

# **Gender Representation in Contemporary Grade 10 Business Studies Textbooks**

By

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## Declaration

I, Preya Pillay, declare that this dissertation is my own work. I also declare that it has not been submitted for degree purposes at any other University. And I have indicated and acknowledged all the sources used accordingly.

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Student's signature

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Date

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Supervisor's Signature

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Date

## **Abstract**

Since 2009 the textbook has emerged as a key educational resource in South African classrooms. This has been a direct response to rapid curriculum change, and real and perceived inadequacies in teacher content and pedagogic knowledge. Of significance though is that there is limited understanding of the nature of content selections that textbook authors invoke and the subtext thereof. The purpose of this study therefore is to understand how gender is represented in Business Studies textbooks available to teachers and pupils in the Further Education and Training (FET) band in South African classrooms. This qualitative study is located in the critical paradigm and engaged the tenets of Critical Discourse Analysis as the key analytical frame. A purposive sample of two contemporary Business Studies textbooks was selected to investigate the phenomenon of gender representation.

Findings reveal that stereotypes of women and men are reinforced in the selected textbooks under study. Women were shown more frequently in home settings than were men. Men were shown in a wider variety of occupational roles than women. Textbooks portrayed men in a wide range of highly-paid, high-status occupations such as managing directors, doctors, lawyers etc. In both texts more males have been represented in leadership positions in government, economic and corporate institutions. The textbooks further represented women as being disabled and destitute. Males were portrayed as confident and educated in the usage of technology while women were portrayed as illiterate. Additionally men were portrayed as assertive and forthright business individuals, while women were also portrayed as emotional and as more reliant on, or needing, the advice of men to deal with business-related issues. Finally, the portrayal of firstness presented the male pronoun first in sentences and conversation as opposed to the female pronoun. The findings indicate that representations in the textbooks are gender-biased and gender-insensitive. Of concern is that these representations may be transmitted to school learners. A critical approach to the selection and use of textbooks is thus necessary. Much work needs to be done by key role players in the educational sectors to ensure that gender inclusivity becomes a feature of South African Business Studies textbooks.

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to my loving parents, **Singaram** and **Geetha Pillay** for their tireless effort in assisting me and for being my valuable source of both encouragement and inspiration. Without your love and support, this research would not have been completed. Thank you.

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## Acronyms

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics.
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DoE	Department of Education
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
NCS-	National Curriculum Statement
GETT	Gender Equity Task Team
FET	Further Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ESL	English as a Second Language
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
TESOL -	Teacher of English as a Second or Other Language
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
MD	Managing Director
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
EFA	Education for All

# Chapter 1

## Background and Introduction to the study

### 1.1 Introduction and background

In the era of political and social transformation that has followed South Africa's first national democratic elections in 1994 the country's education system has faced a continuous series of challenges (Christie, 1997). Numerous policy initiatives have been proposed to reform education practices and equip learners to become critical citizens in changing global and national environments in line with international trends (Naicker, 1999). The initial Government of National Unity set in motion several curriculum-related reforms intended to democratise education and eliminate inequalities in the post-apartheid education system. The first reform initiative set out to purge the inherited apartheid curriculum (schools syllabuses) of "racially offensive and out-dated content" (Jansen, 1999), and was followed by the introduction of continuous assessment in schools (Lucen, 1998). But the most ambitious curriculum innovation under the new democratic government was the introduction of what was referred to as outcomes-based education (OBE), an approach to education which underpins the new Curriculum 2005. This curriculum transformation, driven and underpinned by the Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), states in its preamble that one of its aims is to "heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights" (Department of Education [DoE], 2003, p. 1).

Several sound reasons for a curriculum policy modelled on OBE were cited by both policy makers and government. One fundamental reason was that OBE sought to eradicate the race, gender and ethnic bias embedded in the previous apartheid curriculum (Department of Education, 1999). Other reasons given were that outcomes would replace an emphasis on content coverage, that outcomes would make explicit what learners should attend to, that outcomes would direct assessment towards specified goals, that outcomes would signal what is worth learning in a content-heavy curriculum, and that outcomes would provide a measure of accountability, enabling evaluation of the quality and impact of teaching in a specific school (Geysers, 2000, p. 3). Yet by 2009, and in subsequent years, a number of problems were documented regarding the OBE experience in South African schools and some fundamental questions began to be asked: Do outcomes in fact deliver what they claimed? How do outcomes play out in a resource-poor context? Can outcomes survive their psychological roots in behaviourism? Do outcomes in different contexts mean the same thing – for example, are outcomes specified for education equivalent to those identified for training? (Jansen, 2001, p. 53).

Almost always the answer to these questions has been "No". OBE has been widely criticised in South Africa in the past couple of years and any degree of successes it may achieved has been decidedly

called into question (Jansen, 2001; Christie, 2000 & Spady; 1999). Spady (1999) declares that outcomes-based education has failed in South Africa and it should be stopped completely. He argues that the burden of administration placed on teachers is far too heavy and makes it impossible for them to focus on effective learning in the classroom. The quality of education in South Africa is not up to standard and teachers are very negative about the current situation in classrooms. Jansen (2001) and Christie (2000) point out that teachers are faced with very large classes, a huge amount of paperwork, and far too many demands on their time. At the level of planning and provision the two authors point to serious disjunctions and inconsistencies in the system, with too much emphasis on assessment, and too many learning outcomes and assessment standards to achieve in each year. They also cite unsatisfactory teacher training, failure to accommodate the needs of all the learners in the classroom, serious inadequacies on the part of the state in the provision of resources to schools, and, in particular, a poorly conceived Foundation Phase which makes insufficient provision for concrete learning experiences.

In response to a barrage of criticism, Minister of Basic Education Angie Motshekga appointed a task team to advise the Department of Basic Education (DBE) on changes that needed to be made to OBE (Kgosana, 2010). Curriculum policy, curriculum structure, and support in the implementation of the proposed changes all feature in the task team's report. The conclusion that the task team came to is that although OBE had some positive outcomes, it is necessary to put the emphasis back on the knowledge aspect of positive learning. Clear guidelines should be given for "what to teach and how to teach it" (Kgosana, 2010, p. 12). A new action plan to improve the country's schools, known as Schooling 2025, that has now been set in place by government targets a wide range of concerns, including teacher recruitment, learner enrolment, school funding, mass literacy and overall quality of education (Kgosana, 2010). Renamed as Schooling 2025, the OBE curriculum will be revised, improved, and revamped – not completely scrapped, but changed to improve the performance of learners.

Schooling 2025, in conjunction with the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) documents, attempts to ensure that the performance of South African learners will be improved. One of the ways that the Department of Basic Education sees this happening is by reintroducing textbooks in classrooms as a central resource for students and teachers. The DOEs, *Curriculum News for 2010* comments that "textbooks play a vital part in teaching and learning [and] must be used by teachers and learners to enhance their teaching and learning" (p. 6). Much money and time is now spent on equipping teachers for this learning area and many new textbooks are being published.

Crawford (2003) argues that textbooks play an important role in shaping and socialising students. In countries like South Africa, where the government is a key actor in preparing and controlling school curricula, and where educational environments lack the freedom to criticise the textbooks' content, a

student's learning will be deeply affected. The government views the educational system as a political project; a fusion of linguistic unification and a coherent curriculum within the education system that enables consolidation of a national unity and a new South African identity (Christie, 2000). Yet despite all the ideological changes made to the curriculum since 1994, and despite policy statements aimed at publishing textbooks that are gender friendly, the Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) Report (Wolpe, Quinlan, & Martinez, 1997, p. 23) identified a number of obstacles to transformation of the South African education system, one of which was textbooks (Biraimah, 1998, p. 44).

Promoted by the GETT report Sydney (2004) asks: Do we really need to talk about gender issues and stereotypes in the classroom after curriculum reform? After all, are teachers not contemporary and knowledgeable people? Are learners today really exposed to biases and sexual intolerance? In answer, Sydney (2004) comments that in a perfect world, the answer would be no, but unfortunately this is not the case. Traditional views on gender roles, for example, do find their way into the classroom, where the atmosphere and way of thinking is often a reflection of what goes on in the world outside. Consequently it *is* important to bring issues of gender to the surface in the classroom. Teachers need to be aware that they have a huge responsibility when it comes to choice of text books and other materials, because the teaching materials used will have a lasting influence on learners (Sydney, 2004).

The fundamental question remains: "Who should decide what our children learn in school?" Henry Giroux (2001) identifies schools as political institutions, inextricably linked to the issues of power and control in the dominant society. Citing Giroux, Horner (2000), argues that the schools mediate and legitimate the social and cultural reproduction of dominant gender relations in society. Taking this argument further, Giroux (2001) notes that despite unfavourable reports of committees involved in textbook content, women do at least feature in most textbooks, although reports from many countries indicate that gender inequalities and prejudices continue to be perpetuated and that social issues underlying women's inequality still receive little attention from textbook authors.

Arguably the school, through compulsory education, transmits an authoritative and ostensibly scientific understanding of the world. School textbooks are a major tool in this transmission. They are trusted and represent a source of reality and awareness (Sumalatha, 2004). Taking this point further, Sydney (2004) stresses that textbooks play a major socialisation role in a child's development. They convey important messages to the young on how social relations in a society are systematised and which value system they should accept. Through characters represented in textbooks children are presented with an idealised depiction of the individual and an idealised behaviour model for a given society (Sunderland, Rahim, Cowley, Leontzakou & Shattuck, 2001). Obura (1991) points out that glaringly omitted from many textbooks are the accomplishments of half the human race. Researchers have shown that in most textbooks experiences of men and boys represent the norm (Obura, 1991).

The experiences, ways of thinking and knowledge of girls mean something “different” from that (Jones, Kitemu & Sunderland, 1997). This is problematic, because the limited space afforded to women and girls renders invisible a large part of human experience which is usually associated with women, although it could be of equal value for both genders.

It is believed that commerce textbooks in particular focus primarily on the accomplishments of men and trivialise the accomplishments of women, perpetuating the image of the “corporate male” (O’Neill, 1994). Ideologies within textbooks thus weaken the importance of women, placing them in positions of subordination and passivity (Chambliss & Calfee, 1998). What is also lacking are descriptions of women who take on roles stereotypically reserved for men. Haines (1994) raises the issue of the psychological development of children at the point when they leave school, which is characterised by fast development of perception that approaches “naïve realism” (1994, p. 23). Swann and Graddol (1988) argue that at a subconscious level textbooks prepare boys to achieve in the marketplace while girls are trained to be submissive and obedient at home – gender stereotyping which may injure children’s emotional psyche by forcing them to perform a set pattern of behaviour predetermined on the basis of gender discrimination in which boys are taught to associate with outdoor activities and girls are confined to indoor activities.

Davies (1995) argues that the curriculum and textbooks serve to maintain the status quo in the larger socio-cultural context and that despite all efforts to change the traditional meaning the masculine-feminine dichotomy it still persists along with other oppositional dichotomous categories of active-passive, emotional-rational, nature-culture, dependent-autonomous etc. In addition the curriculum is still not informed by awareness of how gender is positioned within discourses of knowledge production or of its relationship to social power, recognition of which is essential if these gender issues are to be addressed (Davies, 1995).

Recognising the key significance of textbooks in the South African classroom and the important way in which they articulate the curriculum, this study explores the gendered characteristics of Business Management textbooks. As the most commonly used teaching resource and the vehicle through which the curriculum is made public, the Business Studies textbook has the potential to play a significant part in the implementation of gender education. According to Engelbrecht (2006), textbooks by their nature tend to control knowledge as well as transmit it, thus reinforcing selected values and ideologies in the minds of learners.

## **1.2 Purpose and focus of the study**

The purpose of this study is to understand how gender is represented in Business Studies textbooks available to teachers and pupils in the FET band in South African classrooms. It is important to do this because South Africa is a democratic society with a certain kind of history which is fast becoming a

dim memory for today's learners who never experienced it. An understanding of gender in textbooks might help to identify the kind of citizenship that the state is promoting through the current curriculum. Showing how women and men are represented in current Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks, will it is hoped help towards creating future textbooks that are more reflective of the full potential of both women and men in society.

The focus of this study therefore is on gendered representation in text books and the way this is manifested in contemporary South African Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks. The content of two of these textbooks is examined by means of critical discourse analysis (CDA) in an attempt to understand the representation of gender and the reasons why it is being thus represented.

### **1.3 Rationale and motivation for the study**

The paucity of research and available data on gender issues in education, combined with a lack of gender awareness in the field of commerce education, allows key role players in the field of education to claim that there are no gender inequalities and discrimination in schools and that the gender dimension is irrelevant in education. My research seeks therefore to question and take in hand the gendered dimension of textbooks as parts of the "hidden" curriculum embedded in the formation of subject-specific skills and identities. I focus chiefly on FET textbooks in Business Studies, and more particularly how the world which is represented in such textbooks lays down prescribed, separate, categorical spheres for both boys and girls as they learn and produce knowledge in their Business Studies course. This study will provide useful insights to educators on the gendered realities which textbooks portray.

As a Business Studies educator it was apparent from my own teaching experience that gender issues in commerce textbooks portray inequalities and unjust opportunities. The information that textbooks authors choose to include and the manner which they choose to present it can position males and females differently and often unequally. This is especially problematic when women are mentioned only sporadically and in stereotypical roles. Getting to grips with representations of gender in Business Studies textbooks and seeking to arrive at a deeper understanding of the intricacies surrounding these gender issues was in itself a strong motivation for me in embarking on this investigation.

Reading widely and researching on the subject of gender representation in commerce textbooks made me realise the potential of gender education in identity formation and in more equitable acceptance and appreciation of women in the sphere of education and in their life opportunities at large. However such hopes are less likely to be realised while they continue to be contradicted by classroom textbooks. This point is highlighted in a UNESCO (2006) report which emphasises that although textbooks are not the ultimate solution to a country's educational system, they are a major component

underpinning many curricula and many education systems. They provide a solid basis for children's learning and teachers' teaching and a means for gaining information and knowledge. This clear link between textbooks and instruction was an indication that the textbook was the best place to start unpacking my curiosity about gender. It is therefore my intention to add my voice to the debates around gender education in business education.

In addition to being a Business Studies educator, I also play a role in developing and supporting both students and teachers in Business Studies. As a result, I find it necessary to conduct formal research into gender issues in Business Studies in order to develop a deeper understanding of problems that the students face in their learning and perhaps offer recommendations that would make teaching and learning more effective, beneficial and rewarding for both educators and students. These recommendations could be in the form of improved methods of teaching and assessment, and better-informed curricula that would encourage more analytical and critical thinking about gender issues in textbooks.

## **1.4 Research questions**

In order to examine the representation of gender in contemporary Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks, this study attempted to answer the following key questions:

1. How is gender represented in contemporary Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks in South Africa?
2. Why is gender represented in particular ways in contemporary Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks in South Africa?

## **1.5 Outline of research methodology**

This study adopts a qualitative approach in which the emphasis is on the quality and depth of information (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). This approach suits the purpose of this study which is to develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of gender as it is represented in Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks in South Africa. In addition this research is rooted in the paradigm of critical theory as a way to expose underlying assumptions and ideologies that serve to conceal the implicit power relations in the various gendered "representations" present in the textbooks

The methodology I employed to address the critical questions in this study is critical discourse analysis (CDA). According to Fairclough (2003) this methodology entails some form of detailed textual analysis which specifically includes a combination of interdiscursive analysis of texts and linguistic and other forms of semiotic analysis. CDA focuses broadly on the language of a text and on social and theoretical issues that underpinning that text. CDA also concerns itself with relations of power and inequality in language (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). I have accordingly adopted CDA as

an analytical tool because of its focus on the significance of language in the construction of hegemonic ideologies.

The CDA methods used as my data analysis instrument for this study are shaped according to the key functions noted by Fairclough (2000) of describing, interpreting and explaining both text and visual data. My study also follows the analytical approach described by Huckin (1997) in which details are framed into a coherent whole using various techniques which are outlined in the methodology chapter. I have consciously selected techniques that I will use to analyse my data. Qualitative use of Huckin's (1997) CDA protocol and the ideas of Fairclough (2000), enables me to investigate the ideologically gendered positioning which is embedded in the Business Studies texts.

Lastly, the sampling for this research is purposive, meaning that I specially selected the textbooks to be included in my sample on the basis of their "typicality or possession of the particular characteristics being sought" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Analysis centres on two Grade 10 Business Studies learner's textbooks, and in particular on chapters in the books that deal with entrepreneurial education. My choice was also determined by the fact that the two textbooks are widely used in the cluster area in which the research site is located and have currently been adopted as standard textbooks nationally.

## **1.6 Structure of the dissertation**

The structure of the dissertation is as follows:

Chapter 2 provides a review and analysis of literature on gender research in textbooks and on the conceptual framework employed. I begin with the definition and origins of textbook research, I then review related literature that underpins this study, and I conclude with an outline of the conceptual framework used in the study according to which a distinction is made between sex and gender and explanations are proposed for the universal inequality between men and women. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the gap in the literature that gives relevance to my study.

Chapter 3 outlines the research design, methodology and method for the study, and explains why CDA is my methodology of choice. The chapter begins with a discussion of the theoretical underpinnings of the design and methodology and goes on to detail issues of sampling, ethics and trustworthiness.

Chapter 4 presents, interprets and analyses the data in textbooks. The themes emerging from the analysis are then discussed.

In Chapter 5 the results are discussed with reference to the conceptual framework and related literature deliberated in Chapter Two.



Chapter 5 also presents conclusions that emerge from the study on the way gender is represented in contemporary Grade 10 Business Management textbooks in South Africa, followed by recommendations on how to address gender equity in textbooks intended for both boys and girls.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

This introductory chapter has outlined the purpose and rationale behind this study, and gives a preliminary indication of its research design and methodology. The next chapter presents a review of relevant literature and outlines the conceptual framework that guides this study.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the literature relevant to my study and the conceptual framework that underpins it. McMillan and Schumacher (2001) define a literature review as a critique of the status of knowledge on a carefully defined topic. The purpose of a literature review is thus to set out the body of knowledge which already exists in relation to a given topic. This literature review revealed that most studies on gender representation in Business Studies textbooks have been conducted overseas, with only a few addressing the South African context. The paucity of research on the situation in South Africa prompted this study. Literature relevant to the topic was searched, with the assistance of the librarians at University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). The existing literature is outlined according to the following themes:

- What is a textbook?
- The origins of textbook research
- Gender as a phenomenon for textbook research
- Studies on the representation of gender in school textbooks:
  - Firstness of gender noun/pronoun
  - The portrayal of occupational roles
  - The portrayal of personality traits of textbook characters
  - The depiction of leadership positions to characters
  - The association of characters with technology by gender

#### **2.2 What is a textbook?**

The textbook is a learning instrument usually employed in schools and other institutions to support a programme of instruction. It identifies the topics and orders them in a way that students are intended to follow in their exploration of the material. It also attempts to specify how classroom lessons can be structured with suitable exercises and activities. It is thus a key item of reading material, prepared for learners and specifically intended for their use. In the curriculum model, textbooks are regarded as the potentially implemented curriculum, the link between aims and reality (Schmidt, McKnight, Valverde, Houang, & Wiley, 1997; Valverde, Bianchi, Wolfe, Schmidt, & Houang, 2002). Textbooks lie at the core of an educational enterprise, offering students “a rich array of new and potentially

interesting facts, and open the door to a world of fantastic experience” (Chambliss & Calfee, 1998, p. 7). Textbooks are regarded as authentic sources of the knowledge that can be imparted in the classroom as intended by the curriculum. As described by De Castell, Luke & Luke (1989, p. vii), textbooks are “an officially sanctioned, authorised version of human knowledge and culture”. In line with the Revised National Curriculum Statement, textbooks aim to develop “knowledge, skills and values” (DoE, 2003, p. 1). Textbooks thus fulfil a crucial role in education and are prime vehicles for conveying scientific knowledge to students through ideas, information, explanation, argumentation, and persuasion (Muspratt, 2005). Their significance was underlined at a 2002 UNESCO meeting (UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 12–13 December 2002) where textbooks were characterised as explicit manifestations of both national education philosophy and national political orientation (UNESCO, 2002).

Crucial as textbooks may be for the instructional materials they provide, questions are nonetheless raised about their neutrality. Apple and Christian-Smith argue strongly that

texts are not simply “delivery systems” of “facts”. They are ... the result of political, economic and cultural activities, battles, and compromises. They are conceived, designed, and authored by people with real interest. They are published within the political and economic constraints of markets, resources and power. (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991, p. 3)

The implication here is that imperative issues are at stake in the textbook sector and as such textbooks do not really deserve their reputation as impartial tools that simply teach students facts and skills. Nor should it be assumed that they manifest gender neutrality.

Apple (1979; 1986) argues in addition that school textbooks – in the messages they portray as well as in their production, distribution and use – express the unequal social and economic relations and agendas common to the wider society in which they are located. Therefore, since textbooks are a key resource used in schools, they may well, to whatever degree, serve the purpose that French Marxist Louis Althusser sees in education, where what he calls *ideological state apparatuses* (ISAs) within society legitimate the status quo and perpetuate the notion that inequalities between classes, genders and races are “natural” and therefore unchangeable (Merquior, 1986, p.152). Consequently the question of what content should be taught and learnt is a political one: selection of content is made on “the basis of what one considers important” (Werner, 1987, p. 91), and the power to make decisions about textbook knowledge rests in part with publishers who are influenced by evaluation, adoption and funding procedures of Ministries of Education (Werner, 1987). Because textbook content represents compromises amongst competing interests (Werner, 1987), there can be no certainty that gender equity will be reflected in textbooks. Hence the importance of reviewing textbooks to uncover the hidden, underlying assumptions and stereotypes within their content.

## 2.3 The origins of textbook research

Textbook analysis was initially called “textbook revision” when it originated in the late nineteenth century in the United States (Pratt, 1984) and Europe (Schissler, 1989). Textbooks were revised because educationalists recognised how historical images were manipulated for nationalistic purposes. In 1922 the League of the Nations organised an International Committee for Intellectual Co-operation, which considered how textbooks (history textbooks in particular) could be improved so as to advance international understanding and combat international conflict (Auerbach, 1965). This led in turn to the “Casares Resolution”, adopted by the League of the Nations in 1926, which recommended the exchange of textbooks between countries. Textbook research in Europe was prompted by an attempt to “calm down the conflicts between the powerful in Europe which led to the Great War” (Pingel, 1998, p. 38).

In 1949, after the Second World War, British Prime Minister Attlee hosted a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) conference in London which sought to reduce political conflict by establishing a new foundation for co-operation as a political goal (Auerbach, 1965). This led to the publication by UNESCO of a guide for evaluating textbooks by looking at accuracy, fairness, balance and world-mindedness (UNESCO, 1949). State schooling systems in Europe were reconceived as systems in which curricular and textbooks were to be active contributors to the development of modern democracy (Johnsen, 1997). This trend continued into the sixties, seventies and eighties in the Western world where a global perspective was promoted in curricula and textbooks. The International Textbook Research Network, established in 1992 at the Georg Eckhart Institute in Germany, has undertaken a number of projects on human rights and identity construction in textbooks which have contributed significantly to improvement of textbooks and their related content.

Although textbook research has led to considerable changes in curricula and textbooks, Hohne (2003) argues that a major deficit in textbook research is that it lacks proper guidelines and theoretical underpinnings according to which textbooks are identified as “objects” of research. Seeking to meet this objection Pingel (1999) provided structured guidelines for textbook analysts, with detailed methodologies and stages which may be used as an analytical instrument. Nicholls (2003) contends that the methods used do not provide the researcher with the necessary methodological skills to analyse textbooks, while Johnsen (1997) asserts that although there are internationally recognised technical processes for the evaluation, development and production of textbooks (see for example UNESCO), no compatible theoretical systems have been established for textbook analysis as a field of research with status as a separate discipline. The present study therefore aims to make a contribution in this direction.

## 2.4 Gender as a phenomenon for textbook research

Analysis of concepts such as *woman*, *gender relations*, *sexism*, and *sexual or gender stereotypes* in textbooks, began in the 1960s and 1970s in Europe and Canada (Pingel, 1999). Pingel (2008, p. 12) comments that textbooks were reviewed because they served as “informants” or “constructors” of minds in relation to “sexual roles” or “gender identities”. Such reviews were initiated by female academics and female activists in “condemnation of the differentiated education of girls and boys and the sexist bias in education” (Pingel, 2008, p. 12). This mark of origin permeated research and intervention into sexual stereotyping in school textbooks in European countries. According to Cameron (1998), the women’s movement in the 1960s prompted studies on women’s role in linguistic settings and paved the way for content analysis of foreign language textbooks during the 1970s and 1980s that illustrated how women were excluded or subordinated in these materials (Sunderland Rahim, Cowley, Leontzakou, & Shattuck, 2001). In the late 1970s activism on the part of women’s movements in Brazil lead to research on “how to overcome differentiated education for males and females at school and the displaying of sexual stereotypes in the school curriculum and textbooks”. The research took serious issue with co-educational schooling, which it criticised as falling far short of the ideal of an egalitarian education for males and females (Nielsen, 2007). U’Ren (1971) arrived at a similar overview:

The education of women reflects the role that society expects them to perform. Our society teaches men and not women that they must achieve progress and create. This deference to men is particularly evident in the school books used by the children in primary schools. (p. 318)

The Brazilian feminist Mello (1975, p. 142) in a critique of sexual stereotyping in schools, pointed out how gender bias is manifested in textbooks:

The school itself is not responsible for cultural stereotypes: still, it functions as a socialization agency and strengthens them [...] school ideology is far from being in the forefront as far as sexual roles are concerned. The textbooks used by teachers generally portray models of traditional sexual roles.

Taking a lead from studies by Zimet (1968) and Mello (1975), the Council of Europe (1996) conducted a survey that involved the examination of 900 textbooks in use in Europe, and concluded that gender partiality and bias were generally unconscious. The Council recommended that teachers and textbook writers correct these tendencies by attending to use of language and vocabulary, and reviewing teaching methods. An earlier report by Osler (1994, pp. 221–222) on a history textbook study in Britain revealed, among other things, that the most balanced textbook contained twice as many images of men as of women. In recent decades, the issue of sexual stereotyping or gender bias in school textbooks has penetrated academic literature, the feminist agenda and, as from the 1980s, national, state and municipal agendas. One example is the National Textbook Program (PNLD) in

Brazil, which in 2007 bought 102.5 million books produced by private publishing houses and distributed them free of charge to public and community schools (Nielsen, 2007).

In South Africa the first systematic study was done by Franz Auerbach, who published a book in 1965 called “Power and Prejudice of South African Education: an enquiry into history textbooks and syllabuses in the Transvaal high schools of South Africa” (Auerbach, 1965). The objective of the study was to establish whether textbooks were being used to divide the people in South Africa. Drawing on the UNESCO guidelines on textbook analysis (Auerbach, 1965), Auerbach found that education in the Transvaal (and thus implicitly in South Africa more broadly) was being used to perpetuate societal divisions. Walshe (1985, 748) in the review of his book offers a “meticulous analysis of South African schools textbooks”. His book illustrated the omission, distortion and stereotype within textbooks and policy in South Africa.

In South Africa, authors seem however to be caught up in a political struggle, either personally or as observers, so that questions of how children learn and what it takes to write a good textbook become obscured in the political conflict. Van Eeden (1997, 98), a professor in humanities at the North West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa documents numerous discussions and meetings to reinterpret, innovate and revitalise syllabi, “some of which are regarded as quite controversial, emotional and belonging to the so-called apartheid past”. This reflects the political conflict that precludes informed and logical analysis by educationalist of syllabi and textbooks. Weldon (2005, 3), a researcher working in the Western Cape Department of Education, argues that the majority of educators, including policy makers and advisers on textbooks, resist change. Ferro (1981) argues that such resistance severely affects the processing of the hurtful apartheid past and the interests of students and teachers in South Africa. As a result studies about women/gender relations in textbooks in South Africa have added little value to education, just as education has added little value to studies on women/gender (Rosemberg, 2001). This study therefore hopes to contribute to a deeper understanding of the gender representation in school textbooks, thereby adding value to gender studies and textbooks.

## **2.5 Previous studies on the representation of gender in school textbooks**

The manner in which gender has been represented in school instructional material, including textbooks, has been a concern for the last 15 years. Documented findings from different studies across various disciplines have clearly indicated (as will be shown) that the two genders have been treated quite differently. This section will review literature with the hope of gaining a historical perspective on this issue of gender representation in school textbooks. As this is a neglected topic in South Africa,

the study relied heavily on the research done by various American and European academics. The literature is organised thematically.

### **2.5.1 Firstness of male noun/pronoun**

One of the most widely examined manifestations of sexist language is omission (Miller and Swift 1976). According to Foucault (2000), omission refers to a process whereby sounds or words are left out of spoken words or phrases, either consciously or unconsciously. As early as the 16th Century, it was argued that males should be mentioned before females: “let us keep a natural order and set the man before the woman for manners Sake” (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003, p. 34), for “The Masculine gender is more worthy than the Feminine” (Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 2003, p. 34). This ordering, reflecting a widespread perception of male supremacy, has been conventionalized and not questioned until relatively recently.

The analysis of gender firstness in textbooks was first undertaken by Hartman and Judd (1978) in an investigation of several textbooks published over a period of twelve years. The authors proposed that many texts presented needlessly stereotyped portrayals of men and women, whether through one-sided role allocation, overt put-downs, or simple omissions (Hartman & Judd, 1978, p. 384). Hartman and Judd investigated the order of mentioning of two nouns paired for sex, such as Mr. and Mrs., brother and sister, and husband and wife, and discovered that (except in the case of “ladies and gentlemen”) the masculine word always came first. They argue that this automatic ordering reinforces the second-place status of women.

Five years later Porreca (1984) completed a study adopting a similar criterion in an attempt to determine if change had occurred since the Hartman and Judd analysis. In his quantitative investigation in which 15 textbooks were evaluated, focusing on female visibility and firstness in sentences, the findings confirmed those of Hartman and Judd and indicated that sexism in EFL textbooks was still a problem. Women were mentioned half as often as men, firstness for men was three times as prevalent as female firstness, and women were less visible in occupational roles (Porreca, 1984). Porreca also noted that when two gender-specific nouns or pronouns appear as a pair in a text, like mother and father or he/she, the one appearing in the first position can be interpreted as having a higher status. This, she maintained, reinforces the stereotypical notion of who in society is regarded as more worthy and important.

More recently, Ansary and Babii (2003) explored firstness in current ESL/EFL textbooks. They performed two types of analyses (quantitative and qualitative) to examine the manifestations of sexist language in two textbooks (Right Path to English I and II) which were locally designed to cater for and respond to the English language needs of Iranian students at guidance schools. They found that “women suffered most obviously from a second-place status” (Ansary & Babii, 2003, p. 69).

Mineshima (2008) examined all the instances in a Grade 6 social studies textbook in which the two genders were mentioned together and checked which appeared first. The findings revealed that the masculine noun tended to come first (e.g., Ben and Mary, Mr and Mrs Son's bedroom, successful sportsmen and sportswomen, brothers and sisters). The male-first phenomenon was also found in form filling: for titles, Mr always came before Mrs, Miss and Ms; for sex, males always came before females in the textbook. A total of 52 instances were found of male firstness, compared to only six of female firstness, from which Mineshima concluded that males are regarded as superior and more important in society than females.

Similarly, Lee and Collins (2008) discovered a strong tendency for men to be mentioned first in single phrases in Hong Kong primary English textbooks where two nouns were paired for sex. In the whole series of textbooks the researchers found 37 instances of male firstness but only three of female firstness, in a ratio of male to female firstness of 12.3:1. In the examples which they cited there were a few of female firstness (e.g., Witchy and Didi) but the overall tendency was for males in the pairing of names (e.g., Harry and Holly), possessive nouns (e.g., Harry and Holly's first day at school, Harry and Holly's birthday, etc.), subject and object pronouns (e.g., He is or She is, him/her, etc.), and short phrases or sentences (e.g., Birthday boy(s) and/or girl(s), Write "He" for a boy and "She" for a girl, etc.). Lee and Collins argue that this ordering of placing the male first "reinforces the second-place status of women" and they suggest mixing the order because female learners will feel weak and unimportant in comparison to male learners and the ideology of masculine superiority will impact on a female learner's self-esteem.

### **2.5.2 Portrayal of occupational roles**

Occupational roles are very commonly gendered (Bem, 1993), with the traditional division of labour bestowing certain characteristics on women and others on men, based upon their roles in society. Women's tasks historically have included gestating, nursing, and caring for infants and children. These tasks make it difficult for women to perform tasks that require speed, long uninterrupted periods of time, or travel (Eagly, Wood & Diekman, 2000). The resulting stereotypes and beliefs have created gender roles for people which are "assumptions made about the characteristics of each gender, such as physical appearance, physical abilities, attitudes, interests, or occupations" (Shaw, 1998, p. 24). These gender roles develop over time and are reinforced through the media, the educational system, and social interaction.

The issue of sex treatment in textbooks has received considerable attention (Porreca, 1984; Peterson & Kroner, 1992; Reese, 1994; Ansary & Babii, 2003). Since the 1970s, researchers worldwide have shown interest in the study of gender bias of occupational roles in educational materials. Textbook studies have found widespread gender stereotyping, with males occupying a wider range of social and



occupational roles and women depicted mainly in domestic and nurturing domains. Frasher and Walker (1972) analysed the main characters in textbooks by counting the number of male adult occupations versus female adult occupations. Adult males were observed in 58 different occupations, whereas adult females were observed in just 11 occupations. Similarly Arnold-Gerrity (1978) performed a content analysis of a 1976 series of primary reading textbooks, examining the visibility of female characters. She found that in the first four textbooks, for Grades 1 and 2, men were portrayed in four times as many paying occupations as women and that the females were most frequently portrayed in a housewife/mother capacity, occupied with household tasks and serving their children and husband. Gerrity (1978) concluded in his study that textbook knowledge portrayed issues of gender bias and inequity in terms of occupational roles of men and women. Taking this point further, Cincotta (1978) confirmed that males and females were usually portrayed with typical male and female activities and having different interests. They were also represented by stereotypically different characters or personality traits and occupational roles. Cincotta advocated that textbooks should be carefully examined as they fail to educate children on issues of gender inclusivity.

In the study of TESOL textbooks, Hartman and Judd (1978) examined the images of women and men and the stereotyped roles for females and males. For each category, they found that the ESL materials reflected sexist attitudes and values. Women were underrepresented in the textbooks; the worst ratio of males to females was 73 % to 27 %. Occupational roles for women were traditional and limited, with a very small number of token professionals, whereas occupations for men showed much wider variety. Likewise in the primary Chinese language textbooks in Hong Kong, a higher proportion of female characters than males are found in household settings and portrayed as doing different kinds of housework, whereas male characters are more likely to be portrayed in workplace settings and are always in a more senior position than females (Law & Chan, 2004). Stern (1976) conducted a review of the foreign language textbooks published between 1970 and 1974 and found that in this period women were usually excluded, and in the rare cases where they were included, they were only assigned restricted roles as stewardesses, wives and housewives.

In contrast, O'Kelly (1983), in a study of the representation of gender in art history textbooks, found that although the textbooks under analysis portrayed women and men in traditional stereotypical occupations the ratio of male to female portrayal in stereotypical occupational roles was significantly reduced. She suggested that this decrease could be as a result of textbook screening policies and gender-inclusive ideologies on the part of the author, and also that the time frame of the textbooks (from 1970 to 1980) favoured a higher degree of gender inclusivity. Porreca (1984) and Schmitz (1984) found similar results. They both concluded that although women continued to be depicted in lower positions than men, overall there was an increased depiction of females occupying traditionally male roles in textbooks.

Confirming increased portrayal of women in a variety of occupations, Hitchcock and Tompkins (1987) found that women's occupational roles in reading textbooks from 1984–1986, compared to those from an earlier study of 1970, increased favourably. Women were represented in many more occupations than previously; in the period 1981 to 1986, women were shown in 27 different occupations, compared to just 11 different occupations for women in the Frasher and Walker (1972) study. In reading textbooks in use in 1986, males were shown in 136 careers, as against 90 careers for women (Purcell & Stewart, 1990). Sleeter and Grant (1991) found that women were depicted in traditional and non-traditional roles in social studies textbooks, but that men were rarely pictured in non-traditional roles for males.

Gupta and Lee (1989) found however that the roles of women portrayed in Singaporean primary English textbooks were mostly in the nurturing professions such as teaching. The situation in Hong Kong textbooks is similar: in Hong Kong English textbooks over the two decades under study by Lee and Collins (2008) women still occupied female positions such as secretary, receptionist, typist, etc. Researchers in the 1990s continued to find that men were depicted in a wider range of occupational roles than women. A study by Cerezal (1991) of content analysis relating to character in English textbooks in Spain found that in most cases males appeared superior, had superior occupations and played the protagonist's role. In Germany, Hellinger (1980) found that textbook writers tended to underestimate the role of women and girls in their textbooks.

A study by Mattu and Hussain of textbooks from Pakistan revealed a disjuncture between public statements on women's rights and patriarchal reflections of masculinity and femininity, with a "false division of space into the domestic, which is associated with women, and the public which is thought to belong solely to men" (Mattu & Hussain 2004, p. 92). The authors concluded that the message conveyed by these texts is that women's only legitimate role is in performing household tasks and caring for the family. They also point to the way in which many stories portray males as active and rational, while females are portrayed as passive and irrational, and they emphasise that such stereotypical representation of masculinity and femininity has negative effects for both boys and girls. A UNESCO study of research on textbooks from Swaziland, Costa Rica, Egypt, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Yemen and Zambia, over the period 1990–2006, also highlights consistent gender stereotyping and under-representation of girls in relation to boys (UNESCO, 2006).

The issue of gender and the economy has become increasingly important. The *Journal of Economic Education* publishes articles on factors that influence economic issues such as the labour market and the status of women and minorities. In a study on how gender-related issues were treated, Feiner and Morgan (1987) examined 21 introductory economics textbooks over a ten year period from 1974 to 1984 and found that the quantity and quality of the coverage of issues concerning the economic status of women were not encouraging. Sixteen of the 21 introductory economic textbooks were

subsequently re-examined by Feiner (1993) in terms of their treatment of the same issue of gender and the economy, using a set of guidelines for avoiding gender bias in economic discourse set in place by the Committee for Race and Gender in Economics that was formed in 1987 and chaired by Feiner. What was concerning about the later findings was that some textbooks either avoided discussing the occupations of women and minorities or else reproduced traditional images of women and minorities. Textbooks relied upon stereotypes to illustrate economic phenomena; for example, one textbook showed a picture of rural black women standing in an unkempt yard but used pictures of notable white males, failing to reflect the gender inclusivity of economic life in African American communities. This tendency to exclude women or minorities produces a skewed vision of the economy which Feiner noted as a concern, since a balanced treatment is provided only when authors present alternative explanations to avoid inferences not supported by data. Failing to present a wide range of explanations also narrows the alternatives presented to students, because when textbooks ignore alternatives the economic experiences of women and minorities are marginalised. Authors should also present all aspects of important information and it should be up to students to decide which positions they find most persuasive.

The representation of gender in accounting textbooks was the focus of Tietz's (2007) study. She examined the hidden curriculum and analysed the representation of gender in nineteen introductory accounting textbooks. She conducted a content analysis of the pictures, stories and homework items using a qualitative and quantitative methodology. Her results revealed that the different representations of males and females in these textbooks reinforce "gender bias and gendered role stratification" which is a replication of stereotypes embedded in society. One of the concerns was that although women make up more than half of accounting graduates in the USA, they only make up for 19% of accounting business partners. Therefore promotion prospects for women are limited. According to Tietz (2007), formal laws cannot alone address the barriers of gender stereotyping, prejudice and bias.

She found that gender stereotypes are depicted through overt and implied messages in the textbooks. Due to students relying heavily on textbooks and the belief that what textbooks depict is incontestable, there is a real danger in this power to legitimise role stratification and Tietz therefore recommends that this implied, inferred curriculum needs to be exposed. This can be done by a thorough critical examination by publishers and writers of the implicit communication in textbooks. A way to prevent the specific example of gender bias, according to Tietz, would be to depict male and female textbook figures in roles which are non-stereotypical thus raising students' awareness of gender-related issues and equity. Otherwise the reinforced traditional gender stereotyping and prejudice can inhibit the fulfilment of the potential of all individuals in society.

An analysis by Brickhill, Hoppers and Pehrsson (1996) of gender issues in texts from Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwean found that gender stereotyping is most pronounced among adults, while children were often shown in gender-neutral roles “with not-so-subtle undertones of boys in assertive, action-orientated roles and girls in supporting or domestic roles” (Brickhill et al.,1996, p. 21). Brickhill et al. question whether one can expect representation of gender equality “in the sense of gender-neuter (or unisex)” approaches to all roles in a context “where custom and culture still respect special and different roles for men and women in community and family” (1996, p. 11). Although Brickhill et al. caution that one cannot expect to escape differently gendered roles, the diverse reality of African men and women – which includes the role of African women in politics, as farmers and heads of households, in a variety of income-generating and professional occupations – should be represented in textbooks in southern Africa. Brickhill et al. stress the need in African contexts to address the perpetuation of stereotypes through cultural beliefs.

Since the occupational roles of men and women were first analysed in the 1970s, women have been portrayed in fewer occupational roles than men. The roles of both women and men have generally followed a traditional division of labour schema, with women depicted as nurses, teachers, and homemakers, while men have been depicted in a wide range of occupations. The number of occupational roles in which women have been depicted in textbooks has expanded over time, but improvement is still needed.

### **2.5.3 Stereotypical personality traits in textbook characters**

People differ in the degree to which they possess personality traits stereotyped by gender. Among the researchers who have considered the portrayal of personality traits in examining gender and sexism in school textbooks are Biraimah (1988), Charlott (1974), Clarkson (1993), Davies (1995). Deliyanni-Koumutzi (1984), Gupta and Yin-Lee ( 1990), Khoza (1994), Michel (1986), Obura (1991), Sprague (1999), Sugino ( 1998) and Witt (1997). These researchers have reviewed the literature using secondary data that involved textbooks from various countries covering a range of subjects. Other researchers have examined personality traits in one or several subjects in a single country at a given level of education (Clarkson, 1993, Deliyanni Koumutzi, 1984, Witt, 1997)

Michel (1986) looked at the portrayal of personality traits in 19 Arabic textbooks currently in use in seven Arab states (Egypt, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia and Yemen). The findings indicated that women were still presented according to the traditional image of being dependent on men for economic welfare and status (Michel, 1986). Women and girls were depicted as weak, submissive, emotional and dependent. According to UNESCO, a study in France yielded similar results with men portrayed as strong and muscular and women depicted first and foremost as mothers confined to child-raising. Michel (1986, p. 27) contended that the vast majority of children’s story books ignored

active women. Child-raising was the only activity in which women were portrayed, while men were portrayed in strenuous and physical, well-paying occupations.

In a Peruvian study (Michel 1986, p. 29) personality traits were specifically demarcated according to gender and were strongly stereotyped. Men were portrayed as brave, strong, intelligent, and patriotic and infused with a spirit of fellowship. Women on the other hand were depicted as obedient and devoted to caring for others. Correspondingly in the UNESCO study for Zambia the men were shown to be strong, brave, intelligent, calm, and assertive compared to women who were easily cheated, exploited and beaten by men. Women were followers and had to obey the men (Biraimah, 1988).

The findings by Gupta and Yin-Lee (1990) in relation to the association of personality traits with characters in textbooks showed an imbalance between masculine and feminine traits. Males tended to speak more than females and males also tended to show more control over particular situations than females. The study also showed the difference between female and male authors in depicting traits. Female authors were more likely to write characters that possessed a balance of masculine and feminine traits. Male authors wrote exclusively about males and masculine experiences and rarely portrayed males as androgynous. Commenting on this bias in textbooks, Sprague (1999) states that textbook authors play an integral role in the maintenance of specific gender personality; they unknowingly pass on knowledge that can contain hidden concepts perpetuated by specific gender ideologies, reinforcing gender bias.

The findings by Obura (1991) in Kenyan textbooks for Kiswahili, Science, English and other African vernacular languages echo the findings of Gupta and Yin-Lee (1990). Obura (1991) indicated gender stereotypes of personality traits in her analysis of 24 textbooks. In these textbooks she found that the authors often propagated ideologies of gendered personality that maintained the status quo of men as more active and forthright than women. Traditional feminine and masculine personality traits were clearly demarcated. While men were seen as positive, strong and dynamic, women were perceived as negative, weak and passive. In a similar analysis by Khoza (1994) on the portrayal of gender roles in middle school music textbooks men were illustrated as problem solvers who took leadership roles and girls were portrayed as subservient beings.

The Commonwealth study (Davies, 1995) on the portrayal of gender bias in school textbooks in countries from Asia, Africa, Caribbean and Australia also addressed the depiction of personality traits of characters in textbooks analysed. The study found that males were depicted as assertive, authoritarian, competent and strong whereas women were depicted as worried, subtle, emotional and stressed. Qualities of being unkind, threatening and criminal were associated with males. Davis raised concerns that the pegging of a gendered personality may have an adverse effect on a learner's development when students begin to accept and enact a gendered personality.

The Korea Working Women (1997) study on the portrayal of gender roles in textbooks showed that men were portrayed as active and willing to assume leadership roles while women were passive and emotional. The mother was the housewife who stayed at home, while the father was presented as the head of the family who has a job and participated in a broader society. Clarkson (1997) argues that this stereotypical personality trait needs to be addressed by textbook authors. Kabira and Masinjila (1997) concur with Clarkson in stating that through the usage of textbooks boys have been encouraged to view a wider range of possibilities for themselves, while girls have been directed to a narrower range of possibilities, almost all centred on obedience and a domestic context. This outcome has hindered the development of learners' critical and emotional abilities to create awareness of gender bias and gender stereotyping portrayals in textbooks (Kabira & Masinjila, 1997).

#### **2.5.4 Depiction of leadership positions**

According to Kabira and Masinjila (1997) men have traditionally been regarded as having more power and status than women and this dominance has in turn influenced the gendered depiction of male and female roles in school textbooks. Heshusius-Gilsdorf and Gilsdorf (1975) studied the gender content of career materials provided for high school students. Looking at the illustrations of various people in various jobs and the accompanying job descriptions they found that men were shown in top management jobs more than four times more often than women. If a man and a woman were in the same picture, the male was typically shown as directing the woman, reinforcing the ideology of "the man being the leader – both at home and work" (1975, p. 12).

A study by O'Kelly (1983) of the representation of gender in three major art history textbooks yielded similar findings. Across all time periods, men were depicted in traditionally masculine, public settings as powerful managers, CEOs and top decision makers, whereas women were depicted in traditionally feminine, private settings. O'Kelly argued the textbook authors portrayed women in this way so that they would accept this traditional role of being subservient to male leadership, and that women were automatically inclined to be subordinate, never questioning the male character. Similarly, Frasher and Walker (1972) found that girls were shown more frequently than boys as needing help and protection, giving up easily, and lacking competence. Depictions of boys reflected leadership and independence while female characters were portrayed in destitute positions – either as disabled or in a poverty scenario. Frasher and Walker argued that depicting females in such destitute positions lowered the self-esteem of women, giving them less hope of achieving leadership positions.

Hahn and Blankenship (1983) found that college economics textbooks pictured many more men than women in leadership positions. The overall ratio of men to women in leadership positions was about two to one, but the ratio of independently pictured men to independently pictured women was almost three to one. Stuck and Ruhe (1995) analysed international business cases in 19 business textbooks

published mainly between 1988 and 1991 and found that less than 3% of the cases featured women in prominent, power-possessing roles (beyond secretary or clerk).

In a study by Pomerence, Varner & Mallar (1996) which analysed photographs of women and men in business communications textbooks published over a 30-year period, men were depicted as the superior or dominant person far more frequently than females which, the researchers argued, helped to maintain the glass ceiling faced by women in the workforce. Helfat (2006) argued that the glass ceiling continues to operate in textbooks, as evidenced by the low percentages of women illustrated in top executive positions. By being excluded from the higher echelons in business textbooks, women are prevented from equally participating in society.

Ferguson (2008) argues that the glass ceiling is constructed and reinforced in textbooks at least partially via the stereotypes and beliefs about women and men. Eliminating the glass ceiling will therefore involve changing those beliefs and stereotypes on the part of both the textbook authors and the textbook users (the learners). Praxton & Kunovich (2005) argues that unless textbook authors eliminate the glass ceiling effect, male students will continue to be encouraged to undertake a wider range of leadership occupations while female students will receive the message that they have responsibility for the private sphere and there are a fewer variety of leadership occupations available from which they can choose.

A study by Thomson and Otsuji (2008) of gender issues in business Japanese textbooks found that the textbooks present a stereotypical and exaggerated version of social practices of the Japanese business community, based on idealised native-Japanese norms. Female characters in the textbooks had less access to managerial positions and fewer opportunities to participate in business than was actually the case in reality. The study also highlighted the invisibility of non-Japanese female characters in the textbooks. Female students using the textbooks were not provided with role models or spaces to acculturate into. Similar studies on gender roles in textbooks in Hungary (Czachesz, Lesznyák & Molnár, 1996; Thun, 2001) showed that textbooks represent the experiences of men and boys, which are considered as the norm, while the experiences, ways of thinking and knowledge of girls mean something “different”.

### **2.5.5 Gendered associations with technology**

Studies conducted during the 1990s began to find diminishing gender bias in textbooks. Jones et al. (1997), for example, in their study of three EFL textbooks of the time, found that textbook authors were increasingly aware of the implications of such bias. Plumm (2008) warns however that despite hopes of dwindling sexism with the emergence of technology in the area of instruction, gender-neutral language is still not fully established in the classroom because teachers tend to attribute “technology-related activity to boys more so than to girls” (p.13). In another recent study, Amare (2007) reports

how, as an English teacher, working on the assumption that textbooks, being up-to-date, would provide her learners with non-sexist account of language, she encouraged them to refer to such sources, only to find that “a detailed analysis of the exercises and example sentences in textbooks identified gender bias in relation to technology against women” (p.164). Arguing that more needs to be done in textbooks to ensure gender equity in relation to technology, she makes some useful recommendations for the revision of such materials and mentions some insightful implications.

Whitcomb (1999) conducted a study about the presentation of gender in textbooks. The focus of the study was core subject textbooks at the late elementary level on the basis that textbooks could have a tremendous influence on the formulation of social assumptions and the impressionability of youth at that age. Content analysis, through assessment of language, content focus, verbal content and pictorial content, was used to determine if gender bias was still prevalent. Despite recommendations and guidelines that were available for gender-fair writing, the analysis indicated that bias against girls and women was still present in the textbooks, specifically in relation to technology. Women were depicted as backward, afraid and confused about technological trends. Moreover, the textbook authors assumed that due to the nature of womanhood, time was a factor that hindered women from keeping abreast with technological demands. Whitcomb argued that because women have reproductive duties this could be a reason why they lag behind in technological advancement.

The aim of a Kenyan study by Obura (1991, p. 6) was “to examine the messages on the role of girls and women in society passed on to girls through school textbooks”. Obura argued that in a context where books are scarce and opportunities to engage with mass media are limited, the textbook operates as “Africa’s mass medium for children” (1991, p. 10) and is thus a powerful source of authority. Obura’s study examined textbooks across a range of curriculum areas including Maths, Science, Agriculture, Social Science, and found consistent gender bias across all subjects. In relation to science and technology, the study focused on the extent to which textbooks reinforced the alienation of females from science and technology. The results revealed that

as the textbooks are addressed to higher classes, masculine context, masculine words and masculine illustrations multiply . . . men are associated with modernity and development while women are associated with domesticity and low technology. (1991, p. 42)

Ozdogru, Cetinkaya and Dogan (2002) studied the representation of gender roles in Turkish elementary school textbooks. Turkey, like other patriarchal societies, traditionally values male dominance. In the study, depictions of gender in two Turkish elementary school textbooks were investigated using content analysis. Analysis of Turkish and Life Science textbooks for 3rd grades showed that there were important gender differences in relation to technology, where men were depicted as more knowledgeable and experienced. In the worst stereotypical finding on the use of



technology portrayed in the Turkish textbooks the researchers found an overall male to female ratio of 34:2 in depicted use of technological equipment. The results highlighted important directions for educational administrators and policy makers to follow in the preparation and use of educational material.

Sydney (2004) examined how gender roles were represented in 40 textbooks covering six subjects taught in Tanzanian government primary schools and found no portrayal in any of the 40 textbooks of women as users of specialised technological equipment. Women were mainly portrayed as doing domestic chores and therefore having little or no time to understand and learn how to use technological equipment. The underlying assumption seemed to be that women were not interested in the field of technology. Sydney argued that the mechanisms to eliminate gender stereotyping in textbooks were inadequate as the emphasis was on producing textbooks that matched the official curriculum.

Examining the portrayal of gender images in primary school English textbooks published by Kenya Literature Bureau, Kobira (2009) found instances where females were portrayed as weak or incompetent in the use of technology, both at home and at work. Women were illustrated doing clerically orientated jobs, such as filing of documents, that effectively implied that females were lagging behind as far as technological advancement is concerned. The study showed how sexist language and pictorial depictions in textbooks have content that promotes sexist assumptions concerning gender roles. As a whole, the language, pictures and examples in the Kenyan textbooks support patriarchy.

## **2.6 Implications of the literature review**

In summary, gender representation in textbooks has been analysed across a number of disciplines, including reading, art history, economics, psychology, foreign languages and science, with evidence of consistent differentiation between depictions of males and depictions of females. Most of the studies found that males are portrayed positively while females are portrayed negatively. The studies also found that school textbooks displayed sexism by featuring males more often in both written texts and illustrations.

Importantly, regarding gender representation in business, marketing and economics textbooks, desktop and database search has revealed evidence of limited research. This gives relevance to my study as its focus is on addressing this gap. Moreover, to my knowledge, no studies have been conducted in South Africa on the representation of gender in Business Studies textbooks within the FET band. This gives me further opportunity to address this gap in my study. Additionally, prior studies have mainly analysed the gender representation in textbooks and then stopped after the

description of the findings. This study continues after the initial analysis to make recommendations for revising Business Studies textbooks to help to influence social change.

## **2.6.1 Conceptual framework**

### **2.6.1.1 Introduction**

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), “A conceptual framework explains, either graphically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied, the key factors, constructs or variables and the presumed relationships among them” (p. 18). In a similar manner this section focuses on concepts that elucidate gender as a social construct. This section begins by discussing the sex–gender distinction along with various explanations that have been given for the universal inequality between men and women. Other related concepts such as cultural capital, hegemony, ideology, patriarchy, gender as a performance, power and discourse have been included in the discussion to illustrate how gender is a social construct and how inequalities between men and women are acted out in society.

### **2.6.1.2 Gender as a social construct**

According to McMahon (1997), social constructionists view learning as a social process. Learning does not take place only within an individual, nor is it a passive development of behaviours that are shaped within external forces. Meaningful learning occurs when individuals are engaged in social learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) assert that learning occurs within social communities of practice whose members engage in collective learning. Similarly, gender is a social process; knowledge is constructed uniquely and individually in multiple ways, through a variety experiences and contexts. Kessler and Mckenna (1978) argue for the notion of gender as a social construct:

What does it mean to be a woman or a man? It initially begins with where your head is, with your own identity, then internalising and reflecting those things that are consistent with that identity, and acting upon the world in ways that are consistent with those identifications ....Being a woman is pretty much as I thought it would be. (Kessler & Mckenna, 1978, pp. 174 and 178)

Gender cannot therefore be automatically assumed from attention to sexual difference (Carter & Steiner, 2004). While sex is fixed, gender and gendered behaviour can succumb to social change via social engineering (Dunphy, 2000). Seen as a social construction, gender impacts on upbringing, social conditioning, social relations and personal choice. Norms of masculinity and femininity which are reproduced and regulated by society may justify inequalities and reinforce power structures and power relations. A social constructionist approach to viewing and understanding gender therefore includes a focus on the way gender constructions involve power relations whereby one gender, or gender norm, may be constructed as more preferable and powerful than the other (Dunphy, 2000).

Sex and gender are very important aspects of our personal identity – fundamental to the way we perceive both ourselves and others (Paechter, 1998). Although gender is usually ascribed to babies on the basis of perceived anatomical distinction, assumptions of a child’s future are more to do with social and cultural values than with the direct consequences of such bodily features (Paechter, 1998). Sex refers to the biological and physiological differences between male and female (Russo & Green, 1993). The term *sex* signifies physical differentiation between the biological male and the biological female, and most people are born (except for a few ambiguous cases) as one sex or another (Minas, 1993). Hence, when an infant is born, the infant comes to be labelled “boy” or “girl” depending on their sex (Russo & Green, 1993). It has however been argued that having been born into one sex or another, individuals are then socialised according to specific gender expectations and roles (Martin, 1989). Biological males learn to take on masculine roles. They are socialised to think and act in masculine ways. Biological females learn to take on feminine roles. They are socialised to think and behave in feminine ways (Martin, 1989). Connell (2000) contends that one needs to look beyond biological differences to examine the social domain and social practice.

Margaret Mead, an American anthropologist, was one of the first to empirically ground the distinction between the biological and social characteristics of men and women. She did this through her study of the conceptions of masculinity and femininity among three societies in the New Guinea Islands (Mead, 1935). On the basis of this study, she argued that the Western equation between masculinity and aggression on the one hand and femininity and nurturance on the other is but one among a number of possible permutations of traits which have no intrinsic relation with biological sex. Between them, the three non-Western societies studied by Mead displayed other possible combinations of these variables. Mead’s study, though contestable on several grounds, contributed significantly to the shaping of the concept of gender in the latter half of the twentieth century (Connell, 2000).

Subsequent to the work done by Mead, another a crude precursor of the concept of gender was the functionalist notion of “sex role”, which had its origins in the work of Emile Durkheim (1958) and suggested that men and women are socialised into sex-specific roles: namely, “instrumental” roles and “expressive” roles (Hacker, 2003, p. 26). The instrumental role was taken by the man, who was expected to maintain the physical integrity of the family by providing food and shelter and linking the family to the world outside the home. The woman took the expressive role; she was expected to cement relationships and provide emotional support and nurturing activities that ensure the household runs smoothly (Hacker, 2003). These roles were regarded as the basis of a complementary relation between men and women, which, along with the sexual division of labour, contributed to a stable social order. Scholars have questioned the focus of this conceptualization upon “individual” men and women who are socialised into sex-specific roles. They suggest that gender is something more than roles performed by men and women, just as economy is something more than jobs performed by

individuals (Lorber 1984). Critics have also pointed out that socialisation is always a precarious achievement and that agency, interpretation and negotiation are part and parcel of the way gender identities are actually constituted (Bourdieu, 1997).

Later on, Ann Oakley's *Sex, gender and society* (1972) made the sex-gender distinction very popular in sociology. In her book, Oakley explores the term gender. For Oakley, sex is a word that refers to the biological differences between male and female: the visible differences in genitalia, the related difference in procreative function. "Gender", however, is a matter of culture; it refers to the social classification into "masculine" and "feminine" (p.18). Oakley states in her book that in Western culture women play the roles of "housewife and mother" (Oakley, 1972, p. 12), and that they are made to do so because of their biology. Western culture also believes that any effort to change the traditional roles of men and women in a society can cause damage to the social fabric of the society. Oakley concludes that this view of the roles of men and women helps to support and maintain patriarchal society (p.101).

Patriarchy literally means rule of the father in a male-dominated family. It is a social and ideological construct which considers men (who are the patriarchs) as superior to women (Barrett, 1980). Sylvia Walby, in *Theorising Patriarchy*, calls it "a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women" (Walby, 1990). Patriarchy is based on a system of power relations which are hierarchical and unequal where men control women's production, reproduction and sexuality (Walby, 1990). It imposes character stereotypes in society of masculinity and femininity which reinforce the inequitable power relations between men and women. Patriarchy is not a constant, and gender relations, which are dynamic and complex have changed, over periods of history (Mandell, 1995). The nature of control and subjugation of women varies from one society to the other as it differs due to the differences in class, caste, religion, region, ethnicity and socio-cultural practices. Heywood maintains that "Patriarchal ideas blur the distinction between sex and gender and assume that all socio-economic and political distinctions between men and women are rooted in biology or anatomy" (2003, p. 248).

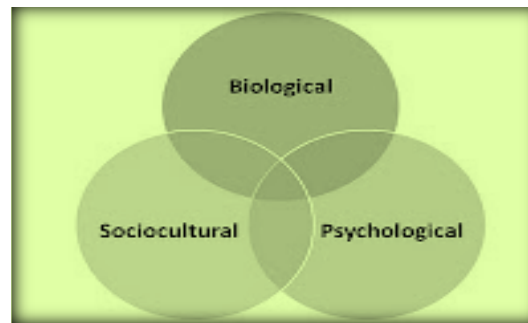
Bourdieu (1992) maintains that the patriarchal values embodied in the school curriculum create gender inequalities. Meyer (2008) concurs, adding that in school boys generally have access to more "educational privileges", or relevant cultural capital which are systematically denied to girls largely because of the ideology of patriarchy embedded in the curriculum and textbooks, especially teacher attitudes and expectations of pupils' gender roles. Connell's social theory of gender (Carrigan, Connell, & Lee, 1985; Connell, 1987, 1995, 2002a; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) further emphasises the relations of power between men and women, and also between different groups of men. It asserts that gender is structured relationally and hierarchically, and consists of multiple masculinities and femininities. Hegemonic masculinity, the most popular aspect of Connell's theory,

is defined as “the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell, 1995, p. 77). In using the term hegemony, Connell asserts that culturally constructed relations are presented to appear natural and thereby justify present social positions. There are thus prevailing beliefs which accept and perpetuate current gender relations. Central to the theory is the use of ideology, which Connell states to be an “ideology of supremacy” of men over women (Connell, 1995, p. 83)

Through a gendered ideology, a set of knowledge and values is created in the text books within complicated cultural, economic and political processes that make up the social texture prevailing in that period (Apple & Christian-Smith, 1991). Feminists have therefore challenged patriarchal knowledge, ideology, values and its practice. Despite a range of common themes within feminism, disagreements exist amongst the feminists in understanding patriarchy. Gerda (1986) observed that for various reasons there is no common understanding among feminists of the term “patriarchy” and most prefer the term “gender” and “gender oppression” (Gerda, 1986, p. 12).

The early 1970s marked a turning point in the way scholars thought about the concepts of sex and gender. Simone de Beauvoir’s (1952) influential book, *The Second Sex*, asserted that the use of the term gender “serves to reduce assumed parallels between biological and psychological sex or at least to make explicit any assumptions of such parallels” (p. 1,086). Her ideas led scholars to become more selective in their use of the terms sex and gender and to avoid framing research in ways that might hint at biological determinism (Poulin, 2007). De Beauvoir claimed that “one is not born a woman, but becomes one”. By this conceptualization de Beauvoir asserted that gender is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity somewhat constituted in time, an identity instituted through a “stylized repetition” of acts (de Beauvoir, 1952, p. 29). Significantly, it is this claim that Simone de Beauvoir cites in *The Second Sex* when she sets the stage for her claim that “woman,” and by extension, any gender, is an historical situation rather than a natural fact (de Beauvoir, 1952, p. 12).

When Beauvoir claims that “woman” is a historical idea and not a natural fact, she clearly underscores the distinction between sex, as biological facticity, and gender, as the cultural interpretation or signification of that facticity (de Beauvoir, 1952, p. 54). Since Simone de Beauvoir made the assertion that “woman” was not a biological given, but a learnt cultural production, feminism has debated the nature of, and relationship between, “gender” and “sex” (Butler, 1993). Post de Beauvoir, the understanding favoured by theorists conceptualised “sex” as the biological distinction between males and females, and “gender” as the cultural construction of sex (Butler, 1993). Feminism has used the sex/gender distinction to sever the connection between the biological category of sex and the social/cultural construction of gender.



According to de Beauvoir the biological, sociological and psychological factors of an individual are interconnected in the construction of a particular gender. De Beauvoir identifies these three variables as key indicators in the construction of gender (Author).

**Figure 2-1 Biological, sociological and psychological factors in construction of gender**

Taking this argument further Kessler and McKenna (1978), are credited as the first to reject the sex/gender distinction as a point of departure from feminist utilisation of sex and gender.

What does it mean to say that the existence of two sexes is an “irreducible fact”? ... this “irreducible fact” is a product of social interaction in everyday life and that gender in everyday life provides the basis for all scientific work on gender and sex. (Kessler & McKenna, 1978)

Kessler and McKenna (1978) rejected the distinction because, they argued, it is used with biological definitions that promoted only two types of sex and two types of gender. In rejecting these definitions they therefore suggested that “sex is as much a continuum as gender, and therefore need not be separated linguistically from it” (Diamond, 2000, p. 51). They were the first to question the reality of how gender is constructed and they argued that gender is an accomplishment that is constructed through cultural interaction that creates and maintains two genders. It is not a “fixed essence” that exists within the person (Rodgers, 1999), but rather is expressed in the way we behave and the way others react to our behaviour. Kessler and McKenna (1978) states that both language and imagery can help create and maintain a specific view of what is considered as natural for men and women.

Later, other feminists began to question the sex/gender distinction. West and Zimmerman (1987) define sex as “a determination made through the application of socially agreed upon biological criteria for classifying person as females or males” (p. 127). In their 1987 article “Doing Gender” West and Zimmermann first introduced their notion of gender not as a trait, a social role or a societal representation, but rather as an accomplishment – the product of daily social practices and behaviours which codify and manifest femininity or masculinity. This product is the result of social structures and

it in itself serves to reinforce them (West & Zimmerman, 1987). The “doing” of gender legitimises social structures and therefore establishes the male/female dichotomy as natural. Traditional gender perceptions view man and woman as natural and unequivocal categories (Basow, 1992). These allegedly principal differences between sexes are supported by the division of labour and are characterised by female and male behaviours which have deep psychological and social implications (Basow, 1992). West and Zimmerman’s linguistic emphasis on the way gender is “done” underscores the conscious and unconscious production of gender in all social interactions and relationships (p. 112). They also emphasise the accountability of gender within the dichotomous sex/gender system where individuals must perform gender if they wish to make themselves, and their actions, accountable.

Additionally, West and Zimmerman (1987) maintain that “actions are often designed with an eye to their accountability, that is, how they might look and how they might be characterised”. West and Zimmerman point out that gender is also implicated in all social relationships and at the institutional level which enforces the production of gender (p.189). Everyone is therefore complicit in the maintenance of the gender order. Finally, “doing gender” reinforces essentialist arguments about differences between men and women, concealing the socially constructed nature of such differences and perpetuating the status quo subordination of women and femininities (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

Judith Butler (1990, p. 33) extends this concept to theorise gender as a constantly negotiated performance. Butler collapses the sex/gender distinction in order to argue that there is no sex that is not always already gender. All bodies are gendered from the beginning of their social existence (and there is no existence that is not social), which means that there is no “natural body” that pre-exists its cultural inscription. This seems to point to the conclusion that gender is not something one is, it is something one does: an act, or more precisely, a sequence of acts, a verb rather than a noun, a “doing” rather than a “being” (1990, p. 25).

By performativity, Butler means that sex is reproduced in a process of constant recitation of norms. She argues that through this citation of norms “the ‘one’ becomes viable” and a body is qualified “for life within the domain of cultural intelligibility” (Butler 1993, p. 2). This is not merely a matter of social regulation, but involves psychic processes. Butler’s argument is that from the moment they are born individuals are produced as subjects through a process of gendering. This process shapes not just the way individuals enter into society but also their own psychic processes, desires and impulses.

However, in her second book Judith Butler sought to clarify her theorisation of performativity to question those accounts which had suggested a free or voluntaristic notion: “Performativity is neither free play nor theatrical self-presentation; nor can it be simply equated with performance. Moreover, constraint is not necessarily that which sets a limit to performativity; constraint is, rather, that which

impels and sustains performativity” (Butler 1993, p. 95). One does not wake up each morning and decide which gender to be – it is not an arena of free play but is shaped by the “reiterative power of discourse” (Butler 1993, p. 2).

Butler (1993) exemplifies the post-structural thinking of Michel Foucault (1980). Therefore, the doing of gender, is not simply a “role” utilised by the individual, it encapsulates power. As Foucault suggests, power is all around us.

We should admit...that power and knowledge directly imply one another: that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose at the same time power relations. (Foucault, 1989, p. 27).

Foucault (1980, p. 37) maintains that power is not something that one “has”, neither is it lodged in any privileged group of people or locations. Rather, it is exercised in actions. Foucault’s work on the relationship between knowledge, power and gender shows how power is exercised through common knowledge and discourse, which function in a disciplinary way to produce docile bodies. Foucault (1980) posits that the appropriation of masculine and feminine behaviour through cultural traditions such as language usage is a tool to enforce women’s and girl children subjugation. Foucault (1980, p. 37) asserts that children adopt and perform particular gendered subject positions, which perpetuate or challenge inequitable relations amongst and between boys and girls.

Foucault (1989) also argues that discourse is “a textual mediated conversation between people that are separated in time and space”. Discourses are intimately involved with power relations, such that some discourses are more powerful than others (Foucault, 1989, p. 28). Discourse functions as a powerful tool through which linguistic conventions, social and political beliefs and practices, ideologies, subject positions, and norms can all be mediated. In his ground-breaking work, *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault claims that a distinct feature of modernity is how discourse of normality controls people’s lives by simultaneously defining deviancy. Discourses are agents of inclusion and exclusion, and by categorising individuals in details, discourses exert an unprecedented amount of power over the individual’s comportment and relationship to herself (Foucault, 1980). Foucault asserts that discourse is not something abstract, but in fact a very material process that disciplines people into certain gendered behaviour patterns. Foucault’s notion of “subjectification” refers to the process by which subjects ( for instance girls and boys) construct gender by disciplining their bodies and behaviour in accordance with the gender norms explicit/implicit in the discourses in terms of which their subjectivity is constituted (Alsop, Fitzsimons & Lennon, 2002, p. 87). Foucault’s notion of “subjectification” has been useful in research to make sense of girls’ and boys’ attempts and failures to produce their bodies, and generally construct gender in accordance with the local norms of desirable masculinity and femininity.



In addition Foucault (1980) states that discourse is more than simply a connecting link between a stable, exterior society and the individual. All of these social values emanate from individuals who enunciate a discourse that is at the same not completely their own, a discourse which in turn implants and reinforces the notions it contains (Foucault, 1980). Discourse always consists of both input and output, and is always at once an extension of our culture and of ourselves. Foucault's critique of the assumption that sex is a biological fact (Foucault, 1989) has also underpinned the growing discontent with the sex/gender distinction. For him "sex" owes its existence to particular scientific and non-scientific discourses. He demonstrated how the idea of sex

[took] form in the different strategies of power...[by grouping] together, in an artificial unity, anatomical elements, biological functions, conducts, sensations, and pleasures, and [how] it enabled one to make use of this fictitious unity as a causal principle, an omnipresent meaning, a secret to be discovered everywhere. (ibid., p. 152–154)

These criticisms suggest that gender is not merely a social construction tethered to "sex" which is a given and fixed. Rather, sex is itself a construction.

Butler (1990) likewise asserts that humans are "citing" gender norms that permeate society, mediated by a heteronormative discourse that describes masculinity and femininity as stable, natural, and mutually exclusive, but when people fail in their imitation of gender norms, they are simultaneously excluded from being socially recognised as fully human. Following on from Foucault's argument, Butler (1990) thus maintained that discourse can be defined as a conversation that takes place through so-called "texts" (spoken and written statements and pictures or a combination of these) that sometimes prescribe norms on behaviour, resulting in socially structured behaviour (Foucault 1980; Butler 1990; Jorgensen & Phillips 1999).

In my study I will continually draw on the way gender is constructed, as explained above, to enhance my exploration of gender representation in Business Management texts. It is because gender norms are so often taken for granted they can be easily overlooked. The gender construct works against this omission because it makes gender the focus of analysis and thus illuminates some of the ways in which textbooks influence learners and educators to reinforcing dominant gender cultures. The gender construct thus seeks to challenge dominant understandings about gender that are typically rooted in the assumption that masculinity and femininity are "natural" outcomes of being male and female respectively. My study will provide a critical examination of the way gender is represented in textbooks and provide possible explanations as to why it is represented in such a manner. It can also identify a link (if there is any) with the dominant power/gender in society. The understanding of social differences and social inequality are key to providing a high-level explanation of gender representation in textbooks. Connell (1987) asserts that the complexity of societies in South Africa according to

notions of gender is crucial to understanding the social relations and decision-making process concerning equity in textbooks (Connell, 1987). The conceptual framework of gender as a social construct therefore challenges me to examine critically how gender is represented in textbooks at an abstract level.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I reviewed relevant literature and explored the conceptualizations of gender that frame this study. In the next chapter, I discuss the research design, methodology and method that were used to generate the data.

# Chapter 3

## Research design and methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to describe and discuss the research method and methodology that has been applied in this research. The chapter has six sections, detailing the overall structure of the study. The first section describes the research design, explaining the research paradigm that guided the study, and taking note of shortcomings in the paradigm and in the approach of the study. The second section details the method of data production, namely, critical discourse analysis (CDA) as outlined by Huckin (1997). The third section describes the sample for the research, explaining how purposive sampling was used in selecting the textbooks studied. The fourth section discusses issues of trustworthiness. The fifth section discusses the ethical issues considered before, during and after data production. The six and last section discusses the limitations which were experienced in the method of data production.

### 3.2 Research design

In this section I explain the concept of a paradigm and I then discuss the research paradigm used in the study. While I have chosen to draw on the principles of critical theory to guide the study, I am also aware of the critique that is levelled against critical research (Fay, 1987). It is for this reason that I engage with this critique to explain how these principles were managed in the current study. Lastly I discuss the approach to the study, which is qualitative in nature.

#### 3.2.1 The concept of a paradigm

Many definitions can be found of the term *paradigm*, but two figures in particular gave this term its special prominence in the later 20th century, namely, Michel Foucault and Thomas Kuhn. The term originates from the Greek word *paradegima* which means to represent something or offer it as a model (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1986, p. 13).

Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p. 107) explain that

A paradigm may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs (or metaphysics) that deals with ultimates or first principles. It represents a worldview that defines, for its holder, the nature of the “world,” the individual’s place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts, as, for example, cosmologies and theologies do. The beliefs are basic in the sense that they must be accepted simply on faith (however well argued); there is no way to establish their ultimate truthfulness.

According to Hussey and Hussey (1997, p. 47), the term refers to a process of scientific practice based on people's philosophies and assumption about the world and the nature of knowledge. For Shuttleworth (2008) it means a framework or a dominant way of thinking and doing things that involves shared expectations and rules. According to Neuman (2006, p. 81), a paradigm is a basic orientation to theory and research. Neuman (2006, p. 80) explains that a paradigm establishes the justification for one's research, relates values to research and guides ethical behaviour.

Paradigms thus serve as lenses or organising principles by which reality is interpreted. In this regard Nieuwenhuis (2007) describes paradigms as enabling us to tell a coherent story by depicting a world that is meaningful and functional but also culturally subjective. In this study the methodological paradigm outlined below serves as the lens or organising principle by which texts and theories are interpreted in the course of the chapters that follow.

### **3.2.2 The critical paradigm**

This research is rooted in the critical paradigm. Critical theory is a school of thought that emphasises examination and critique of society and culture, drawing from knowledge across the social sciences and humanities. The term has two different meanings with different origins and histories: one originating in sociology and the other in literary criticism. This has led to the very literal use of "critical theory" as an umbrella term to describe any theory founded upon critique. It was developed by a group of sociologists at the University of Frankfurt in Germany who referred to themselves as the Frankfurt School, including Jurgen Habermas, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, Max Horkheimer, and Theodor Adorno. According to critical theorist Max Horkheimer a theory is critical in so far as it seeks "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them" (Horkheimer 1982,p. 244).

Critical theory is thus a type of social theory oriented toward critiquing and changing society as a whole, in contrast to traditional theory oriented only to understanding or explaining it. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2004, p. 28) "critical means not taking things for granted, opening up complexity, challenging reductionism, dogmatism and dichotomies, being self-reflective in research, and through these processes, making opaque structures of power relations and ideologies manifest". In this sense critical theories aim to dig beneath the surface of social life and uncover the assumptions that keep us from a full and true understanding of how the world works. Critical researchers have argued that culture has to be viewed as a domain of struggle where the production and transmission of knowledge is always a contested process. Dominant cultures employ differing systems of meaning based on the forms of knowledge produced in their cultural domain (Giroux, 1983). A critical approach does not take power relationships in the world as a given, but steps back and asks how the order arose in the first place. This is done to provide a historical account of the origins of the current world order, and in the process to detect where configurations of power are weakest (Cox 2002).

Critical theory thus is a perspective that holds that the “social world is characterised by differences arising out of conflict between the powerful and powerless” (Munford & Walsh-Tapiata, 2001, p. 20)

In my study I draw from the principles of the critical theory to start a debate, ask questions and raise awareness of the factors that contribute to gender-related issues in textbooks. Critical theorists argue that some relationships in the world are more powerful than others (Henning, 2007). In my study, I hope to understand and reveal the gendered representation in Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks in South Africa. Critical theory is thus used in my research as an act of exposing underlying assumptions and ideologies that serve to conceal the power relations via the “representations” in the textbooks. In this way awareness of gender equality in textbooks can be realised to address possible gender issues in the learning of Business Studies. As Cohen et al. (2007) similarly point out, critical theory supports a philosophy that redresses inequality and promotes individual freedom within a democratic society.

### **3.2.3 Shortcomings of the critical paradigm**

The major shortcoming of a critical paradigm in research is that the researcher’s involvement, interaction, and activities during the research process can be substantially political and thus may fail to maintain a scholarly perspective (Fay, 1987). Furthermore, critical research is also often described as being highly reflective (Alvesson & Willmott, 1992; Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2001). This means that critical research needs to reflect on its own assumptions and consequences which can bias the research as a whole. My research has made use of various methods for ensuring trustworthiness, including member validation, open coding and audit trail, to overcome possible political or personal bias when conducting the research. Moreover I argue that in almost all research politics and inquiry are intertwined or inseparable (Creswell, 2009).

The critical paradigm approach also advocates a process of research that yields social change rather than pure knowledge generation through the process of an action research (Rettig, Tam, & Yellowthunder, 1995). However the research that I am conducting is a process of raising awareness through my publication. This will help educators and learners become more informed of the gendered representation in textbooks, thereby creating a more conducive educational environment. The goal of this research is therefore foregrounded on a personal emancipation of both the researcher and the audience.

### **3.2.4 Qualitative approach**

The two types of research approaches most often used in the collection of data are quantitative and qualitative (Ghuri, Grønhaug & Kristianslund, 1995). The quantitative approach is characterised by systematic empirical studies which involve quantifying with the assistance of mathematics and statistics (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Data is collected and transformed into numbers which are

empirically tested to see if a relationship can be found in order to draw conclusions from the results obtained. In other words, quantitative methods are related to numerical interpretations. Qualitative research, on the other hand, does not rely on statistics or numbers. Qualitative approaches are often characterised by case studies where information can be collected from studying a few objects (Bryman & Bell, 2007). Furthermore, qualitative methods emphasise understanding, interpretation, observation in natural settings, and closeness to data with a sort of insider view (Ghauri et al., 1995).

This study is approached from a qualitative perspective. This seemed a logical choice since this study is concerned with representation and ideologies and the qualitative method allows the researcher to interpret the findings and reach conclusions not detectable with a quantitative method. A qualitative approach puts more emphasis on the quality and depth of information (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). I adopted a qualitative perspective mainly because the primary concern of my study was with depth rather than breadth of understanding (Henning, van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). Lichtman (2006) contends that although the focus is on a smaller amount of data than with a quantitative method, the researcher is able to conclude a lot about a little. In a similar manner I consider the use of qualitative method favourable when the objective is to seek deeper knowledge and understanding of a topic. On this point, Anderson (1998) comments that “The intent (of qualitative research) is to uncover the implicit meaning in a particular situation from one or more perspectives” (p. 90). This approach is thus suitable for the present study since it seeks to explore and get an in-depth understanding of the phenomena of gender as it is represented in Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks in South Africa. Neill (2007) contends that when an exploration is needed, and one which all the complexity of a situation must be explored, researchers use qualitative research. The manner in which I have framed my research questions can best be answered by qualitative research as it seeks an in-depth explanation as to how and why gender is represented in a particular way in contemporary Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks. This qualitative study will thus lean heavily on providing a rich and broad meaning of the data, exploring several critical issues, and examining different possible interpretations as influenced by social factors. The qualitative study also allows me greater flexibility in the exploration of gender ideologies in the texts that I have chosen to examine.

### **3.3 Method of data production**

The methodology I employ to address the critical questions in this study is critical discourse analysis (CDA). Fairclough (1989, p. 20) defines CDA as an interdisciplinary approach to the study of discourse, which views “language as a form of social practice” and focuses on the ways social and political domination is reproduced by text and talk. In other words, language is viewed as both socially constitutive and “socially shaped” (Fairclough and Wodak, 1997, p. 258). CDA is rooted in a critical study of language which sees language incorporating relations of power and social practice. Fairclough, Wodak, van Dijk, and other critical linguists have studied the relationships between

power, ideology and language. Seminal works by Kress and Hodge (1979) and Fowler, Hodge, Kress and Trew (1979) looked at issues such as how language perpetuated power and ideology. Some of the tenets of CDA can be traced back to Marx who influenced social theorists like Gramsci, Althusser and Habermas. Frequent references are made to Habermas, whose critical theory (1973) shows an interest in “ideology and the social subject” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 7). Habermas’s (1973) critical theory shows the importance of the need to understand social problems of ideology and power relationships reinforced in written texts. Words are never separate from a situation but draw their meanings from the contexts in which they are based (Habermas, 1973). Fairclough’s book, *Language and Power* (1989), is commonly considered to be one of the founding texts of CDA, in which he used the approach to analyse British political discourse in the rhetoric of Thatcher’s speeches as well as the changing characteristics of the economic and social discourses of late modernity.

In order to clearly explain this approach I first need to explain what discourse is. There are two ways of regarding discourse. The first is better known in language studies and sees discourse as “social action and interaction, people interacting together in real social situations” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 18). The second considers discourse as a “social construction of reality, a form of knowledge” (ibid.), and is more concerned with what to say, do and know about this knowledge in a historical context (Gillespie & Toynbee, 2006). Fairclough’s approach is to merge the two approaches (described above) to analyse language in relation to social and cultural processes. This definition of discourse therefore calls on critical discourse analysts to focus on concrete features of language to uncover distributions of power (Mills, 2004, p. 119). There are many ways to use discourse analysis as an analytical tool, but I have chosen to adopt Fairclough’s approach because it is specifically concerned with language use in relation to social power (van Dijk, 1993, p. 250).

Two further issues which have a bearing on this investigation are *ideology* and *hegemony*. Both are rather complex to explain and understand.

The first of these two terms, *ideology*, is a key element of investigation in CDA (van Dijk, 1998; Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000) and relates essentially to questions of power. As van Dijk (2001) puts it, “if there is one notion often related to ideology it is that of power” (p.25). Power, in this context, is having the ability to shape actions. Since the most prominent feature of textbooks is conveying information through shaped interaction between reader and writer, influence of the latter (the writer) over the former (the reader) is clearly an issue. In turn, the exercise of power is accomplished through ideology, whereby the configurations of the economy and the state are maintained and reinforced and in which language is a crucial tool. Ideologies, as explained by Fairclough (2003), “are representations of aspects of the world which can be shown to contribute to establishing, maintaining and changing social relations of power, domination and exploitation.” As understood by Marx and Engels, the notion of ideology refers to the body of thoughts, particularly by intellectuals, that is used

to support the economic domination of particular classes. Ideology can, in short, be explained as a set of beliefs that provides a framework for members of a culture and assists individuals when considering social issues and their surrounding world. A major concern of critical analysts, accordingly, is how texts can be representations of ideologies and can contribute to social relations of power and domination.

Da Silva (1999, p. 1) argues that a curriculum “is always [an] authorised representation” that implicitly legitimates and disseminates a certain ideology. Da Silva (1999) adds that if the influential role of textbooks on learners’ mentality is accepted, then the way textbooks portray the various people in the target society and the way those people are shown to communicate will directly affect business students’ worldview. The norms of conduct, ideology, etc., are usually disseminated without the learner even being aware of being exposed to such norms. Effectively, the learner is exposed to a hidden curriculum (Skelton, 1997). CDA scholars thus contend that ideologies are constructed, naturalised and legitimised through language, and more specifically through discourse, as a social practice (Fairclough, 1989, van Dijk, 2004), and that CDA methodology can provide researchers with effective analytical tools to analyse texts in depth and thereby uncover ideological underpinnings.

The term *hegemony*, which is frequently an issue in studies on ideology, was originally formulated by Antonio Gramsci in the 1920s. Hegemony tries to explain how the dominant parties in society can remain dominant and still have the support of the subordinate groups (Lull, 2000). When power is established through “norms, habits and even a quiet general consensus”, hegemony is established (van Dijk, 2004, p. 355). According to the notion of hegemony this state of affairs is attainable because dominant groups produce and circulate ideas through various channels in the existing society (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000). In this production and circulation of ideas textbooks play a significant role, since they are influenced by powerful interests in society who seek to maintain their status and culture by reproducing ideas formulated by their superior group. Hegemony is a continuing process and for a superior group to maintain their power position, the subordinate groups must accept their system of supremacy and their culture of power (Lull, 2000). Hegemony is a question of interest in this study as it has a bearing on two closely linked fields: the construction of gender made through Business Studies textbooks and the production of ideologies.

CDA thus “critically” takes a stand against injustice “as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, legitimised and so on by language use” (Wodak, 2001, p. 2). Brookes (1995) argues that the prime rationale of CDA is to “uncover how language works to construct meaning that signify people, objects and events in the world in specific ways” (p.462). Thus, the foremost concerns of CDA are how discourse is shaped and constructed by relations of ideology, power and systems of knowledge or belief and how texts are used to preserve or generate societal inequalities through representation of so-called reality which are not explicit to discourse participants. Fairclough and Wodak (1997, p. 275)



usefully translate this into the “working assumption” that “any part of any language text, spoken or written, is simultaneously constituting representations, relations, and identities”. By applying suitable linguistic tools CDA aims to reveal ideology that is “normally hidden through the habitualisation of discourse” (Fowler, 1991, p. 89). Language is “a primary force for the production and reproduction of ideology” (Bucholtz, 2003, p. 57), and discourse represents particular world views, particular social relations between people, and particular social identities according to the purpose, context and addressees of the text. CDA assumes from the outset that language is invested. Language is not a neutral tool for transmitting a message; on the contrary, all “communicative events” (van Dijk, 1993, p. 250) constitute “a particular way of talking about and understanding the world (or an aspect of the world)” (Jorgensen, 2002, p. 1) both on the part of the producer (the writer, the speaker) and on the part of the consumer (the reader, the audience).

Texts should thus not be analysed in isolation from the surrounding situation within which they are produced. From a feminist standpoint, which assumes that gender is an essential organising principle of both knowledge and experience and expresses invested interests of diverse kinds, CDA, which shares that assumption of investedness, is an ideal research tool since it reveals the message and process of that investment (Cameron, 2006). CDA as a research method thus centres on understanding the ideological scheming of discourse and aims to produce a critique of the way discourse operates to affect certain agendas (Cameron, 2006). In this respect CDA has much in common with gender studies in that the objectives of both involve uncovering ideological agendas which surface from the discourses produced in textbooks.

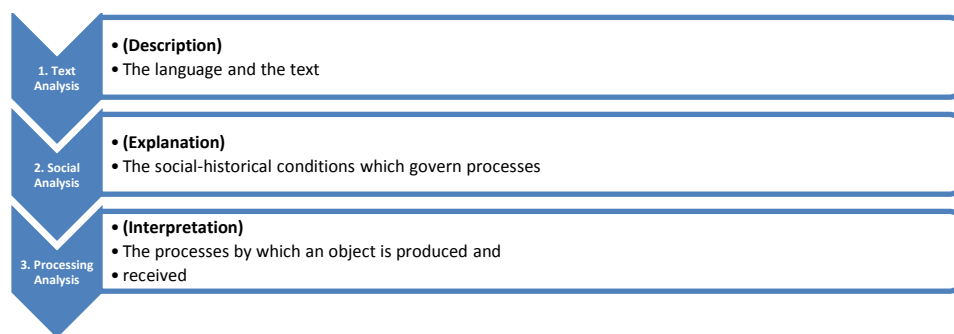
CDA is thus of great importance for my study as it is an approach which enables an in-depth study of the text in focus. Furthermore, critical discourse analysis aids me in detecting meaning and ideologies that would not be visible in a study adopting a more quantitative approach. This methodology is appropriate because it accommodates the theory of power and ideology that emerged from the literature review of gender and textbooks. I have chosen it as an analytical tool because it focuses on the important role that language plays in the construction of hegemonic ideologies (hegemony being the undue influence of one ideology over another). CDA concerns itself with relations of power and inequality in language (Blommaert and Bulcaen, 2000). As McGregor (2003) succinctly puts it, CDA is the only approach that enables one to figure out the real meaning behind the written and spoken word (the overt and hidden meaning).

One further reason why CDA is my chosen methodology for this study is that it enables me to engage with both textual and visual aspects of the textbooks, thus extending and deepening analysis and understanding of gender phenomena in the textbooks.

In the words of McGregor (2003), “unless we ... debunk their words, we can be misled into embracing the dominant worldview (ideology) at our expense and their gain.”

### 3.3.1 Analysing and presenting qualitative data

The CDA methods used as data analysis instrument for this study follow the points noted by Fairclough (2000) which consist mainly of describing, interpreting and explaining both text and visual data. In addition, the following basic steps for using CDA as outlined by McGregor (2003) guided my initial analysis. Firstly, I read the chapters selected in the textbook in an uncritical manner. Then I re-read the chapters in a critical manner by raising questions about them and establishing how they could be constructed differently. The next step was to look for the perspective being presented, a step which is referred to as framing the details into a coherent whole. Finally, I closely analysed sentences, phrases and words, looking (among other things) for language that conveys power relations, insinuations, and tone – three linguistic elements between which CDA particularly seeks to identify connections.

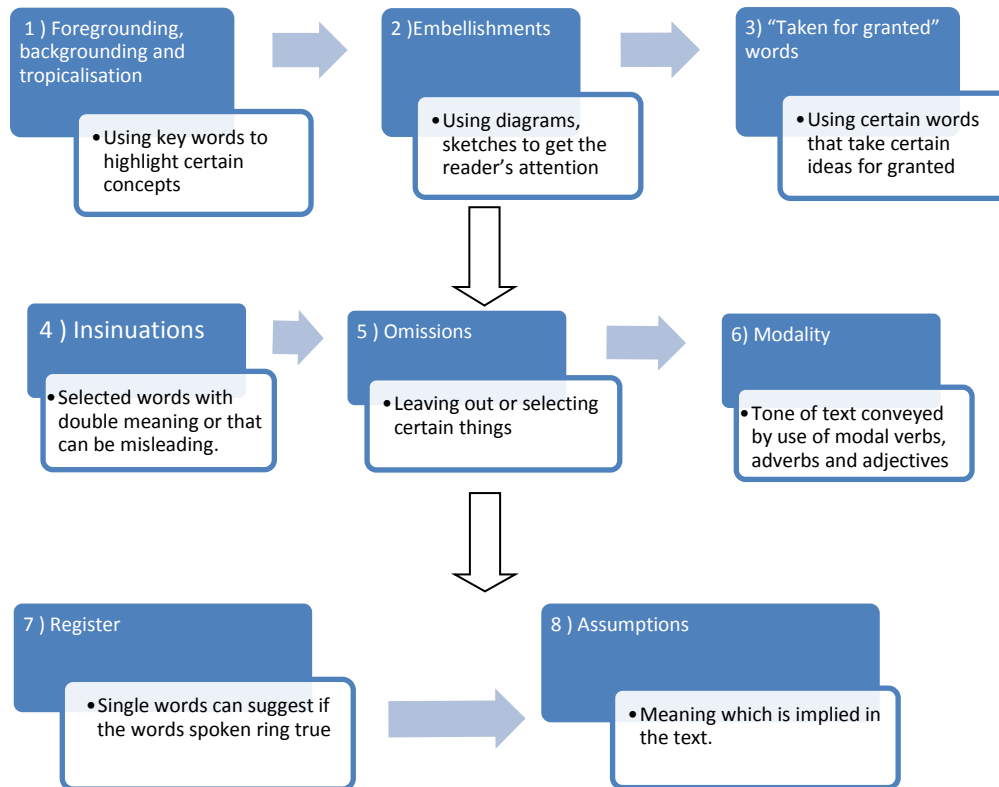


**Figure 3-1 Three dimensions of CDA**

(Source: Fairclough, 2000)

In addition to the analytical steps noted above, I also acquired data using the analytical tools of CDA in conjunction with Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL) where there is particular emphasis on close observation of the role of language in the construction of hegemonic ideologies. Broadly, my study is contained within the framework outlined by Huckin (1997), who recommends checking out what sort of perspective is being presented – what angle, slant, or point of view. This is called framing the details into a coherent whole and can be accomplished by various different techniques (Huckin, 1997). Each of the features is numbered for ease of reference. The CDA protocol devised for this study is indicated diagrammatically in Figure 3-2 in which the upper boxes name each feature and the lower boxes provide a very brief description of the feature. An expanded presentation of the protocol is provided in Table 3-1, which gives fuller explanations of how the numbered features are interpreted with examples drawn from the texts to illustrate the interpretation of the features. Complete and detailed interpretations appear in the chapter on the analysis.

Using the CDA protocol qualitatively, I hope to reveal the ideological gendered positioning hidden in the Business Studies texts.



**Figure 3-2 Critical discourse analysis protocol**

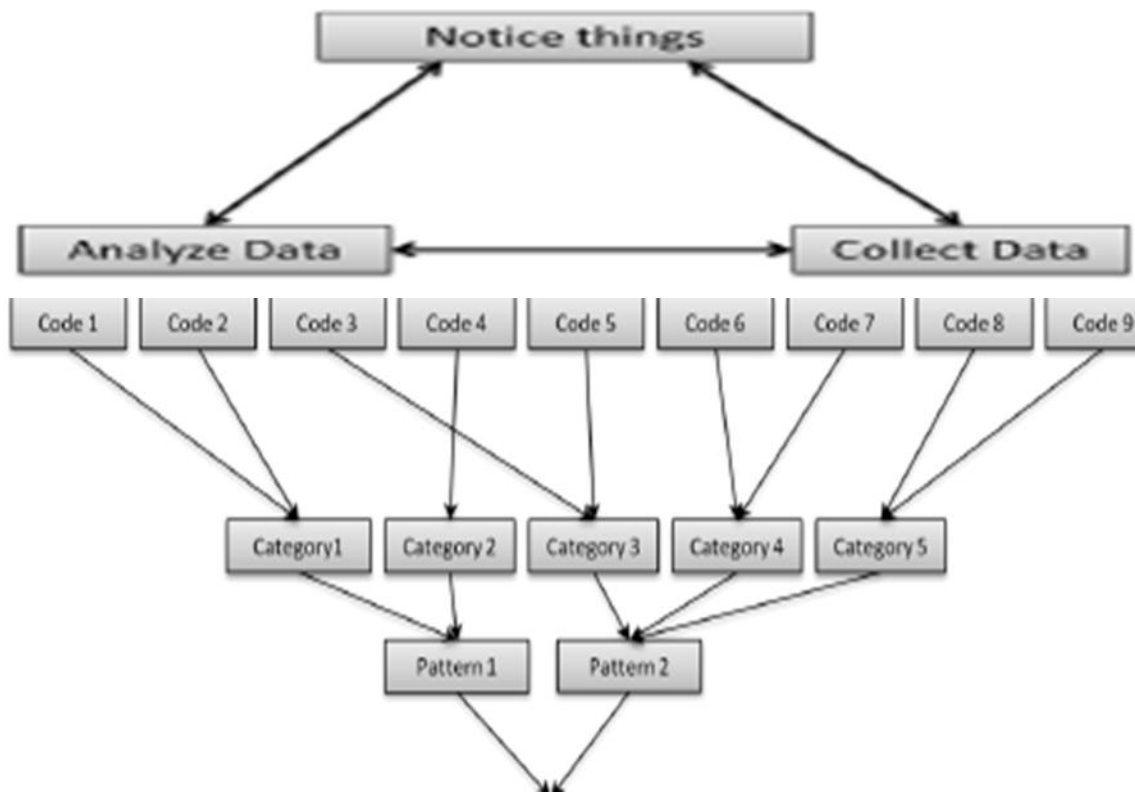
**Table 3-1 Extended CDA protocol with illustrative text extracts**

Feature	Further explanation	Example
1.1 Backgrounding	The ultimate form of backgrounding is omission, or leaving relevant information out of a text. In some cases, such textual silences are of a broad ideological sort (Remlinger, 2002); in others they are more deliberate. In any case, what is left unsaid is often more important than what is said.	<b>Textbook A</b> , p. 114: Factors preventing women from taking on leadership position insufficiently explained and thus backgrounded, whereas male leadership success and attributes are foregrounded.
1.2 Foregrounding	Giving importance to parts of a text, either by their physical placement or size or by the emphasis given them through word choice or syntactic structure (Foucault, 2000).	<b>Textbook B</b> , p. 45: Attributes required for entrepreneurial success foregrounded; risk and obstacles minimised and therefore backgrounded.
1.3 Topicalization	Positioning of a sentence element at the beginning of the sentence to give it prominence.	<b>Textbook A</b> , p. 123: “Exceptional leadership of Dave” foregrounded with photograph, giving importance to the topic of leadership (masculine leadership).
2. Embellishments	Non-linguistic aspects of a text, such as graphics or sound effects. They draw attention and so can make a quick and powerful impression.	<b>Textbook B</b> , p. 18: Author has embellished the pictures of two prominent South African entrepreneurs, stating “destined for success”.
3. Taken-for-granted word or phrase	Word or phrase or assumed to be a common sense notion; can also be seen as a presumption that certain things are automatically the case. A reader is thus not likely to question what is presented as common knowledge, having no alternative beyond what has been stated; where the reader assigns a meaning without considering any other possibility because people are products of their cultures, experiences and society.	“Manager” used throughout textbooks when describing leadership positions. Reflects the masculine gender as “manageress” is used for women. Example of a taken-for-granted term.
4. Insinuations	Slyly suggestive assertions, carrying double meanings. When the facts, or the way the facts are presented, are challenged, the originator of the discourse can readily deny any culpability. This ability to deny any intention to mislead gives the originator of the discourse a lot of power.	<b>Textbook A</b> , p. 202: in cited case study Tiny (a business owner) insinuates that women are incompetent because in his organisation women (not men) always ask for help and advice when they need to make financial decisions or use technological equipment.
5. Modality	Use of modal verbs and phrases like <i>might</i> , <i>should</i> , <i>will</i> , <i>we think</i> , and commands to project a certain authorial “voice” or attitude (Palmquist, 1999). Modal constructions facilitate various forms of manipulation including the hedging of claims in textbooks.	<b>Textbook B</b> , p.12: It might be wise for you to open a bakery business Thandi but I think you should wait for Ben.

Feature	Further explanation	Example
6. Register	Linguistic style of discourse that connects it to a particular discursive activity or group (Biber et al.).	Quoting directly from university spokesperson using first person, while using third person to refer to a student challenging university policy, can convey the message that the university is more objective than the student, hence more legitimate.
7. Assumptions	Statements implying that what is written is true or sure to happen, with no factual proof. Fairclough (2003) identifies three types of assumptions: (i) existential assumptions (assuming what exists), (ii) propositional assumptions (assuming what can be), (iii) value assumptions (assuming that something is good). Assumptions are predominantly imperative when looking at ideology as ideology can be transmitted when there are meanings which are conveyed as commonly received facts.	<b>Textbook B</b> , p. 67: assumption that women, not men, are destitute; however there is no actual proof of that.

(Huckin, 1997)

Henning (2007) outlines a process called open coding which I will use to analyse the data from the selected textbooks and ensure trustworthiness. Open coding is “the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualising and categorising data” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 61). Line by line coding forces the analyst to verify and saturate categories, minimises missing an important category, and ensures grounding of data categories beyond mere impressionism (Glaser & Barney, 1992). The result is rich, dense theory with assurance that nothing has been left out. It also corrects the forcing of “pet” themes and ideas unless they have emergent fit (Henning, 2007). Henning (2007) suggests that the process of open coding should accordingly follow the following broad principles. First, I (as the researcher) read through the chapters to get an overall impression of the content. I then re-read the chapters selected in order to identify “units of meaning” in the text. Price (2005) calls this first reading “reading with the text” (p7) to try and understand the writers’ positioning and why they wrote in the way they did. I then selected codes according to what the data means to me and allocated the codes to the different “units of meaning”. Here analysts are actually asking how these texts are used to reproduce or transform the status quo in society (Janks, 1997, p. 329). The related codes were then put into categories which form the themes to be discussed as the findings of my study. Open coding was then used to help me generate meanings and ideas and also to deepen my understanding of the data in detailed analysis which could yield more than one possible meaning of that data. To guide the open coding I used the framework recommended by Huckin (1997) as indicated in Figure 3 2 and Table 3 1.



**Figure 3. 3 Open coding flowchart**  
 (Source: *Basics of Qualitative Research*, Strauss & Corbin 1990)

### 3.4 Sampling

Data gathering is crucial in research, as the data is meant to contribute to a better understanding of a theoretical framework (Bernard 2002). The success of the research hinges on having an appropriate method for obtaining the data and on choosing from whom or from what the data will be acquired, since no amount of analysis can make up for improperly collected data (Bernard , Pelto., Werner., Boster., Romney., Johnson., Ember & Kasakoff, 1986). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) describe sampling as a step which involves determining the people, settings and events, or behaviours that will be studied. The sample is the unit on which the analysis focuses. The sampling for this research was purposive. Henning (2007, p. 71) describes purposive sampling as sampling which “looks for factors which fit the criteria of desirable”. The purposive sampling approach is used when samples are chosen because they have particular features or characteristics that will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central questions that the researcher intends to study (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Accordingly I selected the textbooks to be included in my sample on the basis of their “typicality or possession of the particular characteristics being sought” (Cohen et al., 2007). The books selected for this study were handpicked based on their accessibility and relevance to my study. The analysis will be on two textbooks for Grade 10 Business Studies learners, and the focus will be on those chapters of the books that deal with entrepreneurial education.

I chose textbooks for Grade 10 Business Studies because these are newly published, contemporary textbooks widely used in the cluster area in which the research site is located and also nationally. My choice was restricted to just two textbooks because this study is a qualitative study and the sample size is therefore not relevant since my interest is in attaining in-depth understanding.

The data that will be generated for this study will come from the two Business Studies textbooks (see Table 3-2) and the focus will be on the chapters dealing with entrepreneurship education. Historically entrepreneurship has been a male dominated sphere of both the South African economy and education sector. However the new South African constitution makes provision for gender equity and inclusivity both at work and at school. I therefore seek to investigate whether Business Studies (grade, 10) textbooks reflect this gender inclusivity and equity orientation in terms of entrepreneurship education.

**Table 3-2 Textbooks chosen for data analysis**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Pseudonyms</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Publisher</b>
2011	<i>Textbook A</i>	Cape Town, South Africa	Maskew Miller Longman Publishers (PTY) Ltd
2011	<i>Textbook B</i>	Cape Town, South Africa	Via Africa Publishers (PTY) Ltd.

### **3.5 Trustworthiness**

In research, to trust data one needs to know how data was collected and how conclusions were reached. Guba and Lincoln (1994) stress that trustworthiness of qualitative inquiry is crucial in determining the worth of research.

Henning's (2007) *open coding* process outlined in section 3.3.1 above was one measure intended to reinforce data trustworthiness of the data and I further ensured trustworthiness by member validation (Holloway and Wheeler, 2009). One particular method of note was to ask my supervisor to judge the analysis and interpretation by providing him with a summary of the analysis as well as text, and asking him to critically comment upon the adequacy of the findings. I also created an audit trail (Holloway and Wheeler, 2009). To ensure reliability I (the researcher) ensured that I had an audit trail by which other academics are able to judge the process through which the research has been conducted and the key decisions have been made that informed the research process.

### **3.5 Ethical considerations**

Strydom (1998; 24) defines ethics as a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or group and is subsequently widely accepted, and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about what conduct is most correct towards experimental subjects and respondents. Ethical issues were not a very serious concern since the research is not dealing with people. The textbooks which are the source of the data are readily available and already in the public domain. Nevertheless all the ethical considerations required by the University of KwaZulu-Natal regarding this kind of research will be observed. In keeping with the research policy of the university through which this study was conducted, ethical clearance was applied for and was granted with full approval by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Reference no. HSS/0885/012M. See appendix for copy). Moreover, although textbooks are public documents, the selected textbooks were given pseudonyms to avoid any ethical issues that could arise.

### **3.6 Limitation of this study**

The study looks only at Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks in South Africa and thus the results cannot be extended to other Business Studies textbooks. Nor can the results be extended to upper grades Business Studies textbooks, although an argument could be made that one would find more of the same at the higher level of textbook.

Widdowson (1995) and other researchers have argued that there are limitations in CDA. One of the concerns raised is that the concepts and the analytical design of CDA are vague and not clearly distinguished. In particular, concepts and methodologies are not clearly differentiated from one another. Blommaert & Bulcaen (2000) also has concerns with CDA, arguing that the CDA analyst is too reliant on a single linguistic aspect, namely that which is set out in Halliday's systemic functional linguistics. Blommaert & Bulcaen (2000) argues that Halliday's is not the only model that offers critical perspective. For this reason my research combined Halliday's model with Foucault, creating a unique, well-explained CDA protocol which offers a broader analysis.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the design and methodology for the study. The study is a critical study following a qualitative approach which focuses on detailed understanding of how gender is represented in Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks. The method of data production employed is critical discourse analysis and the CDA tools used were inspired by Fairclough (2000) and Huckin (1997). The sampling was purposive and two contemporary Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks were selected for data analysis. The limitations of the research were also discussed in the chapter to acknowledge areas that can affect the credibility of the study.



# **Chapter 4**

## **Data Presentation and Analysis**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is on analysis of the data obtained by using the CDA method explained in Chapter 3 and it presents key findings from the data within the conceptual framework and literature context discussed in Chapter 2.

### **4.2 Data analysis procedure**

According to Miles and Huberman (1984), data presentation is a process whereby the reviewed or collected data is carefully displayed for streamlining into patterns, meaningful categories and themes. The data from the two textbooks under investigation were categorised reflecting emerging themes. The six primary themes which emerged in relation to representation of gender in contemporary Business Studies textbooks were:

- distinct, conscious choice of male leadership figures
- occupational roles for males and females
- masculine features/ attributes presented as a norm for success in entrepreneurship
- firstness of male noun/pronoun reinforcing gender bias
- portrayal of males as prominent technology users and experts
- representation of women in destitute positions

### **4.3 Deliberate choice of male leadership figures**

Analysis of the two textbooks in the study reveals that the authors consciously chose male leadership figures. In the analysis that follows I will demonstrate how representation of leadership is a distinct and conscious choice made by the authors. This primary theme can be disaggregated into sub themes as follows:

- moving from the neutral to the masculine embellishment
- depiction of males in high status leadership positions:
  - depiction of male leadership figures – top management
  - depiction of male leadership figures – middle-level management
  - males portrayed as sole proprietors of a business
  - males portrayed as political leaders
- academic competence vs practical application in leadership roles

### 4.3.1 From neutral representation of leadership to masculine embellishments.

In the discussion that follows I demonstrate how the authors use the term leadership from a neutral definition towards a masculine embellishment. In both textbooks, the definition of “leadership” begins without specific reference to gender. There is no use of either male or female nouns or pronouns. Leadership has been defined in neutral terms in the following ways:

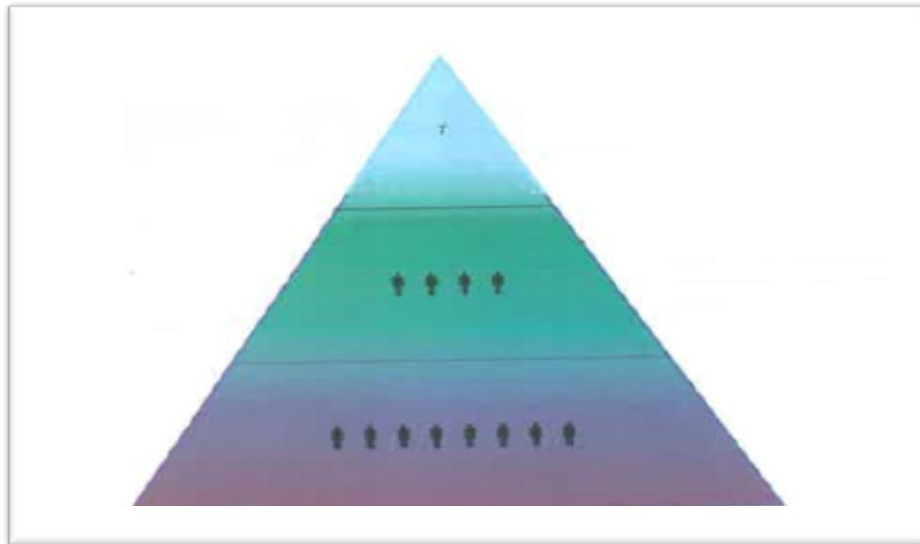
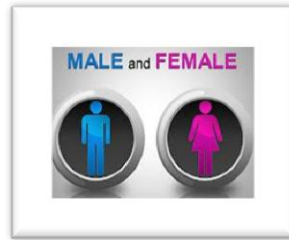
- Leadership is “Inspiring and influencing people to achieve the goals of the business efficiently” (Textbook A).
- A leader is “someone who is in charge of a team and who provides guidance to a group of individuals for the purpose of achieving results” (Textbook B).

In each of the two cases the respective authors’ definition of leader/leadership is a statement that can stand on its own without a gender context, using a normalised strategy (Fairclough, 2003). Pronouns are removed and presented as facts with no reference to gender at this point. Leadership thus is presented as genderless.

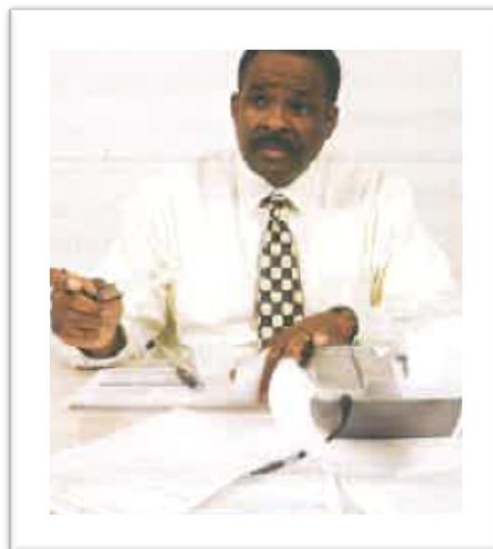
However as the chapter progress there is a distinct shift from a genderless orientation at the point where the author uses a male illustration to foreground the concept of leadership. In each case the authors provide the definition of leadership and then goes on to use a male graphical image to foreground this terminology. Text and image are fused to give a male orientation in the authors’ projection of what began as a gender-neutral concept.

In one case (see Figure 4-1) the authors use the male symbol in a hierarchical pyramid representation of levels of management. This fusion is portrayed as normal but it sends out a hidden message as to *who* the entrepreneurial leaders are, and in this case leadership is portrayed with a male orientation. The texts are presented in ways that associate leadership with males and this is done in a conscious way. The authors could have used both male and female symbols yet they has made a conscious and deliberate choice to use only the male symbol.

This reflects “veiled neutrality” on the part of the authors: they introduce the leadership concept as gender-neutral, but its subsequent presentation renders it as non-neutral and associated with a particular gender. Learners who read and use these textbooks are exposed to the concept of leadership in a way that moves from neutrality to strong associations with males. This is likely to reinforce stereotypes that leadership is a male domain.



**Figure 4-1 Male symbol in diagram of leadership levels**



**Figure 4-2 Male illustrative image embellishing definition of leadership**

### **4.3.2 Depiction of males in high-status positions**

In analysing the portrayal of men and women in leadership positions in both texts some stark differences between men and women began to emerge in terms of management and leadership at the

workplace. Men were frequently depicted and described in leadership positions which included top management, middle management and economic leadership. In the discussion that follows data from the two textbooks demonstrate how males are depicted as powerful entrepreneurs with strong leadership attributes and traits.

#### **4.3.2.1 Depictions of male leadership: top management**

According to authors in Textbook A:

*Top management translates the policy (formulated by the board-of-directors) into goals, objectives, and strategies, and projects a shared vision of the future. It makes decisions that affect everyone in the organisation, and is held entirely responsible for the success or failure of the enterprise. (p. 12).*

This description clearly implies that top management is a very important leadership position which is attained by persons with exceptional skills and traits. Once more the concept is initially introduced in gender-neutral language, but this changes as the text unfolds.

In both textbooks male characters were frequently portrayed as successful top management leaders such as CEOs or Managing Directors. Female characters on the other hand were not portrayed in any top management position but rather as low-skilled employees engaging in low-level secretarial work such as filing and answering the telephone. The authors – in sections on entrepreneurial leadership – used descriptive and lengthy case studies along with pictures to portray only men in top management positions with success stories. Two distinct examples are given below to illustrate how males are represented in top management positions.

In a section on the market environment (p. 39) the foregrounded title “*Nothing fishy about real enthusiasm*” introduces a description and discussion of the leadership of Dave Kershaw, MD (Managing Director) of the franchise “*Something Fishy*”. The lengthy and descriptive case study presents Kershaw as:

*an exceptional leader who saved “Something Fishy” from financial collapse is now an inspiring role model to millions in the business environment ... hands on exceptional management earned the company millions through innovation and improvisation.... A successful story indeed ... something for others to follow.... Kershaw is not only admired for the exceptional leadership but also the R80, 000 profit.*

As portrayed in the case study Kershaw is described as an exceptional leader who is a role model for others to emulate.

The authors of Textbook B (p. 26) further intensify the depiction of males as successful top-level managers. They use a case study of a “*petrochemical giant, Pat Davis*”. This title is foregrounded and further embellished with an account of Davis’s astonishing leadership. Sasol CEO Davis is described as a “*global leader who is one of the key successors of Sasol*” and Sasol under the leadership of Davis is said to be “*one of South Africa’s top five performers*”. Throughout the case study much emphasis is placed on the strategic management of Davis and the success he has achieved. Davis is portrayed as a powerful, inspiring individual who is an exceptional leader.

In addition to the case studies in which only males are represented as successful top-level managers, photographs are also used in both textbooks as examples to reiterate the assumed belief that top management is a “male occupation”. One specific example that the authors of Textbook A give of a top-level manager is in a description of the hierarchy of a school, where the school principal in the photograph is a male identified as a top-level manager. Preceding the illustration of the principal, a photograph of Kimal Maharajah of Taylor & Co. Ltd embellishes the account of his success and “*stupendous*” leadership as CEO (p. 16).

The recurring pattern in both textbooks of only males being depicted at top management in photographs and narratives reinforces a stereotypical message to learners. When learners are exposed to content material that is sexist and projects males as powerful figures, both male and female learners are likely to believe that top management positions are reserved for males in the business/economic sector.

#### **4.3.2.2 Depictions of male leadership: middle-level management**

In the depiction of middle-level management the authors have crammed the textbooks with examples of male success; there are very few examples of female success, which is likely to reinforce the stereotype that success in the business spheres is male-dominated.

*Middle level management is concerned with implementing plans made by top level management. They are leaders who meet the companies’ goals by guiding employees’ activities. They achieve an organisations objective by working with both the strengths and weakness of the business. (Textbook B, pp. 12 & 37)*

Following this definition the authors describe the role of middle-level management as fundamentally to guide and inspire lower level management to achieve the goals of the business effectively. Middle-level managers are by definition important as the link between top management and lower management. By implication therefore the manager/manageress who occupies this position must be competent, knowledgeable and hardworking as their particular leadership role is crucial in achieving the goals of the company. In Textbooks A and B the authors have consciously chosen to depict male

figures as examples of middle management leaders. Complementing the depiction of top-level management, men are once more given as examples of successful, competent and knowledgeable leadership, with no corresponding examples in either textbook of women in such a role .

Chris Mankayi is described (p. 57) as an “exceptional” manager of a fast food restaurant in a “*busy shopping mall*”. This case study describes Mankanyi as having leadership skill that made him a success. In the case study Mankayni is quoted as saying

*I delegate a task and ensure it is correctly carried out ... time is money and therefore it's important to do a good job once. I am faced with demanding customers and demanding employees, however through the right approach I am able to calm situations.*

The case study goes on to explain how Mankanyi’s management has earned the business a number of accolades. The case study notes that under Mankanyi’s leadership the business is now expanding in various provinces throughout South Africa.

In a similar case (p. 153), the title “Creative staff management” foregrounds the “brilliant” management of Ravi Singh. The case study notes that “...*Ravi was called by his superiors and praised for the good work that he had done*”. We are told that it was Ravi who first came up with the idea that the initial plastic company should enter the market for manufacturing and selling make-up. Owner Jonas is quoted as saying that “the initial thought was outrageous but he managed to make his idea a success . The company has since opened five stores in the areas due to the demand”. A comment made by Ravi is that “I cannot be at every store but I can ensure quality and satisfaction through effective leadership. With skill and creativity anything is possible.”

This lengthy and detailed case study then goes on to describe how he created profitability and stability within the business. He thus presented as not only a competent manager but also as a team player within the organisation in working well under pressure to launch this venture.

Men were cited as examples not only of successful and inspiring middle-level leadership but also as taking a leading role in decision making in the business environment, where they occupy the vast majority of positions of power and authority. Learners who read these textbooks and encounter the success stories of male leadership figures at middle-level management may internalise the misconception of top management as an occupation exclusively for males. Such depictions in textbooks are also likely to deprive learners of role models in the economic arena. There were altogether 28 stories which illustrate men in a variety of middle management positions and leadership roles, and none where the leadership role is taken by a woman. The overwhelming message that learners will derive from these textbooks is that leadership positions are gendered.

#### **4.3.2.3 Men as sole proprietors in the business environment**

A sole proprietor is an individual who has a one-person business. Sole proprietors manage and lead their own businesses. In the representation of sole proprietorship men were characterised in both textbooks as successful and powerful owners of businesses.

In the opening page of the chapter on entrepreneurial qualities (p. 103) the authors immediately foreground the content in the subtitle they give to the chapter “*Big dreams, clear vision, energy and passion*”. Closely linked to the title is the additional foregrounding of a “*fact focus*”. Within this fact focus two iconic South African entrepreneurs, Sol Kerzener and Richard Maponya, are presented as examples of successful, passionate entrepreneurs who lead their new businesses. When students read this fact focus they are likely to associate success and power with males. The fact focus is further embellished by photographs of these two corporate powerhouses, thus reinforcing the stereotype that males are more often than not successful leaders. The use of the plural term “*businesses*” illustrates clearly that these two iconic males are successful in the corporate world and own many companies.

In the same chapter on entrepreneurial qualities the depiction of male iconic leadership figures is immediately continued (p. 104) in a lengthy case study in which real-life business tycoon leaders, Bill Gates, Henry Ford and Walt Disney are foregrounded in a “*fact focus*” as three famous successful entrepreneurs “*who persevered to overcome obstacles on their path to success*”. The fact focus describes their business success stories as “*outstanding innovation*” that is worth more than R90 billion. Bill Gates is quoted as saying that “*as a billionaire focus should not be loss, products still need to be modified and re-marketed. Businessmen like myself thrive for success and success comes from passion.*” Similarly Henry Ford and Walt Disney are described as “*powerhouse entrepreneurs with big dreams and billions more to be made*” (Textbook B, p. 104).

Women, on the other hand, are depicted by both textbooks in partnerships rather than as sole proprietors. In Textbook A (p. 115) Ina Paarman is described in a partnership with her son Graham. Together, they own a culinary business in which Ina provides 80% of the capital and exports products to Europe and the United States, while Graham manages the factory and the finances. Ina is quoted as saying, “*my son is a tremendous help, ... his dedication and insight has made us a success*” Although Ina has contributed a majority of the capital she is portrayed as not knowledgeable about business operations and therefore requiring her son to manage the business and finance operations. Furthermore Ina and her son share the profit equally irrespective of contributions in terms of capital.

In another instance (p. 123) Malie (a female name) and Sibisiso (a male name) are portrayed as partners of a clothing company that supplies high fashion to local celebrities. Malie and Sibisiso are equal partners, but Malie has contributed 60% of the capital to start the business. Moreover Sibisiso is described as being given more responsibilities. In the words of the case study: “*Sibisiso is in charge of*

*the media and publications, marketing brand promotion and finance, Malie on the other hand is in charge of designing and consultations”.*

In summary, across the two sample textbooks, males were represented 58 times as sole proprietors, with there was only one instance of a woman as a business owner – in the case of Fathima (p. 23, Textbook A) who owns a small tuck shop. With this single exception, the overall pattern was to depict women in partnerships as opposed to sole proprietorship. In the partnerships, moreover, women provide more of the capital but receive the same returns as their partner. This portrayal is likely to have a negative impact on learners as they may be induced to see and understand the world in a distorted way. Female learners are also likely to feel excluded from leadership positions since hardly any female characters are presented in the textbooks as role models for them of successful leadership.

#### **4.3.2.4 Portrayal of males as economic leaders**

In Textbook A (p. 45) the authors have made a deliberate, conscious choice to use a male economist as a high-level financial expert. Minister of Finance Pravin Gordhan is portrayed as South Africa’s national expert in the understanding of the country’s economy. Similarly in Textbook B (p., 89), chief economist Mike Schussler is cited as giving statistics of employment and unemployment in South Africa. The authors in both textbooks portray males as experts in the economic sphere, yet there are also powerful females in South African government whom the authors have not included. This is an example of what Fairclough (2003) refers to as omission. The authors could have cited women in government leadership positions but they chose to cite male economic experts in each case. The consequence of this choice is that children are exposed only to powerful, strong, capable men in economic and financial decision-making positions. Such depiction may prevent females from seeing themselves as part of the economic arena when it comes to leadership and decision making. Hence girls will be de-motivated from engaging with any economic or political issues in the study of Business Studies.

#### **4.3.2.5 Academic competence vs practical application in leadership**

Although the data shows that men were depicted in successful and powerful leadership positions more frequently than women, confirming the notion of leadership and other related business activities as a domain of males, the authors in Textbook A nonetheless provide an illustration of statistics in which females (identified by their female names) perform better than males in Business Studies (Figure 4-3). This could be taken to mean that while females excel academically, practically males are much more successful. But since the statistic is contradicted throughout the textbook by the depiction of women in low status leadership positions one can only conclude that the statistical data is provided purely for decorative purposes, with no thought on the part of the authors of communicating meaning, since learners are not invited engage in any critical analysis of the evident contradiction. Indeed the authors



themselves provide little space for critical thinking and evaluation of the gendered content in their textbooks.

Activity 8 – Statistic calculations	
Look at the following learners' Business Studies results	
Term1	%
Nokwanda Zulu	88
Priyanka Naidu	71
Sipho Mkhize	52
Lynne Willow	69
George King	35
Charles Padyachee	78
Ben Pepper	48
Mishka Govender	60
Vusi Gumede	48
Cindy Fu	88

**Figure 4-3 Textbook example showing that females excel in Business Studies**

#### **4.4 Stereotypical occupational roles for males and female.**

In both textbooks the illustrative occupations of men and of women both visually and textually exemplify stereotypical gender roles. In the analysis of these respective occupational roles the following subtopics emerged:

- women represented in traditional low status, low paid occupations
- low skilled occupations reflected as a female domain
- stereotypes define the “place” of women
- overall analysis of male and female occupations reveals negative stereotyping of women

What follows is a presentation and analysis of the data in relation to these themes.

##### **4.4.1 Women represented in traditional low-status, low-paid occupations**

Analysis of both textbooks reveals that occupations for females are represented as low status and low paid. In an example from Textbook A, Tracy Gilmore and Tracy Chambers are described as employees of an NGO called “In Aid of Women” (p. 67). Similarly in Textbook B, Susan is described as member of an NGO in support of undernourished and ill-treated dogs (p. 45). These examples not only depict nurturing and caring occupations as stereotypically “feminine” but also raise issues of remuneration. An NGO occupation is usually low paid, with low status in a hierarchy of occupations (Kang, Sang-wook, 2001). Conversely, in neither textbook are any male characters identified as NGO members. Instead, men are portrayed as dominant CEOs, managers and owners of businesses, in strong leadership positions, who are both authoritarian and assertive (p. 56, Textbook A). The

occupations ascribed to male characters in both textbooks represent them as highly paid with high status, as illustrated in the following two examples:

- *Pat Davis is a global leader who is poised for success. His CEO position earned him not only a top-ranked job but also the attention of global leaders (Textbook B, p. 53).*
- *Richard Branson turned a weak company into a brand name “Virgin Active”, making billions from 88 clubs throughout South Africa. Regarded as a man with companies and partnership throughout South Africa, Branson is destined for success (Textbook A, p. 29).*

These instances portray men in high leadership positions which have a bearing on their status and economic power. Both textbooks deliberately omit women in economic and powerful business positions. Therefore both male and female learners are less likely to be exposed to female role models in high-status or prestigious occupations.

In addition to textual accounts of females in domestic occupations, the authors also use photographs to depict low-status, low-paid occupations (Figure 4-4). These show women in stereotypically traditional female roles, predominately in the domestic sphere – such as cooking, fetching water, child-rearing activities and doing the washing – in which no remuneration is provided.



**Figure 4-4 Depictions of women in low-status occupations**

The photographs confirm the status quo which most children encounter in their families and communities at large. Across the two textbooks females were represented in domestic occupations 23 times, compared to none for men – reflecting a clear bias on the part of the authors in relation to gender roles. In both textbooks these stereotypical depictions of women in domestic settings are presented as “normal”, and at no time do the authors offer any challenge to the stereotyping. The assumption is that women are solely responsible for private sphere, nurturing and domestic occupations whereas men are responsible for high-paying, high-status occupations. Learners are therefore likely to model themselves on these examples and maintain the status quo of unequal division of labour between males and female in both private and public sectors.

#### 4.4.2 Women portrayed in low-skilled occupations

Women are depicted by the textbook authors in low-skilled occupations, one example of which is secretarial work, including (in both the textbooks) filing and answering the telephone. Even though, in today’s twenty-first century, most businesses use technology such as computers, the authors in both textbooks made a conscious choice to associate technology and innovation in the workplace with men and to depict women as doing filing, an old way of storing information (Figure 4-5). This portrays women not only as having low-level skills but also as incompetent and backward in the use of technology. Additionally women are represented as employees of a man who is portrayed as their “boss”. There are many instances where there are illustrative graphics of women answering the phone and responding with sentences such as “*Mr Mackay your meeting is at 10*” (p. 215, Book, B) or “*Mr George are you available?*” (p. 114, Textbook A). Apart from being portrayed as low-skilled, incompetent and backwards, women are also illustrated as being subservient to their male employer.



**Figure 4-5 Woman doing low-level secretarial work (Textbook A)**

Men, on the other hand, are portrayed as competent, dominant high-skilled employers and employees in political, legal and commercial occupations High-profile individuals cited as examples include:

- Dr W. Edwards Deming: a leading producer of innovative products, regarded as a leading guru in USA and Japan (p. 29 Textbook A)
- Mr Ackerman: top designer of computer software (p. 33, Textbook B)
- Abdul David: head of research (p. 49, Textbook A)
- Mike Schussler: chief economist at economist.co.za (p. 89, Textbook B)

In both the textbooks the depiction of working individuals in various occupations is skewed in favour of males, with women associated with low-status jobs and men portrayed as powerful and successful entrepreneurs. Learners who are exposed to these textbooks are likely to link secretarial work exclusively with women, reinforcing the stereotyping of “male” and “female” occupations in the business environment.

#### 4.4.3 Stereotypes defining the “place” of women

Another feature of occupational depictions in the textbooks is that the authors portray women as individuals who would *like to start* a business – in each case, businesses which the authors refer to as “small”.

- Aadiya Moonsamy would like to start a *small* samosa business and sell to a *few* supermarkets (p. 9, Textbook A).
- The case study of Zubeida Jali describes her as a person who wants to own a *small* beauty salon.
- Joy wants to start a *small* business called “Homemade Pies” ( p. 56, Textbook A).
- Sarah wants to start a *small* day-care called “ Humpty Dumpty Daycare and Playcentre”. (p. 9, Textbook A).
- Mara Jooste seeks to own a *small* bakery (p. 23, Textbook A).

This representation of women in small businesses reinforces an implicit scepticism in the textbooks about women’s competency and level of education. The examples just cited imply that women are not sufficiently skilled to own and maintain large businesses; this is a distortion of what is actually the case in society, where it would be a misinterpretation to regard one gender as economically and educationally inactive. This misrepresentation of women’s engagement with the business world is likely to leave females learners feeling marginalised and could deter them from becoming business owners of large industries. Another phenomenon that comes to the fore is the occupations that are gender stereotyped. The businesses to which women aspire in the five examples listed above are not just small businesses but also businesses which are typically female-orientated. Learners would assume that activities such as baking, beautification, cooking and taking care of children are domains for women and not men. This should not be the case; textbooks should provide a range of occupational models for both girls and boys to emulate.

#### 4.4.4 Overall representation of gendered occupations in Textbooks A and B.

**Table 4-1 Listing of gendered occupations in Textbooks A and B**

Gender-associated occupations	
Male occupations	Female occupations
Archaeologist	Teacher
Pilot	Nurse
Shop manager	Hospice worker
Principal	Shop assistant
Spy	Secretary
Doctor	Florist
Builder	Hairdresser
Mineworker	Crèche owner
CEO / manager	Housewife
Store detective	Mother
Policeman	Factory worker
Inspector	Sales women
Lifeguard	Cooking
Politician	Knitting
President	Fetching water
Accountant	Planting and watering trees
Lawyer	Attending birthdays
Engineer	Dancing
Captain	Baking
Public speaker	NGO members
Technologist	
Making furniture	
Electrical fittings	
Professional hair stylist	

Table 4-1 lists various occupations alluded to in Textbooks A and B according to whether they are given either male or female associations by the textbook authors. Closer analysis of these occupational roles indicates in each case that they reflect stereotypes of what are conventionally regarded as appropriate work for men or for women. Men are linked to occupations that are well remunerated with high prestige (pilot, dentist, CEO, manager, judge, etc.), whereas women are linked in a majority of cases with occupations which have low economic rewards (fetching water, knitting, cooking, washing dishes, etc.). These associations could have a negative impact on the attitude of learners, as the linking of occupations could lead them to think that some occupations are only for men and some only for women. Also, women are mainly depicted in a domestic setting. Learners

might internalise the idea that women are still primarily responsible for the home whereas men's responsibilities lie in the world of business. Table 4-1 also implies that most work skills are exclusively for men, and that women do not acquire the specific knowledge and skills related to prestigious occupations. Hence in the socialisation of learners who use these textbooks boys are exposed to a greater number of highly-regarded occupational role models than girls are.



**Figure 4-6 Representations of men in various occupations (Textbooks A & B)**

## **4.5 Masculine attributes as the norm for entrepreneurial success**

In both textbooks analysed the requirements indicated by the authors for entrepreneurial training are dominated by masculine features. The discussion that follows will illustrate how masculine features and traits are presented as a norm for success in entrepreneurship.

### **4.5.1 Physical endurance required for entrepreneurial success**

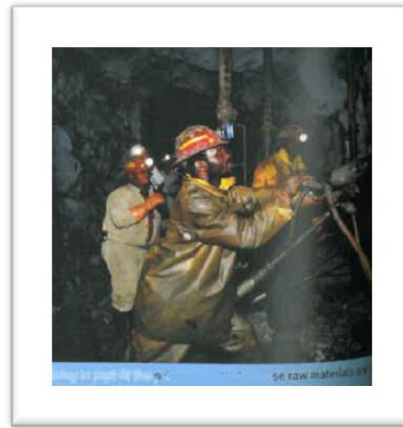
Historically, the word *stamina* comes from the ancient Greeks (Boulding, 1989; Weldon, 1997; Davies, 2000). The term has come to signify physical strength and endurance and has conventionally been regarded as a masculine trait. Even today, this concept has chiefly masculine associations. In both textbooks the authors present this concept as a key trait for entrepreneurial success, as in the phrasing: “*great physical stamina as a key trait for success*”. Thus stamina becomes a taken-for-granted trait, being presented in the two textbooks in a way that makes no attempt to problematise it; a reader is unlikely to question what is regarded as common knowledge. Closer consideration of the issue of physical stamina confirms its historical association with masculinity.

Physical stamina is given further emphasis in photographs linked to occupational roles and activities (Figure 4-7 and Figure 4-8). The authors in both the textbooks have consciously chosen to illustrate males with strength and endurance. In the two textbooks taken together the preponderance of men to

women in photographs depicting physical strength is in the ratio of 14:1, with 28 illustrations of men in physically demanding occupations and only 2 of women.



**Figure 4-7 Construction worker on the job**



**Figure 4-8 Miner on the job**

The two photographs reproduced here depict occupations which involve lifting and carrying heavy objects, working with dangerous tools, and exposure to adverse weather conditions either outside or in partly enclosed structures. Construction workers (Figure 4-7) also do a lot of bending and lifting. The photographs mark this work as masculine, and they invite the reader to infer that physical occupations such as construction work are inherently male-orientated.

Figure 4-8 shows a male miner forcefully drilling into the rock with a sledgehammer and drill. The miner is exerting a lot of energy and strength in breaking the rocks. The working conditions as shown in the picture require lots of standing, lifting, climbing and stooping in cramped quarters with tools that are dangerous. This type of occupation therefore requires workers to have physical stamina. The authors have consciously chosen in both textbooks to portray miners as male, and the photograph reinforces the conventional assumption that males are better suited for this type of occupation as they have the physical stamina to “work long and hard hours”, as depicted in the picture .

Women on the other hand are portrayed as having physical stamina in the fetching and carrying of water, a stereotypically female activity (Figure 4-9).



**Figure 4-9 Women fetching and carrying water**

Unlike their male counterparts in Figure 4-7 and Figure 4-8 the women depicted in these photographs are not remunerated for the strenuous task they are performing, or for any of their other household duties. Men, on the other hand, are portrayed in paying occupations in which their strength and endurance is recognised and appreciated. The type of stamina associated with women in the fetching and carrying of water is undervalued. This is because this task is regarded as unimportant in the economic sphere and hence no credit is given to women who perform such duties. Having to constantly fetch and carry water could severely reduce a girl's chances of getting ahead in a paying occupation. Therefore when these textbooks are used in schools, the insinuation or hidden message for learners and educators is that in order for entrepreneurs and mineworkers to be successful they have to have to be a strong, powerful individual.

#### **4.5.2 The gendered nature of time**

Historically, the role of men in society was to be the provider and the worker in a family (Foxman & Easterling, 1999; Hogben & Waterman, 1997). Men were cast in the role of working long hours while women were destined by their nature to spend long hours at home in child rearing and home keeping. In the two textbooks being analysed one of the characteristic specifically mentioned for entrepreneurial success is "*an individual's commitment to working long hard hours*". The potential reader of this text is likely to believe from the information presented in the text that in order to be successful they have to commit to working long hours. This has implications both for women who aspire to become entrepreneurs and for those who want to have their own family and children. This is because when a woman chooses to have a family (bear children) the expectation is that she is biologically limited in her options for advancing in a working career. Since society defines the family roles of women and men differently there is pressure on women to conceive, carry the child during pregnancy and give birth, all of which is likely to hinder or prevent them from undertaking entrepreneurial jobs which require commitment to long, hard working hours. Men are less likely to



experience interruptions and absenteeism in their work because biologically they do not give birth. Moreover society expects a woman to be a mother, parent and wife, which is likely to have an effect on working long hours. The authors present time as a factor for entrepreneurial success in neutral terms, but it is not neutral. The availability of time for business or entrepreneurial activity is different for men and for women. Having time to pursue success is a masculine opportunity. The authors are silent about the circumstances that limit women's ability to work long, hard hours.



**Figure 4-10 Time constraints for females (Textbook B)**

Figure 4-10 shows a photograph from Textbook B of a female learner for which the caption (in the textbook) reads: "*is time your friend or enemy*". The authors in both textbooks deliberately choose female rather than males to represent time constraints, and the facial expression of the learner in this photograph suggests the dilemma she is experiencing as she holds her books in one hand and the clock in the other. The assumption could be that this learner has other responsibilities both at school and home which cause her to look stressed and anxious. Therefore time is regarded as an enemy as she looks with dismay at the clock.

#### **4.5.3 Masculine assertiveness and "masculine calm"**

In the textbooks analysed men are illustrated as more forthright and assertive. The authors in both textbooks present this as an important character trait for entrepreneurial success. Masculine assertiveness is another taken-for-granted concept. The underlying implication suggested by the authors is that for "*dealing with demanding customers*" and "*dealing with problems calmly*" one has to have a particular type of personality. The word *dealing* has authoritarian, commanding, dictatorial overtones which means that individuals who wish to deal with demanding customers should acquire this characteristic. The authors suggest these traits in a very neutral manner, but in both textbooks there are depictions of masculine assertiveness and calm reinforcing the emphasis on masculine

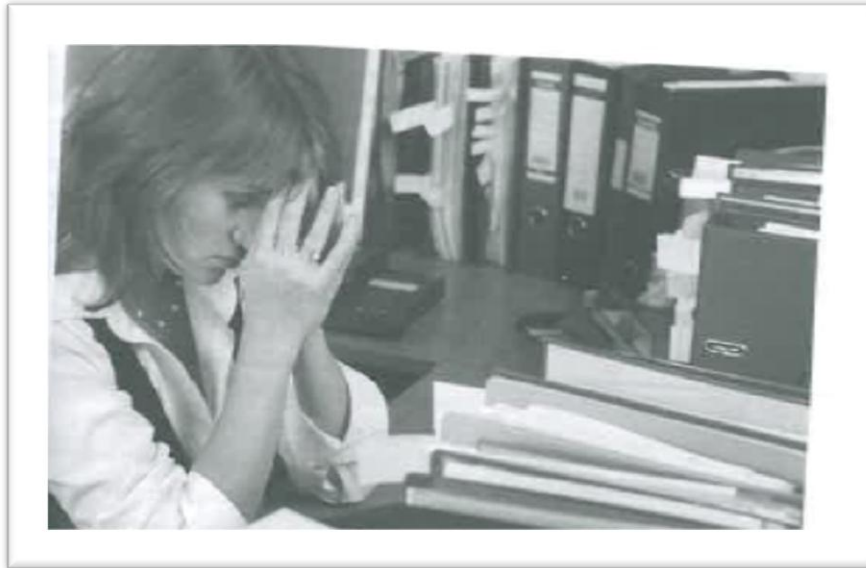
tolerance for stress when dealing with demanding customers. This trait is clearly scripted towards a male orientation.



**Figure 4-11 Sasol CEO Pat Davis exemplifying forthright assertiveness**

Figure 4-11 is a photograph from Textbook A of Sasol CEO Pat Davis in a pose that suggests assertive leadership. Davis is described as A CEO who “*tells it as it is!*” (p., 39). The case study also describes his leadership as displaying an “*aggressive yet firm approach to attain results*”. The body language of the Davis photograph illustrates his aggressiveness, forcefulness and determination to achieve success as CEO of Sasol, and its inclusion in the textbook reinforces the ideology of masculine assertiveness. The lesson that students are likely to internalise is that males are best suited to solving important issues concerning the business environment. The more learners are exposed to this type of illustration in textbooks, the more they internalise it as masculine.

In contrast to the image of male assertiveness in Figure 4-11, females are depicted as stressed, tired and hopeless. Neither of the textbooks shows stressed and weary males, but Figure 4-12 shows a woman office worker in a stereotypical state of stress and despondency in the business environment.



**Figure 4-12 Female office worker under stress**

The caption in the textbook for Figure 4-12 is “*manage your stress effectively*”. The authors have made a deliberate choice to foreground a female whose work has become uncontrollable. This image illustrates her state of despair caused by the high level of stress being experienced. The authors construct women as hopeless, incompetent and depressed without taking into consideration the complexity of womanhood. The authors consciously choose to project women as stressed and incompetent individuals.

#### **4.5.4 Men more disposed to risk taking**

In representing risk taking as an entrepreneurial phenomenon the authors constantly make reference to examples of men who have taken risks and become successful entrepreneurs. Some specific examples are those in case studies which both textbooks include:

- CEO Simon Susman who took risk in buying out owners of 76 franchise stores to make more money for his company (p. 33, Textbook A)
- Dave Kershaw, MD of Something Fishy who successfully took risk in introducing chicken in their Fish restaurant (p. 39)
- Phuthuma Nathi who initiated the risk in introducing Top TV to a new market in which he successfully raised dividend returns (p. 49)
- Siyabonga Sole who took risk in expanding his market abroad, thereby selling more than 6000 pairs of shoes in a distant market (p. 52, Textbook B)

Neither textbook makes any reference to women in risk taking. Instead the authors have consciously chosen to present women as seekers of advice in starting a business. Men, on the other hand, are

depicted exclusively as advice givers rather than advice seekers. Examples from both textbooks, in the form of activity questions, include:

- Mpho wants to invest in a clothing business; advise Mpho on the possible risks she might incur (p. 109, Textbook B)
- Fatima wants to open a restaurant near ABC food outlet; is this risk viable? (p. 114, Textbook A)
- Mrs Jones a retired school teacher has R10 000 and seeks to invest in the business of her matriculated grandson. Advise Mrs Jones on the possible risks she is likely to come across ( p. 143, Textbook B).

The authors construct women as uninformed and therefore needing expertise to help them acquire knowledge. Women are continuously and repeatedly presented as incompetent and uninformed in making business decisions and this consistent stereotyping is likely to make an impression on learners, indoctrinating them with the idea that women in the workplace will always be in a subservient position, with an especially negative affect on the self-esteem of any female learner who might aspire to invest or open a business.

#### **4.6 “Firstness” of the male noun reinforces gender bias**

Firstness refers to the mention in texts of men first before women, as if the masculine gender is more worthy than the feminine .More often than not, in the order of two words paired for sex, such as *Mr.* and *Mrs.*, *brother* and *sister*, and *husband* and *wife*, the masculine word comes first. This automatic ordering reinforces the second-place status of women and is one of the ways the power status of men is reinforced. All the instances in the two textbooks were analysed in which the two genders were mentioned together to inspect which appeared first. A count across the two textbooks taken together revealed the following: males were in first position 52 times while females were in first position only twice (see Table 4-2) – in each of the two instance being mentioned first by name: “*Sarah and Jake*” (Book A), “*Mpumsi and Phelo*” (Textbook B).

**Table 4-2 Firstness of male and female nouns/pronouns**

<b>Firstness of male noun</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
• <b>He or she</b>	10
• <b>His or hers</b>	12
• <b>Male name before female (eg. Patrick and Lisa)</b>	12
• <b>Boys and girls</b>	4
• <b>Businessmen or business women</b>	2
• <b>Men and women</b>	8
• <b>Mr and Mrs</b>	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>Firstness of female noun</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
• <b>Female name before male</b>	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>

This pattern reinforces the stereotypical notion that womanhood is a second-place status and therefore not as important the male counterpart. In both textbooks the authors reinforce the notion of masculine firstness in students' minds, so that they internalise the subordination of females to males.

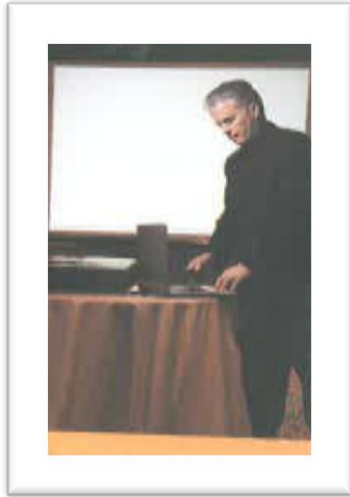
## 4.7 Men taking precedence in technology

In relation to information technology the illustrations across the two textbooks show just two examples of women as technology experts or users, set against twelve examples of men. The pictures tell a biased story about who the information technologists are in the world as well as which gender is more dominant in, knowledgeable about, and attracted to information technology. Women in the textbooks are illustrated as using charts and posters when presenting information to viewers, whereas men are illustrated as using the latest technology such as laptops, desktop computers, projectors and smart boards. The authors make no attempt to raise any questions in learners' minds about why information technology is a male-dominated sphere; they simply accept it as a norm, and in so doing they pass on that assumption to the learners who use the textbooks.

The next set of pictures (Figure 4-13) are examples that reinforce the ideology of males as experts in technology. In both textbooks we see the authors using illustrations to embellish a clear distinction that is being made between male and female usage of technological instruments in the workplace. In Picture A the authors depict a man as technologically advanced using a laptop and a smart board in making a presentation at work. In Picture B the authors depict a woman presenting her information to colleagues using a simple old-fashioned chart, reinforcing a conventional implication that women are

technologically illiterate and have yet to reach a level of expertise in the use of sophisticated technological equipment. This sends the message to learners that in the field of technology men are more competent, innovative and knowledgeable than women.

Picture A



Picture B



**Figure 4-13 Male and female levels of technological competence**

#### **4.8 Women represented in destitute situations**

Throughout the two textbooks men are depicted in the illustrations as strong, powerful, competent and successful individuals. Women, on the other hand, are presented as physically impaired and poverty-stricken individuals who are in need of support – even confined to wheelchairs in one instance, suggesting dire economic need. Both sets of textbook authors construct women as disabled, burdened and destitute, reduced to a condition of dependence. Both sets of authors portray women in destitute situations to inform learners about economic and gender inequalities in South Africa (as stated in the outcomes of the chapter on **contemporary socio-economic issues**, p. 87). However the authors do not invite learners to question why such inequalities exist; they raise issue of gender equity but merely by way of an inconsequential statement, and they fail to offer a critical perspective on such issues. The pictures and policies are merely put in the textbooks for decorative reasons, as part of the criteria for publishing the textbooks. Learners are not given the opportunity to question either the policy or the pictures. Therefore illustrating women in such destitute positions may lead female learner to believe it is their destiny to be destitute.

**Figure 4-14 Women represented as disabled and destitute (Textbook A)**



## **4.9 Conclusion**

The findings indicate that gender inequalities are evident in the current Business Studies textbooks for Grade 10 learners in relation to occupational roles, firstness of pronoun, leadership roles, technology usage and general attributes. In both text and images, women were stereotypically depicted in low-skilled and low-status work situations, and as incompetent in the usage of technology. Almost invariably, management or leadership positions were associated with men, not women. Men, in contrast, were stereotypically depicted as strong, informed risk takers in the business environment, occupying high-status, highly-paid positions – further reflected linguistically in the virtually automatic priority, or firstness, of male pronouns.

Having discussed the six main themes emerging from the data, the next section presents a synthesis of the data and the theoretical understandings.

# Chapter 5

## Summary, findings and Recommendations

### 5.1 Introduction

In the previous Chapter, I analysed the data using the CDA method discussed in Chapter 3. The purpose of this chapter is to conclude the thesis by synthesising the main arguments and to present my conclusions. This chapter begins with an overview of the study and a discussion of the research findings included in my thesis. Following the discussion of findings, some limitations of the study are addressed and suggestions are offered for addressing the challenges that emerge from the findings. Finally suggestions are provided for future research.

### 5.2 Overview of the study

The thesis has five chapters. Each has its own particular focus, but the chapters form a connected sequence through which the trends, patterns and themes of the study unfold.

**Chapter 1** introduced the study and outlined the post-apartheid context underpinning curriculum reform. A brief discussion of curriculum change was highlighted with the most ambitious, OBE, being intensively underlined. OBE, which was regarded as South Africa's "solution to the apartheid regime" as encapsulated by the new educational government, had notable "ideological significance". However, given the high failure rate of matric learners and the low literacy level of grades 1–3, the OBE curriculum was widely criticised. Many critics, such as Jansen (1995), Christie (2000) and Spady (1999), argued that OBE needed to be scrapped. After much criticism from educationalists, Minister of Education Angie Motshekga called on a task team to remedy the crisis that OBE was facing in schools. As a result a new curriculum called Schooling 2025 was put into place in 2010. According to Motshekga, OBE was not to be scrapped completely but modified. One of the major changes brought about with Schooling 2025 was the introduction of textbooks as a major teaching and learning tool used in the classroom. Textbooks were acknowledged as the vital instructional material that would now be used by teachers and learners. In this context, the present study set out to understand the nature of gender represented in a specific set of educational resources, namely the Grade 10 Business Studies textbooks, with the aim of establishing the extent to which their representation of gender meets the goals of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and portrays gender equality. Chapter 1 also stated the research question for this thesis, which was followed by a brief discussion of the research design, methodology and method used in the study. The chapter concluded with an outline of the chapters.



**Chapter 2** provided a review and analysis of literature on gender representation in textbooks and the conceptual framework employed. The review of literature, expressed in a thematic manner, was important in identifying the main academic discourses related to the topic of this study and to identify the gaps in knowledge, if any, so as to establish where this study belongs. Due to the lack of literature in South Africa, and on Business Studies textbooks in particular, I reviewed related literature internationally and in African countries that underpins this study. The literature revealed an important overall finding. Female characters (compared to males) were underrepresented in almost all textbooks in terms of occupational roles, leadership, usage of technology, firstness of noun/pronoun. The general pattern was an imbalance between male and female textbook characters.

Chapter 2 also discussed the conceptual framework and its relevance for my study. The conceptual framework used in my study was informed by gender as a social construct. Gender is seen as mutually constructed through interactions (Connell, 1987, p. 184). This chapter begins a discussion of the sex–gender distinction and the different explanations that have been given for the universal inequality between men and women. Other related concepts such as cultural capital, hegemony, ideology, patriarchy, gender as a performance, power and discourse have been infused in the discussion to illustrate how gender is a social construct and how inequalities between men and women are acted out in society.

In **Chapter 3** the focus is on the research design, methodology and method, where I justify my methodological choices. In the design section I explained that the study is a qualitative study approached from the critical paradigm. Other issues explained included the research sample and ethical considerations. I then elaborated on critical discourse analysis (CDA) as the methodological choice. Here, literature on CDA was reviewed and a rationale provided with the aim of ascertaining the relevance of the methodology to this study. Finally, Huckin’s (1997) CDA protocol was employed to analyse the data generated from the selected textbooks. This was carried out in concurrence with Fairclough’s (2003) idea of describing, interpreting and explaining the text in order to understand the role of language in the nature of gender representation in the selected textbooks.

In **Chapter 4** I presented, interpreted and analysed the data collected. Huckin’s (1997) and Fairclough’s (2003) ideas of CDA were put into practice. Each textbook was analysed independently. The process of open coding was also used when analysing and establishing themes.

Finally in **Chapter 5** the results are discussed with reference to the conceptual framework and related literature reflected in Chapter 2. In addition the summary, some limitations of the study will be addressed and implications will be mentioned for changed practices to address the challenges as acknowledged in the findings. Finally suggestions for future research are provided.

## 5.3 Discussion of findings

I discuss issues of gender representation in the selected Grade 10 South African Business Studies textbooks in an effort to understand why gender is presented the way it is in these textbooks. This discussion is presented in relation to the research questions and their implications for this study and for the broader society as well as in relation to the debates identified in the literature review. The discussion is presented thematically, similarly to the findings.

### 5.3.1 Traditional occupational roles of women

In the analysis of the two textbooks, one distinct finding revealed gender biases in occupational roles or career. This corresponds with prior research (Porreca, 1984; Peterson & Kroner, 1992; Reese, 1994; Ansary & Babii, 2003). In relation to occupational roles, the textbook authors' understanding of gender equity as presented in the two textbooks analysed appears to fall short of the principles set out in the South African Constitution and the National Curriculum Statement. The aim of the constitution, as stated in its preamble, is to "heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights" (Republic of South Africa – constitutional law, 1996, p. 1243). The gender-biased representation of occupations portrayed in the textbooks indicates that the textbook producers and other stakeholders have not moved beyond the apartheid and colonial past of South African society with regard to issues of patriarchy. Denis Lawton has argued that, like curriculum, textbooks always present a "selection from culture" (in De Castell, Luke & Luke 1989). Similarly the portrayal of women's limited roles may have a causal association with the writers' culture. A culture embodies and sustains social values attached to male or female and it shapes people's expectations about what types of jobs men and women should do and how they should behave (Yaqin, 2002). Renner (2009) believes that "the impact of this reality may affect classroom practices and restrict female learners' learning opportunities".

It can be noted from the findings that the representation of gender is not neutral; it is an act of power in our culture. Gender representation of occupational roles in the textbooks might be seen as either reflecting certain ideological values that society adheres to or a subversion of the cultural norms. Similarly, representing women in stereotypical occupational roles may be a reflection of the textbooks author's cultural norms and ideological views on gender-appropriate occupations.

Yaqin (2002) makes the point that

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 (p. 14).

Therefore the textbooks books analysed, as well as being reflections of sociocultural influences, may 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.

It was also found that men have access to a greater variety of occupational roles than women do. This finding is in line with prior research that found that men were depicted in textbooks in a greater variety of occupational roles than women were (Cawyer et al., 1994; Frasher & Walker, 1972). Women were mainly represented in positions of unpaid and unrecognised labour that sustains household economies, such as cooking, washing, housekeeping, looking after children, fetching water, stitching clothes, etc. Other unpaid occupations and low-paid jobs included NGOs and secretarial occupations. In addition women were represented in “typical” stereotypical female occupations such as being a nurse, hair stylist, florist, factory worker etc. The portrayal of women in traditional gender roles is also consistent with findings by Bason (1980, cited in Dube, 2006) who states that stereotypes tend to set up a self-fulfilling prophecy and often lead females to behave according to expectation which disempowers them and limits their ability to develop their potential to the full. Tietz (2007) concurs with the findings of Bason (1980, cited in Dube, 2006) in adding that when women are shown in fewer occupational roles that are predominately domestic, female students are not exposed to as many potential role models for their own careers. Such portrayal in the textbooks, in which boys are encouraged to view a wide range of occupational possibilities for themselves while girls are directed towards a much-narrowed range of possibilities, may impede gender equity not just in the schooling system but also in the community at large. Additionally, the implied message is that women are not suitable for a variety of occupational careers.

Textbooks further portrayed men in a wide range of highly-paid, high-status occupations such as managing directors, doctors, lawyers, etc. Men were also represented as dominant in the public setting. As a consequence of such portrayal this subtly or directly influences girls' and boys' educational and career aspirations. For instance, by portraying women mostly in the domestic sphere and men in the public setting, the books give the impression that not many women engage in paid work outside the home. By implication the findings can have a negative impact on the attitudes of young learners since it is implied that most high-skilled occupations are exclusively for males and females do not explicitly acquire the knowledge and skills related to some occupations. This finding is similar to Maluwa-Banda's (2004) observation that there was a real gap in the way curriculum materials represented women in terms of occupation.

It also has been noted that at times the presentation in the textbooks analysed do not portray the prevailing situation. This is because these ways of thinking about gender occupations as presented in the textbooks are obsolete gender stereotypes. The writers of the textbooks have presented females

having limited occupational roles because they may have been influenced by these baseless stereotypes. Hence gender stereotypes are dangerous for learners who are the target of these stereotypes because they can affect learners' self-esteem and occupational choice. If females believe them, they may become a nurse or a factory worker and may be deterred from becoming a construction owner or a miner. Michel (1986) argues that by presenting women with limited occupational opportunities there is reinforcement and perpetuation of the glass ceiling that prevents women from participating fully in corporate South Africa. Writers of textbooks are required to write textbooks that break job-stereotyped patterns for men and women. An attempt should be made by writers to break down this pattern of employment stereotyping as it has a negative effect on both boy and girl learners.

### **5.3.2 Explicit choice of male leadership figures**

In terms of leadership positions, more males have been represented in leadership positions in government, economic and corporate institutions, corresponding with prior research (Pomerence et al., 1996; Helfat, 2006; Ferguson; 2008; Thomson and Otsuji, 2008). Many male characters were depicted as successful business leaders, whereas few women were depicted in such roles. In most situations only males were depicted as top and middle level managers, sole proprietors and economic leaders. The data revealed a huge gap in terms of leadership – a 58:1 ratio of men to women. The illustration and texts implicitly show who the desired leader in the business and economic world is. Conversely, women were predominately portrayed as low-skilled workers or in occupations that are regarded as “feminine”. Through such representation girls are likely to be denied models related to leadership. Leadership roles as represented in the textbooks are taken for granted to be a monopoly of males. Ragins, Townsend, and Mattis (1998) and Timberlake (2005) argue that although many more men occupy senior leadership positions than women there are successful business leaders who are women. The failure to portray women in leadership position in textbooks contributes towards maintaining the glass ceiling faced by women in the workforce (Pomerence, Varner & Mallar, 1996).

Helfat (2006) argues that the glass ceiling reflected in textbooks continues to operate, as evidenced by the low percentages of women illustrated in top executive positions. By being excluded from the higher echelons of business textbooks, women are prevented from equally participating in society. To picture predominantly male leaders reinforces the stereotype that successful leaders are male. In fact at a subconscious level these texts are preparing boys to achieve in the market place while girls are trained to be submissive and to obey at home (Ferguson; 2008). These gender stereotypes may adversely affect even the emotional psyche of children by forcing them to perform a set pattern of behaviour pre-determined on the basis of gender discrimination in which boys are taught to associate with leadership activities and girls are confined to low-skilled activities.

The data from the findings do not however depict the reality of leadership in the South African context. There are female cabinet ministers and leaders such as Gill Markus in the business and economic setting. This is supported by the introduction by the South African government of gender-affirmative action to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions (Dudu, Mareva & Sibanda, 2008). This finding indicates that, when given a choice, authors are more likely to gender a character with leadership as male. This tendency helps to reinforce the stereotype that men make better managers and are more successful in business. Tietz (2007) therefore argues that the textbooks present an implied picture of the gendered hierarchy of our society. Textbooks currently reflect and reinforce the stereotypes and expectations of our society. If learners are exposed, for instance, to a large number leaders who are men, and only to a few women they might conclude that either there are few women leaders, or they are not worth mentioning. The textbooks do not show equality between men and women; instead they send the message that men are more important than women and that it is okay to portray women as objects. Thus the biased portrayal of leadership in textbooks may create a deleterious real world and have damaging pedagogical consequences, especially for women and girls.

### **5.3.3 Portrayal of males as technology users and experts**

The portrayal of technology in the textbooks analysed reveal a gender gap between males and females in the use of technology. The uses of technology were rigidly divided into either masculine or feminine. Men were presented as the predominant users of technology, and as more knowledgeable and competent in information technology specifically. The data reveals that men are more disposed to use the latest technology when attending business conferences. Men were more frequently seen as using technological equipment such as smart boards, computers, laptops and iPhones. Conversely women were seen as using traditional posters and charts method when presenting data. The broader implication here is that today, as in the past, men predominate in both the technological arena the economic arena as the main users of advanced technological equipment and are more technologically advanced than their female counterparts. This differentiation has implications for the status of the shown characters in the texts using the illustrated technology, such as who is capable of acquiring and using new skills in a given technology. In this regard, the textbooks seem to have failed in transmitting one of the requirements of the NCS, which is to provide equitable learning opportunities.

Sydney (2004) argues that the efforts by textbook authors to eliminate gender stereotyping of technology advancement are inadequate. He maintains that the emphasis for textbook authors is on producing textbooks as commercial products and not on equal opportunities for both male and female learners. My findings corroborate his argument as men and women have been represented stereotypically in the portrayal of technology usage. Men were portrayed as more educated and experienced than women in the use of technology. This is dangerous at many levels. By failing to take into account gender equity in the use of technological equipment, the textbook authors are likely to

promote lack of student interest in the training and exploration of technological progress, both at school and at work. Moreover such representation echoes gender-biased and culturally skewed messages about unequal opportunities for male and female learners (Tietz, 2007).

However it should be noted that although the situation that has been depicted is based on traditional thinking, it is not static and changes with time. Women are now acquiring advancement in technology. Writers should respond to this changing trend by depicting the usage of technology by women. Such portrayal would do much to redress our books' gender imbalance, which distorts our society and culture. Boys, too, need to be disabused of the idea that technology is the preserve of "macho" masculinity. This would create role models for girls on which to base their aspirations as technology users and experts.

### **5.3.4 Representation of women in destitute positions**

Destitution can be understood to refer to people who lack the basic means for human existence, and are therefore extremely poor, because of personal factors such as wrong choices, underdeveloped coping skills, family situations, etc., or because of social factors, where society abuses people, breaking them down, deserting and abandoning them, or because they are marginalised. In addition the condition of being destitute causes a range of personal and social problems, ranging from a breakdown in self-image, to inability to break out of the vicious cycle of poverty.

In the two textbooks women were represented pictorially and in the text as destitute – disabled and hopeless. In an effort to make learners aware of the prevailing economic situation in South Africa the authors have consciously chosen to use females to depict people in a state of destitution. Not only have the authors used women to illustrate the unemployment situation in South Africa, they have gone step further and portrayed women in wheelchairs and in a poverty-stricken predicament. Men, on the other hand, were not represented as destitute and hopeless either in text or pictures; instead they were seen as competent individuals with high status, in highly-paid occupations. This does not however reflect the true situation in South Africa. According to Statistics South Africa (2012) there is an almost equal number of men and women in a state of destitution in South Africa, including the unemployed and the disabled. One possible reason as to why the authors have not reflected the true gender reality of the destitute could be the social construction process. This process not only shapes how the writer enters into society but it also influences his own psychic processes, his desires and impulses as to which gender should be portrayed as destitute. Moreover this representation not only entrenches stereotyped gender roles but also promotes disempowerment of women for meaningful contribution to national development (Renner, 2009). 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, possibly being left destitute.

### **5.3.5 Masculine attributes as norm for entrepreneurial success**

The two textbooks analysed described entrepreneurship education as an occupation exclusively dependent on masculine traits. Men were attributed with traits of physical endurance, openness to risk taking, working long and hard, and having masculine assertiveness and masculine calm. These masculine features and traits were presented as a norm for success. These findings are similar to what has been reported by Lee and Collins (2008, p. 129) who assert that there is widespread gender stereotyping, with males possessing a wider range of positive entrepreneurial traits such as “successful risk taking, dealing with demanding customers and so forth”. Women however, are portrayed mainly as having nurturing personalities with traits of hopelessness such as being “emotional, stressed and weak”.

In the representation of physical stamina males were depicted as strong, energetic individuals who occupied a variety of occupations. They were portrayed as hardworking and dedicated individuals. In the depiction of such traits women were represented as having stamina when fetching water while carrying their infant on their back. This portrayal showed the traditional stereotypical occupational role associated with women. The activity of fetching water is a domestic chore related to women, especially in rural areas. Water is needed for household duties such as cooking, washing, cleaning for which women are mainly responsible. Moreover the remuneration associated with the task of water fetching should be taken into account: men are remunerated for having stamina and endurance whereas females are not given any salary. Female occupations such as fetching water are degraded, low-status occupations. This is a subtle way of transmitting bias by suggesting that females are invisible in the corporate world.

Blumerg (2008, p. 345) argues further 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”. And he adds that “stereotypes of [the occupational roles] 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” (Blumerg 2008, p. 347). Therefore it is important that textbook authors and educators are properly trained and educated on gender-related issues in school textbooks. Guidelines and training should be adequately provided in order for males and females to receive equitable opportunities.

Another personal trait that the textbooks included as important for entrepreneurial success was commitment to working long hours. Due to the child-rearing activities that women engage in, men

were seen as having an advantage in achieving economic success. The textbook presented women as not having time and men as “having all the time in the world”. A critical analysis of this trait revealed that apart from having child rearing obligations women have other household duties and therefore are less likely to work long, hard hours. This is presented as a barrier to gender equality. This finding suggests a perpetuation of patriarchal elements in the representations of males and females that engender male dominance, visibility, superiority and inclusion, and female invisibility, subordination, and exclusion. Jones, Kiteku and Sunderland (1997) noted that inclusion and exclusion in the classroom impact on motivation and learning. Therefore such representations of females and males in the textbooks are not likely to help in achieving gender equality in and through education.

Other traits mentioned for entrepreneurial success were masculine calm and masculine assertiveness and risk taking. Back and Back (1991, p. 27) define assertiveness as “standing up for your own rights in such a way that you do not violate another person’s rights and expressing your needs, wants, opinions, feelings and beliefs in direct, honest and appropriate ways.” In the presentation of masculine calm and masculine assertiveness men were portrayed as dealing with customers more forthrightly and assertively than women. Women were represented as stressed and emotional. Both text and pictures portrayed women as unable to handle stress or customer demands. Portraying females as unable to lead due to lack of assertiveness and calm may have an adverse effect on the aspirations of women to lead. By implication, females may lose interest in taking up assertive positions economically. Davies (1995) raised concerns that the pegging of a gendered personality may have an adverse effect on a learner’s development when students begin to accept and enact a certain gendered personality. Sprague (1999) asserted that authors unknowingly pass on knowledge from textbooks that can contain hidden concepts perpetuated by specific gender ideologies, hence reinforcing gender bias.

Another stereotypical trait required for entrepreneurial success is risk taking. Men were presented as successful due to their ability to take risks, with a number of case studies where men’s succeed as risk takers, and none where women are presented as risk takers. Conversely females were depicted as seekers of advice from their male counterparts. This heavily biased picture of who the successful risk takers and decision makers are in the business world is likely to give greater encouragement to male learners to take risks in business than it would to female learners. The textbook also projects the idea that women are less likely to be able to make independent decisions. Clarkson (1997) argues that this stereotypical personality trait needs to be addressed by textbook authors. Kariba and Masinjila (1997) concur, stating that the textbooks encouraged boys to envisage a wider range of possibilities for themselves, while girls are directed to a narrower range of possibilities, almost all centred on obedience and a domestic context. This outcome has hindered the development of learners’ critical and emotional capacity to be aware of gender bias and gender stereotyping portrayals in textbooks (Kabira and Masinjila, 1997).



### **5.3.5.1 Firstness of male noun**

“Firstness” refers to the positioning of the male noun or pronoun ahead of the female noun or pronoun in sentences and conversation. Males took firstness 52 times in the two textbooks, and females just twice. Females were consistently relegated to second place after males, making men seem superior and more important than women. This reflects another part of the hidden curriculum in learning materials that fosters polarised gender identities and promotes gender inequality. These findings suggest what has been described as discursive marginalisation of discourse partners, especially, females, which indicates male dominance and an engendering of female stereotypes as trivial or unimportant (Sano, Iida and Hardy, 2001). Hartman and Judd (1978) maintain that such automatic ordering reinforces the second-place status of women which reflects women as unimportant and minor. Adding to the findings of Hartman and Judd (1978), Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (2003, p. 34) assert that the traditional order of mention which is often found in texts reflects a widespread perception of male supremacy: “let us keep a natural order and set the man before the women.” In some texts males also initiate more dialogues than females. It is therefore important to eliminate sexism in the language use in order to provide an environment where every pupil can learn on equal terms. Mills (1995, p. 95) states that a gender-free language contributes to the acceptance of each human being, without dominance from one group. Hence, language determines the socio-cultural generalisations of a society and forms a part of society’s collective consciousness. The implication is that the process of manufacture of such knowledge is political and largely reliant on the choice of language.

The findings from Chapter 4 were discussed in relation to the literature. This discussion indicates that representation in the learning materials are gender-biased and gender-insensitive and would therefore not contribute towards qualitative education or gender equality among learners. Despite the efforts and the goals of the third MDGs, CEDAW, EFA (Education for All by the Year 2015), UNESCO, the Commonwealth Gender Equality Policy objectives and the South African Constitution and NSC discrimination, subordination, invisibility, degradation and exclusiveness still exist in all the textbooks. Gender discrimination, similar to the discrimination that underpinned apartheid, is still present as reflected in the textbooks. Much work needs to be done by key role players in the educational sectors to ensure gender-inclusive textbooks, which equalise the playing fields for both boys and girls.

## **5.4 Limitations of the study**

- No study is without limitation and mine was no exception. I have looked at a limited number of textbooks, and only a small selection of texts has been analysed in depth. Thus, it is not possible to make any generalisations about the results found. There may very well be other

Business Studies textbooks that live up to the policy documents in a better way than the books I have investigated.

- This study also does not examine other factors influencing inequalities between groups. Particularly, this study does not scrutinise the connection of gender and race, which has been shown to be important in previous studies. Prior studies have found that class, race, age, or other demographic characteristics do have an influence on how gender is experienced (Cranny-Francis, Waring, Stavropoulos, & Kirkby, 2003; Lorde, 2005; NietoGomez, 2005). This study makes gender its sole focus so that the effects of gender can be brought more sharply into focus.
- Although societal stereotypes perpetuate gender inequalities, individual women's lives are complex and other factors may influence why a particular woman does or does not become a business owner or lead companies. For example, a woman may choose to stay home and be "in the kitchen" rather than pursue that top managerial position. Societal stereotypes perpetuated in textbooks are just one determinant in the persistence of career barriers for women.

## 5.5 Implications for future practices

Here, I list some implications for future practices.

- This research suggests that textbooks contain gender-based implicit messages, even though no explicit linguistic features are articulated on the surface level. Awareness should be raised among students, teachers, and textbook writers of a socially constructed self that is not gender-biased.
- Curricular material for schools should be carefully selected so that gender sensitive materials are used in order to promote both gender equality and learning equity.
- Training of educators with techniques that empower them to deal with gender-biased materials appropriately and present them in an unbiased way would be useful. Workshops on gender equity issues need to be planned and implemented for teachers and school textbook writers to infuse gender issues into the curriculum from an informed point of view.
- Education in itself is never neutral (Apple, 2001). Teachers also need to bring it to the attention of their pupils that despite biases embodied in the curriculum and expressed through school text books, the social behaviour, roles and characteristics associated with boys, men, girls and women are nothing but products of gender socialisation and therefore as agents of change, they need to ascertain that their own thinking, attitudes, behaviours and mindsets are gender sensitive if they are to imbue their pupils (both girls and boys) with the idea that there

is nothing to stop them from venturing into any career field provided they have the interest, ability and opportunity.

- There is still a need for materials writers to carefully examine the textbooks they produce so that male dominance can be further reduced. This is not to suggest that writers need to carefully measure every aspect of their textbooks to ensure an even 50/50 split, for they would surely sacrifice creativity in doing so, but they need to make sure there is a fair representation in future textbooks in terms of the number of male and female characters and the amount and quality of the discourse learners are exposed to and will practise.
- Material developers and curriculum designers should pay attention to and consider the guidelines of gender-fair material development. There are several working guidelines in literature including *On Balance* (Florent & Walter, 1989), *Guidelines for Non-sexist Use of Language in NCTE Publications*, prepared by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) in 1985, and the *Guidelines for Gender-fair Use of Language* published by The Women in Literacy and Life Assembly (WILLA) in 2002 (Mukundan & Nimehchisalem 2008).

## 5.6 Recommendations for future research

Further research is recommended especially in the following areas:

- An investigation into textbook construction/writing. This can include an investigation into authors, policy, and context in the writing or construction of textbooks.
- Gender representation in other textbooks at Grade 10 level. This can include Maths, Science, Geography and various other FET band-related subjects.
- Exploration of gender representation in textbooks using other methodologies.
- An investigation of gender representation in Higher Education and FET textbooks.

## 5.7 Conclusion

Through a critical analysis of the language (both textual and visual) of the selected Business Studies textbooks, this study attempted to arrive at an understanding of the nature of the representation of gender, as well as the reasons for its representation in a particular way. The findings indicate that textbooks are gender-biased. Therefore efforts to write textbooks that are gender-inclusive have not succeeded. The textbooks under investigation reinforced gender disparity in the schooling of male and female learners. The goals of the NCS document for provision of equitable and fair education for both genders have not been realised, and the messages passed on to learners through the hidden curriculum

may affect female learners negatively. In addition, these textbooks are seen as powerful objects that deal with powerful concepts and shape what teachers teach and learners learn. Gender is therefore as explained in my conceptual framework a powerful form of social construction. Discourse has always played a great role in determining the nature of gender and in defining and supporting certain ideologies in textbooks. Therefore careful selection of curriculum material in schools needs to be undertaken in order to ensure the adoption of equitable pedagogy.

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