

## **An Educational Research on Gender and Cultural Study: Gender Representation in English Textbooks of 2013 Curriculum in Indonesia**

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**Abstract:** This study aimed at figuring out the representation of gender in English textbooks from the 2013 curriculum in Indonesia, to confirm how the government deals with gender equality and the Indonesian traditional cultures towards gender. The model of this study was content analysis research. Three series of English textbooks for senior high school students from curriculum 2013 with 1361 characters and 429 pictures were analyzed. The characters data were identified, classified and coded into a male and female division based on six aspects from Brugeilles & Cromer (2009), while the pictures were simply classified into a male or female category. Then, percentages and inferences were presented as the discussion. The results of the study showed that some textbooks still reflected Indonesian traditional culture towards gender that dominantly presented male representation. Afterward, there was not any textbook which supported gender equality. At last, summarizing and recommendation were stated as a final statement.

**Keywords:** Gender Equality, Traditional Culture, Gender Representation, English Textbooks, Curriculum 2013

### **1. Introduction**

Education is the key aspect of human life, through education people can elevate their knowledge, attitudes, and understandings for a better development of the society. Türkkahraman (2012) assumes that the core objective of education is to maintain personal and community progression which deals with concrete and ethical proportions. In addition, the educational process is supposed to be done without any dissimilarity towards the economic background, color, sex, speech, faith, political view, and state or social root (Fredriksson, 2004). The notion is well known as education for all, where everyone has the right to get an education without any distinction for any reason (Brugeilles & Cromer, 2009). Then, education for all is becoming the concern issue in today's education. Accordingly, the topic which becomes the endless discussion related to education for all is gender equality. UNESCO (2006) postulated that gender equality is a primary human right. It is critical to cover all components of a great civilization, from reducing poverty to encouraging the healthiness, education, security and the well-being of males and females. More, gender equality connotes that males and females have the same human rights, properties, chances and securities (UNICEF, 2011). Hence, men and women and boys and

girls have equal quality, should be given equal treatment and supposed to be seen in the same right and position in all aspects of life included in educational process and design.

That is why acknowledging gender equality through education is fundamentally essential. Bursuc (2013) notes that gender-based label, inequality, and bias must be evaded in the edifying progression and scheme. Furthermore, gender bias might trigger the bad effect both for the personal and community development. The students would be frustrated and angry, and treat the unfairness for the society (Loan, et al., 2010). It assumes how important gender equality in education. On the other sides, some tribes in Indonesia have their own way of treating and seeing gender position. The traditional culture in Indonesia puts man higher position than a woman, the place of women in the family is just to deliver the baby, keep the children and handle for the housework, while a man will take over all parts of outside the house. Even more, women would never lead for any reason. The women consider to stick and retain to the principal norms of conventional Javanese culture (Ida, 2001). Thus, patriarchy culture still exists in some societies in Indonesia (JICA, 2011).

As a result, those ideas also influence the educational understanding in Indonesia. There are a long history and viewpoints which still affect the norms in Indonesia towards gender education nowadays. Education is only subjected to men, only men who need higher education (Suhaeb & Asri, 2009). Therefore, the traditions and cultural views still strongly shape the society in Indonesia in terms of gender role. In view of those conceptions, there must be an in-depth discussion on how Indonesian government deals with all thoughts of gender equality, how the government accommodates gender equality and the traditional cultures in accomplishing the conception of education for all might be an interesting topic to be concerned. Therefore, to analyze the educational design is strongly important to discover all the ideas.

One of the most important parts towards educational aspects is materials given to the students because they are the direct instructions designed with all the conceptions of education. The common material which is being used in education is presented in the form of textbooks. The textbook is the manifestation of all educational aspects that might be transferred to the students. More importantly, Loan et al. (2010) assumed that textbooks could be used to promote gender equality. Thus, analyzing the gender equality in the textbooks is a significant way in managing gender development. Accordingly, this scrutiny analyzed the textbooks which were used in Indonesia. As well, the English textbooks were chosen to be analyzed because English language teaching textbooks are significant as kits of gaining the second language and extremely valuable to uphold gender equality to improve gender fairness in life (Aydinoglu, 2014).

Next, some similar studies were conducted by several researchers, Nofal and Qawar (2015) analyzed the textbook which is used by the students in Jordan, and meanwhile, Ebadi, Salman, and Marjan (2015) accomplished the analysis for textbooks of students in Iran. In Indonesia, Darni and Abidah (2017) analyzed textbooks for elementary schools students. All the studies revealed the same results in which the proportion of male is more dominant than female. The latest curriculum which is being implemented in Indonesia is curriculum 2013 and along with 3 series of English textbooks which was also published by the government, one series is per each grade. English textbooks entitled *Bahasa Inggris 10*, *Bahasa Inggris 11* and *Bahasa Inggris 12* for senior high school students were analyzed in this study. As this

curriculum becomes the newest one, those textbooks were used widely as the main educational materials source in Indonesia.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1 Gender Equality**

Gender equality is when male and female are seen in the same position and right without any distinction for any reason. Gender equality and women's rights are points to deal with the undone discussion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and quicken worldwide growth beyond 2015 and it could be viewed in some conditions; 1) Acknowledging girls' attainment of a good edification, 2) women's financial empowerment, 3) global admission to sexual and reproductive healthiness and human rights, 4) ending the violence of women and girls, 5) women's expression, leadership and influence, 6) women's contribution in diversity and safety, and 7) women's assistance to environment sustainability (OECD, 2015). UNESCO (2006) postulated that gender equality is a primary human right. It is critical to cover all components of a great civilization, from reducing poverty to encouraging the healthiness, education, security and the well-being of males and females. More, gender equality connotes that males and females have the same human rights, properties, chances and securities (UNICEF, 2011). In short, gender equality is when men and women have an equal place in the society.

### **2.2 Education and Gender Equality**

A conceptual edification design makes girls and boys equally to be useful and empowered citizens. That is why gender-based label, inequality, and bias must be evaded in the educational process and designed (Bursuc, 2013). Also, the qualified education for all is a fundamental human right, as a security instrument and a medium for personal and societal progress. A gender-awareness learning concept is essential to make sure all gender learners of all ages get admission to excellence, significant and protective didactic chances (INNE, 2010). Further, equal opportunity for human rights between male and female in an educational system has been inserted in the concept of education for all (Brugeilles & Cromer, 2009). Hence, education is one of the best schemes in upholding gender equality.

### **2.3 Indonesian Traditional Culture towards Gender**

In Indonesia, men have a special position in the society. Men are considered the leader of the family, the worker, and the controller of decision-making authority (Westendorp, 2015). Even more, male-child has privileges in Indonesia. It is because the patriarchy culture becomes the role among the societies. Then, the male has liberty, superiority and right than females (Darni & Abidah, 2017). Furthermore, based on the research by Hayati, Emmelin, and Eriksson (2014) that there are some understandings on how men see the women position in Indonesia. The traditionalists view that man has a superior position and given a responsibility by the God as the leader. Next, the pragmatists see that men have a high place but in some conditions, they need to be covered by the women and the last is egalitarian, who think men need support from women. Therefore, a strong conception towards gender position is still rooting in Indonesian culture and society.

## **2.4 Textbooks and Gender Equality**

The textbook is the presented material of an educational program. The unfair structure of gender in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbook could be an imperceptible barrier to equality in the educational framework (Ebadi, Salman, & Marjan, 2015). The educational materials namely textbooks are key instruments of socialization that encourage morals and manners in the young populace, including distinguished gender position (Lee, 2011). Thus, the instructional textbooks and mainly the language textbooks might be the best tools which might assist the accomplishment of the gender equality in civilization (Nofal & Qawar, 2015). As a result, textbooks could be utilized as a tool in promoting gender equality.

## **2.5 Guidelines for Evaluating Gender Representation in Textbook**

In evaluating textbooks, there must be the guideline that could be used. The guideline can be formed in the type of checklist, aspects or other types. Brugeilles and Cromer (2009) hypothesize the aspects to be six aspects that could be utilized in evaluating textbooks towards gender representation. The aspects which promoted by them namely; (1) category, sex, and age of the character, (2) designations, (3) activities (actions), (4) attributes, (5) interactions (6) location in the lesson. Those aspects cover all parts of gender representation in daily life.

## **2.6 Previous Related Studies**

A similar study was conducted by Nofal and Qawar (2015). The aim of this study was to observe gender representation in one of the English language textbooks in Jordan; Action Pack 10. The study used a content analysis research. The results showed that males were dominantly presented in all aspects of life in the textbook. In Iran, Ebadi, Salman, and Marjan (2015) did the same study. The research investigated the level and categories of gender bias in Persian language textbooks entitled “Let’s Learn Persian” (Volumes 2 and 3). The quantitative and qualitative ways were used in analyzing the textbooks. The findings indicated that the textbooks were significantly imbalanced in gender image both in the texts and images. In Indonesia, Darni and Abidah (2017) analyzed nine textbooks which were primarily used by elementary school students in East and Central Java, Indonesia. The study inspected the form of gender bias in language textbooks in elementary school. The textbook was published from two different curriculums, KTSP and 2013 curriculum. The result showed that gender biased was strongly presented in elementary school textbooks in Indonesia. At all, those studies were conducted to analyze textbooks which were used and published in various countries. The model of the study was mostly qualitative analysis research. The results revealed the same that male representation is presented overvalued in all aspects of life.

## **3. Methodology**

In accomplishing this research, content analysis was used in terms of analyzing the gender representation contents in English textbooks for senior high school students from the 2013 curriculum

in Indonesia. This study aimed at finding out the representation of gender in English textbooks of curriculum 2013 to confirm on how the government deals with gender equality and the Indonesian traditional cultures towards gender in accomplishing the conception of education for all. The model of this study was content analysis research. As stated by Mayring (2014), the content analysis was conducted to finish the study in relation to text; documents, oral communication, and graphics. The focus data were characters and pictures in the English textbooks. Employing six aspects from Brugeilles and Cromer (2009) this study assessed 3 series of English textbooks from the 2013 curriculum which was also published by the government in Indonesia. The following Table (1) showed the textbooks which were analyzed:

Table 1: Data for English Textbooks of Curriculum 2013

Title	Publisher
<i>Bahasa Inggris 10</i>	The Ministry of Education and Culture Affairs
<i>Bahasa Inggris 11</i>	The Ministry of Education and Culture Affairs
<i>Bahasa Inggris 12</i>	The Ministry of Education and Culture Affairs

The procedures in doing this study were the researcher identified, classified and coded the characters data into male and or female division based on aspects and sub-aspects of gender representation that had been provided by Brugeilles and Cromer (2009), while, the picture was simply coded under the male or female category. The data were identified, classified and coded into the exact divisions of male and female based on the provided aspects. The data were displayed in the form of percentages. Also, it was demonstrated by the table to make it more understandable. Next, the researcher drew inferences based on the results that appeared, and the data were correlated with the previous related studies, and also confirmed with some issues and theories for the discussion.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

The results of the study were presented in two presentations. The first was the representation of the characters in the textbooks based on male and female divisions. The second was portrayed the data of pictures analysis of the textbooks. The last, the discussion was presented in the form of inferences.

##### 4.1 Gender Representation of Characters Analysis

Based on the analysis, there were 1361 characters in three English textbooks of curriculum 2013. Each textbook showed different representation towards male and female divisions. The textbook entitled *Bahasa Inggris 10* presented with the domination of the male character. Meanwhile, the textbooks with the titles *Bahasa Inggris 11* and *Bahasa Inggris 12* showed higher representations of female division. Table (2) would show the detailed data.

Table 2: Gender Representation under Character Analysis

Textbooks	Characters			
	Male		Female	
<i>Bahasa Inggris 10</i>	459	62%	280	38%
<i>Bahasa Inggris 11</i>	48	36%	86	64%
<i>Bahasa Inggris 12</i>	488	40%	739	60%

#### 4.2 Gender Representation of Characters Analysis

About 429 pictures were analyzed from three textbooks which evaluated. The result of the representation was different from character analysis. The textbook with the title *Bahasa Inggris 10* and *Bahasa Inggris 11* got a higher representation of male than female division. Meanwhile, the textbook entitled *Bahasa Inggris 12* organized female representation more dominant than male representation. The detailed information could be seen in Table (3).

Table 3: Gender Representation under Pictures Analysis

Textbooks	Pictures			
	Male		Female	
<i>Bahasa Inggris 10</i>	71	65%	39	35%
<i>Bahasa Inggris 11</i>	112	60%	76	40%
<i>Bahasa Inggris 12</i>	57	44%	74	56%

#### 4.3 Inferences

There are several inferences that could be drawn considering the results of the study. At first, under character analysis, the textbook entitled *Bahasa Inggris 10* indicated that the representation of gender content reflected the Indonesian traditional culture that represented male higher than female. Meanwhile, the textbooks with the title *Bahasa Inggris 11* and *Bahasa Inggris 12* did not replicate the Indonesia traditional culture. On the other hand, those three textbooks did not foster gender equality under characters analysis, because those textbooks did not encourage equal representation of gender. One gender was presented higher than the other one. Next, from picture analysis, the textbooks under title *Bahasa Inggris 10* and *Bahasa Inggris 11* portrayed the Indonesian traditional culture which presented male more dominant than female. Afterward, the textbook entitled *Bahasa Inggris 12* was not in accordance with Indonesian traditional culture. At all, from the gender equality perspective, all the textbooks also did not promote gender equality under picture analysis, because the textbooks were also presented as unequal gender representation.

Accordingly, some textbooks both under characters and pictures analysis still reflected Indonesian traditional culture. It means that the textbooks indicated the patriarchy culture in Indonesia as assumed by Darni and Abdilah (2017) and Hayati, Emmelin, and Eriksson (2014). Subsequently, all the textbooks did not uphold gender equality. It could be presupposed that the representations were not in line with the conceptions of gender equality as stated by UNESCO (2006), UNICEF (2011) and OECD (2015).

What's more, the results of the study had similarities and differences compared to the previous related studies from Nofal and Qawar (2015), Ebadi, Salman and Marjan (2015) and Darni and Abidah (2017). The textbook entitled *Bahasa Inggris 10* supported the previous related studies that males were dominantly presented. Then, *Bahasa Inggris 11* was not in line under character analysis but similar for the picture analysis with the previous related studies. After that, the textbook with the title *Bahasa Inggris 12* was dissimilar to the previous related studies both under the character and picture analysis. Another unique result related to this study is most textbooks dominantly presented female division, associating to other studies which found males were overrated in the textbooks. It means that the government in Indonesia tried to avoid the conception of the traditional view of gender understanding but still needs to cover more on how giving the equal representation of gender content in the textbooks both male and female representation.

## 5. Conclusion

Employing Brugeilles and Cromer (2009) aspects, a content analysis study was conducted to find out the representation of gender in English textbooks of curriculum 2013 to confirm on how the government deals with gender equality and the Indonesian traditional cultures towards gender in accomplishing the conception of education for all. The result of the study showed that some textbooks still reflected Indonesian traditional culture towards gender. Furthermore, there was not any textbook which supported gender equality. To sum up, both under characters and pictures analysis the textbooks were not equal in presenting the gender representation. Therefore, those textbooks did not promote gender equality in terms of representation and still need to be redesigned in accomplishing the conception of education for all. This study potentially enlightens our understanding of how we should deal with the gender equality. The government, educationalists and all stakeholders might sit together to develop the textbooks and managing gender equality in the textbooks in Indonesia in terms of representation.

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