# Gender Bias in Islamic Education School Textbooks in Oman- Grade 3

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims to analyze gender bias in the Islamic education school textbooks-Grade 3 used in all public schools in Oman. Quantitative and qualitative content analyses are used to investigate the following categories: images, occupational roles, names, adjectives, and gender firstness. Study findings show that gender bias is still strongly visible and ingrained in the four Islamic education school textbooks used in Grade 3. Men were dominant in almost all school textbooks. Men, for example, were strongly more visible than women in the following categories: images, occupational roles, names, and gender firstness in most textbooks. Women, on the other hand, were more visible than men in only one Islamic education textbook (Part 1, Semester 2) in the category related to gender firstness. The study findings also show that traditional occupational roles of men and women are still present in textbooks. In general, the Islamic education school textbooks used in all public schools in Oman confirm the findings of other previous studies in terms of the presence of gender bias against women in school curricula. The findings of the present study should help book writers promote gender equality and fight gender-biased against women in school textbooks around the world.

**Keywords:** Gender bias, occupational roles, Islamic education, Gender firstness, Gender representation, Men dominance.
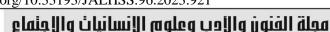
## Introduction

Gender bias refers to the systematic discrimination of individuals based on their gender. This can manifest in a variety of ways, including but not limited to unequal treatment or opportunities, stereotypes and prejudices, and unequal power dynamics. Sharma & Parika (2020) have indicated that gender bias in education refers to "a perception one holds for a certain gender, the people do it unconsciously or sometimes consciously". Gender bias can occur in any setting, including the workplace, education, healthcare, and other areas of society. It can have a significant impact on the well-being and opportunities of those affected by it. Men and women are expected to perform certain gendered roles set by society. Men are supposed to perform specific gendered roles. For example, become engineers, scientists, pioneers, etc. whereas women are seen as housewives, nurses, teachers, etc. Men and women are confined to such gender roles set by their respective societies. They cannot go beyond them (Sharma & Parika, 2020).

Dawar & Anand (2017) stated that there are two types of curriculum: formal and hidden curriculum. They indicated that the hidden curriculum is a collection of values, attitudes, and norms that are subtly communicated to students by teachers through their actions as well as through organizational processes taking place in the classroom and school environment while the formal curriculum refers to specific academic subjects. Papadakis (2018) stressed the importance of the Hidden curriculum in the learning process. He maintained that the perpetuation of gender stereotypes and the upkeep of social stability and order are essentially the result of the hidden curriculum. In addition, Papadakis (2018) pointed out that one of the main ideas of the dominant ideology and a very effective tool for teaching students' attitudes and views about gender roles is found in school textbooks. The rationale is that one of the primary teaching tools utilized in the framework of instructional practices is the usage of textbooks. Islam & Assadullah (2016) indicated that although textbooks are crucial for students' cognitive development, the content students acquire from them matters because the hidden curriculum uses it to influence how they think about gender and other elements of life. Moreover, textbooks lie at the center of educational research as they are available everywhere (Torney-Purta et al., 2001 as cited in Luci et al., 2020). Textbooks can also have a positive impact on students' achievements. But, as we all know that textbooks are not neutral as they reflect power asymmetries and deep-rooted beliefs and cultures in various societies (Moreau, 2010 as cited in Luci et al., 2020).

Gender bias is still widespread in school curricula, which can perpetuate harmful stereotypes and perpetuate discrimination against certain groups of people (UNESCO, 2020). Some common examples of gender bias in school textbooks include lack of representation.  Textbooks may fail to include people of certain genders or underrepresented groups, or may only include them in a limited and stereotypical way. It can apply to men and women in school textbooks, even though it is more common with women. Stereotyping is the assumption that all people of a certain gender behave or think in a certain way. For example, the stereotype is that men are more logical and women are more emotional. According to UNESCO's Global

Education Monitoring Report (2020), women and girls are either underrepresented or, when included, portrayed in mainstream roles in many countries around the world. If you look at Urdu textbooks taught in state-run primary schools, women are under-represented and the roles assigned to them are unimpressive. Another example is stereotyping. Textbooks may present gender roles and stereotypes in a way that reinforces traditional gender norms and reinforces harmful ideas about men and women. Markova, Aeschlimannn & Herzog (2019) conducted a study on the gender gap in STEM fields. They investigated the impact of the gender stereotype of math and science on secondary students' career aspirations. The findings of their study have shown that "the male stereotype of science and of a scientist is persistent and appears as early as in kindergarten age, while the association of science with men is especially persistent among older children". For instance, men are better than women in math, physics, and biology whereas women perform well in teaching, art, etc. Moreover, the omission of important historical figures is yet another common example of gender bias in school curricula. Textbooks may omit or downplay the contributions and accomplishments of people of certain genders or underrepresented groups, leading to a distorted and incomplete understanding of history. For example, women's achievements and contributions are not as visible as men's in school curricula.

Gender bias can have a significant impact on learners. It can affect the way they perceive themselves and their ability to learn and succeed, as well as the way they are treated and supported by educators and peers. Research has shown that gender bias can lead to gender stereotypes and expectations, which can shape the way learners think about their own abilities and interests. Shafer (2018) pointed out that ingrained gender bias is still visible and could lead to serious consequences. Shafer (2018) warned that "stubborn beliefs cultivated from an early age such as "girls are bad at math," "girls are better at cooking," or "boys don't cry," pave the way to sobering statistics about the number of female leaders in business and politics". Moreover, UNESCO's (2020) report on gender in education has shown that "in some contexts, textbooks are the first – and sometimes only – books a young person reads and so can have a lasting impact on their perceptions. That means that, through textbooks, discriminatory norms and values can be challenged". For example, girls may be discouraged from pursuing certain subjects or careers because of gender stereotypes, while boys may be encouraged to pursue certain subjects or careers because of gender stereotypes. This can lead to a lack of diversity and inclusion in certain fields, as well as a lack of representation groups of learners (UNESCO, 2020).

Gender bias can also lead to unequal treatment and support for learners. Gender disparity and inequality in education are manifestations of exclusion in education systems (UNESCO, 2020). For example, boys may receive more attention and support from teachers, while girls may be overlooked or underestimated. This can lead to a lack of confidence and motivation for girls, as well as a lack of opportunities for both boys and girls to learn and succeed. Kerkhoven et al. (2016) examined gender stereotypes in science education resources. Kerkhoven et al. (2016) found that the stereotypical representation of men and women is still dominant in science education

resources. They concluded "a more balanced view will help girls and boys to make their own decisions concerning their studies and professions rather than those decisions being influenced by gender stereotypes". Overall, it is important to recognize and address gender bias in education in order to create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all learners.

The number of male and female students in Omani public schools is almost equal. According to Abdullah Ambosaidi, Undersecretary of the Omani ministry of education the number of students in 2022 in "1242 government schools is 729,331, including 386,184 male students (50.9%), and 361147 female students (49.5)" (Nair, 2022). Therefore, the presence of gender equality is crucial in school textbooks used in Omani public schools. Gender equality in school textbooks should not be compromised.

This study aimed to analyze gender bias in four Islamic education textbooks that are used in Omani public elementary schools for grade 3 students. To fulfill this purpose, the present study will address the following two research questions:

- Are men and women equally represented in the selected school textbooks?
- How are occupational roles associated with men and women portrayed in the designated textbooks?

## Literature Review

Textbooks are an indispensable part of the learning process (Cheng & Gilbert, 2015 as cited in Cheung & Winterbottom, 2022). Teachers often use textbooks to teach their students in classrooms. School textbooks can have a significant influence on learners' expectations, views, and aspirations (Gharbavi & Mousavi, 2012). Textbooks are often used as a primary source of information for students, and the information and perspectives they present can shape how students understand and think about the world.

If textbooks present a biased or narrow view of the world, it can limit students' understanding and expectations of what is possible or acceptable (Blumberg, 2007). For example, if textbooks consistently depict men in leadership roles and women in subservient or stereotypical roles, it can shape students' expectations of what is expected or acceptable for men and women in society. On the other hand, if textbooks present a diverse and inclusive portrayal of people and events, it can broaden students' understanding and aspirations and encourage them to consider a wider range of possibilities for their own lives (Murray et al., 2021). It is important for educators and policymakers to carefully review the content of textbooks and ensure that they present a balanced and accurate portrayal of the world in order to promote inclusive and equitable learning environments.

Studies have shown that textbooks often have a male-centric perspective, with men being overrepresented in illustrations, photographs, and historical accounts. Women are often depicted in stereotypical roles, such as homemakers or caretakers, while men are depicted in positions of power or leadership (Akay Şahin & Açikalin, 2021; Bataineh, 2022; Gharbavi & Mousavi, 2012; Nofal & Qawar, 2015; Orfan, 2021; Siren, 2018; Ullah & Haque, 2016). This can lead to the perpetuation of gender

stereotypes and the undervaluation of women's contributions and achievements. In addition, textbooks may use language that reinforces gender roles and stereotypes, such as using the pronoun "he" to refer to all people or using terms that are associated with a particular gender (Bataineh, 2021 & Lee & Collins, 2010). For example, using the term "fireman" rather than "firefighter" reinforces the stereotype that firefighting is a job for men.

Various studies around the world have indicated that gender bias is still ingrained in school textbooks. Ariyanto (2018) conducted a critical-micro semiotic analysis of the Indonesian ELT textbook prescribed for junior high school students published by the Indonesian Ministry of National Education to investigate the presence of gender bias. The findings of the study have clearly indicated that gender inequality and stereotypical gender difference are still pervasive. Curaming & Curaming's (2020) study of gender relations representation of textbooks series used in primary schools in the Philippines revealed that gender inequality is still inherent. Critical discourse analysis also showed that male prevalence is a core issue in these school textbooks. In addition, another study conducted by Fani & Yonata (2022) confirmed the presence of gender bias in English language school textbooks used in Islamic primary schools in Indonesia. Fani & Yonata (2022) adopted quantitative content and critical discourse analysis to analyze the textbooks. The study findings showed that "female characters are underrepresented, and they are depicted as having a home and family careers, being sensitive introverts, being involved in low-risk activities, and wearing Islamic-based attire" (Fani & Yonata, 2022). It is also important to point out that Kayed et al. (2020) investigated gender representation in Interchange 1A & 2B Student's Textbooks used at Al-Balqa Applied University in Jordan. They used Fairclough's (1995) three-dimensional framework to examine some categories such as social and domestic roles, images, gendered semantic roles, and visibility of men and women. Study findings have confirmed the presence of gender bias against women in some categories such as roles and activities. The study has also revealed that to some extent the textbooks exhibited some sort of gender balance in images, visibility, activities, and roles. In addition, gender bias is still dominant in some private and public school textbooks in Pakistan. Ahmad & Syed (2019) adopted critical and content analysis to analyze the eight-factor procedure adapted from Amerian & Esmaili (2015). The study findings revealed blatant implicit and explicit gender bias against females. Male dominance prevailed the textbooks. Moreover, Akay Şahin & Açikalin (2021) employed visual content analysis to examine gender representation in Elementary and Middle School Social Studies Textbooks in Turkey. The findings of the study have shown that women were underrepresented and less visible than men were. Women also occupied stereotypical occupational roles. In addition, Bataineh (2023) investigated the presence of linguistic sexism in the North Star Workbooks 1, 2, and 3. He used quantitative content analysis to analyze various categories (e.g. pronouns, gender firstness, adjectives, terms of address, and proper names). The findings of the study clearly showed that gender bias against women in school curricula is visible and widespread. Finally yet importantly, Nofal & Qawar (2015) investigated gender representation in Action Pack 10 school textbooks in Jordan. They examined the

following variables: the ratio of male and female characters, and the portrayal of male and female characters in social and domestic settings. The study findings have revealed that women's visibility was inferior to men's. Aguilar (2021) conducted a visual analysis of gender representation in three EFL textbooks used in elementary grades in Mexico. The analysis included images and male and female occupational roles. The study findings showed that male dominance is visible in the three textbooks and that occupational gender stereotypes are still prevalent. To sum up, the majority of research on gender representation in textbooks shows men's dominance, visibility, and superiority.

On the other hand, some studies on gender bias in school textbooks have revealed that there is a balanced representation of men and women in school curricula. Suwarno et al. (2021) performed corpus linguistics and critical micro-semiotic analysis of gender representation in an EFL school textbook used in Indonesia. The study findings showed that "the textbook writers constructed gender fairness by including gender-neutral vocabularies in both verbal and visual texts in order to avoid gender-marked words" (Suwarno et al. 2021). Another finding of the study reported a balanced representation of men and women in the designated textbook. In addition, Lee (2018) conducted an investigation of gender representation in a series of Japanese EFL school textbooks. Gender representation was examined by analyzing various gender-specific categories such as male-female appearances, gender-neutral or gender-marked constructions, adjectives associated with men and women, address titles for women, and gender firstness. The analysis showed that gender equity is achieved to some extent in these Japanese EFL textbooks. The balanced representation of men and women is also achieved in English language textbooks used in public schools in Brunei. Curaming & Alkaff (2021) conducted a content and critical discourse analysis of the textbooks to answer two research questions. One of them is to examine the extent of gender inequality in textbooks. The findings of the study have shown that there is a fair portrayal of men and women.   Finally yet importantly, Dominguez (2003) performed an analysis of sexism and linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of New Interchange Intro textbooks designed for EFL/ESL students in Canada. The findings of the study showed these textbooks displayed a balanced representation of men and women in the following categories: illustrations, characters, occupational roles, and amount of talk. In summary, some school textbooks exhibited an equitable and fair representation of men and women.

## Methodology
The purpose of this study is to examine gender bias in four Islamic education textbooks used at all public schools in the Sultanate of Oman.

## Material
The sample of the study includes four Islamic education school textbooks designed to cater to the needs of Muslim students at public schools in Oman.

## Data Collection Analysis
## Mixed Content Analysis

This study adopts a mixed content analysis approach to examine the presence of gender bias in four Islamic education textbooks used in Oman. The mixed content analysis includes quantitative and qualitative research approaches to achieve breadth and depth of understanding and validation (Johnson et al. 2007). Creswell, Fetters, and Ivankova (2004) indicated that this type of research entails more than just accumulating both quantitative and qualitative data; it implies that data will be incorporated, linked, or mixed at some point during the research study. The core idea is that using only quantitative or qualitative methods is not sufficient to capture the situation's trends and details. When combined, they provide a more comprehensive analysis and complement one another. The use of mixed content analysis provides deeper insights into the various aspects of the text(s) at hand. Schram (2013) stated that "this approach of using mixed methods creates possibilities to study the various issues that science educators encounter in more depth". In addition, using mixed content analysis offers the researcher a better grasp of his/her research problem and subjective and objective perspectives of the issue at hand. Therefore, the mixed content analysis is appropriate and serves the objective of the present study (Creswell, 2008 as cited in Fischler, 2011).

Quantitative data are used to examine the frequency and percentage of images, names, adjectives, occupational roles, and gender firstness.. In addition, qualitative analysis is employed to investigate the underlying messages found in the texts. In other words, the qualitative analysis examines occupational roles, adjectives associated with males and females, and gender firstness

## Sampling

Purposeful sampling was used in the present study to collect data. Purposeful sampling is widely used in mixed research methods. Robinson (2014) defined purposeful sampling as the "intentional selection of informants based on their ability to elucidate a specific theme, concept, or phenomenon". The four school textbooks were intentionally selected to investigate the presence of gender bias by analyzing the following five categories: images, occupational roles, male and female names, adjectives, and gender firstness. The overall number of occurrences of each category for men and women is counted in quantitative analysis. Furthermore, the overall number of occurrences of all categories for men and women are quantitatively analyzed. The qualitative analysis investigates the presence of stereotypical gender occupational roles and masculine and feminine adjectives.

## Description of the Sample

The sample textbooks are four Islamic Education Grade-3 school textbooks (1st edition). The Omani Ministry of Education in 2018 published them. The textbooks teach students topics and concepts related to the Islamic faith. Topics and concepts taught in the textbooks include chapters of the Holy Quran, believing in Allah, pillars

of belief, prayers, taking care of orphans, companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), avoiding extravagance, believing in messengers of Allah, being steadfast in tough times, good character, virtues of patience, virtues of fasting, avoiding cheating, and protecting public properties, etc. Table 1 shows the number of units, lessons, and pages in each textbook.

**Table 1**
**Number of Units, lessons and Pages in Grade- 3 Textbooks**

| Textbook | Units | Lessons | Pages |
|---|---|---|---|
| Semester1:Part1 | 1 | 6 | 93 |
|  | 2 | 6 |  |
| Semester1:Part2 | 3 | 6 | 90 |
|  | 4 | 6 |  |
| Semester2:Part1 | 1 | 6 | 89 |
|  | 2 | 6 |  |
| Semester2:Part2 | 3 | 6 | 88 |
|  | 4 | 6 |  |

## Results and Discussion

The findings of the present study clearly indicate the presence of gender bias against women in the four Islamic education school textbooks taught at all elementary public schools in Oman. The quantitative and qualitative analysis confirmed the presence of gender bias against women in the following categories: images, occupational roles, male and female names, adjectives, and gender firstness.

## Images

The quantitative analysis of the frequency and percentage of images of men and women in Islamic education school textbooks shows powerful men's dominance. Table 2 shows a huge gender gap between men and women in the four Islamic education school textbooks. The total number of men is 104 (63.8%) whereas the total number of women is 59 (36.2%). It is an explicit and implicit indication of men's dominance in Omani Islamic education textbooks. In addition, Table 2 indicates that the Islamic education textbook (Semester 1, Part 1) is the most biased Omani school textbook against women. The total number of men is 40 (72.7%) while the total number of women is 15(27.3). Statistics also show that the Islamic education textbook (Semester 2, Part 2) has the highest number of mixed images (images that show men and women at the same time). In addition, Table 2 shows that the same school textbook exhibits the lowest gender gap between men and women.

**Table 2**
**Number of Men and Women Images in Grade- 3 Textbooks**

| Semester | Part | Men | Women | Mixed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 40 | 15 | 6 |
| 1 | 2 | 19 | 10 | 9 |
| 2 | 1 | 22 | 30 | 6 |
| 2 | 2 | 15 | 12 | 17 |
| **Total** |  | 96 | 59 | 38 |

A chi-square analysis was also performed to see if there were any statistically significant differences in the representation of men and women in the textbook in terms of the number of masculine and feminine images. The analysis shows that the $p$-value is (0.198). In other words, statistically significant differences between the representation of men and women were not observed.

## Occupational Roles
## Quantitative Analysis

Occupational roles were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data explicitly indicate that men are more visible than women in the occupational roles category in the designated school textbooks. The total number of men's occupational roles is 19 (55.8%) whereas women's is 15 (44.2%). In other words, gender bias against women is still visible in the Islamic education textbooks- Grade 5. The data obtained from Table 3 also indicate that women are slightly more visible than men in one school textbook. The number of women's occupational roles in semester 2 (Part 2) is five compared to only four for men.

**Table 3**
**Number of Occupational Roles in Grade- 3 Textbooks**

| Semester | Part | Men | Women |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 1 | 6 | 4 |
| 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 |
| 2 | 1 | 5 | 3 |
| 2 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| **Total** |  | 19 | 15 |

A chi-square analysis was also performed in terms of the number of gender roles assigned to men and women. The analysis shows that the $p$-value is (0.000). In other words, statistically significant differences between the representation of men and women were observed.

## Qualitative Analysis

In general, qualitative analysis revealed that stereotypical occupational roles are associated with men and women. Men, for example, were portrayed as students, police officers, medical doctors, muftis, sultans, kings, mosque imams, construction contractors, etc. Women, on the other hand, were seen as students, teachers, store cashiers, house cleaners, etc. The presence of such occupational roles reflects the conservative nature of Omani society. Omani society, in general, still holds traditional norms and perceptions of men and women.

The analysis also revealed that women were associated with some non-stereotyped occupational roles such as businesspersons and poetesses. It is an indication of a slight improvement in gender equality. In addition, it shows the need for greater efforts to achieve gender equality in these school textbooks. Table 4 summarizes the number of occupational roles found in the four Omani school textbooks.

**Table 4**
**Occupational Roles of Men and Women in Grade-3 Textbooks**

| Men | Women |
| --- | --- |
| Student (16), king (1), king's bodyguard (1), | student (15), businessperson (1), poetess (4), |
| pottery maker (1), store owner (2), house cleaner (1) | teacher (4), store cashier (1), |
| police officer (1), mosque imam (5), sultan (1), medical doctor (1), | and saleswoman (1). |
| construction contractor (1), store employee (2), | |
| mufti (1), and religious scholar (1). | |

## Names

The quantitative analysis of Islamic education school textbooks in Grade 3 showed explicit gender bias against women. Table 5 shows the total number of masculine names mentioned in the textbooks. The total number of masculine names is 90 (89.1%) whereas the total number of feminine names is only 11 (10.9%). The masculine name with the highest frequency was "Mohammed". It was mentioned 90 times in the four Omani school textbooks for Grade 3. On the other hand, Maryam (Mary) was mentioned 29 times all over the four textbooks. In other words, this is another indication of the powerful presence of men in the designated school textbooks. In other words, gender inequality is still prevalent.

Table 4 also indicates that the occupational role "student" has the highest frequency in the textbooks for men and women at the same time.  Men were portrayed as "students" 15 times in the textbooks while women were shown as "students" 15 times in the same textbooks. It is a strong indication that stereotyped and traditional gender roles are still dominant in Islamic school textbooks.

**Table 5**
 **Masculine and Feminine Names in Grade- 3 Textbooks**

| Textbook | Masculine Names | Feminine Names |
|---|---|---|
| Semester 1 | 36 | 5 |
| Semester 2 | 54 | 6 |
| **Total** | 90 | 11 |

## Adjectives

A quantitative examination of Islamic education school texts in Grade 3 revealed an explicit gender bias against women. Table 6 demonstrates that there are 100 adjectives pertaining to men and women in textbooks. The entire number of adjectives related to men is 65 (65%), while the total number of adjectives related to women is only 35 (35%). Semester 2, Part 1 has the greatest number of adjectives related with men. It has 23 adjectives related to men and 13 adjectives related to women. Furthermore, the most common adjectives linked with men are "patient" (13 times) and "true." (10 times). Females, on the other hand, are associated with the adjectives "patient" (10 times) and "unswerving" (5 times). It is also worth noting that the number of negative adjectives pertaining to men is more than that of females. Males were described unfavorably nine times, while females were described negatively six times. In other words, gender inequity persists.

**Table 6**
 **Adjectives Associated with Men and Women in Grade- 3 Textbooks**

| Textbook | Masculine Names | Feminine Names |
|---|---|---|
| Semester 1 | 28 | 13 |
| Semester 2 | 37 | 22 |
| **Total** | **65** | **35** |

A chi-square analysis was also performed in terms of the number of adjectives associated with men and women. The analysis shows that the *p*-value is (0.000). In other words, statistically significant differences between the representation of men and women were observed.

## Gender Firstness

A quantitative analysis of words and visuals in textbooks in terms of gender firstness revealed that masculine hegemony is still clearly present. Table 7 reveals that men appear 25 times more frequently in words and photographs than women (20 times). Furthermore, the study findings indicate that men appear before girls in Semester 2, Part 1 textbooks. Men, for example, were shown before women in 9 distinct places in the textbook, but women appeared before men in 3 different places. On the other hand, statistics indicate that women outnumber men in the Semester 2, Part 1

textbook. Women, for example, appeared seven times before men, whereas men appeared three times before females. Furthermore, data reveal that men and women appear in the textbook before each other in Semester 1, Part 2.

**Table 7**
**Gender Firstness in Grade- 3 Textbooks**

| Textbook | Masculine Names | Feminine Names |
|---|---|---|
| Semester 1 | 13 | 10 |
| Semester 2 | 12 | 10 |
| **Total** | **25** | **20** |

A chi-square analysis was also performed in terms of the number of gender firstness. The analysis shows that the *p*-value is (0.000). In other words, statistically significant differences between the representation of men and women were observed.

## Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate gender bias in four Islamic education textbooks used in Omani public elementary schools. For this purpose, four school textbooks used in grade 4 in public elementary schools were analyzed. The study findings revealed that there is a huge gender gap in the four school textbooks. Women's presence is marginal in the four textbooks. The study findings showed that the majority of occupational roles associated with men and women are traditional. For example, men were portrayed as students, police officers, imams, store owners, etc. Women, on the other hand, were portrayed as students, teachers, store cashiers, salespersons, etc. The analysis also showed the presence of few non-traditional occupational roles associated with women (e.g. poetesses and business persons). The analysis of gender-specific categories showed that men outnumber women in all categories. It is an indication of blatant gender prejudice against women in the textbooks.

## Recommendations

Taking into consideration the presence of gender bias in the present and numerous previous studies on gender representation in textbooks (Akay Şahin & Açikalin, 2021; Bataineh, 2023; Bataineh, 2022; Gharbavi & Mousavi, 2012; Nofal & Qawar, 2015; Orfan, 2021; Siren, 2018; Ullah & Haque, 2016), teachers and book designers need to deal with this major obstacle to gender equality.  To address gender bias in school textbooks, it is important to carefully review and evaluate the materials used in the classroom. This may involve seeking out more inclusive and diverse materials, or working with publishers to update and revise existing texts. It is also important for teachers to be aware of their own biases and to actively work to create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students.

There are many ways to address gender bias and promote gender equality. This can include implementing policies and practices that promote fairness and inclusivity,

providing training and education to raise awareness about gender bias and its impacts, and actively working to dismantle systems and structures that contribute to gender inequality. It is important for individuals and organizations to recognize and address gender bias in order to create a more equitable and just society. Moreover, making it mandatory for all school textbook writers and designers to use non-sexist language manual checklists is another effective method to avoid gender bias. Non-sexist language manual checklists have been found to minimize the presence of gender inequalities, particularly at an early age.

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