within modern educational settings. Still, they may also reinforce various gender-based stereotypes, potentially influencing students' perspectives in a limiting manner ([Benla, 2023](#)).

### CONCLUSION

In the process of teaching and learning, textbooks are considered to be the valuable source of information. However, textbooks can also have a significant impact on how students perceive the world. This is due to the fact that textbooks often contain information that upholds societal norms and ideals that could not accurately represent wide range of life experiences that people have in society. The attitudes that students form and carry into adulthood can be significantly impacted by what they see in textbooks. Content of many textbooks still reflects conventional gender norms, according to empirical surveys on educational materials. The way that gender is portrayed in textbooks perpetuates stereotypical societal constructions in which women are portrayed as passive or secondary and men as dynamic and leading. Students may internalize these preconceptions as average if they are reinforced in words & visuals that highlight them. The study aim to explore gender representation in secondary level curriculum of Balochistan Board.

Boys and men are supposed to behave in a manly way, whereas girls and women are supposed to behave in a feminine one. In this connection, the study find that the Male individuals are typically shown more frequently and in more authoritative roles in school textbooks, which results in gender imbalance and a restricted representation of female opinions and experiences. Whereas the content analysis of evaluated textbooks reveals significant underrepresentation of women. Notably, certain chapters exclusively focus on the lives, strengths, and roles of males. This raises a critical question: does this portrayal imply that traditionally masculine traits such as strength, power, precision, and honesty are inherently associated with men, perpetuating a narrow and biased representation of gender roles in diverse situations and circumstances. The findings provide valuable insights for curriculum developers, enabling them to challenge and redefine existing gender positions by incorporating inclusive and equitable gender knowledge in textbooks.

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