GENDER BIAS IN INDONESIAN SELECTED ENGLISH TEXTBOOKS FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

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Abstract

Gender bias persists in many societies, particularly in developing countries. In most cases, such prejudice favors men over women. As a result, having more gender equality materials in English textbooks is critical because they are the primary references used in the classroom. This study examined the pictures, texts and dialogues section of Indonesian selected textbooks to see the gender bias aspects. The study used a framework proposed by Solomon (1988) as guidance, content analysis method was applied by using descriptive qualitative and quantitative approach in analysing the gender bias aspects provided in the textbooks. The findings indicate that three textbooks almost entirely contain gender bias. Despite the authors' demonstration of gender equality awareness, gendered bias in textbooks still persist. This has significant implications on the textbook writers in writing gender materials to promote gender equality and avoid gender-biased textbooks in order to later be more selective in the words they choose about gender bias.

Keywords: *Textbooks, Gender Biases, Content Analysis*

Sari

Bias gender tetap ada di masyarakat, terutama di negara berkembang. Dalam banyak kasus, prasangka seperti itu lebih memihak laki-laki daripada perempuan. Akibatnya, memiliki lebih banyak materi kesetaraan gender dalam buku teks bahasa Inggris sangat penting karena merupakan referensi utama yang digunakan di kelas. Kajian ini mengkaji bagian gambar, teks dan dialog dari buku ajar pilihan bahasa Indonesia untuk melihat

aspek bias gender. Penelitian ini menggunakan kerangka yang dikemukakan oleh Solomon (1988) sebagai pedoman, metode analisis isi diterapkan dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif dan kuantitatif dalam menganalisis aspek bias gender yang terdapat dalam buku teks. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa tiga buku pelajaran hampir seluruhnya mengandung bias gender. Terlepas dari demonstrasi kesadaran kesetaraan gender oleh penulis, bias gender dalam buku teks masih bertahan. Hal ini berimplikasi signifikan pada penulis buku teks dalam menulis materi gender untuk mempromosikan kesetaraan gender dan menghindari buku teks yang bias gender agar nantinya lebih selektif dalam memilih kata-kata tentang bias gender.

Kata kunci*: Buku Teks, Bias Gender, Analisis Isi*

Introduction

Many gender-related issues have been extensively discussed and reported in a larger international literature of gender and education and gender and language in the context of education, including gender representation, gender stereotyping, and the underrepresentation of women in school textbooks (Lee, 2019; Namatende-Sakwa, 2019; Atchison, 2017; Sarvarzade & Wotipka, 2017). Despite the diversity of the ethnic groups and traditions in Indonesia, the people tend to share similar views regarding men and women. Men are valued more than women and given more thorough educations than girls due to the belief that women will eventually get married and raise children, making higher education for women a waste of money (Masruchah & Keenan, 2005).

Despite the stereotype that female and male genders are unique or distinct in multicultural and multireligious Asian societies like Indonesia, this gender distinction has been impacted by the issue of gender equality, for instance through Indonesian women's emancipation or what Widodo (2018) refers to as "women empowerment (for Raden Ajeng Kartini) a national heroine who fought for gender equity in all aspects of social practices." Despite the efforts to empower women, the discourse of gender equality in ELT textbooks tends to create gender bias, it can have a negative impact on students and create an oppressive environment for them (Cameron, 1990).

In Indonesia, the most recent curriculum should be related with the use of textbooks. The teachers can ensure that every student receives the same input by utilizing the same curriculum. In contrast to the fact that different schools utilize different English textbooks, there are many distinct textbooks used in Indonesia. According to the findings of the other researcher (Ramadhani et al. 2017), a textbook that was formerly used in Indonesian schools needs to be reviewed in light of its contents because there are still gender bias in it. For that reason, it is do crucial to carefully analyze textbooks to find any hidden biases and to lessen the negative consequences that biased information has on students' learning experiences (Lee & Mahmoudi-Gahrouei, 2020).

There have been few studies that examined the gender bias in the Indonesian textbooks with different theories (Ariyanto (2018), Saputra (2019), Julianti et al. (2019), Lestariyana et al. (2022) and Siregar et al. (2021). However, unlike previous researchers who only focused on the issue from one level only, the present study investigates whether there are any differences in the gender bias in the textbooks for the 3 levels. This current research, the researcher will look at 3 English textbooks for 3 levels (grades VII, VIII, and IX) using Solomon's theory (1988) to provide a more comprehensive analysis.

Despite much research into the representation of gender bias in language textbooks, relatively little empirical evidence of Firstness, Masculine generic construction in such social contexts as family, occupations, school participation and achievement, and hobbies and interests. Therefore, the present study attempts to fill this empirical gap.

Methods

Research Design

This study uses content analysis as research design. As defined by Krippendorff (2004), content analysis is a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts or other resources to usage contexts. The researcher selected the textboooks, examined and studied thoroughly, including reading practices, pictures and dialogues. After determining and examining the textbooks, the researcher divides the contents of the textbooks into different categories, such as gender bias, visibility,

firstness, generic masculine construction, and so on. Finally, the frequencies of each category were counted in the form of a content analysis. Moreover, she added the data are collected qualitatively but is frequently analyzed quantitatively through frequencies, percentages, and other statistics to define the conclusion about the differences of gender bias.

Data Collection Techniques

Data was gathered using document analysis. There are several phases which should be done to investigate this phenomenon towards gender bias context. At the beginning, the researcher reading the textbooks and identifying names, gender, identifiers, or sentences that contain gender elements. After the data were collected, the researcher classified the stereotyping, invisibility, selectivity, fragmentation, linguistic bias and unreality followed by observation checklists. In this research, the researcher observed three English textbooks entittles *When English Rings a Bell* for grade VII, *When English Rings a Bell* for grade VIII and *Think Globally Act Locally* for grade IX.

The classification is then consulted with the inter-rater to confirm whether or not the classification is reliable. The results of the observation were used to describe and explore the gender bias in Indonesian selected English textbooks. Implementing observation in content analysis research design aimed at exploring in depth and additional research data focusing on clarifying the whole research questions of this study towards the gender bias in the textbooks. As the following phase, observation checklist was adopted to explore issues dealing with the context in the textbooks such as visibility, firstness, generic masculine construction and activities. After having a further insight of the research problems being investigated, the researcher determines the research method used to solve the problems.

By conducting research, the researcher implemented some research procedures and treatments to solve the problem being investigated. After that, the researcher reducing data so that the data is in line with the theory and the data can be researched. Following this, the researcher obtained and evaluated the results of the research which had been conducted. The results of the research were expected to be successfully used in giving additional knowledge in gender bias. Furthermore, it can be used to provide some insights for other researchers to develop other researches to expand the

development of gender bias in related fields. Therefore, the researcher tends to investigate the gender bias in Indonesian selected English textbooks.

Results and Discussion

The first finding reveals type and frequency of gender bias in both books entitled "When English Rings a Bell (WERB VII & VIII) and Think Globally Act Locally (TGAL IX). It was found that the proportion of male characters (82%) was higher than female characters (28%). This result showed that there was an imbalanced visibility of males and females. The same result was also reported by other researchers (see Saputra, 2019; Ariyanto, 2018). These interesting findings show, despite the absence of significant difference between all the eight aspects of gender bias (stereotyping, invisibility, selectivity, fragmentation, linguistic bias, unreality, firstness and masculine generic construction), but only the above six aspects in contrast indicate a significant difference. This reflects how gender bias aspects could differ from one gender to another in images, dialogue or text. For further findings, we present our data in terms of how gender bias found in the three textbooks (Table 1).

Unit	Theme	Description	Grade (page)	Gender bias
III	What time is it?	A picture of a father cooks delicious roasted chicken for the family	VII (42)	Stereotyped activity for men because a father prepares delectable meals for the family dinner.
V	It's a beautiful day!	A picture (with text) portrays two female are having interaction and one male in silence	VII (103)	Invisibility issue about two of them are female, while one is male and less important. He has no response to the conversation.
II	This is me!	A dialogue about a girl explaining her mom's job as a housewife	VII (33)	Selectivity issue because everyone understands that girls do not have to be housewives, they can be corporate leaders or firefighters. The textbook writers presented females with limited

				occupational roles.
X	When I was a child	A picture depicts unrealistic material	VIII (143)	Unreality issue because it showed that two students are watching people who are playing marbles, but the picture presented that the object of marbles players was not recognized as their gender because the picture figures out unreal players which what are their gender.
VII	My uncle is a zookeeper	A picture (with text) of a young boy who are explaining about his family's activities	VIII (95)	Firstness issue because he mention that "Both **my mother and my father** go to work". Female is mentioned first.
V	Everybody is always in the middle of something	A picture (with text) of a boy who are wondering about the taylor's sleep schedule.	IX (101)	Masculinegeneric construction issue because he stated "I'm wondering if **the tailor** ever has a chance to sleep. When I passed by **his** shop last night, he was sewing." The masculine generic was also exclusively male referenced in the books studied here.

Stereotyping

Stereotyping occurs when undesirable mannerisms or characteristics are assigned to minority characters in a text (Solomon, 1988). Stereotyping ignores the diversity, complexity, and variation found in any group of people. A gender stereotype is a broad generalization about the characteristics, differences, and roles of men and women. Positive or negative stereotypes may exist, but they rarely convey accurate information about others. When people apply gender assumptions to others without considering evidence to the contrary, they are perpetuating gender stereotyping. Many people are aware of the dangers of gender stereotyping, but they continue to make such generalizations.

The first image, along with a dialogue text (on the left), and the second image (on the right) of the English language textbook (Grade VII and VIII), depict the portrayal of a boy and father, as well as a traditionally feminine role that males (boys) may perform at home (Meeussen et al. 2020). In this regard, a father prepares delectable meals for the family dinner. Although Edo and his sister are eager to assist their father in the kitchen, they are labeled as recipients because they do not take the initiative to assist their father in the kitchen. Edo and his sister may want to obey their father's command in order to demonstrate their submission as good children. In line with the findings in grade VII, the son agrees to do this domestic chore (see in grade VIII, p28). This is due to the fact that children should be submissive to their parents without arguing or being negligent. Regardless, the textbook authors may want to emphasize how a mother should encourage her son to do a household chore, such as cooking in the family setting. They may be aware that in today's society, males can participate in traditionally feminine and communal activities such as housework and child care. They may also introduce the concept of shared emancipation, which emphasizes the equality of male and female domestic responsibilities (Feldman 2000). Prior research (Meeussen et al. 2019) suggests that men's greater involvement in childcare and household tasks may allow their female partners to pursue their career goals, reducing gender inequalities in the paid work domain and optimizing women's increased economic independence. However, male participation in traditionally feminine and communal activities may be considered taboo or culturally inappropriate in countries with strong gender norms.
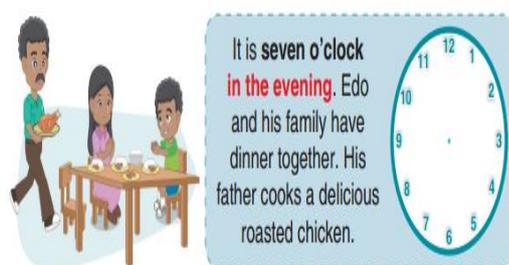
(VII/2/p42) (VIII/5/p28)

Another image from the English language textbook (Grade VII and VII), along with a dialogue text (on the left) and the second image (on the right), depicts a girl and a

schoolgirl in the kitchen as a sociocultural space. In this scenario, two actors, Siti and her mother, are going to school and working because they dress formally or wear a uniform. Siti appears to be assisting her mother in the preparation of a breakfast dish. Siti is expected to do this routine cooking chore because her mother has not instructed her to assist her mother. This indicates that a woman or a girl is socioculturally assigned to perform a traditionally feminine role, such as doing domestic chores in the kitchen. The second image depicts a girl in a uniform who makes the beds, cleans the house, prepares breakfast for the family, looks after the home, does housework, cleans the bathroom, and washes the dishes. In this sense, a kitchen is a social territory where women or girls are expected to be located. Women or girls in this social space should be familiar with and capable of using cooking utensils as semiotic artifacts in order to perform a cooking task. This popular stereotype depicts a domestic obligation between men (boys) and women (girls) at home. This type of image could help to reinforce female identity (Barton and Sakwa 2012). The stereotypical depiction of "a daughter assisting her mother in the kitchen" may represent a domestic obligation that every daughter (girl) is expected to fulfill in the domestic domain. The discourse underlying the two images also emphasizes that women or girls are expected to do a variety of domestic chores at home, such as cooking.
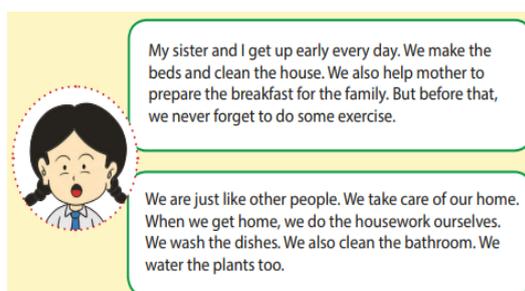
(VII/2/p4)   (VIII/2/p94)

Invisibility

When the culture of one group or gender is completely or partially excluded from the text, this is referred to as invisibility. This exclusion implies that minority groups and women are less valuable, important, and significant in the substantive areas discussed in the material (Solomon, 1988).

Invisibility refers to the omission of information about any of the main variables (Banks, 2001) that comprise our individual and collective cultural identities, as well as the influence they have on our daily lives. Weitzman et al. (1972) examined award-winning picture books for preschool children and concluded that women were simply invisible, being underrepresented in the titles, central roles, pictures, and stories of all samples. Female invisibility, which must be primary concern to all educators, should naturally be the primary focus of investigation in any linguist sexism research, including this paper.

As presented in (Grade VIII, p112) showed three students figure out in the pictures, but only two of them have a conversation, and one of them does not. Two of them are males and another less important is female. Why there was a picture of three of them but only two of them were talking? In line with this, the invisibility also existed in the pictures (Grade IX, p3) because it showed three students figure out in the pictures, but only two of them had a conversation, and one of them did not have a conversation. It can be classified as invisibility. According to Otsuji's study (2003), non-Japanese females are almost invisible in most textbooks. Male dominance is evident in their lexico-grammatical choices as well as their conversation topics. Its female characters are given minor business roles and little access to conversations, rarely taking turns.

(VIII/1/p112)

(IX/1/p3)

Selectivity

Selectivity or imbalance occurs when information and/or circumstances are presented from a culturally/ethnically dominant point of view. The data is presented from a single dominant point of view and does not cover every aspect (Solomon, 1988). A textbook that promotes imbalance and selectivity bias presents only one interpretation of a problem, situation, or group of people. For example, when discussing heroism or excellence in fields such as science and technology, only men are mentioned, whereas when discussing household, only women are mentioned.

Table (on the left) and the second table (on the right) of the English language textbook (Grade VIII and IX) show the portrayal of selectivity. Table 4.6 and 4.7 above presented the profession and activity found in these textbooks showed that that males are much more prominently featured as dominant activities in the second textbook as females. In contrast, the first image depicts males who seems powerful and strong like football player and farmer. This indicates that only males are employed in jobs requiring physical strength. Table 4.7 reveals that males are characterised as coach who seem to be effective meeting leaders. Consequently, this contributes to the belief that coach primarily target men. According to social role theory, the biological differences between males and females have resulted in the assignment of various duties to them (Meeussen et al., 2020).

Women's occupational roles were traditional and limited, with a small number of token professionals; on the other hand, men's occupational roles were quite diverse. Women's limited roles may also be related to the writers' culture. A culture embodies and sustains social values associated with men and women, and it shapes people's expectations about what jobs men and women should do and how they should act. According to Porreca (1984, p. 706), if women do not appear as frequently as men, there is an implicit message that women are not as important as men, or that their achievements are not as worthy of mention as men's, or that they themselves as human beings are not important enough to be included. Today, everyone understands that girls do not have to be housewives, they can be corporate leaders or firefighters, and men can nurture children without shame. Since they may have been influenced by these baseless clichés, the textbook writers presented females with limited occupational roles. If women believe in them, they may be forced to become nurses or tailors instead of firefighters or miners.

Males	Females		Males	Females
Teacher (2)	Teacher (1)		Teacher (2)	Teacher (2)
Singer (2)	Singer (1)		Hiking (2)	Cooking (2)
Zookeeper (2)	Cooking (2)		Seller Meatball (1)	Singer (1)
Football player (1)	Doctor (1)		Football player (2)	
Cutting trees (1)			Coach (2)	
Farmer (2)			Singer (1)	
Doctor (1)			Badminton player (1)	
69%	**31%**		**69%**	**31%**

Table 2: Selectivity in the WERB VIII   Table 3: Selectivity in the TGAL IX

Unreality

Unreality is a distortion of facts that portrays material in an unrealistic manner (Solomon, 1988). Many experts in educational systems or educational psychology agree that images can play an important role in instructional textbooks (Peeck, 1993). Some elements in a textbook can be highlighted by the visual design and arrangement of the textbook. Students visualize and then comprehend words in textbook illustrations (Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson, 2003). Images and photographs are a part of our reality. These images are frequently used to help students focus on experiences that are an important part of their lives (Dimopoulos et al. 2003). The following pictures (see Grade VII, p8 and Grade VIII, p143) presented an unreal material. The speaker can be seen greeting the audience, but the audience cannot recognize their genders. The students cannot imagine which ladies and gentlemen are in that picture because the picture is not clear. Supposedly students can use pictures to activate prior knowledge, most likely something like imagine (Cho & Kim, 1999). However, the textbook authors appear to be obscuring the image.

(VII/4/p8)
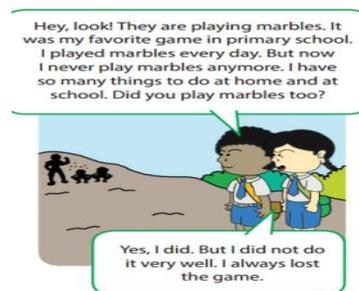
(VIII/2/p143)

In line with this, another picture showed that two students are watching people who are playing marbles, but the picture presented that the object of marbles players was not recognized as their gender because the picture figures out unreal players which what are their gender. Pictures in textbooks can serve a decorative purpose (Peeck, 1993), and most textbook illustrators do not consider educational philosophy or students' psychological needs in the learning process or in the pictures and illustrations. This is especially true because a truly basic education system is required to create a creative society (Morris, 2006). As a result, the critical role of thinking, innovation, and creativity is not fully developed, and many people in some countries do not care or appreciate the value of creativity (Ishaq & Director, 2003), so these issues require more attention in educational systems. Furthermore, illustrations in books can heighten children's awareness. It may provide unsuitable materials of concepts and views. Furthermore, the researcher did not discover the unreality material presented in the third grade IX textbook. It is clear on every page of the textbook that the unreality material has not been implemented.

Firstness

The term "firstness" refers to the practice of mentioning men first in texts before women, as if "the masculine gender is more worthy than the feminine" (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet 200, p.34). The current study looked at all instances in textbooks where the two genders were mentioned together and determined which came first. The order of appearance refers to the widespread belief in almost every society that men are more important than women and that it is therefore obligatory to put them first in all situations (Hameed, 2014, p.110). Based on the finding on page 23 stated that **Yuli and Tono** can make fried rice, and they can fry the egg nicely. Furthermore, on page 95, Edo stated that "Both **my mother and my father** go to work". The current study looked at all instances in textbooks where the two genders were mentioned together and determined which appeared first. From the statements above, it can be conclude that females come first than males and females take precedence over males.

> Rani: "***Yuli and Tono*** *can make fried rice, and they can fry the egg nicely.*
> *They can also serve fried rice beautifully with tomatoes and celery.*
>
> (VIII/2/p23)

> *Edo:* *There is nobody at home most of the day. Both **my mother and my** ***father*** *go to work, and the children go to school.*
>
> *(VIII/2/p95)*

Masculine Generic Construction

Another instance of sexism is the use of the masculine as a generic pronoun, which has its roots in English grammar. People rarely conceptualize females when they read words like man, person, etc., and pronouns like everybody, and somebody in EFL textbooks (Porreca 1984). Using paired pronoun phrases such as he/she, him/her, his/her, and s/he is one method. Conrod (2020) associates the proclivity to use masculine pronouns with the belief that masculine or male pronouns are the default. As a result, this type of study investigates textbook bias and tendency. The proclivity to use masculine pronouns reveals biases against women.

To investigate this issue, all occurrences of generic constructions were identified and analyzed to determine whether masculine generic constructions were truly generics referring to male. As presented in (see Grade VII, p69) it is stated "Congratulations for **the baby**! I cannot wait to play footbal with **him**!" Another example based on the findings in the third textbook (see Grade IX), "I'm wondering if **the tailor** ever has a chance to sleep. When I passed by **his** shop last night, he was sewing." The masculine generic was also exclusively male referenced in the books studied here. Overall, the textbooks looked at overrepresented male characters in terms of frequency and order of occurrence, occupation, stereotypical activities, and linguistic manifestation of masculine generic referent generic constructions that were all male-referenced.
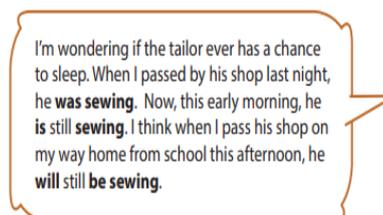
(VIII/3/p69)   (IX/4/p101)

The Presentation Gender Visibility in Three Textbooks

The proportion of male and female characters in textbooks is depicted by gender visibility. According to Stockdale (2006), gender visibility is arguably the most easily examined aspect of gender balance and refers to the proportion of men and women featured in textbooks. To see how gender appears in textbooks, use the person's name as a type of gender marker. Visibility includes gender-specific names and illustrations. The name is text, and the illustration is a picture or image. As a result, when one gender is used more frequently in an illustration, it implies that one gender is more important than the other. Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that the book WERB VIII has the most gender used based on images, whereas the book TGAL IX has the least gender used based on images.

Summary of Gender used based on image in WERB VII, WERB VIII and TGAL IX

Textbook	Male	Female	Total
WERB VII	258	215	473
WERB VIII	279	259	538
TGAL IX	122	137	259

Summary of Gender used based on the character names in WERB VII, WERB VIII and TGAL IX

Textbook	Male	Female	Total
WERB VII	41	45	86
WERB VIII	76	76	152
TGAL IX	27	19	46

Based on the findings above, it can be concluded that the book WERB VIII has the most gender used in the character names, whereas the book TGAL IX has the least gender used in the character names.

Conclusion & recommendation

Conclusion

According to the findings of the current study, three textbooks almost entirely contain gender bias. Despite the authors' demonstration of gender equality awareness, gendered bias in textbooks still persist. The researcher argue that the textbooks are

inappropriate and unsuitable for students. A textbook used in Indonesian schools needs to be reviewed in light of its contents, as it still contains gender bias. As a result, it is critical to carefully examine textbooks for any hidden biases and to mitigate the negative effects that biased information has on students' learning experiences. The researcher also argue that the textbook authors have not given careful consideration when writing the books. As evidence, almost every chapter in the textbooks contains a gender bias. If they are aware, mindful, and careful when writing the book, the textbook author and government can work together to promote gender equality, both in the textbook and in real life.

To summarize the findings above, book WERB VII has more gender bias content than the others, and book WERB VIII has more gender visibility on images and character names content than the others. In addition, stereotyping, invisibility, and selectivity are discussed more frequently in WERB VII. Meanwhile, no results were found for fragmentation and linguistic bias in the books WERB VII, WERB VIII, and TGAL IX. Furthermore, unreality is discussed more in WERB VII, while firstness and masculine generic construction are discussed more in TGAL IX.

Although the findings show marginal differences between the subscales, the findings can be useful in determining the level of use of the gender bias aspects in textbooks. The results can help teachers, textbook authors, and the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture provide academic resources to raise students' awareness of gender bias. The difference in gender bias aspects between genders demonstrates that not all aspects are the same for male and female students.

The general findings of gender bias and its aspects of the book WERB VII, WERB VII, and TGAL IX were presented in this study. More research is required to determine whether it is feasible to consider other variables that will benefit students in the long term. Since teachers do not always monitor their students' gender awareness during the teaching and learning process. Students are accountable for their own learning. The time has come to take action.

Recommendation

Providing a framework for English teachers to improve gender bias awareness. A framework is a representation of the relationship that the researchers expect to see between their variables, or the characteristics or properties that the researchers wish to investigate. If researchers are planning to conduct a study, think about using a framework to organize and document your work. This will enable researchers to make predictions and link the issues they are researching to existing knowledge. The researchers can examine the thesis and research problem, as well as brainstorm on the key variables in their research, investigate related literature, make a list of the variables, and talk about your assumptions or propositions (point out their relevance to the research). The classification of gender bias in this study is also expected to provide more insight in expanding gender equality strategies for their teaching and incorporating gender equality materials in the classroom in order to improve students' gender bias awareness and knowledge. Teacher can expanding gender equality by using gender-neutral language. In assignments, for example, a teacher can challenge students' expectations by including a female construction worker or soldier, a male secretary or nurse, and other professions typically associated with a specific gender. Also, avoid using gendered terms like "guys" when referring to the group as a whole, which may make female students feel excluded. Instead, use gender-neutral pronouns such as 'everyone.' Similarly, teachers should not use stereotypical phrases such as "boys don't cry" or "girls don't fight." This language lays the groundwork for students' understanding of gender roles.

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Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported.

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