Gender equality in and through education in Nigeria: Gender representation in learning materials

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Abstract

The study examines representations of males and females in learning materials - English Language textbooks for Junior Secondary Schools students in Nigeria. Seven highly recommended textbooks were studied - *Practical English Book* I, *Practical English* Book II, *Intensive English* Book I, *Intensive English* Book III, *Project English* Book I, II and III. Methods - Content and linguistic analysis of these texts were carried out in order to identify whether the representation of females and males are biased or fair i.e., whether there contain any perpetration of gender stereotypes (subordination); (ii) discrimination against females/males (invisibility); (iii) over and under representation of particular sex group (domination) and other forms of gender insensitiveness that might be inimical to achieving

gender equality in and through education. Our general findings indicate discrimination against both males and female; however, females are largely discriminated against in forms of underrepresentation, invisibility, domination, subordination and perpetration of gender stereotypes that are inimical to their empowerment for national development and the achievement of the goals of gender equality. Based on these findings, the researcher calls on all stakeholders - researchers, teachers, authors, publishers, government representatives for (I) enlightenment programmes/forum on gender issues in learning materials and environment; (ii) formulation of government guidelines for the elimination of all forms of gender bias in students' learning materials (iii) elimination of gender biasness in learning environments and (iv) revision of learning materials that will promote and entrench gender fairness in the representation of females and males in the learning materials at the UBE Scheme level (Primary 1-6 to Junior Secondary 1-3) and beyond through the efforts of authors and publishers in conjunction with government agents' actions.

1.0 Introduction

This paper reports the outcomes of a research on gender representation in learning materials in Nigeria. The undertaking was motivated by the need to contribute through empirical studies towards achieving the set goals of gender equality programmes as contained in the third MDGs, UNICEF gender equality programmes, CEDAW, ECOWAS Gender Policy, Nigeria's Gender Equality Policy among others. It is anticipated that the outcome of this research (through its findings and recommendations) would not only draw attention to gender issues in Nigeria but also motivate stakeholders into actions that will address one of the hidden areas (hidden curriculum) in the educational sector that serve as obstacles to achieving gender equality (in and through education) in Nigeria.

The study examines gender representation in seven English Language textbooks for Junior Secondary School students in Nigeria. The objectives among others are to highlight gender biasness in learning materials, create awareness about gender issues in the education sector and consequently call on stakeholders to embark on revising these texts in order to enforce the goals of gender equality in and through education that are stipulated in Nigeria's Gender Equality Policy documents among others. This research report is divided into seven sections, namely: background, literature review, methods, analysis, findings, discussion of findings, and recommendations.

2.0 Background

In this section, we enumerate the motivations for this undertaking. The overriding motive is to identify one major area where mainstreaming gender equality into tangible operational actions might be felt - a way of transforming talks about gender equality into walking the talks. Thus it seeks to draw attention to specific areas within the educational process (learning materials) where gender mainstreaming could address gender inequality and have direct desirable and tangible impact on learners and society at large. It is anticipated that through co-ordinated programmes and concerted efforts of all the stakeholders its recommendation would help contribute toward achieving the desired goals of gender equality.

2.1 Motivation for the study

A number of considerations motivated this undertaking. Amongst them is a need to contribute towards the various programmes geared towards eliminating every form of discrimination of all kinds on the grounds of sex. In other words, the study seeks to draw attention to such undesirable forms of gender bias in learning materials and suggest reforms that will bring about gender fairness in the representation of females and males thereby enforcing gender equality in practical ways. These undertakings are in tune with the third

Millennium Development Goals, especially the third goal that addresses gender equality (cite). The programmes of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, together with the Convention on the Rights of the Child which have among their goals the elimination of gender inequalities also motivated our research. UNICEF Policy on Gender Equality, the Empowerment of Girls and Women (2010), and the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 goals also informed our investigation.

Although Nigeria is signatory to the proposed programmes of UN MDGs, UNICEF, CEDAW and others and has been working on gender mainstreaming intended to achieve the set gender equality goals, it does not appear that the amount of talks is equals to walking the talks. Recently, a British Council (2012) research project assessed the level of gender equality in Nigeria. The report, in summary, shows that…. "gender bias is still part of the system" although the research did not consider learners' learning materials in the educational sector which appears to us to be very significant because the educational sector is the socialization ground for the nation's men and women. The exclusion of learning materials is not surprising since learning materials are part of what is referred to in the literature as the hidden curriculum. Thus this research was embarked upon in order to spotlight some aspects of the learning materials that are considered to be gender insensitive and how this insensitiveness in texts contributes to engendering gender inequality (especially discrimination against women) during the formative years of learners who go through the school system at those crucial years of growing into adulthood.

Another consideration is related to CEDAW policy and programmes that Nigeria is also a signatory. Again, it is on record that gender parity in the educational, social, economic, political and other major sectors of the country appears to be improving when compared with what the records show in the yesteryears. However, there is much room for improvement in the area of gender equality when we consider the goals of Conventions for Elimination of all

forms of Discrimination of women and also where the country ranks among other nations (since reductions in the intensity of gender bias in textbooks is considered as a useful indicator of gender equity in society (Blumerg, 2007) the present rating of Nigeria is less than desirable). For according to the British Council research report (2012), Nigeria ranks 118 of 134 countries in the Gender Equality Index.

The third consideration is related to Nigeria's Gender Equality Policy that has been widely reported in government communiqué at various local and international fora. For example, the report that the Minister of gave …summarily itemised proposed programmes in place and not what had been achieved in tangible activities. Similarly, the reports given at CEDAW…

The other motivation for our undertaking is the dearth of studies on gender bias in learning materials in the sub-Sahara. Aside from the co-ordinated programmes of the Commonwealth of Nations, it appears that very little has been done in this area in Africa. Nigeria's UBE scheme, in consonance with UNESCO gender equality goals, has amongst its goals equal accessibility to *quality* education by the year 2015. Although it is encouraging to note that programmes geared toward achieving numerical gender balance (bridging the gap between boys and girls in terms of enrolment) have recorded a measure of success, the other part of the goals 'quality education' is yet to be addressed. While assessing the progress made by nations in that vein, in her recommendations, Blumerg (2007) states that as countries succeed in achieving gender parity in enrolment, i.e., succeed at access, they should be encouraged to tackle –and monitor and evaluate – "second level" problems, such as gender bias in textbooks and curricula.

3.0 Literature review

In this section, we review the literature in gender representation in curriculum and learning materials with those that have addressed the concepts of hidden curriculum, representation

and the place of gender representation in learning materials studies in achieving gender equality in and through education.

3.1 Gendering learners through textbooks and curriculum

The place of learning materials and school curriculum in achieving gender equality in and through education appears not to have received due attention in many gender mainstreaming programmes in the sub-Sahara although, the roles of school curriculum and learning materials have been widely discussed in the literature. For example, Stromquist, Lee and Brock-Utne (1998:83) noted that

> educational institutions are powerful ideological institutions
> that transmit dominant values, and function as mechanisms
> of social control…schools transmit values that not only reproduce
> social class but also main gender structures…the formal school
> system contributes to the reproduction of gender inequalities
> through such mechanisms as selective access to schooling, the
> content of what is being taught and what is not and how it is taught
> and the kinds of knowledge men and women (and boys and girls) get.

Their paper draws attention to what goes on in the educational system/process and how this impacts on the learner. Stromquist, et al. (1998) claim that the formal curriculum covers the knowledge and skills schools officially seek to transmit via their program of studies, courses and textbooks. To them, not many studies have explored the effects textbooks have on learners; consequently they called for longitudinal research tracing influences over time. They concluded that observers and educators acknowledge that textbooks and curricular content leave lasting influences in our memories, as phrases and stories heard, read and written about men and women condition our minds (Stromquist, et al. (1998:83-97).

The place of textbooks in socializing learners cannot be overemphasized, especially as textbooks are often viewed by learners as authoritative, and therefore have the potential to influence a significantly large and impressionable audience (Robson, 2001; Westbury, 1990). In addition, it serves as a "means to facilitate the integration of content about ethnically, racially and culturally diverse populations (Sileo and Prater 1998:05). To Mustedanagic (2010) whenever a text is read, an interpretation is made by the reader and meaning is constructed. Comparing language teaching with building a house, she says that "the text represents our material … therefore, bad material, bad building".

Zeroing in on textbooks, Stromquit *et al*. (1998) affirmed that textbooks are significant mechanism for the transmission of the informal curriculum. In addition to certain subjects, knowledge, and skills, books disseminate sexual bias, prejudice, and discrimination through the ways in which men and women are depicted in stories and illustrations. By focusing on some and ignoring others, the identity of persons may be strengthened or weakened accordingly. Stressing the place of textbooks further, Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008) noted that the textbooks…young people focus on repeatedly during the classroom practice, follow-up assignments or projects, and preparation for examination exert influence on the learner in terms of the quality of education they receive, their understanding of social equality and national unity. Putting it very strongly, both Poulou (1997) and Treichler and Frank (1989) reported that linguistic sexism creates deleterious real-world and damaging pedagogical consequences especially for women and girls.

Thus, the roles that textbooks play in educating learners has attracted the attention of other scholars and studies indicate that both the linguistic and non-linguistic contents of these learning materials inadvertently socialize learners into the traditional gender stereotypes that

are inimical to achieving gender equality and empowerment of women for national development.

3.2 The hidden curriculum

The hidden impact of school curriculum and learning materials (hidden curriculum) became obvious to many scholars and consequently opened up a large area of research. Thus studies that gave serious attention to the influence of textbooks on learners suggest such influences are subtle… thus the term 'hidden curriculum'. Talking about hidden curriculum, Stromquit *et al.* (1998:398) noted that the informal curriculum, popularly called hidden curriculum is the set of knowledge that is transmitted through the roles men and women play in the staffing of schools, the way teachers treat male and female students, and the manner in which adults interact with others (in texts). Another dimension was added to the hidden curriculum, which is the expectations teachers have of boys and girls regarding occupational and family roles, the differential vocational advice given to boys and girls, the behavioural norms and disciplinary sanctions enforced at school, and the re-creation within the school of norms and values concerning masculinity and femininity by the peer group (Levinson, 1997). According to Stromquit et al. (1998:401) from a feminist perspective, a distinction should be made between non-sexist curriculum - one that is free of gender stereotypes and other forms of distortions; and an antisexist curriculum - one that seeks to destroy stereotypes and to build a new way of perceiving and establishing social relations between men and women.

Setting the agenda, Sapon-Shevin and Schniedewind (1991) set the goal, which is to produce gender-balanced curriculum/textbooks (which required collaborated effort and co-operation) that alter the contents of the present gender-biased curriculum/textbooks so female and male learners can see each other as sources of help and support, share their learning experiences, and learn to be responsible for one another's learning.

In conclusion, working towards gender equality in education should not only focus on equal access to or provision of education to men and women, the content of schooling should be given attention. Improving on school enrolment among boys and girls should be pursued especially in developing countries where enrolment gap has been very wide. However, considering the way "school narratives are constructed in basic terms that contrast and oppose masculinity and femininity" particularly "the oppression of women by men should not be seen as a nonissue" rather they are issues that demand urgent attention. Therefore, because "the formal curriculum, through textbook content and instructional dynamics, continue to promote the creation of gendered identities of asymmetrical nature… textbooks should continue to be a prime target in strategies to modify the curriculum (Stromquit et al. 1998:405).

The outcome of these debates was a need for empirical studies that will draw attention to the imbalance and call for reform in the representation of men and women in textbooks. This kind of reform will bring about balanced or gender fairness - as a means of engendering equality not only in the way we view both sexes but also in the way they are treated or given opportunities in human society. For Renner (1997), it is important to eliminate sexism in the language use in order to provide an environment where every pupil can learn on equal terms. Essentially, the need to change the structure that supports sexism in language use became important. Stressing the need to reform and the gain thereby, Mills (1995:95) says that a gender-free language contributes to the acceptance of each human being, without dominance from one group.

Stromquit et al. (1998:405) note that the creation of a new social identity by means of school interventions necessitates the recognition of the value of endogenous culture, but it also

requires the courage to discard traditional elements that are conducive to the oppression of women, whether in the name of culture or religion.

A follow-up action based on these assumptions was that serious attention was directed at how textbooks help to foster imbalance gender education in the formal setting of learning.

3.3 Gender representation and its socialising roles in learning materials

The concept of representation and how it has been explored in visual arts, print and non-print media, especially in textbooks (learning materials) has been taken up by many researchers in gender and education. The acknowledgement that educational materials are key mechanism of socialization that instils values and attitudes in young people, including differentiated gender roles (Lee (2011) is one of the motivating factors for many of these studies. According to Sunderland (200) studies and critiques of gender representation in textbooks blossomed in the 1970s and 1980s and into the early 1900s, (e.g. U'ren, 1971 Schmitz, 1975; Cincotta, 1978; Hellinger, 1980; Whyld, 1983; Peterson and Lach, 1990; Myers 1992; Cerezal, 1994) together with analytical frameworks. However, after her state of the art article was published more works had been done and more are still being carried out on the same subject (e.g. Gooden and Gooden, 2001). The general finding is that the kind of gender bias in texts found in texts is inimical to gender equality in quality education because gender biased representations impact negatively on child development. In fact, the kind of gender unfairness in texts does not only present inequality in the representation of members of sex groups but puts a particular sex group on the other side of the bright light, especially the women. Thus the overwhelmingly poor representation of female characters in terms of visibility, stereotyping of personality traits and occupational roles (including illustrations), and derogatory treatment in textbooks that Sunderland (2000) reported a decade ago is repeated a decade later in Lee (2011).

3.4 Studies in gender and learning materials

Many studies in gender and language education (learning materials) that have examined the way authors' textbooks represent men and women have been motivated by a number of reasons (factors). Amongst them is the argument that the ways the sexes are represented are rather imbalanced or unfair especially to women. And that kind of biased representation may directly or indirectly shape gender identities that will not augur well with the educational goals of our contemporary society, especially the need for gender equality in qualitative education. According to Cameron (1998), research in this area was sparked off by feminist movement in the 1960s when what they might contribute in linguistic sphere was discovered.

In addition, the influx of significant studies in this area is also as a response to the demand from feminist researchers who called for a combination of reflection and practice that they refer to as praxis (Freire (1970) and a need for experts in various areas of language teaching to expose and transform social injustice through research and pedagogical practices within classroom, schools, communities, and society at large. (Davis and Skilton-Sylvester 2004:398 cited in Mukundan and Nimehchisalem 2008:156).

In response, tons of studies had rolled in beginning from 1946. One of the earliest studies was carried out by Child, Potter and Levine (1960) which discovered that primary textbooks often portrayed rather negatively and stereotypically e.g., manipulative. According to Blumberg (2007) with the advent of second wave women movement, studies multiplied and in 1971, activist Marjorie U'Ren published a content analysis of the 'The image of woman in textbooks' in an iconic feminist reader where she analyzed 30 of the newest textbooks adopted or recommended for use in second to sixth grade California schools. In what follows, we shall review studies along this line under three phases:

- First phase studies that created the awareness of imbalance in the language of textbooks and called for reforms;

- Second phase - follow- up studies that assessed responses to reforms called for; and

- third phase - studies that extend the focus beyond textbook images and language use to talks around the texts in the classroom.

3.4.1 First phase studies

The need to reform language use and consequently change people's view about men and women moved gender and language researchers (especially those of feminist orientation) to consider not just gender differences in language use (in day to day interactions) but also language use in textbooks which was thought of as a form of social practice that is used by patriarchal society to entrench (as way of gendering learners into stereotype masculinity and femininity) gender parity and inequality to the detriment of women in society.

Consequently in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s many were carried out and their findings indicate that texts, especially language textbooks were biased against femininity painting men in the brighter light of importance in occupations, public/social life, decision makers in companies and government. On the other hand, women were rendered invisible, or at lowest representation far less than men. For example, Cincotta (1978) revealed that both males and females perform gender stereotypical activities; Porecca (1984) reported that men tend to occupy both more powerful and a greater range of occupational roles than women; Hartman and Judd (1978) showed that men were made more visible than women; women on the other hand tend to be stereotypically emotional and are more likely than male characters to be the butt of jokes; Hellinger, (1980) found that males are over-represented.

There are other studies that reported similar results (Talansky, 1986; in Greece, Poulou 1997; Mukundan 2003; in Malaysia, Chandran and Abdullah 2003; Seng, 2003; in Spain, Cerezal

1991) Mills (1995) operating from a feminist perspective noted that phallocentrism prevails in gender and literature since generic sexism usage in language at the morphological, phrasal and sentential levels abounds. For example, affixes in occupational terms and generic pronouns in literature betray the lack of fairness to womenfolk. Sunderland (1994:55-56) summarised the areas of concern of these studies thus:

> Gender imbalance in texts includes invisibility (fewer males than
>
> females or vice versa), occupational stereotyping (females/males
>
> in fewer and more menial occupational roles; relationship
>
> stereotyping (women more in relation with men than men
>
> with women); personal characteristic stereotyping (women
>
> as emotional and timid); disempowering discourse roles
>
> (more males talking first and degradation (blatant sexism
>
> to the point of misogamy) Sunderland 1994:55-56).

Subsequently guidelines for effecting these recommendations were produced. For example, McCormick's (1994) which was intended for stakeholders in the teaching sphere offers what Mustedanagic (2010) calls theoretical and practical guidelines for implementing a non-sexist classroom environment. Mills (1995) also provides guidelines for gender-free language. Government bodies were tasked to ensure gender balance which included education sectors. For example in Sweden, the country's LPO 94 under the Swedish National Agency for Education stipulates that "The school should promote an understanding for others and the ability to empathize. Activities should be characterised by care of the individual's well-being and development. No one should be subject to discrimination at school based on gender, ethnic belonging, religion or other belief, sexual orientation or disability, or subject to other

degrading treatment" (cited in Mustedanagic 2008:03).(Insert UNESCO and others documents on gender equality in Education)

3.4.2 Second phase studies

Interestingly findings and recommendations from the United States, the United Kingdom (where the studies kicked off) and some parts of Asia tend to be yielding desirable results although there are areas that are yet to be addressed or rather thinly investigated. For example, Sunderland (1994b) (pedagogical and other filters) reported changes in some of the textbooks she examined in Britain where newer grammar books from 1988 upwards encourages readers towards the avoidance of gender-specific language.

According to Blumerg (2007) by 1990s various second generation studies began to analyze the persistent (or not) of gender bias in a variety of substantive fields. Most showed modest improvements (sometimes very modest) handling texts at the high school, children's illustrated books and teacher training textbooks. For example, Zittleman and Sadker (2002) followed up the classic Sadker and Sadker (1980) study of gender bias in teacher training materials. The restudy, according to Blumerg (2007) involved 23 textbooks published from 1998-2001. Using the 1980 study evaluation methods, they found progress to be 'minimal' and disappointing. But despite the quantitative data showing that textbooks are far from gender-equitable, they also found that 'today's' textbooks are less offensive than those published more than 20 years ago.

Similarly Mukundan and Nimehchisalem's (2008) study is a follow-up on earlier studies by Seng (2003) and Chandran and Adbudllah, (2003) in Malaysia while Healy (2009) is a follow-up on studies done in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s (Hartman an Judd, 1978; Porecca 1984; Jones, et al. 1997). These studies fall within what we have categorized as second phase studies. These studies, among others, assess progress made in ensuring gender balance in

textbooks and they further suggest areas that have not been covered by authors/publishers. For example, Healy (2009) concluded that in the textbook that she examined the authors have managed to represent both sexes fairly evenly in the amount of talk - thus avoiding gender bias. Similarly, Sano, Iida and Hardy (2001) noted that although recent moves toward gender equality might have changed lexical choices made in Japanese EFL junior high school textbooks, and might have prompted the exclusion of explicit representations of stereotypical assumptions from previous editions, regarding gender roles, however, implicit and metalinguistic messages in the existing texts suggest the need for a thorough analysis to evaluate the balance of gender representation. Their study categorically states: "Obviously, gender-imbalanced language has been substantially eliminated from EFL textbooks since 1990. There are no occurrences of gender-biased language such as chairman…. (however)…reading through the texts reveals prominence in the number of features focusing on male characters" (Sano, Iida and Hardy 2001:903-904).

Sweden and China appear to have achieved a higher measure of success. Blumerg (2007) noted that the initiative in China (funded by the Ford Foundation) resulted in the development of 49 sets of non-biased primary and secondary school teaching materials, covering 20 subjects. The overall findings, according to Blumerg (2007:22) show, however, that China's road to eliminate gender bias in textbooks and curricula will not be a short one, despite an official state of policy of achieving gender equity in education. (see Zhao, 2002; Zhang, 2002; Yi, 2002; Yi, 2003; Ross and Shi, 2003; Hui, 2003) Also more success has been reported in Latin America (Costa Rica, Brazil, Argentina, Peru and the Caribbean. (see Gozalez, 1990; Drayton, 1997;

In addition, it has been reported that the Nordic countries have been successful in decreasing male stereotypes and improving male parenting skills through various school interventions (see, SIDA, 2007; Carlson, 2007)

3.4.3 Third phase studies

Following the success achieved from studies on representations of gender in language textbooks, researchers' attention has been drawn to the limitations of reformed textbooks. It has been observed that gender-balanced textbooks might still be turned around in the classroom by teachers or rather opposed by sexist female and male teachers who see themselves as agents of society to perpetrate patriarchal system they are used to and oppose any wave of feminism that some consider to be asocial movement set to upheld inherited stereotypical imbalanced gender representations. Sunderland (2000) raised a germane question that suggests that research on gender representations in textbooks should not be the end of the road. She asks whether gender bias in textbooks does matter. In her answer, she says:

> It may not matter as much as these studies assumed -
> not because gender bias is unimportant (it will always
> matter to those who have principled objections to
> sexism in any shape or form), but because to focus
> on gender bias in a text may be to miss the point as
> far as learners and learning are concerned" (Sunderland 2000:153).

She goes further to buttress this position:

> The point is that we cannot predict what a teacher will do
> from a text itself. A focus on gendered text alone, which
> assumes teacher treatment of the text is somehow evident
> from the text, would thus seem misguided. A text is arguably
> as good or as bad as the treatment it receives from the teacher
> who is using it; in particular, a text riddled with gender bias
> can be rescued and that bias put to good effect, pedagogic
> and otherwise (Sunderland 2000:155)

This argument points the way forward in gender and language education research. And that way forward is often tagged 'talk around the text'. That means studies should focus on how teachers use texts in classroom - in teaching learning environment. Sunderland (2000) says that empirical studies are needed of teachers' use of texts. This new area is important for achieving the balanced or quality education that is at the centre of the whole efforts. The focus on the teacher - what they do with texts in the classroom is important judging from what has been reported among some of them.

For example, Bonkowski cited in Alderson (1997:12) reported that language teachers often distorted textbook authors' intentions, interpreting those intentions through their own models of language, language learning and language teaching. Similarly Shattuck 1996 (cited Sunderland 2000:155) also found that at a British Council School in Portugal, the teacher chose not to stick to the text but went beyond it, contributing observations of his own about the topic of discussion. Therefore teachers' treatment of gendered texts and learners' interpretations or handling of gendered texts should be researched. This new area has been taken up by a number of researchers but it has been noted that gender and language learning in classrooms has under-researched sites in developing countries in Africa, Islamic countries, Eastern Europe, South America, and China (Sunderland 2009)(?).

Another new area has also been proposed by Blumerg (2007) who suggests that after decades, it is time move beyond studies that describe gender bias in textbooks to research that evaluates the level and type of impact of such bias on female – and males. She added that the place to start this gender sensitization is during teacher training... therefore it is recommended that wherever teacher training includes some form of practice teaching, exercises of the sort designed in such profusion by Kalia (1986) be incorporated into their training.

3.4.4 Studies in under-researched sites

While learning materials in some countries (UK, US, Sweden, China and the other countries) might have undergone revision in order to bring about gender fairness and formulated guidelines for authors and publishers on gender fairness in textbooks are adhered to, similar success has not been recorded in some countries (e.g., Islamic countries and in Africa), as studies show.

In spite of the large number of studies that has been done in other countries it appears that very little or nothing has been done in this area in the sub-Sahara Africa. Amongst the scanty studies that had been done in Africa are those funded by the World Bank, The Commonwealth of Countries and the British Council in Nigeria. The World Bank between 1990–2005 funded educational sector initiatives in Africa with specific gender components or an exclusively female clientele (Tembon 2007). The programme targeted (i) provision of infrastructure to increase educational access (constructing rehabilitating schools and classrooms, building separate latrines for girls and boys) and (ii) learning interventions (increasing the numbers of female teachers, curriculum and textbooks reform, provision of textbooks and other educational materials and gender sensitization of personnel. The programme covered Nepal, Bangladesh, Chad, Guinea and Ghana. This large educational initiatives was claimed to have had explicit components or activities aimed at eliminating gender bias from curricula and or textbooks. The impact of these studies appears not to have been noticed in the research sites.

The Commonwealth of Nations also sponsored gender analysis research in seven countries, namely, India, Malaysia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Samoa, Seychelles, and Trinidad and Tobago in 2007. The rationale for the research was based on the question of access to schools in developing countries which has been widely reported in previous studies. The reports on this subject indicate high levels of gender disparity and inequality in a selection of African and Asian countries. According to this research, Page and Jha (2009) "the three least developed

countries, India, Pakistan and Nigeria were found to have much lower participation rates of girls at secondary level, due to a variety of factors including affordability and parental expectations. Boys were found to be under-performing in the other four countries, in the Seychelles and in Samoa by 15 per cent, according to exam pass rates studied" cited in Rowe (2010:35). These findings seem to emphasize gender parity rather than gender equality (qualitative education). In the same vein, other hidden areas where the school system or education process engenders gender inequality were not included in their undertakings. Thus, the studies examined school practices without considering learning materials that schools (teachers and learners) use. Perhaps the researchers underestimated the roles learning materials play in socializing learners to disparate gendering identities and how eliminating gender bias in text would contribute toward achieving gender equality in society.

Barring Ansary and Babaii 2009; Buthelezi, 2003; Madu and Kasanga 2005; McKinney, 2005 in South Africa; Lamidi, 2009 in Nigeria; Touorouzou, 2006; Birkhill, 1996 in Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe), it appears that studies on gender equality in and through education are hard to come by in Africa. In Nigeria, not much has been done aside from the recent research sponsored by the British Council. The British Council (2012) examined gender issues in Nigeria with the sole aim of improving the lives of girls and women. It reports that Nigeria population of 165 million has a magnitude percentage of women estimated to be 49% while observing that "any discussion about Nigeria's future must necessarily entail consideration of girls and women, the role they play and the barriers they face in making the future". According to the report, "women are Nigeria's hidden resource…(therefore) investing in women and girls now will increase productivity in this generation and will promote sustainable growth, peace and better health for the next generation. What happens here to women and girls matters, not least for realisation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)". Amongst its key findings are:

i. women and girls have significantly worse life chances than men and also their sisters;

ii. excellent policies and intentions have not translated into budgets or action to make the changes required if women are to contribute effectively to Nigeria's development (The National Gender Policy has yet to bear fruit, while implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) has stalled);

iii. Nigeria's human development indicators are also worse than those of comparable lower middle-income countries…the averages hide a context that is worse for women and girls…nearly 6 million young women and men enter the labour market each year but only 10% are able to secure a job in the formal sector, and just one third of these are women;

iv. Nigeria is among the thirty most unequal countries in the world with respect to income distribution…significant rural-urban differences in income distribution impact particularly on women…conflict adversely impacts on women and girls, reducing their mobility and inhibiting participation in social, economic and political life;

v. human development outcomes for girls and women are worse in the North…the impact of inequality on the lives of girls and women is reflected starkly in health and education outcomes, nationally; women compose the majority of informal sector workers…though women are involved in subsistence agriculture and off farm activities, (60-70% of the rural work force is women but men are five times more likely than women to own land;

vi women with dependants pay more tax than men, who are automatically defined as bread winners;

vii. women in formal employment are paid less than men; educated women are more likely to use health services and to have fewer and better-nourished children, and their children are more likely to survive…girls who are educated will also contribute to future economic growth;

viii. Nigeria has the largest number of out-of-school children in the world; poor quality of education; Nigeria has one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the world…one Nigerian woman dies in childbirth every ten minutes;

ix. only 9% of those who stood for election in Nigeria's April 2011 National Assembly elections were women…is below the global average and well behind South Africa and Rwanda; women are under-represented in all political decision-making bodies and their representation has not increased since the inception of democratic rule;

x. more women than men register to vote, but women are excluded from decision-making at all levels - by male dominated patronage networks; and

xi. one in three of all women and girls aged 15-24 has been a victim of violence;

These findings indicate the rating of Nigeria in gender equality among other nations of the world.

Although this research reveals useful statistical facts and findings that geared toward achieving gender equality, learning materials used for those who attend school that drop and/or do not pick up formal job or become members of decision-makers are not (thought necessary as) part of their investigation. Again, the oversight is understandable because gender bias in learning materials is hidden to many people and how it impact on learners appears to have been ignored in previous studies.

Thus, it does not appear that gender issues in learning materials has received researchers' attention in Nigeria; an observation that support the claim that the country might be one of the under-researched sites where studies in the area are expected to fill the gap in the literature. Sunderland (2000) has observed that there are under-researched sites as regards gender and language learning in developing countries in Africa, Islamic countries, Eastern Europe, South America, and China. While researchers have responded to this dearth in China, (e.g. Ross and Shi, 2003; Zhang, 2002; Zhao, 2002; among others) in Iran (e.g., Ansary and

Babail, 2003; Birjandi and Anabi 2006; Gharbavi and Mousavi 2012;) barring South and East and Central Africa, it does not appear that researchers have seen the need for similar studies in West Africa, Nigeria in particular.

However, while studies in these under-researched sites are still ongoing, Sunderland (2000b) has suggested that studies on gender in learning materials might be at the very peripheral area in gender and language education. In fact, Sunderland observes that such undertaking might lead at times to viewing gender in an outdated way in language education; resulting in oversimplification and unproductive generalizations…in particular, women and girls are sometimes simplistically represented as victims of gender bias in language textbooks, and of male dominance in the classroom. This picture, Sunderland noted "is far from being the full one, does little, I would argue to help female students, and may mislead teachers" Sunderland 2000b:149). Sunderland (2000b) concluded that studies that had been based on the assumption/definition (representation of gender in textbooks) of gender as a 'culturally-shaped group of attributes and behaviours given to the female or the male' and recognized that these phenomena and the language (representation) through which they are realized may be gendered in the additional sense may play a role in the further gendering of students, that is, in shaping their masculinities and femininities (Humm 1989). Sunderland argued that these studies may have been useful once, but ten years later sounds crude.

The point at which Sunderland (2000b) noted that the preoccupations inherent in much of the past work on gender and language textbooks should now be left behind and went further to illustrate one way in which this is happening to our understanding is quite controversial. In fact, after her proposal, many works have been done and more are expected to fill the gap in many areas. There is no doubt, that in communities where the first (phase) generation studies have accomplished a measure of success and the second generation studies in the same communities (e.g., have attested to that success; new understandings of gender - seeing

"gender in language education in new, non-deterministic ways" might be the next line of action. In other words, these new ways, in these communities, should lead the way into research on "gender and language teaching that avoids the pitfalls of representing teachers as predictable, willing, unquestioning textbook users, and of female learners as passive victims, and can engage with the notions of flux, agency, diversity and individuality" (Sunderland 2000b:150). It might be the case that content and linguistic analyses of gender in language textbooks have declined in frequency in the 1990s (Sunderland 2000b:152) in the West but this is not the case outside Western countries. For example, Tietz (2007) examined the representation of gender in introductory accounting textbooks among …and found that women and men are represented very differently through out the textbooks, thereby reinforcing gender stereotypes and gender role stratification.

In their poster presentation on gender representation in Japanese EFL Textbooks, Sano, Iida and Hardy (2001) found that although gender-imbalanced language has been substantially eliminated from EFL textbooks since 1990 in terms of the number of chapter topics, more males are referred to or engaged in actions, reading through the texts reveals prominence in the number of features focusing on male characters.

Messner (2007) reported that sports media are highly gendered sites: they are often male-dominated and tend to represent stereotypical femininity and masculinity. Tominari (2009) provides a detailed systematic linguistic analysis of sports media to explore the construction of masculinity and sports heroism.

In their study of gender representation in Hong Kong English textbooks, Lee and Collins (2008) found that women are still commonly associated with housework and the home and men with paid work outside; women are weak, and men are strong; women are more passive, and men are more active; women are less frequently mentioned than males in both the written

and visual modes. Stockdale (2006) examined gender representation in an EFL textbook and found that males are still dominant in the amount of talk; men's names are more than females' and titled names, full names, and colloquial terms of address exhibited a frequency bias toward males Mukundan and Nimehchisalem (2008) in their study of gender representation in Malaysian secondary school English Language textbooks found and reported that there is an absolute gender bias which discriminate against women. although it also found that males were discriminated against in their representation as those with most of the negative traits. Mustedanagic (2010) looked at textbooks used in Swedish schools in order to discover the extent to which values of equality are upheld in textbooks and how males and females are represented in non-stereotyped ways and as equal. It was found that the textbooks from the 1980s that still contain very stereotypical views on gender roles are still in use in some schools and that occupations held by women and men in the texts, and the distribution of males and females in the illustrations show that there is a tendency to promote males and to diminish females.

Ansary and Babii (2003) score the point that the stereotypical role of women as mothers and homemakers is till being perpetuated in many current language textbooks where substantial sections of their societies presented in those textbooks are underrepresented or ignored. Similarly, Otlowski (2003) investigated current English Language textbook used throughout (Expressway A) for the way gender-bias was depicted and found that the text still depicts women in roles that no longer accurately represent their role in society. While some texts represent the dominant culture in their societies others misrepresented what holds in their societies maybe for certain reasons.

Therefore, even in the communities where gender-fairness has been enforced in their learning materials, one might still find that the 'traditional' concept of gender is still a dominant culture with a pocket of their conventional citizens being wary of the wave of feminism and its tenets

and tolls on their society. This suggests that in our new understandings of gender, some measure of our old understanding of gender should be accommodated. Therefore, although some theoretical developments may suggest that the text may not be the most appropriate focus of study and bias may be found somewhere other than in the text' (Sunderland 2000b:152), we argue that bias still exists in the text and gender bias in textbooks does matter and is worthy of investigating in gender and language education. In other words, Sunderland's (2000b) proposal might be valid where phase one and phase two studies have been done but for under-research sites, it might be very difficult to start investigation at the talk around the text. Gender representation in learning materials studies might be needed as basis for the third phase studies in under-researched sites.

Gender representations in textbooks from traditional view of gender studies indicate biased gender representations in texts that are reported to be part of the means of socializing polarized and discriminatory masculinities and femininities to the detriment of gender equality in and through educational goals. In fact, when we consider the mechanics/dynamics of representation in texts and how artists/authors explore and exploit them in their works to perpetrate gender stereotypes, we might be spurred to do more studies on learning materials.

4.0 Representation and gender representation in learning materials

Representation is a household name in many disciplines ranging from print and non-print media, visual arts and humanities to mention a few, with a particular interest in feminist/women/gender and language studies. Since our concern in this paper is what representation conveys to gender and language studies, in particular, gender representations in gender and education studies, we shall examine a number of definitions as a theoretical platform on which to situate out assumptions of representations of gender for our study.

A pedestrian definition of representations says that it is simply a re-representation of what is real. In that sense, representations that are presented to as viewers and readers are from secondary source, the primary source being what we have in real world. This definition is close that which sees representation as re-enactment or re-construction or creation of what existed before or still exists in its original form. These definitions suggest that the representations we have should be taken with itch of salt since they are not original form - reality. These views of representation are similar to the idea that representation is that which stands in for something else.

Moving away from these less-sophisticated definitions to a complex definition of Hall (1997) who opines that representation is simply meaning creation might give us another dimension of the concept. To him, representation conveys meaning about reality to the reader/viewer so that representation presented in codes/texts are meaning loaded about reality. Therefore, to represent is to depict something that stands in for reality…thus meaning is given to the things which are depicted that is close to the reality. Representation simply means meaning giving. Thus Hall (1997) offers three approaches to representation - reflective approach, where representations simply reflect reality), intentional approach, where our understanding of reality is created by representation (the opposite of reflective) and constructionist approach, where representations create, or construct meaning which is based on a material reality (a mix of the reflective and the intentional approaches).

A more complex view of representation is that of Ferdinand de Saussure which is tied to semiotics. In his study of how language creates meaning, he argued that that language does not reflect reality but meaning is constructed through language. Therefore we making meaning through the creation and interpretation of signs and signs can be words, images, sounds, odours, flavours, acts, objects and son. He postulated a formula to illustrate his concept of representation. To him, signifier and signified give us sign, where the signifier is

the form which the sign takes, and signified is the concept it represents and the sign is the total meaning that results from associating the signifier with the signified. Thus to him, representation, at a very basis level is the way in which signs are used to construct meaning.

What might be deduced from these definitions is that viewers/readers who might be taken in by whatever representations presented to them might as well be informed that the texts and codes before them are not the reality. In fact, because the codes/texts are works of re-creation, re-enactment, they are nothing but windows on the world of reality. This is closer to the idea of reflection.

Some scholars do make a distinction between reflection and representations to shed/ throws light on the latter. To them, the use of reflection implies that there is a direct correspondence between phenomena (events, people, things) in the real world and their appearance in texts. "Representation…indicates that some kind of modulation or interpretive process has been involved in re-re-presentation. In other words, some manipulation or transformation is unavoidable in representation so that even photographs are reflections, but they are two dimensional representations which we learn to read and interpret in many different ways.

Craig Owen (1950-1990) says that representation is not neutral; it is an act of power in our culture. Thus dichotomy exists between high and mass culture which one can see privileges, the masculine over the feminine…the high culture (masculine) are represented as production, work, intellect, activity, writing; while the mass culture are characterised by consumption as opposed to production, leisure in place of work, emotion, emotion instead of intellect, passivity in place of activity and reading rather than writing.

For Baudrillard, the entire concept of representation is problematic especially in the media, for media representation are simulations of realities that do not exist, thus they are hyperreal. This view of representation is captured in his first order, second order and third order. At the

first order, you have signification (signs which imitate real things) this is where reality is constructed through simulation e.g., representation in maps, paintings, etc; the second order simulation - reproduction (signs refer signs representations of reality which imitate real things reproduced by mechanical technology e.g., films, printing. Third order simulation - simulation (signs no longer represent as there is no connection between real things but serve to mask this reality and representation - absence ot reality instead we have hyperreality (Disneyland).

4.1 Perspectives of representation

Representations has been given varied perspectives, thus we have Marxist representation, stereotype representation, postmodernist representation and feminist representation.

4.1.1 Marxism

Marxism with its ideological framework has a hegemonic view of society, which has to do with fundamental inequalities in power between social groups where groups in power exercise their influence culturally rather than by force. For example, representations are encoded into mass media texts in order to enforce dominant ideologies in society. According to Levi-Strauss, (1958) all representations are encoded into texts and others are left out in order to give a preferred representation (the preferred syntagm). This suggests that representations should be taken with an itch of salt or worse still should be viewed/read cynically.

This understanding of how representations are constructed underscores Rosalind Brunt (1992) view which details that ideologies are never simply ideas in people's heads but are indeed myths that we live by and which contribute to our self-worth. This view is further stressed by Tim O'Sullivan's et al (1998) concept of ideology which refers to a set of ideas which

produces a partial and selective view of reality, notion of ideology entails widely held ideas or beliefs which are seen as common sense and become naturalised. For example, magazine texts and adverts are encoded specifically to represent an ideal self and ideal partner (Rogers 1980).

4.1.2 Feminism and representations

Feminism is a label that refers to a broad range of views containing one shared assumption, gender inequalities in society, that is, historically masculine power (patriarchy) exercised at right of women's interest and rights

As a movement, feminism questions the position of women within patriarchal society and the private sphere of home, children and domestic bliss among others. Feminism in 60s and 70s serves to uncover, challenge and eliminate oppression and dominant gender imagery - representations. It has witnessed debates on the narrow range of stereotypes present across all media, such as women as virgins, mothers or promiscuous, sex objects, as inferior to men as objects to be seen rather subjects who perform. The theoretical perspectives of radical feminism ---advocates the opposite of our society now, where women are the more privileged, powerful, prestigious society. It says that men's reason was created to emphasise masculine control and that it is not as good as women's intuition. Liberal feminism clamours for equality that cannot be obtained only through legal, political, constitutional amendments but must be social too. It emphasizes equal rights for women; women can and should be treated the same as men and this leads to equality. Socialist feminism is of the idea that equality and feminism could be achieved through socialism. Post-feminism – idea that after the feminist movement, we don't need feminism any more. Masculinity and femininity are socially constructed and these are represented in texts and/or images. Thus, gender and ideology –

ideas about gender are produced and reflected in language O'Sullivan *et al* (1998). Postmodernist and representations

4.1.3 Stereotypes and representations

Dyer (1983) argues that stereotypes are a way of reinforcing differences between people, and representing these differences as natural. As an ideological term, stereotype is a means by which support is provided by one group's differential against another. Thus stereotypes about men and women reinforce the idea that they are very different. However, this view has been criticized for misrepresenting the real world e.g. reinforcing that the (false) stereotype that women are available for sex at any time and for being too close to real world e.g., showing women in home servicing men, which many still do (Barker, 1989).

Klapps (1962) distinction between stereotypes and social types throws more light on the concepts. Klapp (1962) defines social types as representations of those who belong to society. They are the kinds of people that one expects, and is led to expect, to find in one's society, whereas stereotypes are those who do not belong, who are outside of one's society. One area where stereotypes have been investigated is in Music. Current findings in music show that:

i. Men engage in significantly more aggressive and dominant behaviour

ii. Men represented as independent, adventurous, unemotional and competent

iii. Stereotypical gendered occupations apparent (i.e. males as fire fighters/mechanics women as cheerleader/waitress

iv. Women represented as objects of sexual advances or as sexual objects

v. Sex roles stereotyping and negative attitudes towards females

vi. Women more likely to be presented in provocative or revealing clothing

vii. Women portrayed as decorative objects that dance, pose and do not play instruments

Another perspective of representation is sexual objectification and the male gaze Mulvey (1975) For example, voyeurism – erotic pleasures gained from looking at a sexual object who is unaware of being watched. The other representations include:

i. Presence of women solely for the purpose of display rather than narrative function

ii. Female on display is passive and objectified for a male gaze regardless of viewers gender

iii. Voyeuristic treatment of female body in male video use of dancers as adornments to the male ego

iv. The inclusion of women for display is a staple element in music video's across all genre

v. Women connote to-be-looked-at-ness and are the object of the male gaze.

Some major problems of stereotypes in these areas that have been addressed in the literature are that they are very unrealistic goals for ideal body shapes, which lead to high rates of anorexia nervosa and bulimia. These stereotypes also make women believe they are valued based on their body, therefore their self-esteem is also based on how their body looks compared to others; and that it is not out of place to treat women as objects, instead of humans. Women are presented as mere passive and not in control of themselves and they gives messages to women that changing their appearance they will have a better life.

On the other hand, men are represented to display ideal for body type, also which can be unrealistic; as aggressive and in control of things, including women whose

problems are flexible, that you either fit the part of the masculine ideal or you do not).

Thus within stereotypes representation, representation has tended to focus upon the way in which different social groups are represented (gender, race, sexuality, social class, etc).

4.1.4 Postmodernism and representation

As a postmodernist theorist, Jean Baudrillard argues that our society has become so reliant on representations that we have lost contact with the real – we can no longer tell the real from the artificial. Reality is (now) determined by representation. There is no distinction between reality and representation, only the simulacrum (a copy that now has more reality than the object it is a copy of).

Baudrillard discussed the concept of hyperreality – we inhabit a society that is no longer made up of any original thing for a sign to represent... it is the sign that is now the meaning. He argued that we live in society of simulacra – simulations of reality that replace the real.

We can apply Baudrillard claims to texts that claim to represent reality. Merrin (2005) argues that the media do not reflect and represent the reality of the public but instead produce it, employing this simulation to justify their own continuing existence.

It has been observed that in a media saturated world, the distinction between reality and media representations becomes blurred or invisible to us. Modern period cam before – people were concerned with representing reality, but now this gets mixed around and we end up with pastiche, parody and intertextuality.

Gleanings from these various schools of thought suggest some understandings of representation. One they suggest that representations and reality are not synonymous…representations are farther from reality. Representations tend to mirror what is real and should not be taken as kindred of reality. It might be added that realities and reflections are not the same though reflection is closer to reality than representation is.

Representation is farther from reality because what is represented is often coloured by the artists' ideological and social values, in other word, representation often reflects the dominant culture that the artist represents and tends to portray. In a nutshell, representations are deliberately designed/constructed to serve certain purposes e.g., to reinforce the dominant ideological views of individuals or groups of people. Thus Lacey (2009) notes that societal ideological values are apparent in representations and at times those values are challenged in representation. In other words, representations may fuel or dismantle stereotypes. For example, conventional representation may portray femininity and masculinity (gender) whether in a subversive way or otherwise.

4.1.5 Representational capacity of language

Gender representations, which abound visually in films and most advertisement, also exist in the written texts of songs, newspapers, novels and advertisements, the spoken texts of talk, and in physical objects, such as toys and clothes (Hall 1997;) Litosseliti and Sunderland (2002:13) noted that in that these representations always relate to something already existing, they can all be seen as forms of recontextualisation.

Representation in textbooks might be seen as either reflecting certain ideological values that society holds or a subversion of the cultural norms entail. According to Yaqin (2002:14) "books reflect the fixed views of a given social culture with respect to gender roles and contain definite gender characteristics patterns, all of which have an important influence on children and cause them to consciously or unconsciously imitate and learn from them. She further comments that books, as well as being reflections of socio-cultural influences, also tend to expand, reproduce, and strengthen society's gender biases and perceptions, all of which may affect the way children identify with and subject themselves to the gender role to

which they belong (Yaqin 2002:22). This understanding has motivated many studies that have considered gender representations in teaching materials.

4.1.6 Understandings of representations and their implications

The implications of this understanding to analysts are that they might have to determine whether certain representations are reflective of social reality or they are mere subversives serving the ideological social leanings of the artists or reflecting the dominant ideological culture of society. Representations may be very close to real live of a people at a given time or may be mere types or stereotypes. In fact, Lacey (2009:22) argued that media texts cannot show reality as it is; by their nature they mediate: To her, "realism is a form of representation that has a privileged status because it signs itself as being closer to reality than other forms of representations such as genre texts. Realist texts can, of course, be fiction. The reality they purport to show may be signified to be typical of everyday life.

Lacey (2009:228) distinguished between 'the real world' and the conventions used to re-present the real world. It is with the latter that she identifies two different modes of representation - realism (including naturalism), and modernism. Thus to her, all representations are the result of conventions produced at a particular time and place determined by the dominant ideology. Thus what appeared to be realistic in the past is as likely to appear contrived now; and that contemporary modes of realism are likely to be seen in this way by future generations.

Based on the importance of textbooks, particularly the role their representations play in socialising learners, studies have been carried out on their impact on learners. For example, Gullicks, Pearson, Child and Schwab (2005) noted that textbooks are often viewed by students as authoritative, and therefore have the potential to influence a significantly large and impressionable audience and that one function of textbooks is to serve as a "means to

facilitate the integration of content about ethnically, racially, and culturally diverse populations" (Sileo and Prater, 1998). Similarly Treichler and Frank (1989) had found that gender-biased materials affect the motivation of students who go through the textbooks.

The roles representations in texts (especially gender representation) play in socializing learners into gendered persons, the dearth of studies in this area in the sub-Sahara and the gap created in the literature coupled with the contributions that empirical studies in this area might make toward highlighting gender bias in texts and recommending their elimination from texts (which would help in achieving gender equality in and through education in Nigeria) necessitated this undertaking.

5.0 Objectives

The following questions are pertinent to works that examine gender representations in learning materials, whether any or all of the following: content, image, illustration, and linguistic items are the objects of study. How do texts re-present the world to us through the use of the technical codes? What does it suggest? Is it typical of is or what is not? Who is speaking? And for whom? What is represented to us? And why? What signifiers are used? What meaning is produced? What social groups are being represented? What is shown to be natural or deviant? Who constructed the representation? Why? Are stereotypes used? What effect do they have? Which characters are dominant? What characters are submissive? Who are the objects? Who are the subjects? What 'reality' is represented? How does the representation relate to reality? In sum, answers to these questions help to indicate elements of subordination, degradation, in/visibility, over/under-representation, stereotypes in the representation of females and males. Similarly, in our investigation, we shall examine our texts for these elements. How are females and males represented in terms of population,

visibility and invisibility, characterisation, prominence in the focus of experiences captures in the passages, roles depicted in pictures and passages, and dominance in interactions.

Data

We selected seven English Language textbooks for Junior Secondary School, which is the terminal point for Nigeria's Universal Basic Education Scheme (UBE). Nigeria operates a 6-3-3-4 system of education where the first six years are spent in the elementary school - Primary 1 - 6; followed by the first three years in the secondary school - Junior Secondary; then the second three years in the Senior Secondary before the last four years in tertiary institution. Of the seven textbooks, the *Junior English Project* textbooks are said to have been developed in consonance with the UBE scheme policy thus they are tagged (UBE Edition). According to the authors:

> This is the first book of a three-year series addressing the new
> Universal Basic Education curriculum introduced in 2007.
> These textbooks are designed to implement the new UBE
> English Syllabus, and will prepare the students for the new
> Universal Basic Education Certificate examination (BSC)
> at the end of Junior Secondary" (p.x)

The authors are Grant, N,,Olagoke, D. O. Nnamonu, S. And Jowitt, D. (2007) (2010 Sixth impression) *Junior English Project for Secondary Schools: Students' Books 1, 2, and 3.* Harlow: Pearson Education Limited. The three volumes 1, 2, and 3 are for Junior Secondary School 1, Junior Secondary School 2 and Junior Secondary School 3 respectively. Each book contains 20 units and each unit has six sub-units - A. Spoken English B. Reading C. Vocabulary D. Grammar E. Listening and F. Writing.

The other four English Language textbooks are *Intensive English for Junior Secondary Schools Book I and II, New Practical English for Junior Secondary School Book I and III,*

The authors for these series did not claim that the texts were prepared in consonance with the UBE Scheme policy. These series of textbooks are highly recommended by government representatives in the ministry of education for use in government-owned schools and are in use in private schools. While Intensive English were published in 1983, New Practical English were published in 2006. Intensive English has 20 units and each unit is divided into four sections, namely Speech, comprehension, language structures and Composition. New Practical English has 24 units and each unit has all the areas of language study found in the other texts including literature section. These series are highly recommended for teachers and learners' use.

6.0 Analysis

Investigations into gender representation in learning materials appear to have found two main traditional methods of analysis - content analysis and linguistic analysis very useful. While some works have used either of the methods and the other researchers have combined both methods in their works based on the nature of their investigations.

Content analysis is used to determine how males and females are represented in images and pictures of males and females, in terms of their visibility/invisibility which is arrived at by comparing the frequencies of males and females occurrence in textbooks, the kinds of role represented in pictures, narratives and dialogues (occupation stereotypes); relationship stereotypes, characterisation/ depiction of male and female characters - who are the main characters; text focus in terms of experiences; and named and unnamed characters. Quantitative analysis appears to be very common in content analysis and it is sometimes combined with qualitative analysis. While some studies (Stockdale, 2006) have used mechanical method (numbering or counting the number of images and reading their perception or representation, their impact values), Glasche (2000) introduced the use of

Fairclough's (1989) technique called critical image analysis which addresses three aspects of images - description, interpretation and explanation which according to Dominguez (2003) is a useful tool to analyze positioning in EFL/ESL books.

For this study, we used both content and linguistic analysis (content analysis in the first section Analysis I and Linguistic analysis in the second section - Analysis II). In the first section, we investigated gender representations in terms of population (under/over-representation) by counting the number of males and females in pictures and passages; character portrayal is arrived at by considering how characters are portrayed in the passages - positive or negative characteristics (degradation); focus of experiences in passages (in/visibility/subordination) was determined in terms of whose experiences were given prominence (major characters) or less attention - minor characters in the passages; female and male roles (stereotypes) were derived from pictures of males and females and characters in passages; roles were grouped into two, those confined to the home and those outside the home.

In other words, content analysis indicates the sex group that is underrepresented or overrepresented, the female and male roles and perpetration of gender stereotypes in gender roles. Character representation indicates how females and males are portrayed positively (desirable qualities e.g., hardworking, inventive, courageous) and/or negatively (undesirable qualities, e.g., stealing, quarrelsome, lazy, etc); the focus of the textbooks' passages depict whose experiences are captured more or less. The foci of content analysis are to highlight gender bias or fairness in the representation of females and males.

Analysis I: Content Analysis

Fig 1a: Gender representation (population) in New *Practical English Book 1*
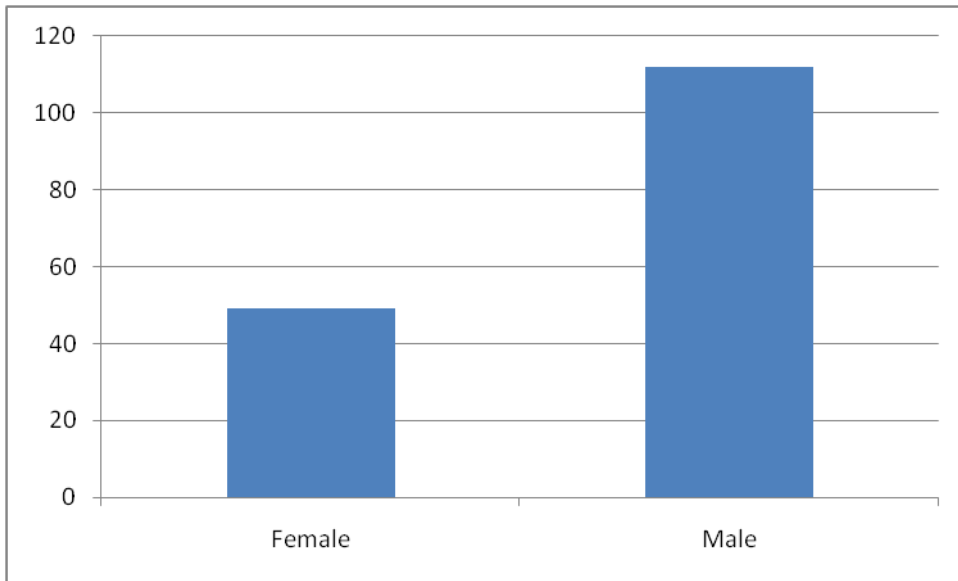
The population of males triples that of females in New Practical English Book I, meaning there are fewer females than males in the textbook.

Fig 1b: Gender representation (population) in *Practical English Book 3*
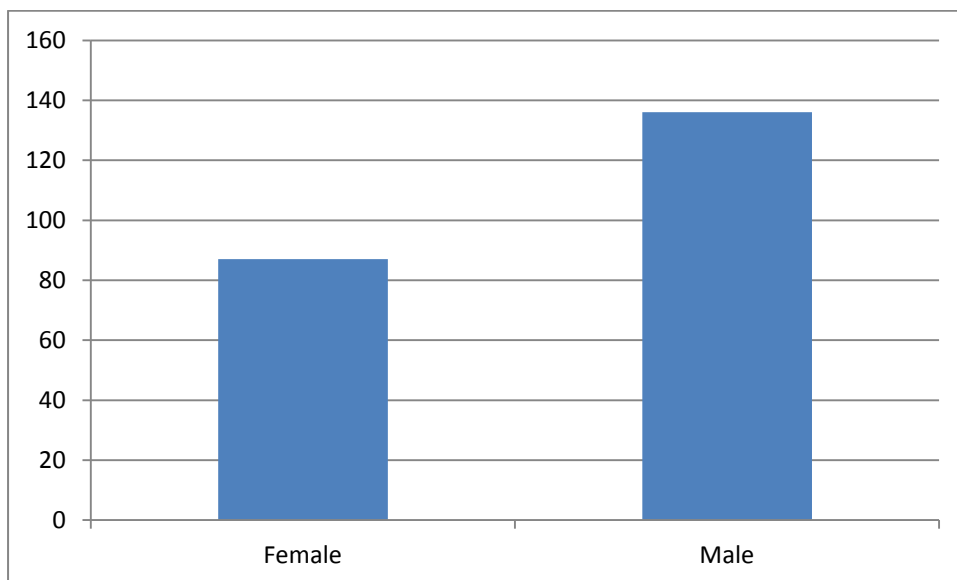
Figure 1b indicates that there are more males than females in the text although the gap is not as wide as we have in Book I of the same series.

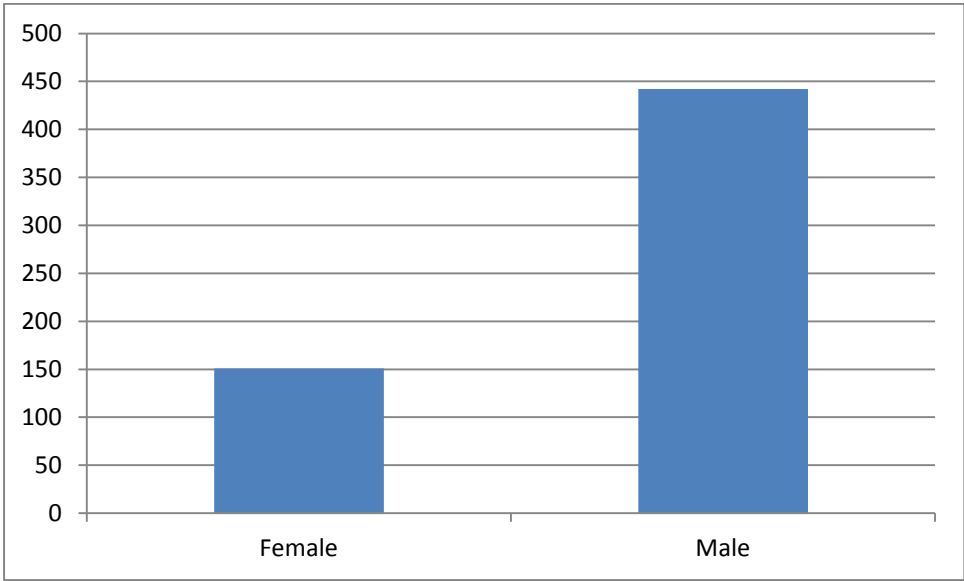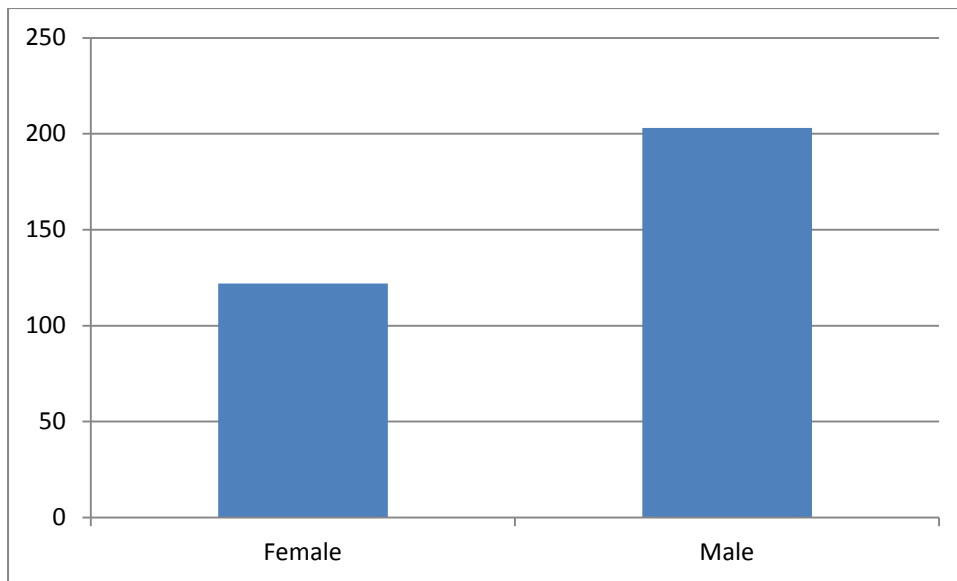Fig 1c: Gender representation (population) in I*ntensive English Book 1*
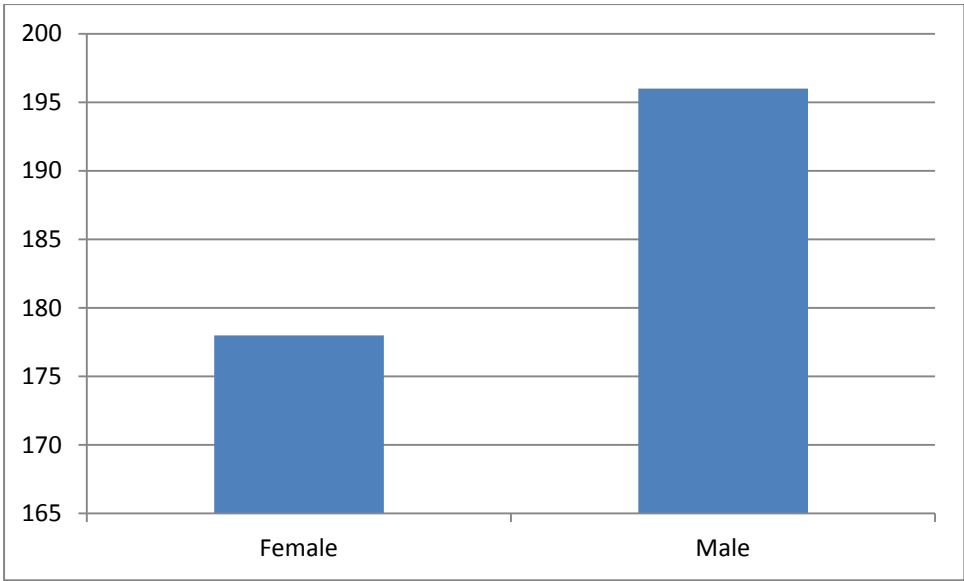
Fig 1c indicates that the population of males in *Intensive English* I nearly triples that of females.

Fig 1d: Gender representation (population) in *Intensive English Book 2*

In Fig 1d, the population of males is nearly three times of females similar to what we have in Intensive English Book I.

Fig 1e: Gender representation (population) in *English Project Book 1*

In English Project I, females' population is far below that of males and males' population nearly doubles that of females.

Fig 1f: Gender representation (population) in *English Project Book 2*
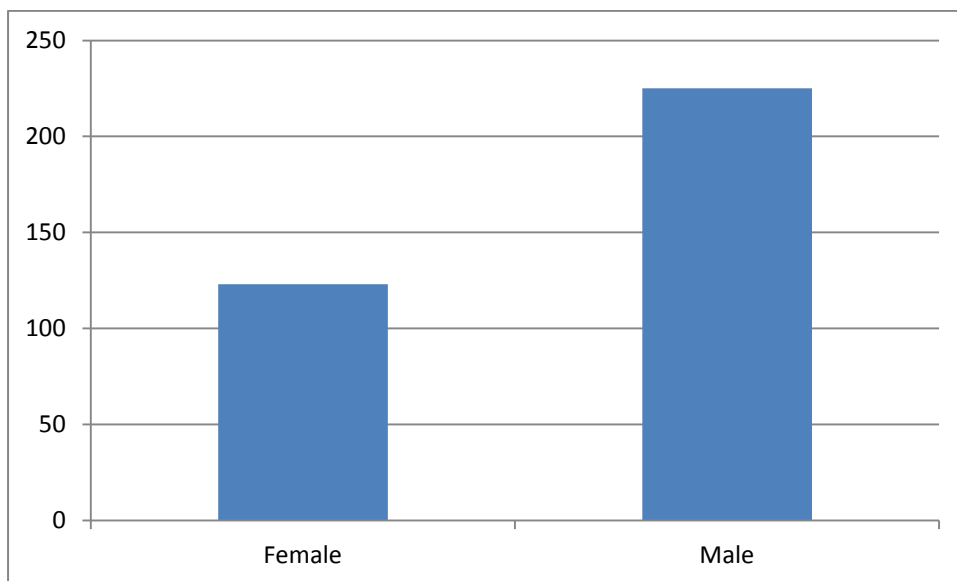
As in *English Project I*, the population of males doubles that of females in Book II

Fig 1g: Gender representation (population) in *English Project Book 3*
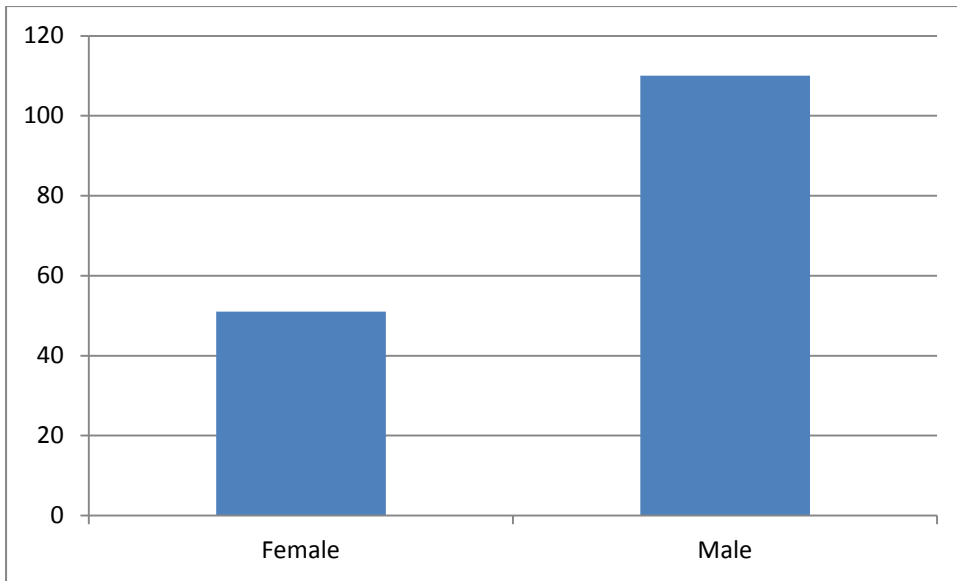
The disparate populations in *English Project Book III* support what we have in the other series as males' population doubles that of women in this text.

Summary

It is interesting to note that in all the textbooks, females consistently record lower population when compared to those of males. Thus, in every textbook, the population of males represented is far more than females'. Figure 1h illustrates the general pattern for the seven textbooks.

Table 1a: Male and female population in seven textbooks

Total Population	Female	Males	Total
Number	760	1435	2195
%	34.6	65.3	99.9

Fig 1h: Distribution of females and males population in seven textbooks
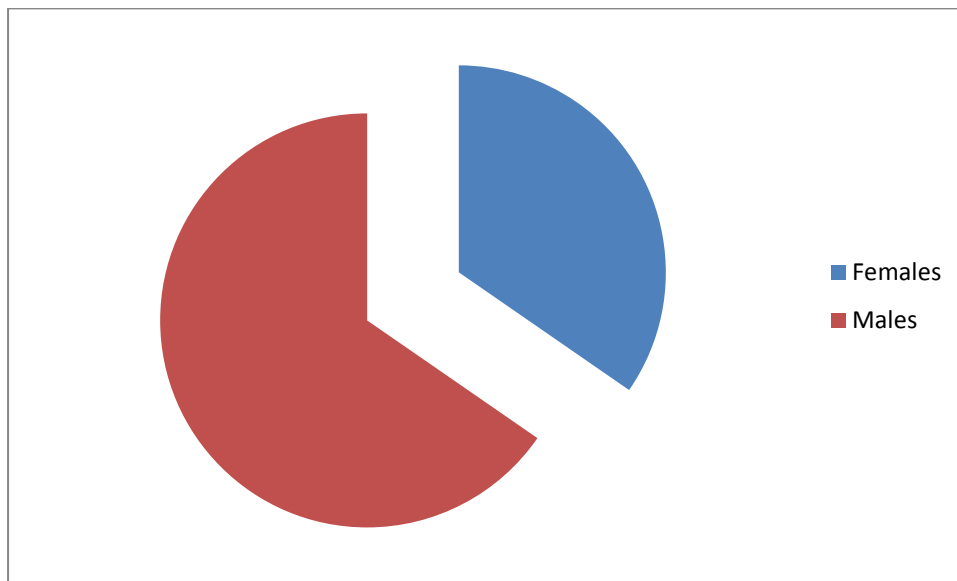
Character portrayal of females and males

Fig 1i: Character traits in *Practical English Book 1*
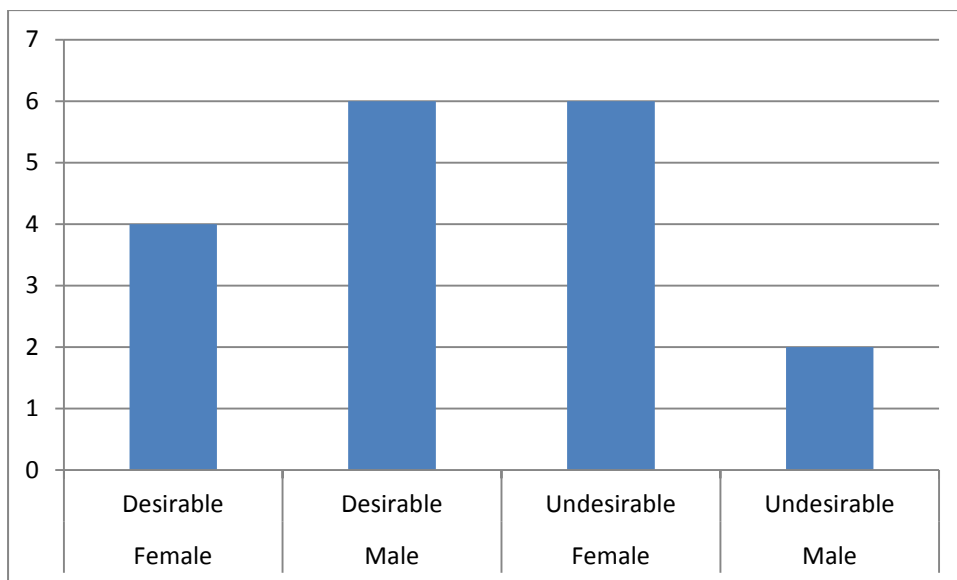
Figure 1i indicates that males have more desirable qualities than females just as females have more undesirable qualities than males.

Fig 1j: Character traits in *Practical English Book 3*
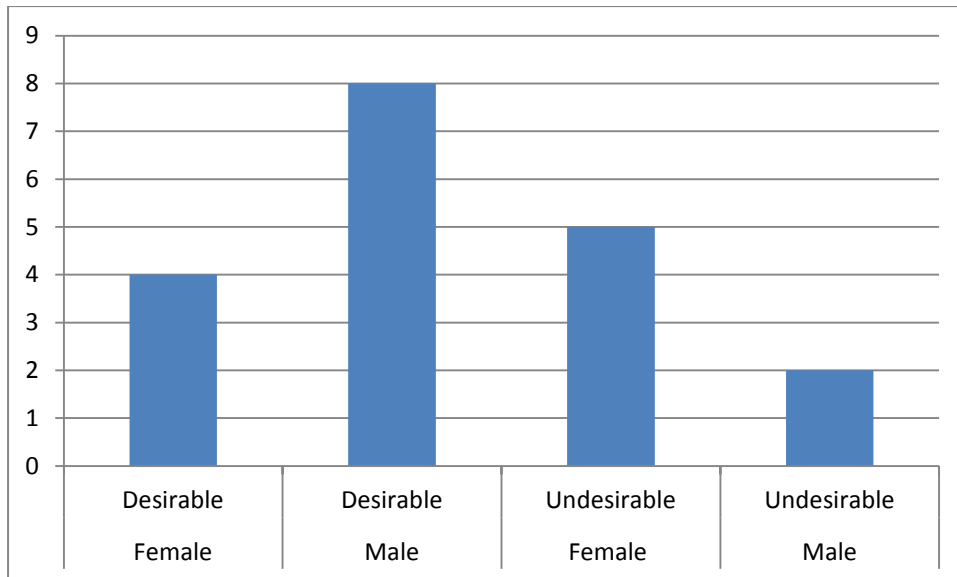
Fig 1j shows that the results in Practical English Book 3 are similar to the ones in previous Book I: women are portrayed as having more undesirable qualities than males; while males dominate the desirable qualities.

Fig 1k: Character traits in *Intensive English Book 1*
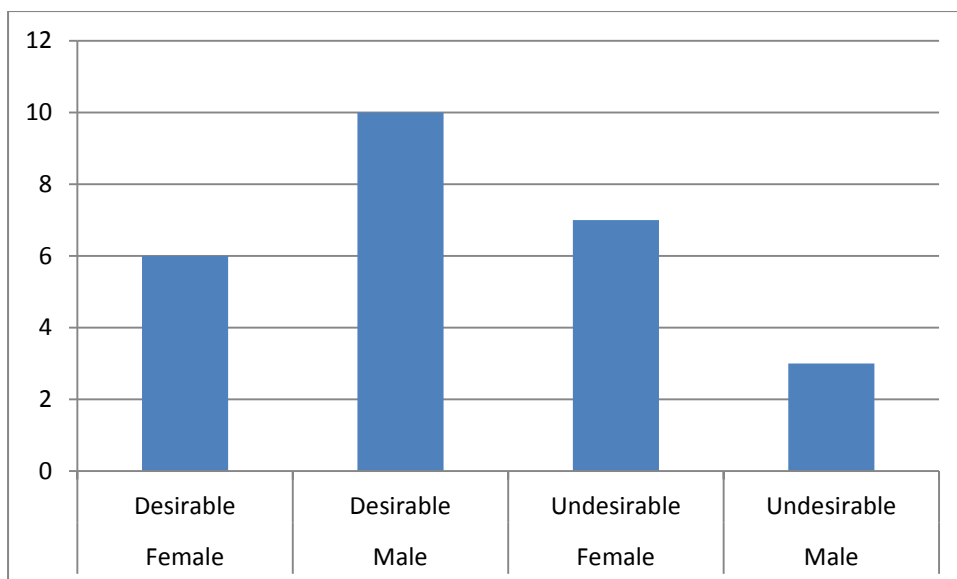
Fig 1k shows that in *Intensive English* Book series the patterns are similar: male are portrayed to be more virtuous than females; just as females are portrayed as being more vicious than males.

Fig 1l: Character traits in *Intensive English Book 2*
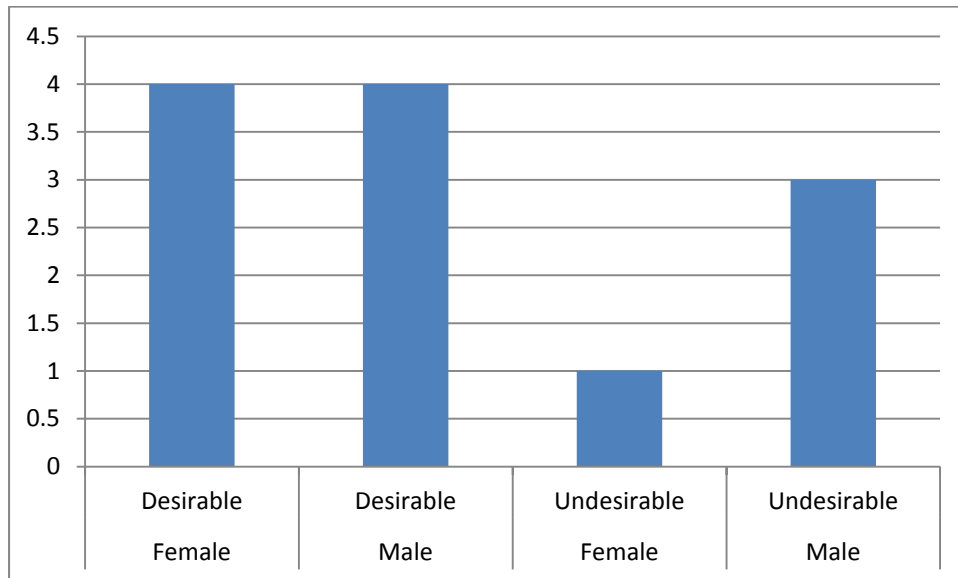
In Intensive English Book II, Fig 1l shows a slightly different pattern from what we have in Book I. Females and males are scored equally in desirable qualities but males are portrayed as being more vicious than females.

Fig 1m: Character traits in *English Project 1*
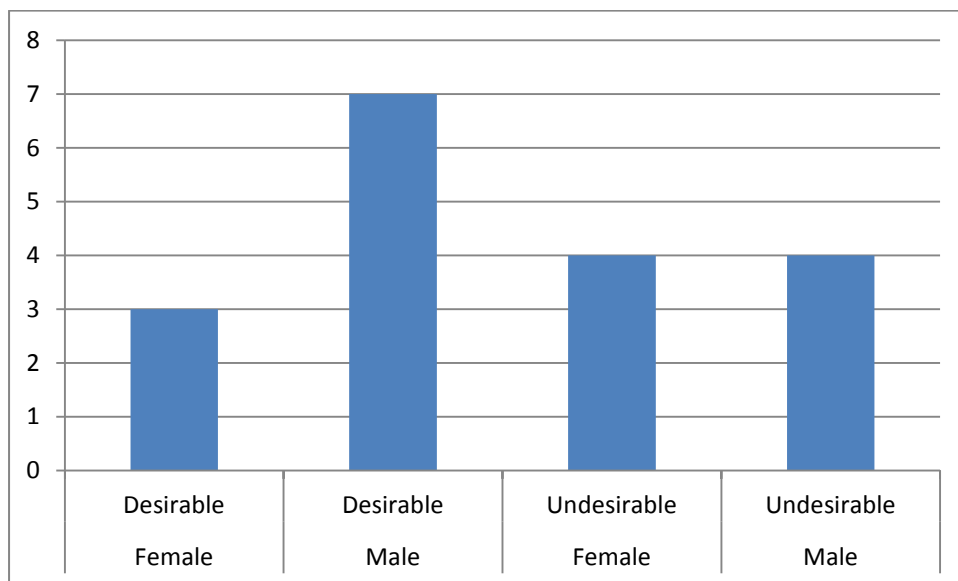
In Book I of *Junior English Project*, males and females are represented as being equally vicious but males are more virtuous than females in Fig 1m.

Fig 1n: Character traits representation in *English Project 2*
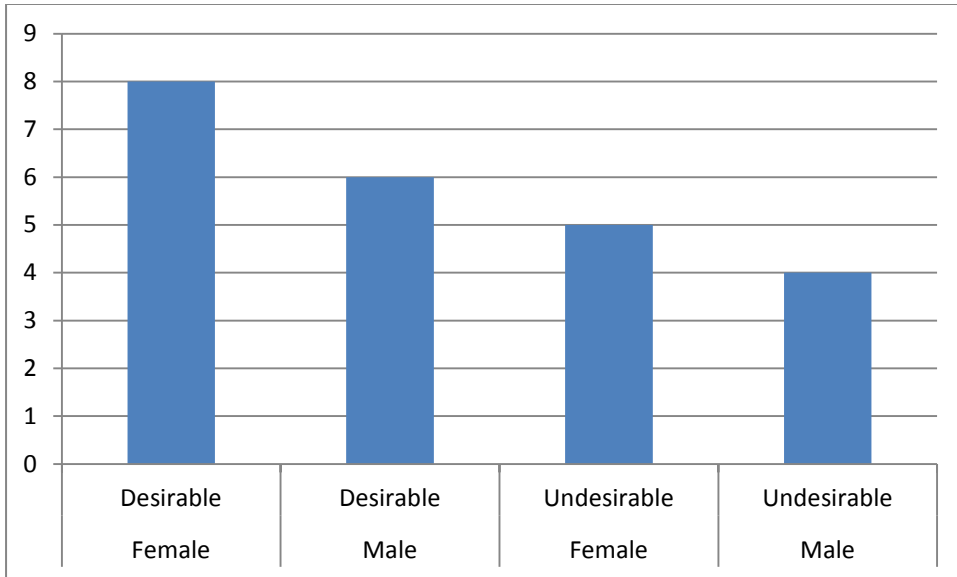

Fig 1n indicates a pattern different from that of Fig 1m in that females are slightly higher in the desirable qualities than males although they are ranked higher in undesirable qualities than males.

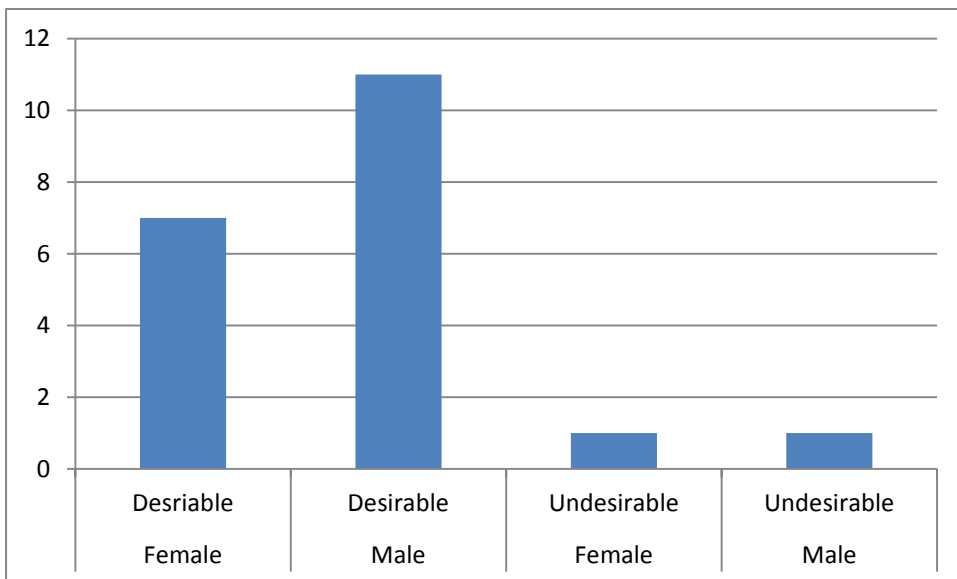Fig 1o: Character traits representation in *English Project Book 3*

Fig 1o indicates the regular pattern (in the previous textbooks) of males dominating the desirable qualities; however, males and females are equals in terms of undesirable qualities.

Summary

In all the series, males' desirable character traits are represented more than females' while females' undesirable character traits are given more prominence than males' undesirable character traits. However, only in English Project Book II did females' desirable characters are given more prominence than males' although in the same textbook more females' undesirable qualities are represented than males'. Table 2a represents the general pattern in all the textbooks.

Table 1b: Character traits portrayal of females and males in seven textbooks

Desirable Qualities		Undesirable Qualities	
Females	Males	Females	Males
36	50	29	19
41.8%	58.1%	60.4%	39.6%

Analysis III

In this section, we present experiences covered in the passages in order to show which sex group's experiences are underrepresented and or overrepresented. It is anticipated that the results will indicate which sex group's experiences are worth mentioning in the texts and which sex group's are not.
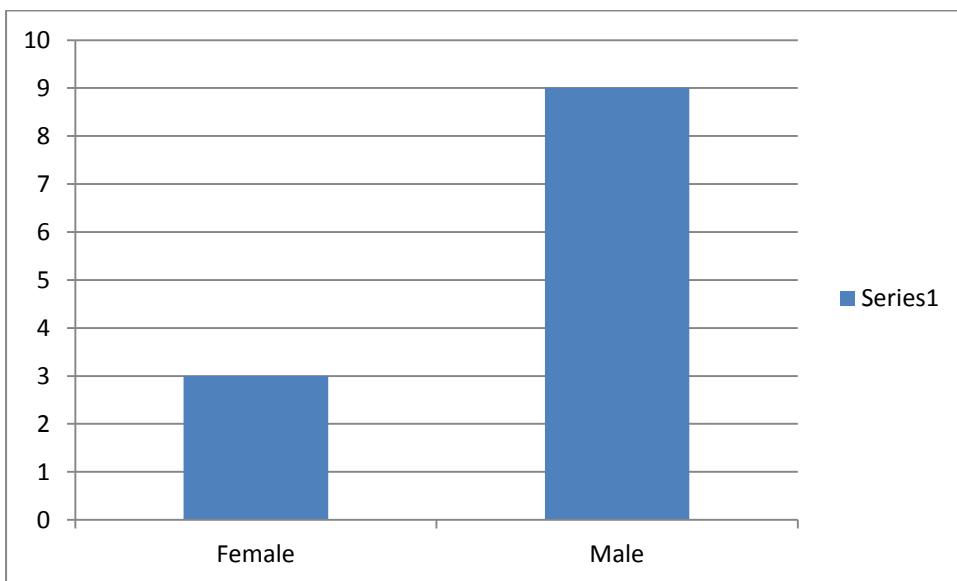
Experiences covered in *Intensive English 1*

Fig 1p: Covered experiences in I*ntensive English*
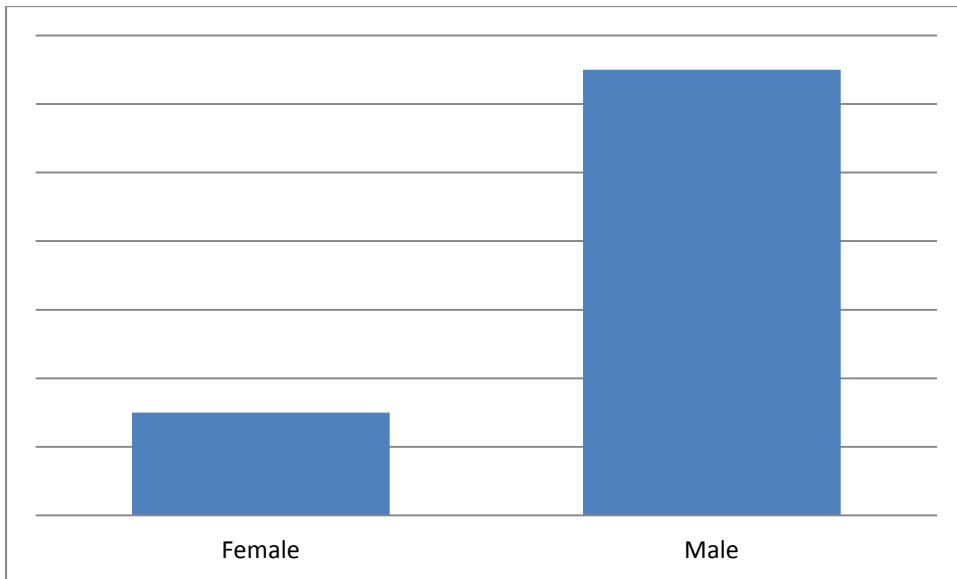
Fml experiences - competitors for husband's love, in polygamous home, desirable character traits as a teacher, concern for partying, moral guides, hardworking students; **Ml experiences** - objects of female competition, as scientists, achievement, as wanderer, adventurous, what they can do, as loafer, as president of countries, their biography, their prowess in wrestling;

Fig 1p shows that males' experiences dominate the passages in the textbook; females' experiences are given minimal attention as Fig 3a illustrates.

Fig 1q: Experiences covered in I*ntensive English* Book 2

The pattern, as illustrated in Fig 1q, is similar to that in Book I of the same series: representation of male experiences triples that of females in Book II of Intensive English.

Fig 1r: Experiences covered in *Practical English*
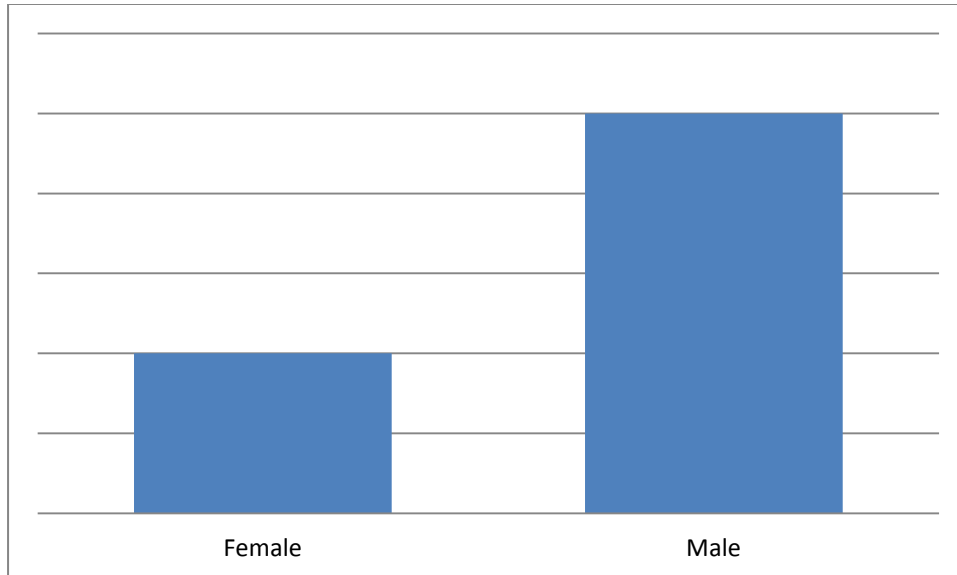
Fml experiences - mischievious sisters, barren, searching for a wayward husband, a protective mother, proud and self-conceited spinsters; **Ml experiences** - heroic deeds, encounter with women, problem solving deeds, prosperity and loss of wealth, smart magician, expertise as physicians/doctor

Fig 1r indicates that female experiences are far less than that of males.

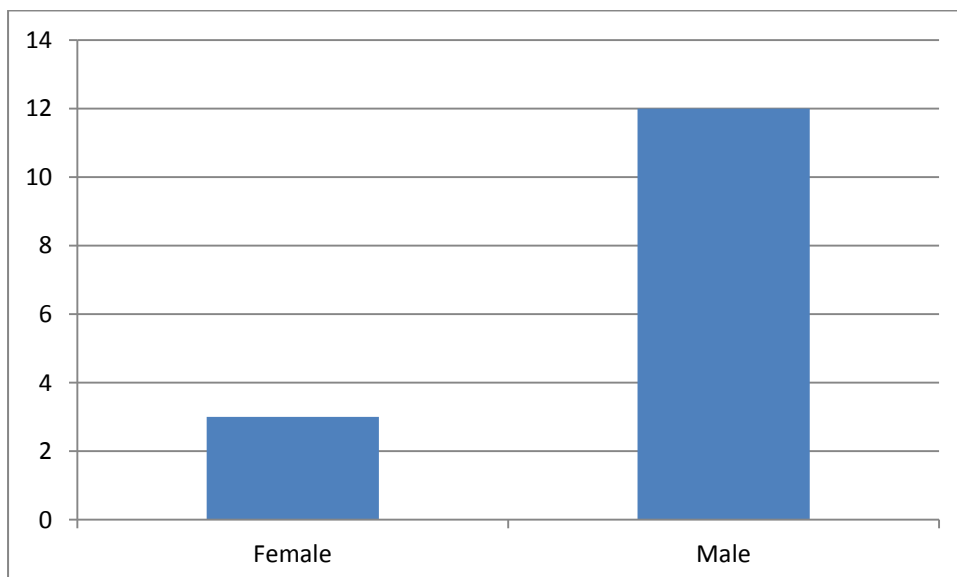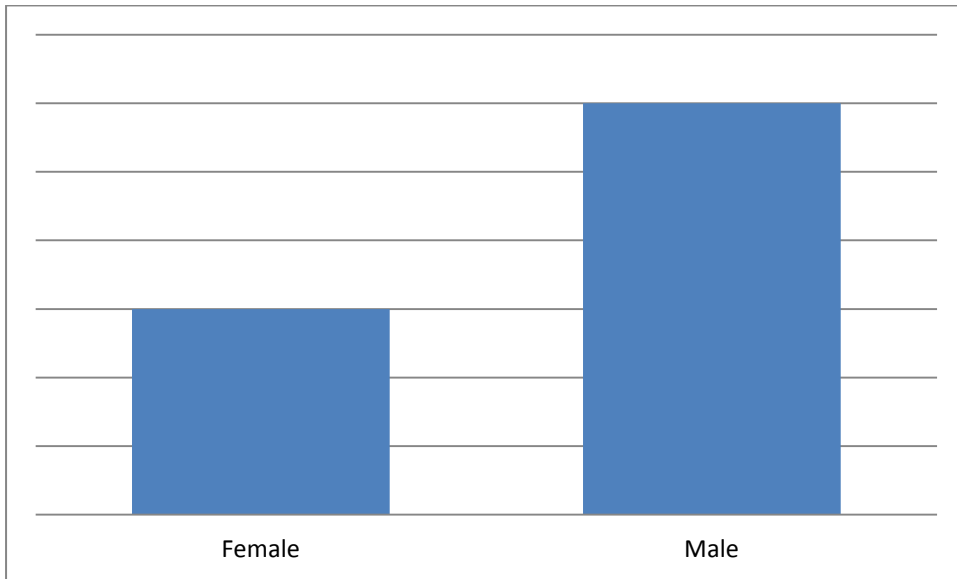Fig 1s: Experiences covered in *New Practical English* Book 3

Fig 1s indicates that the pattern in Book I is repeated in Book III of the same series - males experiences are given prominence than females'
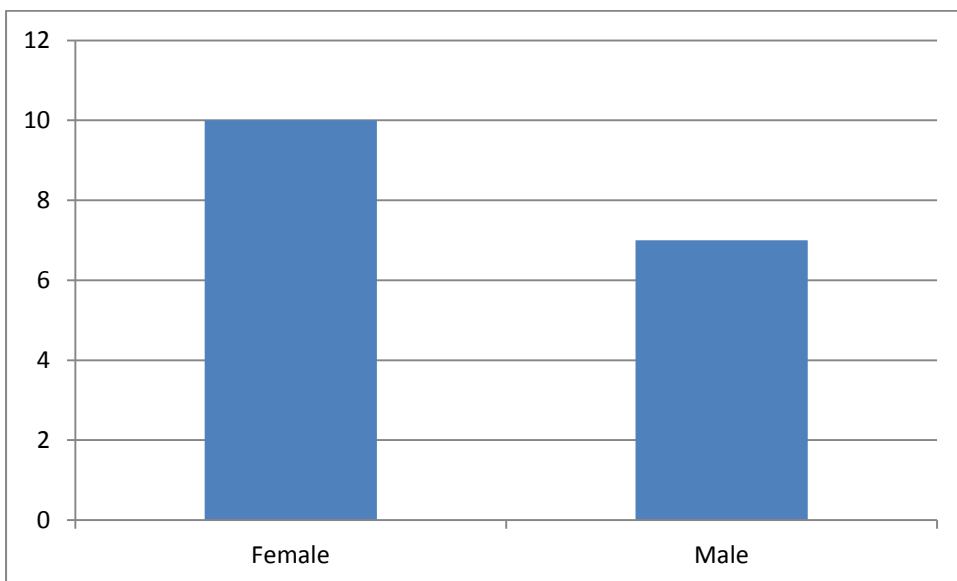
Fig 1t: Experiences covered in *English Project* I

Fml experiences - running errands, self and family, barrenness, as bride, heroic deed of self-sacrificing; **Ml experiences** - first day in school, expedition to the moon as scientists, as thieves, owners of possessions, as successful farmer, as deliverer, as saviour, decision makers, heroic deed, as king, as husbands to be cared for and entertained.
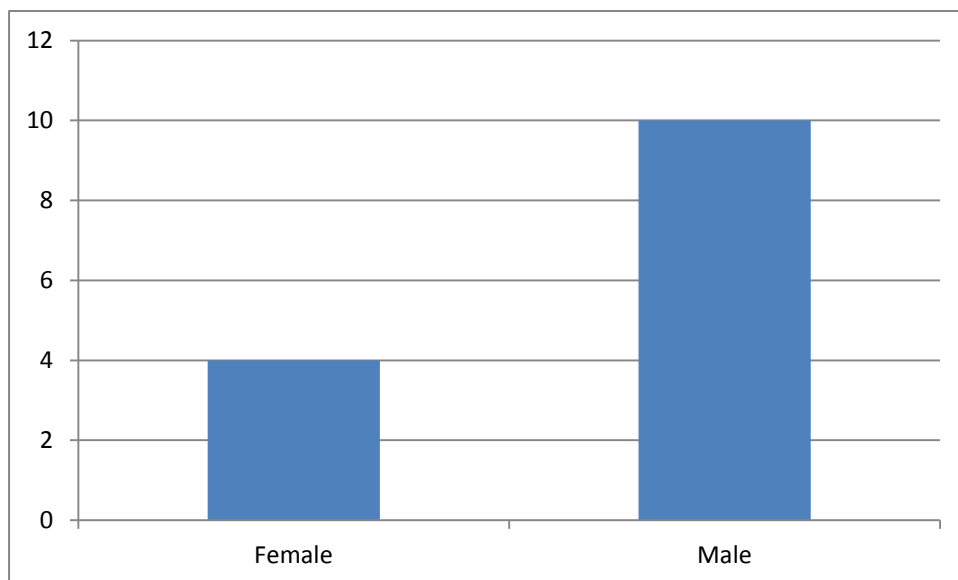
Fig 1t shows that male experiences are far well represented in the textbooks than females' experiences.

Fig 1u: Experiences covered in English Project 2

In *Project English* Book II, the reverse is the case - females' experiences are more in the textbook's passages than males' although the gap is not very wide 7:10.

Fig 1v: Experiences covered in English Project Book 3

According to Fig 1V, the regular pattern of having more male experiences than females' is restored in Project Book III according.

Summary

Although, females' experiences are more than male experiences in only English Project Book II, the regular pattern in all the other textbooks indicates that male experiences dominate while female experiences are downplayed or relegated to the background.   Table 3 illustrates this general pattern.

Table 1c: Female/Male Experiences in Passage Focus

Females' Experiences	Males' Experiences
30	67
30.9%	69%

Analysis IV: Representation of Gender roles in the Textbooks

Fig 1w: Gender roles in *Practical English Book 1*
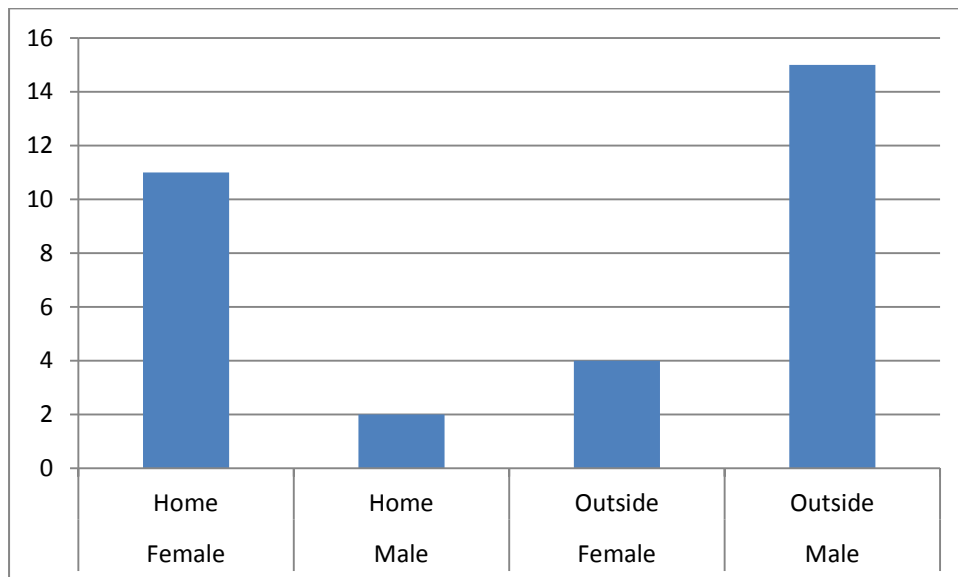
In *Practical English* Book I, Fig 1w shows that males occupy more roles outside the home than females; while females are represented more in domestic roles than males.

Fig 1x: Gender roles in *Practical English Book 3*
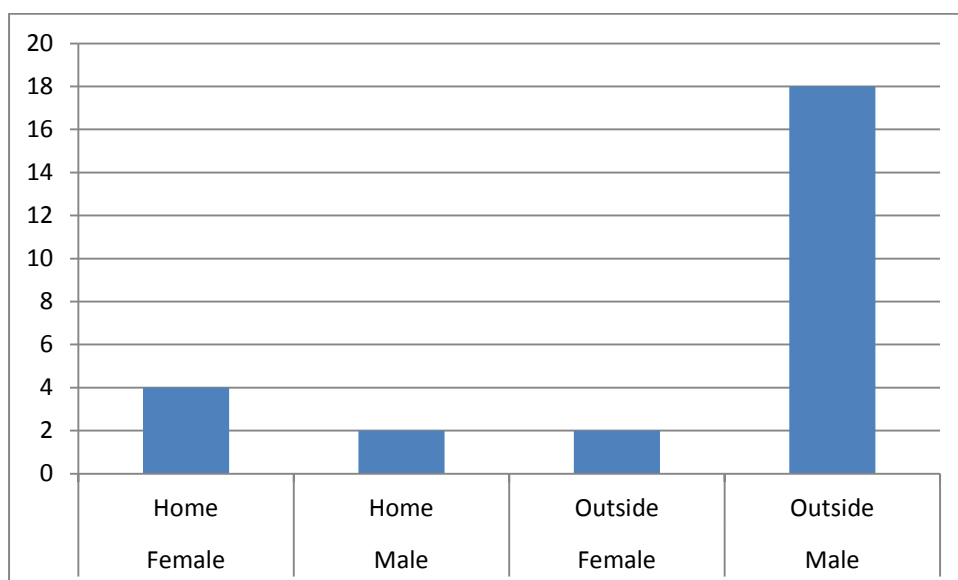
Fig 1x reveals more males in outside the home roles than females while females home roles double that of males.

Fig 1y: Gender roles in *Intensive English Book 1*
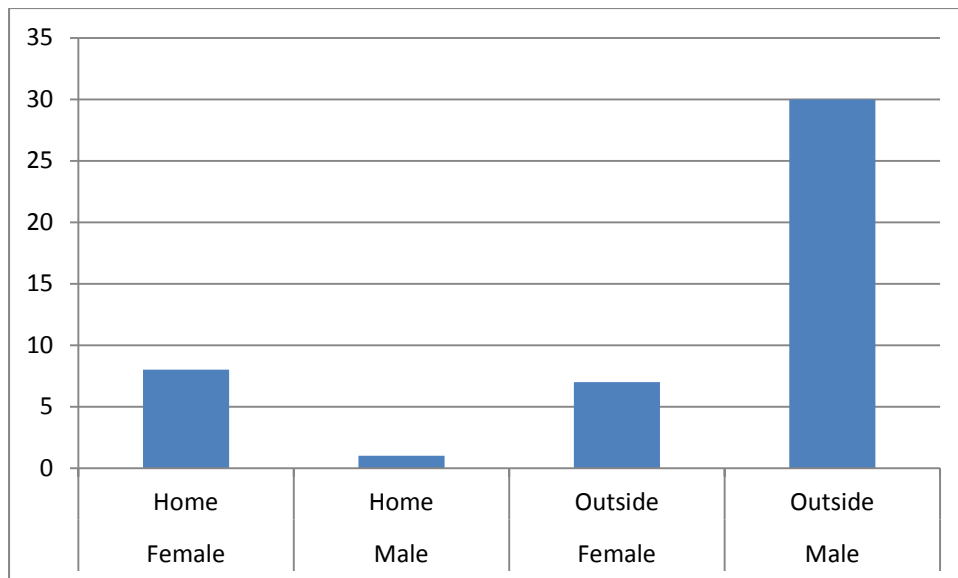
According to Fig 1y males' role at home is far less than females'; just as females' roles outside the home is far less than males'.

Fig 1z: Gender roles in Intensive *English Book 2*
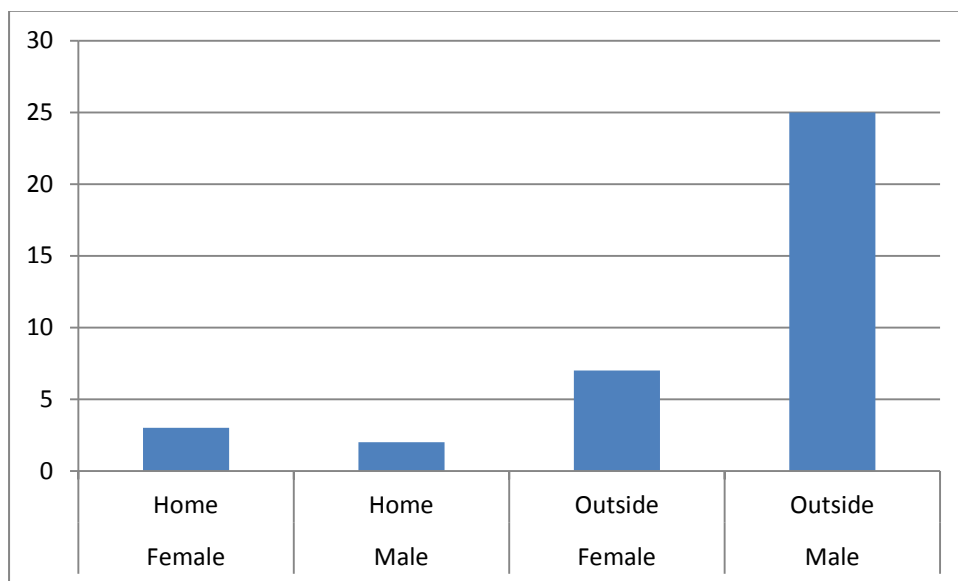
Fig 1z shows that both males' and females' roles within the home domain are minimal although females' is slightly higher than males'; however, males' roles outside home domain are far higher than females'.

Fig 1za: Gender roles in *English Project* 1
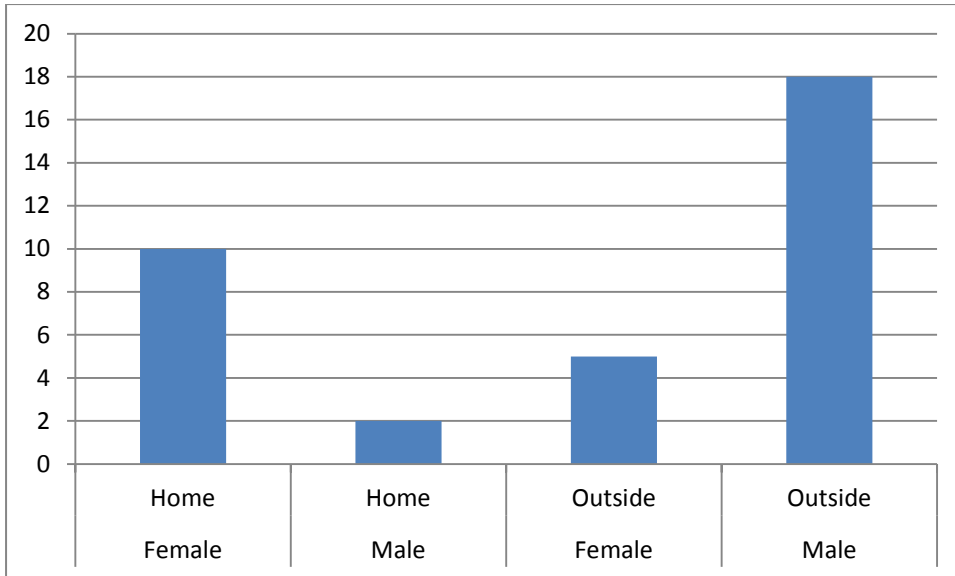
Fig 1za reveals a pattern which favours more roles for women at home than males; while males are given far more roles outside home domain than are given to females.

Fig 1zb: Gender roles in English Project Book 2
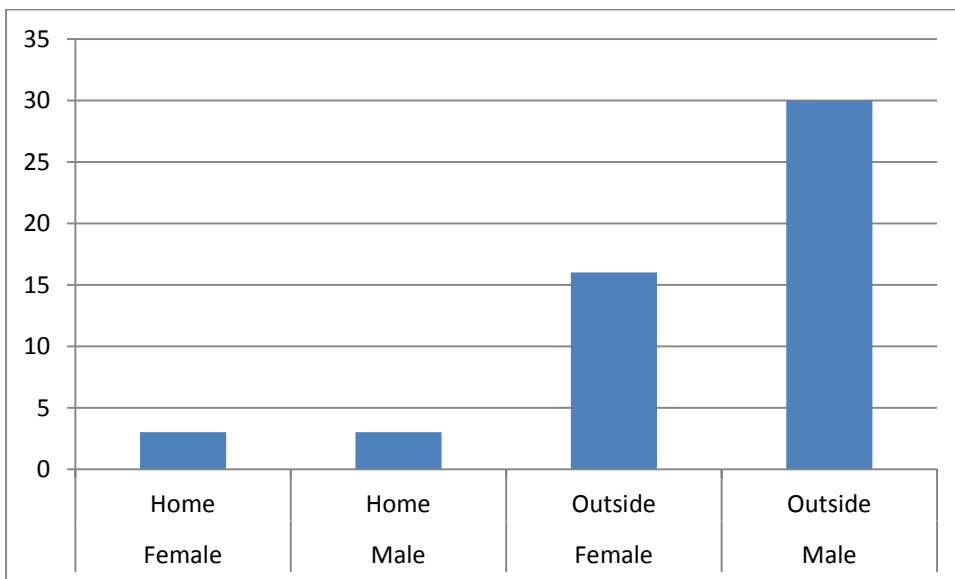
According to Fig 1zb, the pattern in English Project Book II slightly differs from the general pattern as both males and females have equal roles in home domain; however, males have higher representation in outside home domain roles than females although females' roles in this textbook is far higher than in any other textbooks.

Fig 1zc: Gender roles in *English Book Project* Book III
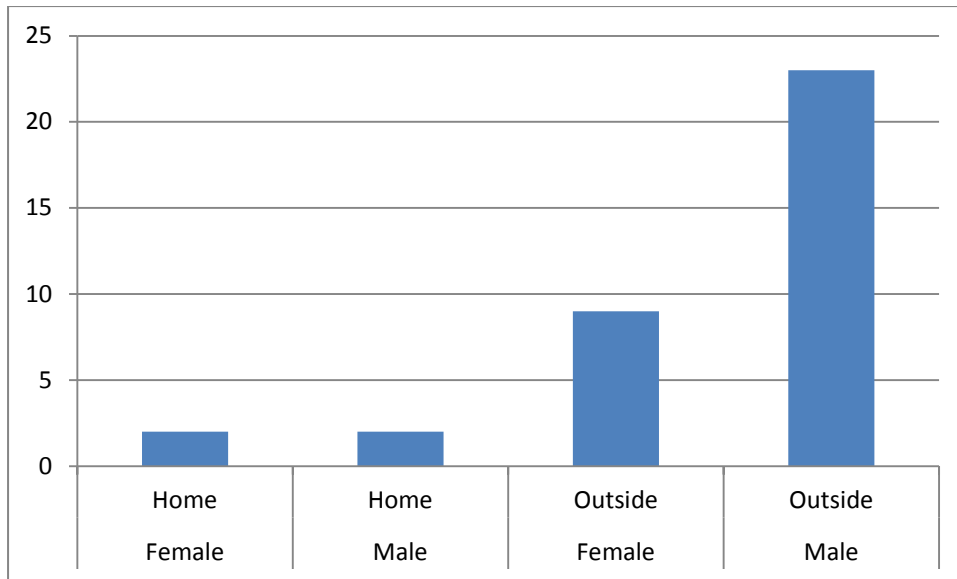
Fig 1zc shows that the patterns in Book II and III are similar: males and females' roles at home equal but are unequal outside home domain.

Summary

Results for gender roles

In terms of roles, females are consistently assigned more home-based roles in all the textbooks than males; while males have far more outside-the-home roles than women in all the textbooks. Noticeably the gap between them is very wide in both roles. Table 4 illustrates this general pattern in all the textbooks.

Table 1d: Representation of males and females roles

Home Domain		Outside Home Domain	
Females	Males	Females	Males
41	14	48	159
Ratio: 3 : 1		Ratio 1 : 3.3	

Summary of general findings of content analysis

▸ The population of males is far higher than females';

▸ Representation of men outside home in economically well-paid work far outweighs that of women whose roles are largely associated with housework and home; thus our analysis indicates perpetration of women as mothers and homemakers - stereotypes of gender roles in typical patriarchal society;

▸ Males' experiences are foregrounded while females' are pushed to the background;

▸ Males' desirable character traits largely occupy the focus of the passages; while females' undesirable character traits are given more attention than their desirable traits portrayed.

Analysis II: Linguistic Analysis

In this section, we present the results of our discourse analysis (that is both qualitative and quantitative) of dialogues from the textbooks. Studies on gender representation in learning materials have been concerned with many aspects of the texts in order to show areas of biasness either towards male or females. General areas covered thus far include visibility, dominance, degradation and deprivation. Linguistic analysis focuses on the use of generic pronouns, (he, mankind, humankind), suffixation of generic nouns, firstness in names and paired common nouns (e.g., boys and girls), connotation of words, e.g. and collocation of words (e.g. adjectives before males and females), the use of nouns to refer to men and women and their context, e.g. wife, men, husbands, use of adjectives in describing males and females, direct and indirect speech - whose utterances are couched in direct speech or indirect speech; discourse roles in dialogues or exchanges(more males talking/who speaks first (initiator, response givers, feedback givers etc) (Sunderland 1994). In other words, biasness might be indexed in points of view… in the narratives - whose points of view are predominant, who asks and who gives information; and the use of active/passive voice, firstness or first place occurrence in dialogues, in the amount of talk (counting number of works for each speaker

(male or female) assigned to sex groups, type of talk, conversation features/structures that characterise male and female styles or structural patterns.

Our linguistic analysis at the discourse level examined the dialogues in the texts and helped to indicate the dominating sex group and/or the dominated sex group thus spotlighting gender bias or fairness.   It is noted that the dialogues in the text are not naturally occurring conversations but are pedagogically motivated thus they are formed to teach certain language skills).   Our quantitative and qualitative analysis provided answers to questions such as: which sex pairs are over-represented, which sex group is dominating the other pair thereby rendering the other invisible? what do male pairs talk about more and what do female pairs talk about more? which sex group are made to talk more in interactions (given more words to speak)? and which sex group dominate the initiatives, the responses and the feedbacks? It is anticipated that find answers to these questions will suggest whether the texts used for and by learners promote gender equality or inequality.

Objectives

In this section, the main objective is to determine how dominance manifests in the conversation.   It is noted that the dialogue are naturally occurring data but crafted conversations that are pedagogically motivated to teach certain concepts and ensure that learners acquire the knowledge and are able to make necessary changes in their behaviour. In the analysis, we shall attempt to find answers to questions such as (i) which sex pairs are over-represented dominating the other pair (thereby rendering the latter invisible); (ii) what do male pairs talk about more? (iii) what do female pairs talk about more?(iv) which sex group are made to talk more in interactions? (v) which sex group dominate the initials, the responses and the feedbacks?

Dialogues, sometimes referred to in some of the textbooks as speechworks were selected for analysis. Dialogues are parts of the English lessons meant to prepare learners to practise pronunciation of words correctly and conversing formally and informally in the target language. Thus learners are engaged in the activities during lesson hours. Generally one lesson period of 35/40 minutes is usually allocated for this in a week. Dialogues selected are either between mixed sex (female and male) or are between same sex (female and female or male and male). WE used clues such names of interlocutors and/or their pictures on the pages where the dialogues are in the textbooks. However there are neutral dialogues that are not assigned to any male and female characters. We focused on those that are allocated to human characters.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis were used. Quantitatively, we found the frequency of types of dyads (mixed sex, same sex), types of talks (formal and nonformal topics) between dyads, amount of talks by males and females, and amount of females and males' initiatives, responses and feedbacks. Interactants' initiatives, responses and feedbacks were obtained through the use of Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) method of discourse analysis.

In order to determine exclusiveness/inclusiveness (how males and females are represented in the dialogue), we examined how dialogues are assigned to the sexes – same sex (F-F and M-M), and mixed sex (F-M/M-F).

Table 2a: Dyads by sex

Textbook	Same-sex		Mixed sex	Neutral
	F-F	M-M	FM/MF	
Intensive English I	0	14%	72%	14%
Intensive English II	24%	60%	16%	0
Practical English Book I	8%	8%	33%	50%
Practical English III	0	0	0	0
Project English I	10%	32%	19%	39%
Project English II	5%	31%	23%	41%
Project English III	0	18%	55%	27%
Total	8.1%	29.7%	31.5%	30.6%

Table 2a shows that female dyads are allocated the least number of dialogues in all the textbooks aside from Practical English Book I whereas male dyads have more dialogues than female dyads and in some textbooks (Intensive English Bk II, Project English Bks I and II) have more dialogues than in mixed sex conversations. The frequency of male dyads competes favourable with those of mixed sex dyads and triples that of female dyads. Figures 2a and Figure 2b illustrate these results.
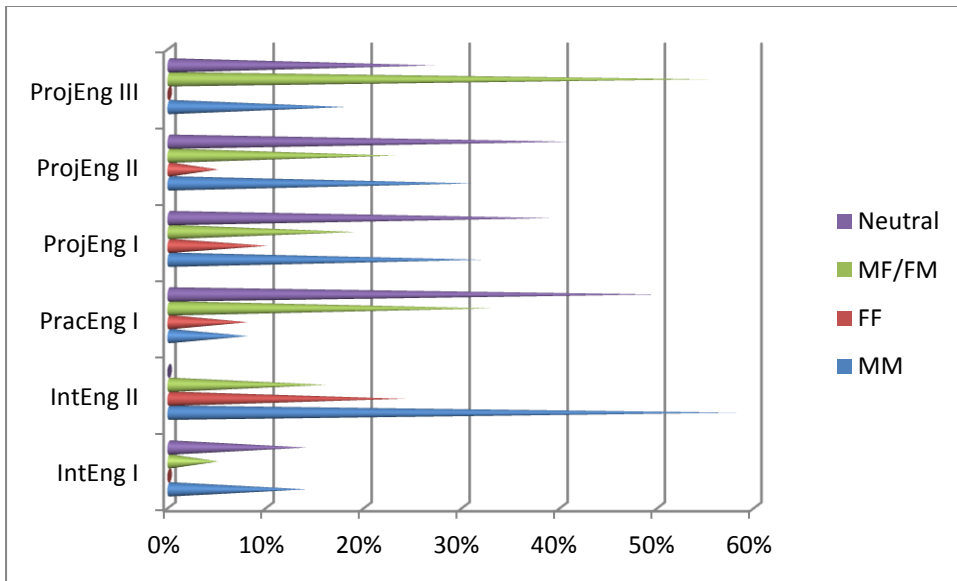
Fig 2a: Dyads according to sex

Fig 2b: Dyads' according to sex
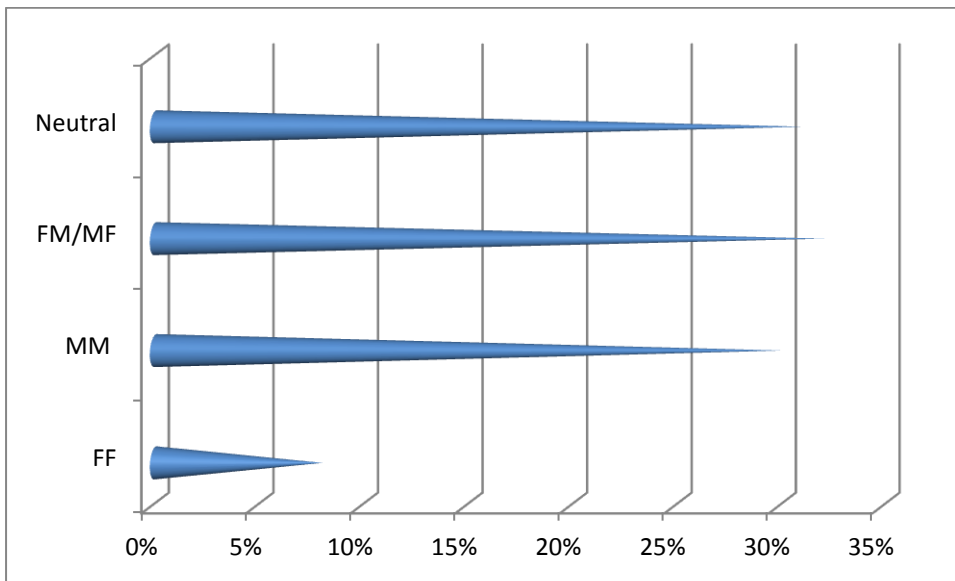
Table 2b: Pairs' types of talk

	FF	MM	MF/FM	
Formal talks	0	1	0	
Informal/private talks	1	0	4	*Practical English I*

	FF	MM	MF/FM	
Formal talks	0	0	2	
Informal/private talks	0	2	3	*Intensive English I*

	FF	MM	MF/FM	
Formal talks	1	5	1	
Informal/private talks	3	4	1	*Intensive English II*

	FF	MM	MF/FM	Total	
Formal talks	1	7	4	12	
Informal/private talks	2	3	2	7	*Project English I*

	FF	MM	MF/FM	Total	
Formal talks	0	5	3	8	
Informal/private talks	1	2	2	5	*Project English II*

	FF	MM	MF/FM	Total	
Formal talks	0	3	9	12	
Informal/private talks	0	1	3	4	*Project English III*

Table 2b shows that male dyads' talks are largely on formal subjects in all the textbooks whereas female dyads' are more about private topics - compare 2% with 6%; although in mixed sex interactions the frequency of formal topics (33%) is far higher than private topics (15%) (see Table 2a and Table 2b).

Table 2c: Total amount types of talk by sex

Total	F - F		M - M		F/M(M/F)	
	FmlT	InfmlT	FmlT	InfmlT	FmlT	InfmlT
Total						
48	1	3	15	6	16	7
99%	2%	6%	31%	12%	33%	15%

Fig 2c : Types of talk by Dyads
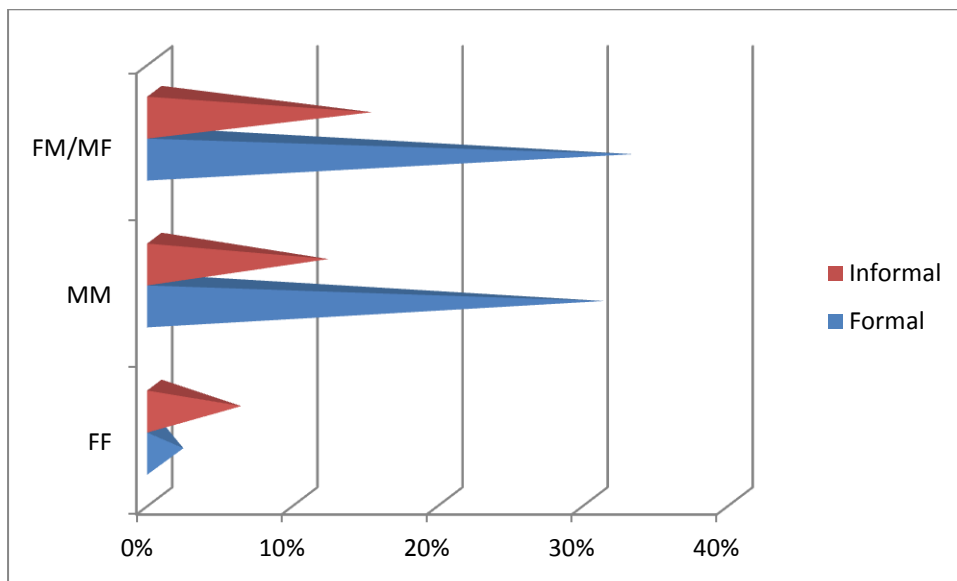
Table 2d: Amount of talk by sex of speakers

	Females		Males		Total
	Amount	%	Amount	%	
Intensive Bk I	117	45	142	55	259
Intensive Bk II	133	48	144	52	277
Practical Bk I	34	34	65	66	99
Project BK I	96	48	103	52	199
Project Book II	186	54	157	46	343
Project Book III	275	49	289	51	564
Total	841	48	900	52	1741

Table 2d reveals that in all the textbooks males use more words in the dialogues than females except in *Project English* Book II. Figure 3a illustrates these results.

Fig 2d: Amount of talk by females and males
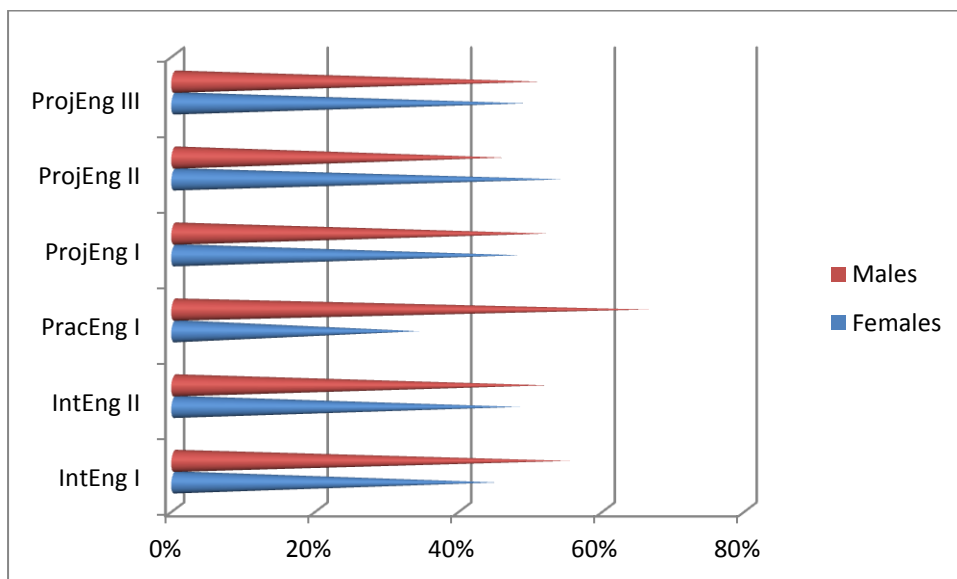
Table 2e: Discourse analysis of dialogues

	Initial		Response		Feedback	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Intensive I	9	2	5	6	2	5
%	81.8	18.1	45.4	54.5	28.5	71.4
Intensive II	6	3	6	6	4	3
%	66.6	33.3	50	50	57.1	42.9
Practical I	8	0	0	8	1	0
%	100	0	0	100	100	0
Project I	5	10	10	3	2	3
%	33.3	66.6	76.9	23.0	40	60
Project II	3	11	13	1	1	4
%	21.4	78.5	92.8	7.1	20	80
Project III	12	18	19	15	7	18
%	40	60	55.8	44.1	28	72
Total	43	44	53	39	17	33
	49%	51%	58%	42%	34%	66%

- In the first three textbooks (Intensive English I & II and Practical English I) males initiate more dialogues than females (compare 81.8% with 18.1%); however, females initiate more dialogues in Project Series than males do. It is noted that female

teachers are largely used to engage learners as their interaction partners thus the female teachers initiate most of the dialogues;

- correspondingly females give more responses in the first three textbooks than males just as men give more responses in the last three textbooks;

- females largely give more feedbacks than males in nearly all the dialogues in all the textbooks;

- overall, while males and females' initials compete favourably (49% and 51%), this is not the results for feedbacks (66% and 34%). (This is illustrated in Figure 2e).

Fig 2e: Initials, responses and feedbacks according to sex
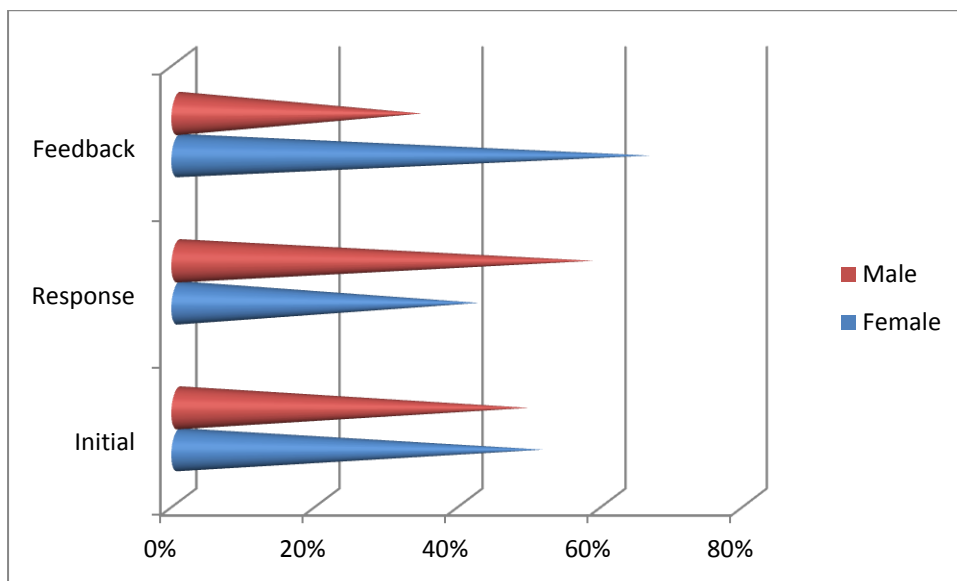
General findings in gender dominance in dialogues

▸ females are under-represented in the allocation of dialogues to dyads (8.1%) as against males who are over-represented (29.7%) (see Table 2);

▸ in same-sex dialogues, female talks are largely about private topics (6%) compared to their formal talks (2%); whereas males are allocated far more formal topics (31%) than private talks (12%);

- in mixed-sex dialogues, formal topics (33%) double private topics (15%);

- although overall amount of talks (count of words) allocated to males (52%) and females (48%) indicates little or no difference, this is not the case in every textbook (males are allocated more words in all the textbook dialogues than females apart from *Project English* Book II where females use more words than males) (see Table 3a)

- similarly, overall number of givers of initiation shows that females' (51%) and males' (49%) are quite close; however, this is not the pattern in each textbook (for example, in *Intensive English* Books I, II, *Practical English* Book I males initiate more conversations than females just as females initiate larger number of conversations than males in the dialogues of the other textbooks);

- females provide larger number of feedbacks (follow-ups) 66% than males (34%) except in two textbooks where males' feedbacks are more than females'.

- similarly, overall number of givers of initiation shows that females' (51%) and males' (49%) are quite close; however, this is not the pattern in each textbook (for example, in *Intensive English* Books I, II, *Practical English* Book I males initiate more conversations than females just as females initiate larger number of conversations than males in the dialogues of the other textbooks);

- females provide larger number of feedbacks (follow-ups) 66% than males (34%) except in two textbooks where males' feedbacks are more than females'.

7.0 Discussion of findings

7.1 Content analysis

The findings that indicate over-population of males and under-representation of females suggests discriminatory representation which renders females invisible. According to the recent census, females are about 80.2 million which is 49% of Nigeria's population leaving 51% for males (British Council, 2012). Our findings in the textbooks' population formula between males (65.3%) and females (34.6%) (see Table 1a) do not reflect this census distribution. In other words, it does not reflect the reality in the country. However, these

results support what has been reported in other studies where there is imbalance in the appearance of males and females that favours males but female-biased - omission (Hellinger, 1980; Porreca, 1984; Hingley, 1983; Myers, 1992; Gooden and Gooden, 2001; Lee, 2011 among others) especially first generation studies.

Similarly, our findings which indicate disparity in the gender roles assigned to males and females favours males in occupational economically viable roles outside the home and females in predominantly home-based roles. These patterns do not favour women in economically viable roles outside the home (seeTable 1d). This representation does not only entrench stereotyped gender roles but also promotes disempowerment of women for meaningful contribution towards national development. As learners are confronted with these stereotypes, especially females, they might be constrained by such representation from desiring more economically viable roles and consequently become content with traditional roles of child-caring, and as wives among others. These findings are similar to what has been reported in the literature where there is widespread gender stereotyping, with males occupying a wider range of social and occupational roles and women depicted mainly in domestic and nurturing domains (Lee and Collins 2008:129) is a barrier not only to gender equality but also to national development.

The fore-grounding of male experiences (69%) (expeditions, decision making, heroic deeds, rulers among others) in the passages of our textbooks suggests the promotion of males' experiences as worthy topics just as their desirable qualities are given prominence in the textbooks. On the other hand, females' experiences are downplayed (30.9%) (see Table 1c) just as their undesirable qualities are given prominence (degradation) as very few of their experiences are related in the passages. This suggests a subtle or camouflaged way of biased representation (discrimination) of females that renders them invisible. However, it is noted that in one of the textbooks, (*Project English* II, (see Fig 1u) female experiences dominate the

passages although we noted that most of the passages feature female teachers just as I*ntensive English* Book II (see Fig 1l) indicates that males' undesirable qualities far exceed those of females. These findings are reflective of biased textbooks that feature degradation, discrimination, subordination, invisibility and stereotypes that are largely against females. Thus gender representations in the textbooks that we examined are biased and gender insensitive perpetrating traditionally feminine qualities and roles/occupations. The textbooks tend to reinforce a system which suggests that males' presence, roles, qualities, and experiences are more interesting and important than females'.

These findings confirm what have been reported in first generation studies in Syria, India, Romania, China and the US among others (Alrabaa, 1985; Ellis, 2002; Miroiu, 2004; Shi and Ross, 2002; Song, 2003; Clark and Mahoney, 2004;. Blumerg (2008:345) noted that gender bias in textbooks (GBIT) is an important, near-universal, remarkably uniform, quite persistent but virtually invisible obstacle on the road to gender equality in education -an obstacle camouflaged by taken-for-granted stereotypes about gender roles. "Their stereotypes of males and females are camouflaged by the taken-for-granted system of gender stratification and roles and this constrains girls and boys' visions of who they are and what they can become" (Blumberg 2008:347).

7.2 Linguistic analysis

Dominance in conversations might be indexed in a number of ways, such as firstness in conversation in terms of who initiates conversation, or who gives information, who is assigned more talks or amount of words and the type of talk (private or public formal talk assigned to speakers. This is another part of the hidden curriculum in learning materials that fosters polarized gender identities and consequently promotes gender inequality. The findings of our linguistic analysis of dialogues in the seven textbooks indicate that females are under-

represented (8.1%) while males are over-represented (29.7%) in the distribution of dialogues between the two sex groups. This suggests representational attempt to render females invisible thereby engendering the social ideological system which supports women as objects to be seen - women-to-be-seenness and not to be heard while males are to be heard. Similarly, male dominance emerges in the findings which indicate greater amount of talks allocated to males (52%) in every textbook and the lesser amount of talks to the dominated sex group - females (48%) (see Table 2d). In fact, only one textbook, English Project Book II has more talks for females (54%) than males (46%) the other textbooks have more talks for males than females.

However, the domination of initiating dialogues in the textbooks is shared between males and females. While males initiate more dialogues in I*ntensive English* I & II and *Practical English* I than females; females initiate more dialogues in *Project English* Series than males (see Table 2e). However, it is important to note that most of the dialogues in the last series are dominated by female teachers. These patterns are rather complex although the pattern in each textbook is gender biased (either biased to males or to females). Traditional order of mention which is often represented in texts often reflects a widespread perception of male supremacy: "let us keep a natural order and set the man before the women for manners Sake" Wilson 1560:189 cited in Eckert and McConnell-Ginet 2003:34) appear in some of the texts where males initiate more dialogues than females. This suggests the subordination of the members of female sex group in dialogues who are traditionally expected to either be quiet or wait for the other person's initiation of topics of discussion. The traditional feminine discourse features of showing solidarity and/or facilitating interactions between interlocutors through ubiquitous feedbacks emerge in the amount of feedbacks that are assigned to females (66%) which doubles that of males (34%) in the textbooks. This is the pattern in all the

textbooks except in *Intensive English* II and *Practical English* I where males give more feedbacks than females (see Table 2e).

The type of talks that largely characterises females' dialogues are informal topics about home affairs, child-caring and the likes while males' interactions are predominantly formal topics about business, politics, economic activities and others. These findings suggest what has been described as discoursal marginalisation of discourse partners, especially, females, which indicates male dominance and an engendering of female stereotypes - female stereotypical topics (women domain) which are considered trivial or unimportant) (Lakoff, 1975; Freeman and McElhinny, 1996 cited in Sano, Iida and Hardy 2001).

From these discussions, it appears that the distribution of talk amount and the structural discourse patterns of the textbooks are not uniform: while some texts are male-biased in initials allocation (e.g., *Intensive English* Book I & II, *Practical English* I), the others (*Project* I, II, III) are female-biased. In response allocation, *Intensive English* I and *Practical English* I are biased against females while *English Project* I, II and II are biased against males (see Table 2e). Feedback allocation in all the texts are complex although overall statistics tends to be biased against women (see Table 2e).

The negative impact of these discriminatory features has been observed in the literature. They are said to contribute towards negative cognitive influence on females and may lead to loss of interest on the part of those who are discoursally marginalised. Consequently, learners who are exposed to these discoursal features might be compelled to imbibe the ideology that promote male domination in the discussions of public interests, be it political, economic, education and others while females have their reserves in private talks that are of little or no significance to national development.

In sum, our general findings from all the textbooks indicate complex patterns which indicate gender biasness against males in some series and biasness against females in other series. However, gender stereotypes on discoursal features of women giving larger amount of feedbacks in order to facilitate interactions emerge in the analysis of all the textbooks. Overall, our findings suggest a perpetration of patriarchal system in the representations of males and females that tend to engender male dominance, visibility, superiority and inclusiveness and female invisibility, subordination, degradation and exclusiveness. Jones, Kiteku and Sunderland (1995) (cited in Johansson, 2009:16) noted that inclusiveness and exclusiveness in the classroom impact on motivation and learning. Thus the structural patterns of the dialogues and the distribution of amount of talks in the textbooks are gender biased.

It has been stressed that one of the most critical parts of the learning experiences of young children is gender development (Gooden and Gooden 2001:90). Considering how children develop their sex identity while reading books (LaDow, 1976) and that books are often the primary source for the presentation of social values to the young child (Arbuthnot, 1984) coupled with the argument that although children's books provide numerous hours of enjoyment, they are also a powerful vehicle for the socialisation of gender roles (Bender and Leone 1989), "books tend to significantly affect gender development" therefore representation in textbooks should be gender fair to both sexes if we are bring about gender equality in society. Unfortunately, representations of females and males in the textbooks that we studied are not likely to help in achieving gender equality in and through education.

8.0 Conclusion

This study indicates that gender representation in the learning materials is gender-biased, gender insensitive and thereby would not contribute toward qualitative education nor

contribute towards gender equality among learners. Generally, females bear the brunt of discrimination, subordination, invisibility, degradation and exclusiveness in all the textbooks. The evidence that these texts are still being used by and for learners in the UBE Scheme does not indicate that gender equality objectives which are parts of the scheme are being given sufficient attention aside from gender parity in terms of enrolment where the scheme has achieved an amount of success. Thus, this study recommends that in keeping with the goals of the third MDGs, CEDAW, EFA (Education for All by the Year 2015), The Commonwealth Gender Equality Policy objectives and Nigeria Gender Equality Policy, learning materials (textbooks for learners) should be revised (by eliminating all forms of discrimination against males and females and ensuring gender fairness in both their contents and linguistic forms). However, before embarking on large scale production of reformed or progressive textbooks, teachers and their trainers should be sensitized about gender issues; gender education courses should be introduced to colleges of education and faculties of education in universities that prepare teachers; and in-service-training programmes for teachers should include gender issues and how teachers can recover gender-biased textbooks in the classroom. Guidelines for ensuring gender equality in the representation of males and females in future (revised) textbooks should be produced for authors and publishers and criteria for the selection of textbooks for learning should include gender sensitiveness in both the contents and linguistic forms of the textbooks. Commitment to these activities would help in achieving the 5th EFA goal which calls for "eliminating gender disparities in primary and second education by 2005, and achievement of gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality".

Government efforts are very important in achieving this elimination of gender biases as studies from Sweden and Latin America report of government initiatives to reduce gender

biasness in textbooks (GBIT), with differing levels of success (Blumerg 2008:345). However, it has been suggested that while government efforts might be delayed due to the high cost of producing progressive textbooks, Kalia's (1986) 'you can do something about it' exercises that can be carried out by students, teachers and even parents (Blumberg 2008:357) might be useful. The other recommendation is that of Sadker's et al. (2009) which identifies seven forms of bias and offers some practical ideas for confronting them. Blumberg (2008) suggests a new anti-GBIT manual that could be created by researchers for use at the teacher training institutes.

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Appendix: Sources of Textual Data

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