






ARTICLE

Gender Representation and Its Impact on the Quality of Education: A Comparative Analysis of EFT Textbooks for Grade Six (2022 vs. 2024 Editions)

Phawani Vijayaratnam¹ , Mehdi Manoocherzadeh² , Fariha Mim³ , Farid Ahmed⁴ ,
Mohammad Golam Mohiuddin^{3*} , Hamenaz Gholipour⁵

¹Faculty of Education and Liberal Arts, INTI International University, Nilai 71800, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia

²Zerodale Inc. Centre for Research in Entrepreneurship Education and Development, Toronto, ON M2K 2H6, Canada

³Department of English, Green University of Bangladesh, Narayanganj, Dhaka 1461, Bangladesh

⁴BRAC Institute of Languages (BIL), BRAC University, Kha 224, Bir Uttam Rafiqul Islam Ave, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

⁵Department of English Language and Literature, Ayatollah Amoli Branch, Islamic Azad University, Amol, P.O. Box 678, Iran

ABSTRACT

Gender representation always plays a pivotal role in English language teaching-learning materials due to the presence and portrayal of male and female characters as well as the mode of activities and dialogues attributed to each gender. This study explores gender representation in the Grade Six English for Today (EFT) textbook in Bangladesh focusing on a comparative analysis of the 2022 and 2024 editions. To conduct the study, we collected qualitative data through content analysis, focus group discussion, and in-depth interviews with 40 participants directly involved in the teaching-learning process applying EFTs. The results reveal an imbalance in gender representation in the prior edition of the selected book but demonstrate a positive change in the current edition. The study offers recommendations for future textbook revisions, emphasizing the importance of gender-sensitive material in promoting inclusivity in English language education in Bangladesh so as to improve education quality. We urge policymakers, educators, and researchers involved in curriculum or education development and gender studies to conduct further studies on this area.

*CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Golam Mohiuddin, Department of English, Green University of Bangladesh, Narayanganj, Dhaka 1461, Bangladesh;
Email: mohiuddin.bracu@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 6 January 2025 | Revised: 3 February 2025 | Accepted: 10 March 2025 | Published Online: 21 March 2025
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i4.8332>

CITATION

Vijayaratnam, P., Manoocherzadeh, M., Mim, F., et al., 2025. Gender Representation and Its Impact on the Quality of Education: A Comparative Analysis of EFT Textbooks for Grade Six (2022 vs. 2024 Editions). *Forum for Linguistic Studies*. 7(4): 23–39. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i4.8332>

COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2025 by the author(s). Published by Bilingual Publishing Group. This is an open access article under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>).

Keywords: EFT; Textbook; Gender; Representation; Portrayal; Education Development

1. Introduction

Gender equality is essential for promoting a sense of inclusivity and social equality in our society for gender rights regardless of gender identity^[1]. Unfortunately, gender inequality persists across societies due to entrenched social practices, laws, norms, and attitudes, manifesting in various spheres of life, including education. Mostly, women continue to be marginalized within an inherently male-dominated social structure despite constitutional provisions and legislation that aim at securing women's rights, equality, and equity in society^[2]. Often this bias makes its way to educational materials, such as textbooks which play a fundamental role in shaping young minds. The portrayal of gender in textbooks, including English language teaching materials like the English for Today (EFT) textbook in Bangladesh is of paramount importance given its influence on learners' social, familial, institutional, moral, and ethical perceptions. It is imperative to ensure that educational materials are free from biases and stereotypes, particularly those that may perpetuate negative attitudes toward women.

Textbooks should serve as instruments for eradicating fallacies and injustices and nurturing young minds with inclusive and empowering content. Textbooks are vital in education, serving not merely as foundational learning tools but also as catalysts for social transformation^[3]. They should proactively dispel misconceptions and injustices by offering factual information and narratives that challenge old and prejudiced viewpoints. Additionally, textbooks must cultivate young minds with inclusive content that reflects a variety of cultures, identities, and perspectives. This strategy guarantees that education transcends knowledge delivery to empower students and promote equality and respect among learners from diverse backgrounds. The focus on the sixth-grade textbook is essential for two reasons^[4]. Firstly, this stage marks a critical period in the development of the students, coinciding with adolescence and puberty, when they are particularly receptive to the information they encounter. As individuals aged 10 to 19 undergo significant cognitive and emotional growth, it is crucial to instill values of equality and respect for all genders during this formative phase. In

this stage of cognitive development textbooks develop their national identity^[5], national ideology and consciousness^[6], understanding of history, cultural norms, and values along with a political, social, and cultural agenda of the state^[5, 7]. Secondly, the presentation of learning materials during this period profoundly shapes the subconscious perceptions and attitudes of the students potentially perpetuating or challenging gender stereotypes. At this stage, textbooks play a vital role in molding students' perspectives and attitudes towards gender equality, social issues, and justice^[8, 9]. Given the sensitivity surrounding gender representation in Asian societies like Bangladesh, analysing the portrayal of gender in the sixth-grade English textbook is essential for debunking stereotypes and fostering societal enlightenment. Examining the gender representation in the English for Today textbook for grade six is therefore crucial for understanding and addressing any biases present in the books. By comparing two different editions of the textbook, this study aims to identify patterns and discrepancies in gender portrayal, ultimately offering recommendations for improvement. By scrutinizing how gender and biological differences are depicted in the textbook, this research seeks to shed light on existing societal norms and offer solutions for promoting gender equality.

The study on the English for Today textbook for grade six enables a comprehensive analysis of gender representation, highlighting both similarities and differences across editions. Through meticulous examination, the researcher aims to evaluate the findings and provide insights into the current state of gender portals in educational materials. Ultimately, this research endeavours to contribute to the enhancement of educational resources, ensuring that they align with principles of gender equality and social progress. By offering recommendations and solutions based on the findings of the study, the researcher aims to foster positive societal change and promote inclusive education for all.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) employs a framework for evaluating the linguistic and visual elements of the textbooks. CDA, as applied by researchers such as Shallaita et al.^[10], provides insights into how language and imagery perpetuate gender biases or challenge stereotypes. Moreover, language reflects and reinforces societal structures, includ-

ing gender hierarchies. Lakoff's^[11] theory on "Language and Women's Place" illustrates how linguistic practices perpetuate gender norms, such as associating women with politeness and submissiveness. These linguistic frameworks are crucial in analyzing textbook content. Eagly's Social Role Theory^[12] posits that gender stereotypes emerge from traditional divisions of labor in society. This study examines how textbooks reflect or challenge these divisions through the portrayal of occupational roles and historical figures, as seen in research by Uyuni et al.^[13]

This study aims to explore the ongoing debate surrounding the English for Today (EFT) textbooks, especially focusing on gender representation. By comparing two editions of the grade six EFT textbook, the researcher seeks to analyze any changes in gender portrayal and assess the practicality of the new edition for educating young learners. Additionally, the study aims to evaluate how gender representation in the new edition influences the values of students and identify areas for improvement with potential recommendations. This study answers some specific research questions which are (1) How has gender been represented in the EFT (English For Today) textbook for grade six? (2) Has the approach of portraying gender in the EFT textbook changed over time? and (3) How does the depiction of gender in the EFT textbook of class six shape the values of the learners associated with gender?

Throughout the whole study, the researcher had to cope with some limitations which included its exclusive focus on the EFT textbook for grade six in Bengali medium schools, omitting English medium schools, and Madrasha boards. Additionally, the analysis solely covers grade six, disregarding other EFT textbooks and grades. The interpretive nature of content analysis introduces subjectivity, potentially yielding unique interpretations. Limited by time and resources, the study employs a small sample size, which may not fully represent the population. Data collection depended on participant availability, impacting the breadth of perspectives. Ethical considerations regarding privacy, confidentiality, and consent were carefully managed throughout the research.

2. Literature Review

English has become the dominant global language in the present world. In this highly communicative era, the

Bangladesh government has emphasized English Language Learning (ELL) at the primary level and its inclusion continues till the tertiary level of education. Here in Bangladesh, the English language is taught as a compulsory subject from class one to class twelve. Every year the government appoints thousands of new teachers and arranges training sessions for all to improve their quality of ELT (English Language Teaching). Moreover, ELT is aided by the supply of educational materials such as EFT (English For Today). Bangladesh's government took the initiative to introduce Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in 1996 to improve students' communicative competence incorporating all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in textbooks^[14]. EFT has been used as a dominant instructional material in primary, secondary, and higher secondary levels and madrasas in Bangladesh. Uddin^[15] tried to evaluate the EFT textbook in his paper and stated that it is enriched with commendable features though a number of external and internal limitations have been identified which require sincere attention from the authority concerned.

Language serves as a means for individuals to convey their thoughts orally or in writing, comprising a shared vocabulary within a group or society, intimately intertwined with its social culture, beliefs, and customs. Linguists, such as Henry Sweet view language as the articulation of ideas through speech sounds assembled into words, then into sentences, reflecting the societal structures celebrated by a community. The concept of gender varies across disciplines while some equate it with societal roles and responsibilities, others define it biologically. Societal outlooks on gender roles stem from cultural, religious, political, economic, and social influences, shaping expectations for men and women. The link between language and gender is culturally constructed, influencing linguistic expectations based on gender, such as women being expected to communicate more formally and politely. The bidirectional relationship between language and gender underscores the importance of fostering gender equality in English language teaching textbooks to promote equal opportunities for genders. We know that textbooks serve as a platform for standardized learning and cultural transmission. They also uphold the beliefs and social order of dominant groups, perpetuating gender inequalities. Despite societal progress, the patriarchal system persists hindering efforts toward gender equality which is thought to be a key

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). Gender misrepresentation such as gender bias in English textbooks significantly affects student perceptions and learning^[16].

A textbook with appropriate moral learning is necessary as learners tend to develop their own gender schemes by choosing the role models from the textbook they follow^[17]. Thus, textbooks significantly influence the formation of gender identities through language and imagery, shaping the views of students on history, culture, and relationships.

Gender representation entails depicting both genders fairly to combat societal misconceptions and discrimination. Textbooks should ensure equal portrayal to maintain balance, avoiding unequal dominance of one gender over another. Imbalanced gender representation in textbooks can shape unhealthy perceptions in young minds. Over representation of male has been discouraging since it displays an incessant and disapproving under-representation of women^[18]. An English textbook that helps in learning a foreign language to the students commonly consists of stories, poems, news, history, etc. for passive foreign language learning. However, these literary pieces sometimes present an imbalanced representation of gender which may lead to an unhealthy perception about women in the young minds. Bhattachariya^[19] states that there should be a balanced gender representation in textbooks and all the discriminatory portrayals of women should be eliminated if we want to build a healthy society for the next generation. This study will try to analyse the EFT textbook for grade six based on gender representation and will try to come up with necessary findings and solutions thus often helping in paving the way for further development in the material.

Numerous studies have focused on analyzing the portrayal of gender in language textbooks both domestic and international. Here, we will delve into some of the research conducted on English Language Teaching (ELT) materials based on gender representation. Shallaita et al.^[10] conducted research on two EFL textbooks (*Buku Siswa Kemendikbud Kelas and Pathway to English*) published by the Ministry of Education And Culture of the Republic of Indonesia and Erlangga Publisher based on gender representation using content analysis and found that male representation was dominant in both books through linguistic bias, stereotyping, imbalance in visuals, etc. Moreover, Fauzi and Utami^[20] conducted research on similar issues in the ELT Textbook Ba-

hasa Inggris *When English Comes in Handy* for tenth grade used in Indonesia following Stockdale's theory of gender bias according to which in multiple aspects they detected gender bias in concerned book. Uyuni et al.^[13] studied Arabic textbooks *Al-Ass* volumes 1,2, and 3 following a qualitative approach with the implementation of CDA (critical Discourse Analysis) which revealed prominent gender injustice for women in various ways such as women being regarded as second class.

Takamäki^[21] discovered that textbooks significantly influence students' perceptions of gender roles, highlighting the importance of achieving gender balance in their content. Research consistently demonstrates ongoing inequalities in gender representation, where males frequently outnumber females and are portrayed in esteemed professions or active roles. In contrast, females are predominantly depicted as caretakers or engaged in household activities. These discrepancies are more pronounced in textbooks from developing nations but persist in developed countries such as Finland. Guichot-Reina & De la Torre-Sierra^[22] found that textbooks are instrumental in shaping socio-occupational perspectives but can perpetuate gender bias when they contain sexist content. A Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of elementary mathematics textbooks in Spain revealed unequal gender representation, even when female and male characters appear in similar numbers. Women are underrepresented as STEM role models and often confined to stereotypical social roles. Problem-solving scenarios frequently depict women in limited activities, portraying them as less capable in mathematical tasks.

Jiang^[23] argued that a bibliometric analysis of research on English textbooks from 1979 to 2022, utilizing Scopus data, shows a consistent increase in scholarly work, with notable growth in the last five years. Asian scholars, especially those from East Asia, have made significant contributions to this field. Common analytical methods, such as corpus analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), are employed to explore themes including gender, ideology, culture, and language teaching. Research in this area provides a valuable framework for understanding global language education and social dynamics. It promotes cross-cultural communication, supports educational reforms, and contributes to societal development at an international level. Vu & Pham^[24] found that Gender bias in educational materials can affect students'

growth and reinforce social inequalities. An investigation of a recently introduced English textbook series in Vietnam, using a multimodal critical approach, found that patriarchal Confucian values continue to shape textbook content. Males are given greater verbal presence and occupy more social roles, while females are depicted as less independent, with restricted opportunities and fewer resources.

The gender gap in Bangladeshi textbooks exists which has a significant impact on the everyday life of the readers^[25, 26]. Asadulla and Islam^[27] studied six government-approved English and Bengali language textbooks and two unrecognized textbooks followed by the Quami Madrasha board by comparing the old edition of the textbook published in the 1990s and the revised edition printed in 2012 on gender perspective and found that Bangladeshi schools textbooks suffer from male biasness regardless of whether they are based on religious or secular curriculum. This male dominance is clearly visible as the authors of these textbooks were mostly male and rarely there were female authors. Moreover, women's representations were less and women had less important roles than men in those textbooks. Nahar^[28] conducted research on the analysis of the English Textbooks (class 1 to 8) of Bangladesh from the gender perspective. Her findings say that the representation of women in English Textbooks is better than before. The researcher suggested that women should be displayed more importantly in outdoor roles and historically famous women should be addressed more in the textbooks. Another qualitative study was conducted by Haq and Alam^[29] on gender sensitivity in 33 school textbooks in Bangladesh which says women's participation was notable in those books, but it was still less than men's. Women especially have less participation in writing Textbooks and in several cases, men were portrayed to be powerful and women to be weaker. Sathee^[30] made a study on gender discourse in the English language teaching coursebook (EFT) for classes 9 and 10 by analyzing data found from both teachers and students through questionnaire surveys and the content of the textbook and Chowdhury^[31] conducted a similar research on the textbook of class 8. The results showed the textbooks have improved a lot about women's representations; and teachers and learners enjoy a very positive attitude about gender equality shared by the books although there still exists some loopholes which should be addressed.

Asadulla and Mukitul^[27] researched gender stereotypes in Bangladeshi, Indonesian, Malaysian, and Pakistani textbooks in 2018 and found that Malaysian and Indonesian textbooks are way more balanced about male and female representation than those of Pakistan and Bangladesh. In Malaysia and Indonesian textbooks, female characters occupy almost more than 44% whereas in Pakistani textbooks it is only 24% and in Bangladeshi textbooks, it is only 37%. This study says the quality of our ELT materials needs to be improved on gender perspective and female participation should be increased. Suchana^[32] worked on the representation of women in occupational and domestic roles in EFT textbooks of classes 4 and 5 showed that there is bias in the representation of women in several aspects such as occupational roles. Women have been underrepresented in both textbooks reflecting the real scenario of Bangladeshi culture and society.

Gender representation in the English teaching textbook is such an essential aspect in the field of educational curriculum that multiple studies have been made nationally and internationally on this perspective. Each study examines the EFT or ELT textbooks in different dimensions based on gender portrayal and comes up with unique findings. This problem of gender inequality and misrepresentation was apparent in the past curriculum and previous editions of textbooks in Bangladesh which the researchers highlighted in their studies. However, traces of improvement have also been noticed in the books day by day. The government is constantly working on it and is on the way to coming up with properly balanced textbooks. We have seen that the government of Bangladesh published a newly revised series of textbooks last year (at the end of 2022) after facing so many controversies and debates on the textbooks. As a result of it in the same year, the government created a new curriculum based on which textbooks have been modified. Major changes have been brought in the content, visuals, exercises, ideas, etc. of the English For Today textbook. Sufficient research has not been made on these books till now as it has not been long since the new editions were published. Therefore, this is necessary to take a look at the new books and to evaluate them and see whether the ideological errors of the past have been addressed and corrected or not in the new books. So, in this research, the researcher intends to study the new edition of the English For Today textbook along with comparing it

with the previous edition to discover the suitability of the new curriculum and the new textbook for our current society. For an in-depth analysis, the researcher has picked the EFT textbook for grade six as there have been insufficient studies on the EFT textbook for this grade. In this study, the researcher has tried to make a comprehensive analysis of the concerned books (two different editions) based on gender representation in those. The current study itself is unique and exclusive in terms of the selection of the book, the process of data collection, evaluation, and objectives.

3. Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative approach to explore gender representation in the Grade Six English for Today (EFT) textbooks from Bangladesh, focusing on the 2022 and 2024 editions. The methodology combines content analysis, focus group discussions (FGDs), and in-depth interviews to provide a comprehensive understanding of the portrayal and its educational implications. These methods are supported by relevant scholarly frameworks and research practices to ensure validity and reliability. The methodology was informed by prior studies on textbook evaluation and gender representation, including works by Shallaita et al.^[10], Asadullah et al.^[27], and Bhattachariya^[19]. These studies provided comparative benchmarks and theoretical grounding for the research design and analysis.

3.1. Participants

This study involved a diverse group of participants representing various stakeholders directly or indirectly engaged with the Grade Six English for Today (EFT) textbooks. 40 participants were selected purposively to ensure a broad spectrum of insights into gender representation and its educational implications. The following groups were included:

3.1.1. Students

A total of 14 students (aged 10–12 years) from three Bengali-medium schools in urban and semi-urban areas participated in the two student Focus Group Discussions. The students were regular users of the English for Today textbooks and were selected to represent varying academic achievements and socioeconomic backgrounds. Their perspectives provided valuable insights into how textbook con-

tent influences young learners' perceptions of gender roles and societal norms.

3.1.2. Teachers

20 teachers who actively use the EFT textbook in their classrooms were included. These participants were experienced English language instructors with a minimum of five years of teaching experience. 14 teachers selected for two teacher Focus Group Discussions and 6 were selected for in-depth interviews. They were chosen to provide insights into classroom interactions, teaching strategies, and challenges related to presenting gender-sensitive content. The teachers also contributed reflections on the evolution of the textbooks across different editions.

3.1.3. Educational Experts

Four educational experts, including curriculum designers and policy advisors, participated in the in-depth interviews. These individuals had significant experience in educational material development and implementation, particularly in Bangladesh's national education system. Their contributions highlighted the decision-making processes and priorities behind the textbook's content design.

3.1.4. Policymakers

Two policymakers from the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) were interviewed to gain insights into the institutional and policy-driven motivations behind revisions to the EFT textbook. Their inputs helped contextualize the findings within the broader framework of Bangladesh's educational reforms and goals for gender inclusivity.

3.2. Data Collection

3.2.1. Content Analysis

A structured checklist was employed to analyze both editions of the textbook. The checklist included 1. Frequency and distribution of gender-specific words, phrases, and visuals, 2. Representation of occupational roles and historical figures by gender, 3. Patterns of language use and thematic elements contributing to gender portrayal, and 4. Alignment of content with the National Education Policy, focusing on gender equality.

The frame in **Figure 1** is guided by established frameworks^[10, 19, 27] in textbook evaluation and gender studies;

however, the qualitative data have been presented quantitatively by coding and counting the frequency of specific themes, words, phrases, or representations of male and female characters in the textbook. Ensuring a critical and objective approach to identifying gender-based disparities.

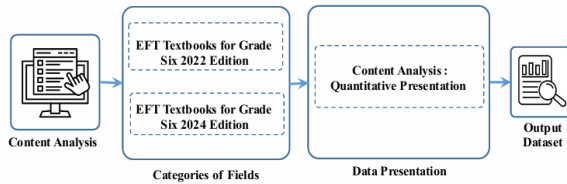


Figure 1. Data on content analysis.

3.2.2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs were conducted with 28 participants, including students and teachers directly engaged with the textbooks in classroom settings.

Figure 2 shows how FGD helps gather perceptions about gender representation and its impact on learning, understand student engagement and teacher strategies related to the textbooks and highlight feedback on the inclusivity and relevance of the content.

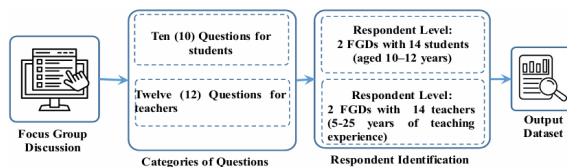


Figure 2. Data on Focus Group Discussion.

3.2.3. In-Depth Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with educational experts and policymakers provided deeper insights into the rationale behind content development in the textbooks, recommendations for integrating gender-sensitive content and broader societal implications of textbook content on gender equality. The Figure 3 below shows the infographic presentation of the FGD data collection.

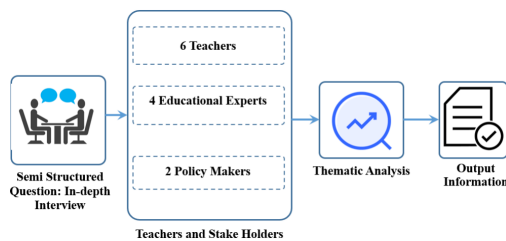


Figure 3. Data on in-depth interview.

3.2.4. Data Analysis

The data collected through content analysis, FGDs, and interviews were subjected to thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes. A combination of manual coding and qualitative data analysis software was used to categorize and interpret findings. Quantitative metrics, for examples, frequency counts were combined with qualitative interpretations to evaluate disparities in gender portrayal. These were transcribed and coded for emergent themes, such as perceptions of gender inclusivity, societal stereotypes, and educational impacts.

3.2.5. Ethical Considerations

The researchers obtained the consent of the participants before FGDs and interviews. They maintained anonymity and confidentiality throughout the research process. They also adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants.

4. Findings & Discussion

The analysis of the Grade Six English for Today (EFT) textbooks uncovered meaningful insights into how gender is represented across the 2022 and 2024 editions. By examining the textual content, visuals, and stakeholder perspectives, the study identified patterns of progress in reducing gender bias alongside areas that require further improvement. This section presents the key findings, categorized to highlight changes in character representation, occupational roles, visual balance, and thematic content, offering a comprehensive understanding of the textbooks' evolution and alignment with gender inclusivity goals. The findings are categorized and discussed in detail and the Table 1 below introduced the contributors to the EFT textbook for grade six has been.

The data reveals that the two editions have distinct sets of contributors, with the earlier edition having fewer female participants than the latest edition. This gender disparity among authors and editors might possibly contribute to influencing the representation of gender in textbooks.

4.1. A Comparative Analysis of the Quantitative Data Found from the Distribution of Data

Table 1. Introduction of the contributors.

Editions of the Concerned Book	Contributors
Previous edition: English for Today: According to National Curriculum 2012 for class six from the academic year 2013	Writers & editors: Shaheen M. Kabir Md. Zulfeqar Haider Goutam Roy Surat Roy Majumder Md. Ali Rezwan Talukdar
Latest edition: English for Today: According to National Curriculum 2022 for class six from the academic year 2023	Writers & Editors: Rubaiyat Jahan Md. Samyul Haque Bijoy Lal Basu Md. Abdul Karim Md. Nasir Uddin Shakina Alter Md. Saiful Malak Najmun Nahar Keya

Distribution of Genders

Analysing the previous edition of the EFT textbook for grade six we found that all the chapters are organised with several topics, characters, and visuals to make this book attractive to the young learners of class six. However, if we notice we would find that among 35 lessons the frequency of male characters and male-oriented visuals are higher whereas the scenario is totally opposite for the distribution of females. Compared to male, female representation is less in both characters and visuals. Even among 35 lessons, 13 lessons had only male characters having no female characters there such as in lessons 1, 3, 9, 12, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 26, 32 & 35, although very few visual representations of females can be noticed among plenty of male-oriented visuals here. Very few lessons address only females as lead characters such as lessons 17 and 31 which is very less compared to male-dominated lessons. From the quantitative analysis, it is found that almost 73.75% of the character distribution is occupied by males and the other 26.25% is occupied by females only which shows a clear discrimination between genders. We can realise the distribution of characters in this book by the following pie chart in **Figure 4**.

Analysing the latest edition of the EFT textbook, we have seen that there has been an effort to maintain a balance between male and female distribution in characters. Unlike the previous version almost in every chapter, there has been representation of both males and females. Along with male protagonists, there have been mentions of a significant number of female characters as well. Even some lessons had

been designed with only female characters like- lessons 7 and 14 and other lessons consisted of almost equal numbers of male and female characters making the book much less gender biased. The quantitative analysis says 50.77% of the character distribution is occupied by males whereas the other 49.24% consists of females. This shows a very positive scenario in the case of gender portrayal. We can clearly realise the scenario in the latest version from the following pie charts in **Figure 5**.

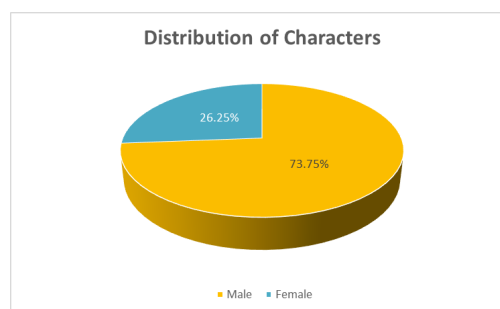


Figure 4. Distribution of male and female characters in the previous edition.

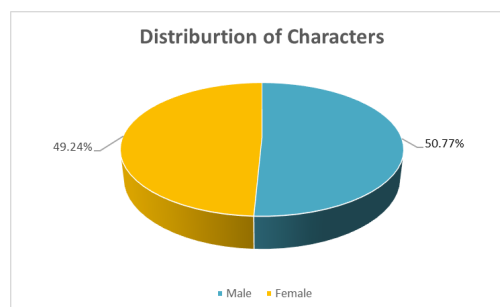


Figure 5. Distribution of male and female characters in the latest edition.

In the case of visual representation, the previous edition shows way more discrimination than the latest edition. In the previous edition of the quantitative analysis, we would find that 69.36% of the total visual representation consists of male portrayal whereas female consists of only 19.35% which shows a huge gap between genders. The scenario can be depicted through the bar graph in **Figure 6**.

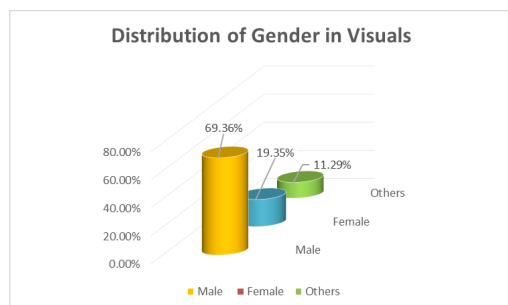


Figure 6. Distribution of gender in visuals in the previous edition.

On the other hand, in the latest edition, this scenario has a very positive aspect where we find from the quantitative analysis that 50.6% of the visual representation consists of males and 49.74% of the visual representation is of females. This scenario can be easily described through the bar graph in **Figure 7**.

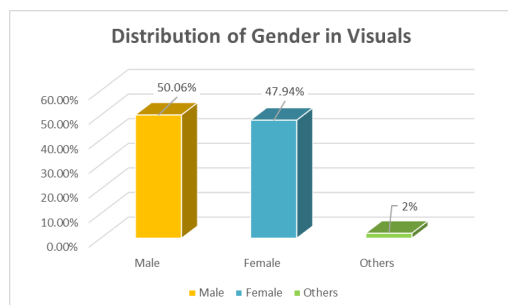


Figure 7. Distribution of gender in visuals in the latest edition.

4.2. Portrayal of Occupational Identities

In book 1, several professional identities of males and females are presented. Males are portrayed to be professionals like- student, pilot, salesman, accountant, businessman, army, singer, etc. whereas females can be identified in professions like- student, receptionist, nurse, teacher, housewife, etc. In this book, women are portrayed as some so-called feminine and stereotypical roles like teacher, nurse, receptionist, student, etc. They cannot be found in any challenging roles although in reality, women are doing diversified jobs.

But in textbooks like this one, women are often associated with some repetitive works or roles that present a partial representation of gender. On the other hand, men are portrayed in many dignified professions like pilot, accountant, army, singer, businessman, etc., although today women are also doing these types of jobs very efficiently and successfully like men. Unfortunately, this picture is not found in this book.

Analysing the latest edition, we see males are seen to be in professions like- student, guard, Gardener, jobholder, teacher, doctor, etc. whereas women are seen to be student, teacher, jobholder, badmintonist, housewife, etc. In this edition most of the time again women have been seen to be associated with feminine and low-risk roles like student, teacher, housewife, etc. To minimize the gender gap, therefore, we see no significant portrayal of men in occupational roles that would possibly create a gender bias and dominance like in the previous edition. It is clear that there has been less discrimination of gender in terms of occupation.

4.3. Presence of Historical/Famous Characters

In book 1, there are some lessons on some famous historical characters. For instance, lesson 12 (Son of the Soil) and lesson 13 (Mujibur in School Days) were based on the introduction, childhood, and school life of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. Moreover, lesson 22 (Hason Raja: The Mystic Bard of Bangladesh) was based on the biography of one the most significant mystical poet and songwriter Hason Raja. Another lesson which is lesson 27 (The Concert for Bangladesh) highlighted George Harrison, an American singer for his immense contribution to our liberation war.

Book 2, which is the latest version of the EFT textbook for class six, also has mentions of historical characters in multiple lessons. Such as lesson 8 which is “Bangabandhu, my inspiration” is solely based on the life of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and his great contributions to our country. Moreover, in lesson 17 we can learn briefly about Shakespeare who is considered the greatest writer in English literature of all time. Also, we see that lesson 4 (Ask & answer) addresses very famous historical characters like Emperor Akbar and his courtier Birbal.

Both the editions lack mention of female historical characters in the book which is pretty disappointing.

4.4. Language and Theme Analysis

The comparative analysis of language and theme of these two editions of the EFT textbook has been done based on the national educational policy. The principles in the national educational policy that address equality between genders and reduce discrimination against women are taken to be the baseline standard for this analysis. These principles mentioned in the national educational policy are as follows

1. According to education policy, chapter 18, section b, both male and female students should have a proper environment for physical exercise and sports.
2. According to education policy, boys and girls should be encouraged to do all types of jobs.
3. According to the education policy, chapter 16, more famous and historically significant women have to be enlisted in the textbooks.
4. According to the education policy, chapter 16, a positive image of women has to be portrayed in the textbooks.

4.5. Previous Edition

In lesson 1, only the achievements of males are represented (ex: Babul getting an A in the English test, Rahul's album release, Manzoor's prize-winning) and females have only the role of appreciating or congratulating. This is definitely an example of gender bias. Also, in this lesson, section B, there is a mention of a female character named Sujana who had been absent from her classes and was having a conversation about this. Being absent in classes for valid reasons is normal but this type of representation could also be portrayed by a male character. Another female character named Munira is mentioned in the lesson who failed her math test. If we notice the language we would find that female characters are portrayed to be very vulnerable. Now the question arises why this type of weak representation is portrayed by female characters only? Therefore, it is quite visible that this particular chapter has only prioritised male characters in a very positive way over females. In lesson 2, a scenario has been portrayed where a boy, Babul has been living far away from his family for study purposes. This can generate ideas among students that only boys can aspire to a good education living far away from home. But, not only in the world but also in our country thousands of girls also stay far away from

home to study and they have good careers as well. So, this type of biased portrayal needs to be considered to encourage our female students to aspire for a good education.

In lesson 4, two friends Mamun and Akash go to the book fair. No female characters are found here. This may not be very encouraging to the female students as they might think that only boys should go to the book fairs and buy books. Also, in lesson 4 of section A2, a boy named Joy is seen as a class captain. Once again, a positive representation of males has been found here where females could also be portrayed as class captains. In lesson 4, section A3, we can see that two female characters are talking about a child crying at the top of his voice because his mother works in a library leaving her child at home. This portrayal can be very discouraging to female students and may convey a wrong message that if a female pursues her career along with managing her family, she might not be a good mother or a good wife; where taking care of a baby is not only a responsibility of the mother but also of a father. But such a message is not seen to be promoted here. It is definitely a wrong and biased representation of women. There could definitely be a different representation of working women and the share of child responsibility which is very positive and encouraging to society. Moreover, in this EFT textbook, there are only portrayals of men in some specific jobs, whereas women participate in these jobs equally to men. For example, in lesson 4 as pilot, doctor, in lesson 5 as cleaner, waiter, and in lesson 19 as accountant, only male characters are represented. In lesson 5, there is a passage on a male cleaner, his contribution, and his measurable life where in our country thousands of female workers do the same job being very underpaid but seldom are recognised for their contribution.

In lesson 9, section F, there is a conversation between two males about their experience and routine of physical exercise. Male characters have been portrayed to be very punctual, active, strong, physically fit, and disciplined. But according to our education policy, women must also be associated with physical exercise and recreation. But such practice about women is missing in this book which may be discouraging to the female students. They might think that exercise only may be a thing for males which notion is absolutely incorrect. Even in lesson 32, four boys were making plans to have a vacation. But recreation is equally important for girls as well. But such a representation we do not see here.

That is how a biased education has been shared and only the mental health of boys has been emphasised. According to the education policy, chapter 16, more famous and historically significant women have to be enlisted in the textbooks. Unfortunately, this practice is also missing in the book. There can be found that there are some lessons (12,13, 22 & 27) that focus on historically famous men, both nationally and internationally such as Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Hason Raja, and George Harrison) but no women famous historical characters are mentioned which may develop a wrong message and learning towards our young students that may be women are not as great as men and have less contributions to the society. Although there are numerous female characters in our history who had immense contributions to our country, society, and literature such as Begum Rokeya, Captain Sitara Begum, Taramon Bibi, Jahanara Imam, etc. Also, in lesson 25, a male character is shown as a Bangladeshi soldier working on a UN peacekeeping mission. But in our country, according to the Armed Forces Division (AFD) of Bangladesh, more than three hundred women soldiers are serving in various UN missions and making our country proud. Unfortunately, such positive roles of women in our country are not reflected in our education materials.

4.6. Latest Edition

The latest version of the EFT textbook of class six celebrates the principles of the National Educational Policy (NEP) more than the previous version of the book. This book has been designed to take the principles of the educational policy into careful consideration which is clearly visible. The latest edition has portrayed sufficient numbers of female characters besides male characters, unlike the previous edition. In lesson 1, female characters (Shimul, Shreya) are seen to be helping others which spreads a positive impression about females. Also, in lesson 7, where the central female character Mina is seen to help multiple persons. Even in this passage of Mina, she has been portrayed to be a very positive character being very punctual, helpful, sincere, cordial, and friendly which is definitely very motivating for the female students. In lesson 9 a female character is seen to be protesting against bullying towards one of her male friends. It is clear that women had a very strong representation of personality in this latest version which was totally opposite in the previous version.

In lesson 3, section 3.8, we can see some daily activities of a good student represented through a female character doing several activities like playing with friends, studying, participating in group tasks in class, watering plants, organising school bags, having dinner with elder brother and going to school. Instead of traditionally portraying these common activities through males like previous editions of books, this book has focused on female participation which will definitely increase the self-confidence of the female students. There will be no chance of feeling uninvolved anymore for the female students. This definitely fulfills the demand of the national educational policy that the positive image of women has to be portrayed in the textbooks. Besides, in lesson 10, it is mentioned that in choosing and playing any sports there should not be any difference between boys and girls. This is an example of following the principle of our national education policy, chapter 18 & section b, where it is mentioned that both male and female students should have a proper environment for physical exercise and sports. The emphasis on exercise and sports for both male and female students renders a very good message among our students which will motivate not only our boys but also our girls to participate in exercise, sports, and games.

In lesson 5, a situation was portrayed where all the family members irrespective of gender are working together to prepare for dinner such as: Anamika's younger brother is fixing the table, her mother is organising the kitchen, and Anamika and her father are bringing dishes to the dinner table. This is an excellent representation of sharing household work among the family members irrespective of gender where traditionally our society sees these household roles to be performed by only females. This lesson has set an excellent example for both males and females about sharing household responsibilities instead of burdening those only on females. Moreover, this chapter includes a task of filling a blank table for the students where some household activities are mentioned and the students have to put the names of their family members who usually do these tasks at their home. The table includes tasks like- cooking, sweeping, shopping, washing clothes, feeding pets, cleaning bathrooms, and mopping the floor. Usually, we know that in our patriarchal society, these household tasks often are considered to be of women. But after reading the passage about "Anamika and her family sharing household activities" students will have

the opportunity to rethink the validity of this societal practice existing in our society and may be at their homes.

The proper representation of males is also celebrated where gender bias is not seen such as in lessons 10,11,13, 15,16 etc. In lesson 18, we see boys and girls being very good friends and helpful towards each other. This gives a good message to the students of both genders about equality between them leaving behind the social malpractices of the concepts of superiority and inferiority between genders. Although the latest edition of the EFT textbook for class six presents a very balanced gender representation, this book also needs some more consideration for further development.

In lesson 3 (Future lies in present), in section 3.5, a character Hasib is mentioned whose father is a government job holder and his mother is a housewife. The word “housewife” could be avoided and replaced with “homemaker” which would sound much better and more respectful. Though according to the education policy, chapter 16, section - procedure, no.6, more famous and historically significant women have to be enlisted in the textbooks, this book falls behind in fulfilling this demand of the educational policy as we see historical famous characters mentioned in the book are- Emperor Akbar and his courtier Birbal, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Shakespeare all of whom are male characters. The similar problem we have seen in the previous edition which unfortunately has not been addressed in the new edition. Also, in lesson 4, there is a passage about the wisdom of Birbal, a courtier of Emperor Akbar. Again, in lesson 6, there is a fill-in-the-blank exercise about a wise man. Now, the question is why only men are associated with wisdom! This creates scopes of gender biases and might create opportunities for the students to think that females may not be as wise as males.

Some examples of language used by males and females are presented below -

The language used in the previous edition:

By males:

I got an A on my English test (page 4)

Well done, son! I am so proud of you! (Page 4)

My new album of Lalon's songs has been a hit! (Rahul saying) (page 4)

I won the first prize! (Manzoor) (page 5)

I am the class captain. (Page 10)

I am quite sincere about fitness. (page- 30)

I am the king of the jungle and this unruly mane does not fit a king. (Page 48)

Remember, in unity there is strength.

(Page 71)

By females:

Oh great, congratulations! [Nina saying to Rahul] (page 4)

I was absent because I had the flu. I was in bed most of the time. (Page 5)

I have failed my maths test! (Page 6)

I just don't understand! That boy is screaming so much! What's his mother doing? (page 11)

Your mother has a headache. (Page 33)

Father, who is this singer? (Page 78)

The language used in the latest edition-

By males:

Sorry! (Page 8)

I can help with cooking. (Page 31)

I will also help you with cleaning dishes. (Page 31)

Oh, Mina. Thank you so much. You just saved me. (Page 58)

Hello, girl! Could you please help me? (Page 59)

So kind of you my dear. (Page 59)

I am so afraid of dogs. (Page 60)

By females:

May I help you? (Page 4)

My little brother and I also help them. (Page 40)

Hello, uncle! How can I help you? (Page 59)

I am feeding this dog. (Page 60)

I want to become an artist. (Page 91)

From above we can detect that in the previous edition, signs of discriminatory language use were seen for women on the other hand which is very rare in the case of the latest edition. In the previous edition, males are portrayed to be more positive and powerful than females which is the opposite for the latest edition. The language used and the context created for both genders in the latest edition is much more satisfying in terms of representing gender.

4.7. Findings from Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

Grade six students engaged in a Focus Group Discussion regarding their current English textbook, “English for Today”, the edition of 2024. Initial responses indicated

widespread approval of the textbook's content, ease of understanding, and visual appeal. Despite its significance, the textbook is supplemented by additional materials due to exam requirements, yet teachers prioritize its use in class. Most students could not identify gender biases suggesting their lack of maturity to understand such critical aspects at this age.

Regarding historical figures, students expressed satisfaction but desired the inclusion of female role models like Begum Rokeya and Valentina Tereshkova, etc. Lesson five, depicting gender-neutral household tasks received positive feedback, prompting some students to initiate changes at their homes. This lesson fostered a sense of gender equality. Students supported the idea of gender-neutral participation in sports, highlighting societal barriers to their interests. Overall, the textbook effectively promotes gender equality and spreads better impressions in society.

4.8. Findings from In-Depth Interviews

ELT experts and ELT teachers contributed to this study via in-depth interviews. They emphasised the vital role of textbooks, particularly "English for Today" in standardising education and fostering comprehensive English language skills. They stressed integrating language proficiency along with the learning of cultural elements and real-world scenarios. Participants advocated for textbooks to accurately represent genders inclusively, empowering students to understand diverse perspectives and identities. The previous edition of the EFT textbook for grade six faced criticism for gender misrepresentation, promoting curriculum and textbook revisions while the new edition is more balanced in this concern. Experts call for further analysis to address minor flaws, including balanced historical character representation and removal of gender stereotypes. They highlight the importance of showcasing both genders' achievements across fields to inspire students, particularly with stories of women's success. Incorporating these changes, especially in EFT textbooks at secondary levels, would enrich students' thoughts, feelings and learning experience in promoting gender equality. Papadakis^[33] argued that since school textbooks serve as primary instructional tools, the depiction of gender roles within these materials influences learners' thoughts, emotions, and behaviors toward both genders.

4.9. Analysis of EFT Textbooks for Grade Five (2022 vs. 2024 Editions) in Line with Six

In the 2022 edition, males were frequently depicted in active, leadership-oriented, or professional roles, such as doctors, engineers, and teachers. Females, on the other hand, were often shown performing domestic tasks or in passive, supportive roles. This imbalance perpetuated stereotypical gender roles, reinforcing the idea of male dominance in public and professional spaces and female association with private, domestic responsibilities. The 2024 edition shows some improvement in gender representation. Females are portrayed in more diverse roles, including scientists, athletes, and entrepreneurs, reflecting an effort to challenge traditional stereotypes. However, these portrayals are still less frequent compared to their male counterparts, and women are often depicted in a secondary capacity rather than leading figures.

In the 2022 edition, language usage often reinforced gender stereotypes, with males associated with action-oriented verbs and females with nurturing or passive language. Visual elements further supported this narrative, with images predominantly showcasing males in outdoor or professional settings and females in domestic or caregiving environments. The 2024 edition incorporates more gender-neutral language and includes visuals that depict women in dynamic roles. For instance, females are shown engaging in sports or leading discussions in classrooms, a significant departure from previous portrayals. However, subtle biases remain, such as male dominance in group settings or leadership positions.

The comparative analysis of the 2022 and 2024 editions of Grade Five EFT textbooks in Bangladesh reveals a shift toward more equitable gender representation. While progress has been made, further efforts are needed to ensure comprehensive gender equality in educational materials. Addressing these gaps is crucial for fostering a generation that values gender equality, thereby improving the quality of education and its societal impact.

5. Recommendations

There is always a scope for improvement. Although the new edition of the EFT textbook for grade six has proved to be very well balanced in terms of gender representation throughout the analysis, still there are some minor flaws that

need careful consideration-

- (1) As the analysis clearly shows the presence of a high focus on male perspectives, successes, leadership roles, and contributions in the NCTB sample textbook for class six^[34-36], it should introduce additional practical and realistic scenarios, storylines or examples featuring female protagonists. The latest edition has enough female protagonists mentioned but most of them are presented as students. So, it is encouraged to create much more practical situations or plots for the female protagonists along with males so that both genders can be displayed in a more balanced way in the textbook. Haq and Alam^[29] have come up with similar recommendations that women should be introduced to more positive and inspiring roles as well as the characters that indicate power should be portrayed for both genders. Also, according to our National Educational Policy, chapter 16, a positive image of women has to be portrayed. So, there is a need to be considerate of such aspects in future editions to represent women in a more positive way that would inspire our young learners.
- (2) Both the concerned editions lack representation of historical female characters which must be addressed in future editions. Nahar^[17] also came up with a similar issue that no female historical characters are added to our EFT textbooks. Now in 2024 still we have a similar issue of the absence of historically famous female characters in our EFT textbooks. To ensure gender equality and rights in academic discourse, textbooks should avoid overrepresentation or underrepresentation of one gender as this practice can negatively influence the belief about gender roles among the students^[1]. This issue must be addressed in future editions.
- (3) Moreover, if we talk about job opportunities for genders portrayed in the latest edition, there is still a lot of scope for development. In accordance with our educational policy, it is mandated to encourage boys and girls to do all types of jobs, thereby presenting diverse job opportunities for both genders should be there that break away from traditional gender stereotypes. Women can also be shown to be doing dignified and high-risk jobs like men rather than only portraying them as students, teachers, mothers, nurses, etc.
- (4) There should be inclusion of female role models in our EFT textbooks. As in the latest edition of the concerned EFT textbook for grade six, we see several chapters such as lessons 4, 7, and 17 mention some role model figures like Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Birbal, and Shakespeare all of whom are males. There should be enough mention of female personalities along with males who had immense contributions to the fields of science and technology, games and sports, history, politics, literature, etc., and are already admired as role models by society. There must be an inclusive representation of both genders in terms of recognising them as role models to our learners through the EFT textbooks based on their contribution, not on their gender identities.
- (5) Moreover, neither the previous edition nor the latest edition has any mentions about third gender communities which is clearly an example of discrimination and stigmatization towards the third gender community. So, it is necessary to focus adequately on the third-gender community and incorporate their real-life experiences into the environment, which can bring about significant positive changes in their lives and in society as a whole. As our constitution recognised the third gender in 2013 and the government is very much considerate about their education and rights, there should be an effort to spread an inclusive message about this community among the nation through our education system. There must be enough awareness campaigns about this neglected community to promote acceptance and reduce social stigma towards them and addressing them in textbooks could be one of the most effective initiatives in this respect. Therefore, it is high time the government and policymakers thought to give proper consideration to this issue of inclusion of all the recognised genders (men, women, and third gender) in textbooks equally, especially in EFT textbooks which would spread a sense of respect, positivity, and empathy among all the genders.
- (6) Additionally, teachers must be well aware of gender ideas. More orientations and training on gender awareness can be arranged for the teachers who implement the book in the class. Gender representation can be

misguided not only by the content of the book itself but also by the way of teaching by the language teachers. That is why along with developing the book in terms of gender representation, it is crucial to educate our teachers on utilizing materials with equitable gender representation to offer impartial education on gender perspectives to our young learners.

- (7) To promote gender equity and inclusivity in educational materials, policymakers should ensure balanced representation of female and historical figures, depict both genders in diverse and non-stereotypical occupational roles, and use gender-neutral language and themes that encourage equal participation in all activities. Narratives recognizing the third gender should be integrated to foster inclusivity, and teacher training programs on gender sensitivity must be prioritized to support unbiased education. Additionally, establishing periodic content reviews will ensure textbooks remain aligned with national educational policies and evolving societal values, equipping students to build a more equitable society.

6. Conclusions

Academic education, more specifically secondary education plays a very crucial role in shaping an individual's ethical principles, moral values, perspectives, and life goals. To foster our new generation with reduced gender bias, it is crucial to approach our education system with great care and attention. Neglecting even the smallest considerations can have detrimental effects on future generations, potentially hindering our national progress. Therefore, establishing and implementing a more practical, advanced, contemporary, and developed education policy and curriculum that reflects real-world scenarios is essential for ensuring a brighter future. Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance for schools and teacher training institutions to have consistent, relevant, and practical professional development and training on the topic of differentiated instruction. Similarly, it is also important that teachers are exposed to authentic experiences of teaching using differentiated approaches^[37]. The analysis reveals that the imbalance in gender portrayal has significantly decreased in the new edition compared to the previous one, though there are still areas for improvement. Despite

efforts to include female presence in dialogues, synopses, and narratives, the new edition of the textbook continues to perpetuate inequality in gender representation. The noticeable imbalance underscores the need for reconsideration and further enhancement in this aspect of the textbook in future revisions.

Author Contributions

Validation, P.V. and M.G.M.; formal analysis, M.M., M.G.M. and F.M.; writing—original draft preparation, F.A. and P.V.; writing—review and editing, M.G.M., H.M. H.G., and F.M.; supervision, M.G.M. and F.A. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding

This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement

Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement

The authors confirm that all data generated and analyzed in this study are included in this paper.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank Mr. Hazzaz Al Abtahee Nijhum, Lecturer, Department of English, Green University of Bangladesh for her unwavering support to submit the paper.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

References

- [1] Awal, A., 2024. Gender representation in English language textbooks in Bangladesh. *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT*. 12(2), 62–82.
- [2] Kosir, M., Lakshminarayanan, R., 2024. Women's rights and social equity: Challenges in a male-dominated structure. *Journal of Policy Studies*. 25(2), 45–60.
- [3] Isaee, H., Barjesteh, H., Nasrollahi, M.A., 2023. Screening EFL teachers' perception on 'Prospect 1': The case of internal and external evaluation. *International Journal of Research in English Education*, 8(1), 71–91.
- [4] Barjesteh, H., Manoochehrzadeh, M., Heidarzadi, M., 2022. *Syllabus Design and Materials Development*. Society Publishing: Burlington, Canada.
- [5] Kim, S. H., Lee, H., 2023. Asserting Koreanness in South Korean middle school English textbooks. *World Englishes*. 42(3), 544–561.
- [6] Qazi, M.H., Shah, S., 2019. Discursive construction of Pakistan's national identity through curriculum textbook discourses in a Pakistani school in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates. *British Educational Research Journal*, 45(2), 275–297.
- [7] Rosenberg M, Smith J, Patel R., 2009. The role of education in shaping national identity. *Journal of History and Cultural Studies*. 18(4), 112–129.
- [8] Agha, N., Shaikh, G., 2023. Teachers' perceptions of gender representation in textbooks: insights from Sindh, Pakistan. *Journal of Education*, 203(4), 891–900.
- [9] Maker C.E., Wray-Lake, L., Cohen, A.K., 2022. Critical consciousness and wellbeing in adolescents and young adults: A systematic review. *Adolescent Research Review*. 7(4), 499–522.
- [10] Shallaita, B., Nawawi, N., Amin, M., 2021. Analysis of English language teaching materials on gender representation. *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 8(2), 419–434.
- [11] Lakoff, R., 1973. Language and woman's place. *Language in society*, 2(1), 45–79.
- [12] Eagly, A.H., 2013. *Sex differences in social behavior: A social-role interpretation*. Psychology Press: London, UK.
- [13] Uyuni, Y. R., Haryanti, E., Izzuddin, I., 2023. Women's images and gender equality in Arabic textbooks for non-Arabic speakers: A case study on Al-Asas in Sudan. *HTS Theologese Studies/Theological Studies*. 79(2), 1–2.
- [14] Rahman, T., 2018. Communicative Language Teaching in Bangladesh: Policy and Practice. *Journal of Applied Linguistics and Language Research*. 5(2), 45–60.
- [15] Uddin, M.R., 2021. Evaluating the effectiveness of English for Today textbooks in Bangladesh: Challenges and opportunities. *Bangladesh ELT J*. 9(1), 78–94.
- [16] Suhartono, S., Kristina, D., 2018. Gender bias in textbooks and test items of English language learning in the Indonesian context. In *Fourth Prasasti International Seminar on Linguistics (Prasasti 2018)*. Atlantis Press: Amsterdam, The Netherlands. pp. 425–428.
- [17] Torre-Sierra, A., Reina, M., Gender representation in educational textbooks: The impact on students' role model selection. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. 14(3), 215–230.
- [18] Papadakis, S., Tousia, C., Polychronaki, K., 2018. Women in computer science. The case study of the Computer Science Department of the University of Crete, Greece. *International Journal of Teaching and Case Studies*. 9(2), 142–151.
- [19] Bhattachariya, S., 2013. Gender Representation in Educational Materials: A Comparative Study of English Textbooks. *Journal of Education and development*. 14(1), 45–63.
- [20] Fauzi, K., Utami, I., 2019. Gender bias in ELT textbooks: A case study of Bahasa Inggris: When English Comes in Handy for tenth grade in Indonesia. *International Journal of Language and Education Research*. 7(2), 112–128.
- [21] Takamäki, R., 2020. Gender representation in school textbooks: A critical analysis of student perceptions. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*. 19(3), 112–30.
- [22] Guichot-Reina, V., De la Torre-Sierra, M., 2023. Gender bias in mathematics textbooks: A critical discourse analysis. *Memory span: A review of the literature*. 28(2), 45–67.
- [23] Jiang, L., 2024. Bibliometric analysis of English textbook research: 1979–2022 trends and contributions. *International Journal of Applied Linguistic Studies*. 32(1), 78–102.
- [24] Vu, T., Pham, H., 2023. Gender bias in Vietnamese English textbooks: A multimodal critical approach. *Asian Journal of Educational Research*. 11(4), 88–105.
- [25] Muassomah, M., Halimi, H., Yasmadi, Y, et al., 2023. Gender inequality in Arabic textbooks: Misrepresentation of women in culture and society. *International Journal of Society, Culture & Language*. 11(1), 272–288.
- [26] Durrani, N., Halai, A., 2020. Gender equality, education, and development: Tensions between global, national, and local policy discourses in postcolonial contexts. In *Book Chapters/Conference Papers*. Brill: Leiden, the Netherlands. pp. 65–95.
- [27] Asadullah, M.N., Islam, K.M., 2018. Gender stereotypes in Bangladeshi, Indonesian, Malaysian and Pakistani textbooks. Available from: <https://world-education-blog.org/> (accessed 10 March 2025).
- [28] Nahar, S., 2017. Gender representation in English textbooks: A study on primary and secondary education in Bangladesh. *Bangladesh Journal of Educational Re-*

- search. 15(2), 55–72.
- [29] Haq, F., Alam, K., 2010. Gender sensitivity in school textbooks in Bangladesh: A qualitative study. *Social Change*. 4(2), 27–36.
- [30] Sathee, S.A., 2018. Gender discourse in English language teaching (ELT) coursebook. Dhaka, Bangladesh: BRAC University. pp. 7–70.
- [31] Chowdhury, A.R., 2017. Representation of (In) equality in English for Today (Class-VIII). East West University: Chicago, IL., USA. pp. 92–114.
- [32] Suchana, A.A., 2020. Representation of Women in Occupational and Domestic Roles in EFT Textbooks. *Shanlax International Journal of English*. 8(4), 43–48.
- [33] Papadakis, S., 2018. Gender stereotypes in Greek computer science school textbooks. *International Journal of Teaching and Case Studies*, 9(1), 48–71.
- [34] Islam, M.A., Hack-Polay, D., Rahman, M., et al., 2023. Gender and leadership in public higher education in South Asia: examining the individual, socio-cultural and organizational barriers to female inclusion. *Studies in Higher Education*. 48(8), 1197–1215.
- [35] Mim, S.A., 2020. Masculinity of science: Unveiling gendered challenges of female science teachers in Bangladesh. *Gender and Education*. 34(1), 80–95.
- [36] Prodip, M.A., 2022. Cultural obstacles to women’s political empowerment in India and Bangladesh: A comparative perspective. *Asian Journal of Comparative Politics*, 7(3), 449–465.
- [37] Shareefa, M., Moosa, V., Hoo, W.C., 2024. An investigation of K–12 teachers’ perception and use of differentiated instruction based on qualification, training, and experience. *International Journal of Education and Practice*. 12(2), 324–335.