SEX DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION:
CONTENT ANALYSIS OF
PAKISTANI SCHOOL TEXT BOOKS

Zeenatunnisa
August 1989

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

This study investigates sex-based discrimination against women in contemporary Pakistani society in the area of education. The method used is content analysis and the sample includes Urdu and English language text books taught at the secondary school level in the province of Sindh. The study proceeds on the premise that human images portrayed in text books contain implicit and explicit messages concerning women and men and their relative positions in the society. The underlying assumption is that textual images and messages do not simply reflect the value system of a society but 'subtly and indirectly help to shape social reality' (Margaret Callagher, 1981, p. 35). Education assumes strategic importance for women due to its dual role of a powerful agent of socialization and as a site of cultural production, i.e. reproduction of ideologies, and consequently its potential as an agent of social change.

The study aims to provide a critical assessment of textual content. It attempts to investigate whether educational content is serving an essentially conservative role, i.e. reflecting, reinforcing and conserving the old traditional, patriarchal values, or incorporating the changes in social values which are taking place in the process of economic development, and, as a result, helping in the reshaping of social reality. The study also seeks to highlight the gap between the State's proclaimed policy for equal participation of women in development and implementation of that policy which is reflected in the failure to bring educational content in line with policy objectives.

Pakistan: An Overview

Pakistan emerged as an independent state on August 14, 1947, when the British rule ended in the Indian subcontinent. At the time of independence, the economy was basically rural and the country had no industrial base. The State policy to develop the industrial

sector and the consequent process of urbanization had far-reaching socio-economic impact. Today 43% of the country's labour force is engaged in non-agricultural pursuits as compared to 57% working in the agricultural sector. It is still largely an agrarian society with 71% of its population living in rural areas.

Pakistan has a population of 94.73 million (1985) of which 48.4% are female. Of the total labour force, only 3.2% is female (1981 Census). The literacy rate is one of the lowest in the world: 26.17%, with a marked disparity between male literacy rate, 35.05%, and female literacy rate, 15.99% (1981 Census). Pakistan spends only 2.2% of its national budget on education.

Women in Pakistan: Today's Reality

The reality of women's condition is hidden behind the statistical indices and under the elusive category of 'house-keeping'. According to the Population Census, 1981, out of the 25.8 million women in the age group 10 and above, only 0.8 million women are working and 23.7 million are categorised as 'house-keeping' which is not considered a productive activity. These 23.7 million women who are not counted as economically active, in reality are involved in a variety of productive labour (unpaid/low-paid) in both agricultural and industrial sectors. On the farms of their husbands, sons and fathers, women do all kinds of work, sowing, cutting wheat, binding sheaves, cleaning grains, picking cotton. In family businesses, women are involved in spinning, weaving, dyeing, food-processing, embroidering, tailoring, leather work, metal work. In urban centers, women are joining the paid labour force in an increasing proportion. Especially in the big cities, women are working in government offices, trading centres, factories, in education, communication and health sectors.

Similarly, the overwhelming illiteracy rate among women (82%) hides the fact that an increasing number of females are availing themselves of whatever educational opportunities are there. From a 13% female enrolment in primary schools in 1960, the rate increased to 32% in 1982, compared to an increase in male enrolment from 45% to 63% during the same period (Govt. of Pakistan, Report of the

Pakistan Commission on the Status of Women, 1984, p.69). The low female literacy rate is due mainly to two factors: lack of educational infrastructure and parents' negative attitude towards female education. Against all odds, women nevertheless are meeting the challenge of development by an increasing participation in all spheres of life.

> The capitalization of agricultural production, the expansion of industrialization, international and national patterns of unequal development, the impact of migrant labour, inflation and education and the emergence of new classes and class conflicts all have a bearing on the position and participation of women in society. Economic imperatives in Pakistan are pushing an ever greater number of women on to the labour market while the number of educated and literate women is increasing.

> (K. Mumtaz & F. Shaheed, 1987, p.3)

This change in women's reality is taking place despite the traditional Muslim ideology of 'women's place is at home' and women's image as only housewives and mothers. The institution of 'purdah', the confining of women in the private/domestic sphere is 'in the process of being dismantled, modernization having triggered mechanisms of socio-economic change no group is able to control' (F. Mernissi, 1974, p.103).

Female Education in Pakistan: A Historical Perspective

Women's lack of access to education in Pakistan has its roots in Muslim orthodox ideology of territorial demarcation for the sexes and seclusion of women. Despite the fact that there are a number of verses in the Quran and many ahadith (sayings of the Prophet) which emphasize the importance of education in the life of every Muslim male and female, women were kept out of the centers of knowledge. As it was a religious duty of the faithful to educate the young, teaching places called maktab - where children were taught the Quran, reading and writing and mathematics - flourished in Muslim society since the advent of Islam in 609 century AD. Set up around the mosques, most of the maktab concentrated on religious training particularly in the Arabian peninsula, but in other regions (e.g. Persian, Mediterranean) there were many such centers which imparted

secular knowledge as well. The latter kind of teaching places, which took the form of today's schools and institutes of higher learning, and taught mathematics, astronomy, physics, medicine, architecture, philosophy, and history, were at their zenith in Muslim society during the period 900-1200 AD.

Theoretically open to both the sexes, there is little evidence to suggest that female children were sent to maktab in as large number as males. Parents preferred to teach their daughters privately at home. Nor did women have access to schools or institutes of higher learning. Tracing the history of medieval Muslim women, Shalaby records his disagreement with those writers who give the impression that female education was common. "Admittedly, a few took advantage of educational facilities, but there is no proof...that such learning was widespread among women" (A. Shalaby, 1952, p. 189).

In 8th Century AD, Islam came to the Indian peninsula where Hinduism had been dominant for over three thousand years, with Buddhism and Jainism emerging later. Islam had the common point with the religions originated in India that education was basically a concern of religious functionaries. But what was different in Islam was the concept of education as a religious duty and the consequent growth of maktab (teaching places). However, following the line of orthodox Muslim thought, these maktab in the Indian Subcontinent concentrated on religious training. Since in all religions, religious organizations were a male domain, women were denied access to whatever education the religious impulses spread in the region.

Under the Muslim rule in the Subcontinent, the growth of higher education outside the religious field - in warfare, trade, architecture, history, languages, literature - was "a development inspired by, paid for, and utilized by the sovereigns and their courts, the feudal chiefs and the rich merchants" (G. Myrdal, 1969, p.1630). Like religious organizations, political institutes were a male prerogative. Muslim elite education thus remained a male privilege. During the colonial period, the British authorities took an interest in secondary and higher education, but the thrust of their educational policy was to create an educated elite to serve the colonial

interests. In 1835, it was decided that all the funds for education should be employed for providing education in English language. There was no support for popular education in the vernacular. Initially, the British authorities reacted unfavourably to the subjugation of women in the Subcontinent. However, as their policy was not directed toward mass education, they made no effort to encourage female literacy.

The Muslim community in India, dominated by the orthodox school of thought, resisted the new system of western education introduced by the British. Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), an educationist and social reformer belonging to the progressive school of thought, started a campaign strongly advocating modern education among the Muslims. However, he was against the idea of sending women to school. While he believed modern education to be essential for progress of the society and for the inculcating of the values of truth, goodness and liberty in the young (males), he considered modern education to be harmful to women and advised them only to concentrate on religious training.

Thus, the attitude of even the most liberal section of the Muslim community towards female education was not different from the predominant orthodox element who was strongly opposed to the idea of educating women. The orthodox section was best represented by a religious scholar of repute and influence, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi (1868-1943), who wrote a 10-volume manual for women titled 'Bahishti Zewar' (Paradisical Ornaments) in an attempt to stem the tide of modern values and to keep Muslim women in their subservient position. "Through this book the Maulana indicated all the ways and means that could make women good and useful slaves" (M. Ali, 1988, p.59).

However, despite resistance from the orthodox religious faction, the necessity for modern education was gradually recognized by the Muslim community. The decadent values gave way to the emerging socio-economic realities. By the turn of the 20th century, the concept of educating women along modern lines had started gaining acceptance in the upper and upper-middle classes. Several of the

Muslim men, educated at the Aligarh University founded by Sir Syed Ahamd Khan, later set up women's schools and colleges.

At the time of independence (1947) the Indian subcontinent had only 16% of its population literate with a much lower female literacy. The region had inherited the legacy of colonial education, by the British, with an emphasis on higher education for urbanized upper and middle classes and a neglect of mass education.

The education system in Pakistan since independence has been characterized by three different kinds of schooling linked with social strata: indigenous maktab and madressah for the masses, missionary schools or convents (established by the British with English as a language of instruction) for the urban elite, and schools with regional language as medium set up by the government mainly catering to the middle-classes. In all three kinds of educational institutes, female enrolment has been much lower than male.

State Control of School Text Books

In Pakistan, the preparation of curricula and content, and the publication of school text books is state-controlled. The federal Ministry of Education, among other tasks, deals with curricula and content under the Bureau of Education, Curriculum, Research and Development. Text Book Boards have been set up in each province which follow the guidelines set up by the State in its education policy and carry out the publication and distribution of school text books. Any change in the curriuclum, or inclusion of fresh material have to be approved by the National Review Committe. The content of school text books in all the four provinces is the same with only minor variation in regional themes (i.e. highlighting specific characteristics/contributions of each region).

Statement of the Problem

Though the Constitution of Pakistan (1973) guarantees equality of law and opportunities to all citizens and Clause 2 of Article 25 specifically states 'There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone', while Article 34 states that 'Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life',

women in Pakistan do not have equal access to education and
employment. Shaped by religious beliefs and traditional ideology,
contemporary Pakistani society is dominated by a patriarchal value
system which relegates women to an inferior status. Through the
institution of 'purdah' women are secluded from the
economic/political mainstream. Female participation in the paid
labour force is one of the lowest in the world. However, the trend
is changing fast both in rural and urban areas and an increasing
number of women are taking up paid economic activities. Still, due
to ideological contraints the majority of women are confined to the
domestic sphere. When involved in non-domestic work, their economic
activities are restricted to either unpaid or low-paid labour.

Considering that education is an effective agent of socializa-
tion, content of education emerges as one of the key elements in
reflecting, reinforcing and reshaping society's concepts, norms,
expectations and aspirations concerning the position of woman and
man. In Pakistan,

> Female education has been emphasized as a sig-
> nificant component of the overall educational planning.
> There is specific policy to reduce the disparity between
> male and female literacy....

> (N.M. Shah, 1986, p.206)

The emphasis is on the provision of educational infrastructure
to females. The content of education has not been given due con-
sideration as a crucial factor which reinforces inequality of
opportunities to the sexes. In 1978, the National Educational Policy
recommended to review the entire curricula and text books and for
that purpose the National Review Committee was set up. However, the
main thrust of the policy makers was to ensure a curriculum content
aimed at:

> ...developing a deep and abiding loyalty to Islam and the
> ideology of Pakistan and a living consciousness of their
> spiritual and ideological identity.

> (Ministry of Information, 1981, pp.477, 490)

At the policy-making level, the issue of women's subordinate status was taken up by the State in January 1979 when the Women's Division was set up under the Federal Government with an objective to formulate policies and laws to meet the special needs of women. A reiteration of Constitutional objective (embodied in Article 34 quoted above), one of the stated functions of the Women's Division is 'to ensure equality of opportunity in education and employment and a fuller participation of women in all spheres of national life' (Women's Division, Cabinet Secretariat, Government of Pakistan, 1987, p.4). It was five years later, in 1984, that the content of education was acknowledged by the Women's Divison as one of the factors that perpetuate the subordinate images of women. Suggestions were put forth by the Commission on the Status of Women that:

> Curriculum and syllabi at all levels of education should be designed as: i) to help girls and women to imbibe self-confidence and a sense of value and; ii) to enable men to change present attitude of super ordination and to give woman her rightful place, role and function in Pakistan.
>
> (Government of Pakistan, Report of the Pakistan Commission on the Status of Women, December 1984, p. 87)

Objectives of the Study

In view of the State's acknowledgement of the importance of educational content, it is assumed that school text books would not portray images which tend to reinforce gender stratification, limiting women's participation in education and employment. However, systematic study of sex-based discrimination is essential since sexism is often hidden behind the 'givens' and unless a monitoring technique points it out, it may go unnoticed. This study attempts to analyse the content of secondary school text books with the following objectives:

1. to provide a critical assessment of female images as portrayed in the texts;

2. to investigate whether the portrayed images of women reflect the real conditions as lived by women;

3. to bring to the notice of policy makers the gap between

the proclaimed objective of the State for an equality of opportunity in education and employment and the discriminatory images found in text books which marginalize women and reinforce their subordinate position in society.

Sample

The sample contains text books used for class room instruction at the secondary school level, i.e., grades 7,8,9 & 10. Though socialization at an early age in the family (age 0-5) and at primary school level (age 5-11) has its own significance in personality development and in the formation of gendered-behaviour and expectations, I have chosen the secondary school level (age 11-18) because I think this stage is also crucial in the sense that it is the age when concepts about relations of sexuality (i.e. respective positions of women and men in society) are about to crystalize in the young minds. After finishing secondary school level, either the student drops out (in Pakistan) and enters the practical world, or else makes subject selection and pursues career-oriented higher education. In both cases, this is the stage when sexual division of labour paves the way for stratifying women and men into rigid occupational roles. Thus, I believe that the educational content at this level needs to be monitored carefully.

The sample includes Urdu and English language text books. The language text books are taken up because of the key role language plays in the structuring and representing of social reality, consequently in the process of socialization. Language is said to be a 'means of classifying and ordering the world: our means of manipulating reality' (D. Spender, 1980, p. 2). Language is the means through which we construct symbols and generate meanings. It is through the language of text books that the main body of cultural values and meanings is transmitted.

The sample consists of text books in the province of Sindh. I selected Sindh province for two reasons: firstly, I come from this province; secondly, the content analysis of school text books of the

province of Sindh has not yet been done (content analysis of text books published by Punjab Text Book Board has been carried out).

The total number of students enrolled at the secondary school level in the province of Sindh is 643399 (1984-85, Bureau of Statistics). Thus, the annual readership of the sample text books is more than half a million. However, since most of the content of text books taught at the schools throughout Pakistan is the same, the estimated readership of the sample material is 2.25 million, as the number of students enrolled at the secondary level is 2,253,298 (1981). The strength of the readership indicates the area of the influence of the content under study and thus its importance.

Sample Lessons and the Format of Content Analysis

The books contained a total of 189 lessons out of which 122 lessons were analysed. The lessons were divided into four categories: story, play, essay and biography. The themes of the lessons were coded into the following categories: religious, historical, fictional. The text was analysed according to the following:

1. Invisibility and Non-Recognition
   a) Sex ratio of human characters
   b) Themes of lessons
   c) Frequency of female/male as subjects of biography
   d) Frequency of female/male as leading characters

2. Sexual Division of Labour
   a) Occupations assigned to the sexes
   b) Occurrence of gender-associated activities

3. Stereotypes of Femininity/Masculinity
   a) Attributes assigned to female and male characters under broad categories of: intellect, character, feelings

Limitations of the Study

The study sample contained only seven text books of Urdu and English language taught at the secondary school level in the province of Sindh. Due to time constraints, it was not possible to content analyse text books of other subjects (e.g. history, social studies, Islamiyat) equally important to the socialization process. For the same reason, the sample was restricted to only Sindh province.

Ideally I would have liked to compare the images assigned to females in Pakistani text books with the traditional images of Muslim women as found in history, religion and folk literature as apparently many positive qualities traditionally attributed to Muslim women do not find a place in contemporary Pakistani educational material. The studies conducted in Muslim Arab societies give credence to this assumption. Alrabaa, while analysing Syrian school text books notes that:

> ... Nor do these texts reflect the Arab tradition well. The Arab tradition and literature have countless examples of strong, brave, wise and achieving women...The text book portrayal of the 'traditional' woman is a pale reflection. What we find in the texts is not an accurate depiction of the many roles historically assigned to (Muslim) women, but what sexist educators and text book writers have selected.
>
> (S. Alrabaa, 1984, p.347)

However, due to time constraints, as well as non-availability of material, this comparison could not be made.

Another limitation of the study concerns reliability of primary data, i.e frequency of characters, images and other variables, particularly the coding of non-quantitative data. Ideally this reliablity is achieved through the counting done by more than one person so as to overcome the coder's bias. Due to constraints of time and resources, counting and coding was done only by one person. Thus human error cannot be ruled out.

I am also aware of the criticism levelled at the studies investigating sexism through content analysis of school curricula and the media vis-a-vis their focus on the artefact itself rather than their concern with the institutional forces which produce these artefacts.

Even when the alternatives (i.e. inserting positive female images, incorporating more women in text book writers' pool) are suggested, the question is raised whether merely a change in content would bring about the desired result unless institutional power structures are changed. While not denying the validity of this question, I would argue, particularly in the context of Pakistani society, that the task of documenting and highlighting sexism in all spheres (education, employment, law, family) is of primary importance. It is through systematic studies and well-articulated and analysed hard facts that the male domination can be challenged at the fundamental level.

2. Methodology

Content analysis has been used as a method of analysis in this study.

Content of education is vitally linked to the issue of women's subservient position in society since education is one of the systems of communication through which a body of knowledge and a set of cultural values and norms are transmitted from one generation to another. In the process of communication, defined classically as 'who says what to whom, how, with what effect', communication content is 'what'. Content is of utmost importance as it is 'expressive of social relationships and institutional dynamics, and ... formative of social patterns' (G. Gerbner, 1964, p. 480). Education, however, is not a one-way, mechanical transmission from sender to the receiver. Education is a dialectic process with a potentiality for active, creative participation of the recipient. Critical investigation of educational content is essential for an understanding of women's subordination since content, a social artefact, serves as a means of reproducing and reinforcing images and ideologies relating to women and men and their respective positions in society.

Content analysis is defined as a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (B. Berelson, 1952, p. 20). As a tool for social science research, content analysis emerged in the first half of this century with the phenomenon of mass media communication. It

was first used in 1920 by the students of journalism to assess New York Times' coverage of the Russian Revolution (M. Butler & W. Paisley, 1980, p. 61). Besides its application in mass print media, content analysis was used in the field of literature. During the late 1930s Harold D. Lasswell gave a new dimension to content analysis by using it in political context while investigating propaganda techniques and public opinion. During this period the technique was applied in yet another new area, adult education (B. Berelson, 1952, p. 23). In succeeding decades, content analysis was extensively used in studying mass media communication (print media, radio, television), in analysing various aspects (e.g. readibility) of educational material, and in studying racism (treatment of minority groups).

The use of content analysis to investigate sexism first emerged in media socialization research.

> Socialization studies draw on media content, but their purpose is to reflect the values of a society as transmitted from one generation to the next or from majority group to minority group.

> (M. Butler & W. Paisley, 1980, p. 62)

As the feminist discourse gained momentum in the 1970s, research in various fields mushroomed documenting women's position and tracing various aspects of sex-based discrimination. Content analysis was found to be a useful tool in analysing both teaching material and mass media content.

The earlier definition of content analysis ('...quantitative description of manifest content...') had three underlying assumptions regarding the technique: that the study of manifest content is meaningful; that inferences about the relationship between intent and content, or between content and effect can be established; and that the quantitative description of communication content is meaningful (B. Berelson, 1952, pp. 18-20). This definition was later expanded to include qualitative aspect of content. In this study I have combined both quantitative and qualitative techniques of content analysis.

3. Organization of the Paper

The paper is divided into four chapters. **CHAPTER I** comprises three sections. The first section introduces the study with a historical note on the status of female education in the country, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, justification and limitations of the study. The second section is a brief discussion of the methodology. The third section outlines the organization of the paper.

CHAPTER II is devoted to the formulating of a conceptual framework to analyse female images in school text books as a manifestation of women's subordiantion. The term 'images', and 'socialization' as a process of learning are clarified. Concepts of **patriarchy, ideology** (gender, religion, sexuality), **sexual division of labour** and **State** as tools of analysis are discussed.

CHAPTER III presents the findings of the content analysis of the sample and gives interpretation of the data within the conceptual framework.

CHAPTER IV gives conclusions of the study.

CHAPTER II

WOMEN'S IMAGE IN TEXT BOOKS: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Sexist images portrayed in text books are one of the manifestations of subordination that women face in society:

> The books and materials used within our schools abound in crude and inaccurate images of women and men ... the inequality of the sexes is subtly maintained by providing one sex with a few tarnished images with which to make sense of the world and their place within it and by providing the other sex with a range of glorified images.
> (D. Spender & E. Sarah, 1980, pp. 25-26)

In order to analyse textual imagery, we need to explore the underlying basis of women's subordination and the various mechanisms through which it is reproduced and sustained. In this chapter, I attempt to formulate a conceptual framework to analyse female images in school text books as a manifestion of women's subordination in the context of Pakistani Muslim society, utilizing the concepts of **patriarchy, ideology** (gender, religion, sexuality), **sexual division of labour** and **State** as tools of analysis. However, before I proceed to discuss the basic concepts, I would clarify the term 'images' as used in this study.

Image can be defined as a form, sign or symbol of an object or attribute. Image is not the form in itself, rather the form as perceived by a subject. Image is 'a mediating agent between mind and world, between subject and object' (G. Roberge, 1978, p. 99). We do not perceive things as they are. Rather, we perceive signs/images and make inferences about things, about reality. Butler and Paisley distinguish two kinds of images vis-a-vis their affects on personality development - images of tasks which affect what we do; and images of the self that affect who we are in our own eyes.

> Images formed from mediated percepts become part of a woman's conception of herself. Mediated percepts of the status and abilities of other women (e.g. stereotypic

housewives) affect her image of her own status and abilities.

<div align="right">(M. Butler & W. Paisley 1980, p. 49)</div>

Female images found in school text books are viewed as portrayals of women, their attributes and their functions as perceived by male-dominated society (i.e. patriarchy).

The concept of **patriarchy** as developed within the feminist discourse refers broadly to male power and dominance over women. The term patriarchy, which literally means the rule of the father, was first used by Kate Millett in her analysis of gender relations (Sexual Politics, 1970). Patriarchy has been defined differently by contemporary feminist theorists. Radical feminists (Kate Millett, Adrienne Rich) emphasize power relations, a relationship of domination and subordination between men and women, and analyse institutions (e.g. family) through which it is sustained. Revolutionary feminists (within the radical feminist stream, like Shulamith Firestone, Mary Daly) single out women's biology (reproductive capacities) as the causative factor of women's oppression by men. Marxist feminists (Zillah Eisenstein, Heidi Hartmann) analyse the relationship between male domination and the organisation of various modes of production. The unifying element of all definitions is however the focus on power, authority and control, indicating the 'systemic character of the oppressive and exploitative relations which affect women' (A. Chhachhi, 1986, p.7).

Patriarchy, broadly defined, is power of men over women, power which ranges from being relative to absolute, depending on specific socio-economic and historical context. In almost all contemporary societies men have more power, more privileges, more space, more autonomy than women, and this imbalance in power puts women in an extremely disadvantageous position. Patriarchy, as an integrated system found across culture and over time, is established and maintained through a complex set of interlocked institutions - the family, religion, law, education and communication - and is reinforced and reproduced through the unifying mechanism of ideology.

Patriarchy has different manifestations, and more importantly, different implications for women in each culture/class context. For instance, the power and control of men over women in an eastern, developing and Muslim society (e.g. Pakistan) differs radically in its manifestations and in the mechanisms by which it is sustained from secular developed societies of the West. Again, within Pakistan, the extent and intensity of women's oppression differ from region to region: women in the tribal areas of Baluchistan and Frontier provinces are comparatively much more oppressed than the urban-based women of Sindh and Punjab provinces. Similarly, within each region, subordination of women takes different forms in different social strata.

Despite the difference in manifestations and implications of patriarchy in different culture/class context, I believe that women's subordination is universally located in four major areas as outlined by Juliet Mitchell (1971, p. 101): 1) production (women's role in economic production); 2) reproduction of children (childbearing); 3) sexuality, its regulation and control; 4) socialization of children. I include in this analysis the area of reproduction of labour force which comprises domestic/regenerational services to husband and adult members of the family. Of these sectors, reproduction of children, women's sexuality and socialization of children (as well as reproduction of labour force), are linked with the institution of family. The family, thus, is the main enclave where patriarchy is nurtured.

> The contemporary family can be seen as a triptych of sexual, reproductive and socializatory functions (the woman's world) embraced by production (the man's world) – precisely a structure which in the final stance is determined by the economy.
> (J. Mitchell, 1971, p. 148)

To me this approach of analysing women's subordination, based on the premise that patriarchy is an ideological structure relatively autonomous yet linked to the mode of production, is helpful in providing insights about women's situation in the context of

Muslim culture where control over women's sexuality is considered crucial for social stability, where women have largely been excluded from production and confined to the realm of reproduction and socialization of children.

Here, I would like to clarify the term reproduction. I do not use this term in a broader sense of reproduction of socio-economic conditions required to sustain and perpetuate a society. Rather, I utilize the term to indicate the reproduction of labour which involves bearing of children, their care and socialization as well as providing services to the adult members of society (F. Edholm et al, 1977). The concept of reproduction of labour force includes the concept of human reproduction which focuses on sexual relations, marriage and kinship in a society, or, 'those relations which circumscribe and determine the operation of fertility and sexuality, and construct the context for the bearing, care and socialization of children' (M. Mackintosh, 1981, p. 12).

To sum up, for an analysis of women's subordination, particularly in a Muslim society, I will use a concept of **patriarchy** which takes into account not only the control of women's labour but also the control of her sexuality.

> To understand the specific form that patriarchy assumes in any given social formation, one must therefore analyse the patterns of cross-sexual relations that prevail within the family as well as the household organization of labour and property ownership. The merit of this more inclusive notion of patriarchy is that it allows us to grant an autonomous significance to the ideological content of specific patriarchal systems and not simply to treat them as mere reflections of the division of labour and property.
>
> (A. Rassam, 1984, p. 126)

Patriarchal control over women in Muslim societies is carried out mainly through a strict sexual division of labour and seclusion which is reinforced by various ideologies (i.e. gender, religion and sexuality). Before proceeding to define the sexual division of labour and the above mentioned ideological concepts, I would like to briefly discuss the concept of ideology as used in this study, for I

consider ideology to be the underlying mechanism which reproduces patriarchal structures in a Muslim culture.

Ideology in a general sense is a process by which specific meanings, beliefs and practices in which human beings think and act in relation to each other and in relation to the world, gain currency in a society, get solidified in collective consciousness and are accepted by individual consciousness as 'common sense' and observable 'truths'. According to Michele Barrett the concept of ideology:

> refers to those processes which have to do with consciousness, motive, emotionality; it can best be located in the category of meaning. Ideology is a generic term for the processes by which meaning is produced, challenged, reproduced, transformed.
>
> (M. Barrett, 1986, p. 97)

The element of consciousness in the process of ideological formulation is best developed in the work of Antonio Gramsci. According to Gramsci, ideology is more than a system of ideas. Ideology has a material existence and it is embodied in the collective mode of living. Gramsci uses the concept of hegemony, referring to power, or a relationship of domination, which is secured by consent rather than by force (R. Simon, 1982, p. 21). Gramsci utilizes the concept of hegemony to

> analyse the interface of social control with various institutional structures and with a wider sense of cultural values and attitudes that go beyond the conscious control of ideas.
>
> (K. Weiler, 1987, p. 12)

Hegemony of ideology, to him, is the way in which the dominant ideology saturates as well as constitutes human consciousness. Despite this hegemony of ideology, Gramsci nevertheless views human consciousness as being capable of questioning, critiquing and transforming the dominant ideology. Ideology, thus, is not a static, monolithic body of a value system imposed from above by the ruling class, but is a continuing process of formation and transformation.

Similarly, consciousness is not a rigid, dumb, unquestioning consciousness but one with the potential for self critique and action. According to this approach hegemonic ideology is reproduced in both formal and informal material settings - family, mosque, school, work. Among these sites of cultural production, the formal apparatus of school occupies a key place for the transmission of ideology.

Of the ideologies which reinforce patriarchal relations I will first discuss **gender** ideology. The term 'gender' refers to a whole array of culturally determined variables (e.g. expectations, attributes, behaviour) associated with female and male while 'sex' denotes biologically determined constants - physiological development processes. Through the constitution of 'gender', the ideology divides humanity into two mutually exclusive categories, woman and man, ascribing specific behavioural patterns and allocating separate tasks to each category. Gender ideology serves the purpose of patriarchy by hierarchically arranging gender categories, with masculine valued over feminine.

> Although symbols of masculinity are always positive, feminine symbols are often negative or at least ambiguous. No matter how variable women's status and power, it is men who dominate the kinship system and political arena and have rights in and over women - everywhere women is 'other'.
>
> (S. Chucchiari, 1981, p. 32)

The power differential inherent in gender categories is maintained by the strategy of double standard which implies that two things, which are the same, are measured or evaluated by different standards (M. Eichler, 1980, p. 15). In the context of gender, double standard means that a specific trait, behaviour, task, is evaluated differently when applied to the categories female and male. In day-to-day human interaction, aggressiveness is respected if shown by men and condemned if displayed by women. Docility in males is considered a weakness, for females it is a virtue. Cooking for the family done by women is unrecognized and unpaid; when taken up by men (chefs) for strangers, it becomes a prized skill, well-paid.

The difference in the interpretation of the act is shifted, in the process of discourse, on to the difference of the sex, as if the difference resides in female or male being and not in the interpretation itself. The historical process of accumulating misplaced, and apparently neutral, differences has obscured the fact that the gender construct does not simply connote a 'difference', but embodies the 'division, oppression, inequality, and internalized inferiority for women' (M. Barrett, 1986, p. 83).

An important site for the construction of gender has been **religion**. Since ideology is viewed as the process by which 'meaning is produced, challenged, reproduced, transformed' (M. Barrett, p. 73), religion with its capacity to create meanings and images is in itself an ideological process. As religion permeates through the very psycho-social fabric of a society, its understanding is imperative for an analysis of gender relations:

> In order to understand, analyse and begin to change the situation of women, insight into religious issues is foundational... The values and images of culture, the myths, the stories it tells about reality, and the images and attributes with which it envisions the divine, are of fundamental significance to the role, status and image of women in that culture.
> (D.L. Eck & D. Jain, 1987, p. 13)

Religious ideologies have served as a crucial instrument in maintaining the patriarchal system by supporting the structures of dominance. Since religion touches the deeper layers of the human psyche, the images created by it have a definite impact on the lives of human beings, particularly in societies such as Pakistan which have a strong tradition of religion. Within the tradition of Islam, there exist certain concepts which have been reproduced to strengthen patriarchal control. The central concept linked to women's subordination is the concept of **sexuality**. Islam views human sexuality (both female and male) as instinctive, active, uncontrollable. Thus,

the most important problem of social life is ... how to
regulate the sexual urge into a system and prevent it
from running wild.

(S.A.A. Maududi, Purdah and the Status of
Women in Islam, Lahore, 1972, p. 145, cited
in P. Jeffery, 1979, p. 20.

The concept of active human sexuality, in its essential
neutral, or egalitarian (i.e. implying to female and male both) form
could not have served any purpose to patriarchy. Around this concept
has emerged the ideology of female sexuality as being more powerful
and destructive, identified as 'fitna' or chaos. This conceptualiza-
tion of female sexuality is epitomized in Imam Ghazali's work.

He sees civilization as struggling to contain women's
destructive, all-absorbing power. Women must be control-
led to prevent men from being distracted from their
social and religious duties. Society can only survive by
creating institutions that foster male dominance through
segregation.
(F. Mernissi, 1974, p. 32)

This segregation is achieved by demarcating public and private
territories and confining women to the private sphere (family)
through the institution of seclusion or 'purdah'. Mernissi views
territoriality as a distinctive characteristic of Muslim sexuality,

a sexuality whose regulatory mechanisms consist primarily
of a strict allocation of space to each sex ... a
specific division of labour and a specific conception of
society and power. The territoriality of Muslim sexuality
sets ranks, tasks and authority patterns.
(1974, pp. 81, 103)

Implied in territorial demarcation and sexual divison of labour
is woman's subservience to man. The subordinate position of woman
within the family is not just implied but has been made explicit in
religious ideology. It has been incorporated into the family laws of
Pakistan as part of the legal effects of a contract of marriage as
follows:

> In the absence of an agreement to the contrary, the husband has the right to guide his wife's movements and in a reasonable manner to restrain her from going out, and showing herself in public...
>
> (M. Farani, 1986, p. 104)

Thus the concept of **sexual division of labour** in Muslim culture has its roots in the religious ideology, and especially in the way female sexuality is conceptualized within that ideology. Territorially confined, women are allocated the task of socialization of children and of providing men with sexual and reproductive services in exchange for their material needs being provided for by men who have access to public territory and means of production.

The problem with the sexual division of labour is that it is not simply an allocation of separate tasks to the sexes, but that it implies a devaluation of tasks performed by women. Women's child bearing/rearing functions and the related household tasks are assumed to be a part of her nature, her biology, deespite the fact with the exception of pregnancy and childbirth, domestic activities cannot be explained in terms of biology. An important factor is that:

> all the labour that goes into the production of life, including the labour of giving birth to a child, is not seen as conscious interaction of a human being with nature, that is, a truly human activity, but rather, as an activity of nature, which produces plants and animals unconsciously and which has no control over this process.
>
> (M. Mies, 1982, p. 2)

Since women's reproductive labour carried out for her family is evaluated on different criteria - as an expression of female nature, act of obedience and duty, act of love - as compared to men's labour which is evaluated on purely economic criteria (i.e. wage), the devaluation of women's work is further reinforced.

Another characteristic of the sexual division of labour is that it changes in form with the changing mode of production while retaining its structural inequality. With the spread of cash

economy, women are increasingly pushed into the realm of economic production. However,

> In areas where both women and men work for wages, women workers tend to be segregated into certain industrial sectors, and into certain occupations within those sectors. Within these jobs, women are typically lower paid, defined as less skilled, low in hierarchy of authority and relatively poor conditions of work.
>
> (M. Mackintosh, 1981, p. 4)

Sexual division of labour, thus, embodies as well as perpetuates women's subordination. Reinforced by sexual division of labour and patriarchal ideologies, women's subordination is reproduced through socialization which takes place in material, formal/informal settings, i.e. family and school.

Socialization is a learning process which begins at birth and through which a child learns the skills, behaviour, norms and expectations considered 'appropriate' by the society. This learning takes place through various mechanisms - reinforcement, reward and punishment, modeling and identification.

> Socialization refers to the pressures - rewarding, punishing, ignoring, and anticipating - that push the child toward evoking acceptable responses.
>
> (J.M. Bardwick & E. Douvan, 1977, p. 147)

Socialization which begins at birth within the family initially through interaction with mother, then with other family members, continues in school where teachers, peers and educational content (text books) become the important socializing agents.

At the core of socialization lies gender ideology: construction of the categories of woman and man. The child is addressed either as a girl or boy and s/he is treated accordingly, that is differently. One research shows that mothers touch their infant girls more often then boys. They talk to and cuddle girls more which evoke similar responses in them: baby girls 'clung to, looked at, and talked to

their mothers more often than the little boys' (S. Goldberg et al., 1966). This differential treatment results in girls learning to be dependent, verbal, social and nurturant while boys learn to be independent, active and aggressive. According to Nancy Chodorow, the different relationship of the mother to daughters and sons reproduces nurturing capacities in females and represses the same capacities in males. She, thus, considers reproduction of mothering as the key factor in reproducing gender constructs:

> The sexual and familial division of labour in which women mother and are more involved in interpersonal, affective relations than men produces in daughters and sons a division of psychological capacities which leads them to reproduce this sexual and familial division of labour.
>
> (N. Chodorow, 1978, p. 7)

The infant's early relation to its mother sets the pace for gender division. This process of learning initially through reinforcement continues throughout childhood when children are provided with explicit instructions on appropriate behaviour. For instance, girls in Pakistani culture are told not to be noisy, not to laugh too much, not to jump/romp around, to speak softly, etc.

Along with learning through explicit/implicit behaviour, reinforcement i.e. reward/punishment (scolding, silent approval) learning at another level continues: children observe their parents, brothers and sisters, extended family members, friends, teachers and neighbours. This is cognitive learning 'when the child is able to sort out and make conceptual distinctions about the social world and herself or himself' (L.J. Weitzman, 1979, p. 153). When the child enters school, books become an important source of learning about the world outside her immediate environment. The images of women and men portrayed in books crystalize her concepts about gender and consequently her own self-image, her behaviour, her aspirations and expectations. It is through socialization that a specific set of social norms, cultural values, relationships, rules, regulations and

skills, determined by dominating ideologies, are transmitted from one generation to another.

In cross-generational transmission of ideologies and the reproduction of patriarchal structures, the State plays an important role. **State,** in a broader sense, refers to the political organisation of society. This political organization is materialized through a set of governing bodies (civil service, judiciary, army, etc.) which carry out the tasks of forming policies and making laws. Sometimes the word 'State' is used in a narrow sense referring to the institutions of government rather than the entire body politic of State. I use the term State in a broader sense encompassing the totality of political organization of society with the primary function of regulating the conflicting interests of its individual members (and groups) and of the society as a whole.

The nature of the State of Pakistan, a post-colonial society, is better understood through Alavi's analysis. He views the State in post-colonial society as relatively autonomous and

> mediating the competing interests of the three propertied classes - the metropolitan bourgeoisies, the indigenous bourgeoisie and the landed classes - while at the same time acting on behalf of all of them in order to preserve the social order in which their interests are embedded, namely, the institution of private property and the capitalist mode of production.
>
> (H. Alavi, 1973, p. 148)

The link between State and patriarchal ideologies is quite complex in the theocratic, capitalist State of Pakistan. Pakistan came into existence as a homeland for the Muslims of the Indian Subcontinent. As such, a regulatory framework based on religious (Islamic) guidelines was to be a built-in feature of the state, consented to and pursued by the Muslim community under the leadership of Jinnah.

The picture turns complex when we note that Islam as a religion and a way of life provides the Muslim community with a set of guiding principles and not many hard and fast rules. These principles, as spelled out in Quran and formulated in the Sharia (Muslim

jurisprudence), have been interpreted differently by the two forces in Muslim history: progressive and orthodox. Progressive interpretation of Islam emphasizes the dynamism inherent in Quranic teachings which allows for a logical adaptability to the changing times, while retaining the essence of Islamic teachings. Orthodox elements advocate the unchangeability of laws formulated 1400 years ago. The enforcement of regulations instituted by the State according to the orthodox interpretation of Islam (referred to as 'Islamization') can have severe implications for women. The State, with its built-in patriarchal forces, selects the area which is related to the relations of sexuality (i.e. marriage and family). Thus the Islamization process under the former regime of Zia ul Haq (1977-88) has had a retrogressive effect on women's status.

The State's use of religious ideology vis-a-vis control over women's sexuality, or the re-emergence of fundamentalist tendencies, could be explained partly as a response to the threat the changing material conditions are posing to the traditional patriarchal structures (A. Chhachhi, 1988, p. 17). Women's slow yet steady entry into male territory (paid labour force) due to economic forces is causing tension in the relations of sexuality and traditional family structure. A big gap is emerging between the ideology of territorially specified gender relations and the reality as is being lived by women in Pakistan today. The State is caught in a double bind: capitalist development requires maximum utilization of human resources, necessitating the induction of women in the labour force while the religious, patriarchal ideology dictates against women's entry into the public domain. The conflict is reflected in the State's stand towards women's participation, a stand which is nor firm and neither clearly spelled out. It could partly be for this reason that the policy measures to ensure equality of opportunities to women are not implemented fully by the State. For instance, female education has been emphasized as a significant component of the overall educational policy, yet there is

...an acute under-investment in education at the primary
level for girls in rural area and limited opportunities
for middle school education for them ...

(S. Hafeez, 1981, p. xvii)

It is to be noted that mass education has never been a high
priority item on any government's agenda due to the hold of the
feudals and aristocrats on Pakistan's politics. Both mass illiteracy
and a high female illiteracy serve the interests of a feudal
patriarchy. Prejudice against education of women is steeped in
feudal traditions. Since educational content reflects the dominant
social structures and the prevalent value system, and is an impor-
tant socialising agent, it serves as an important means by which
patriarchy and the ideologies that sustain it (e.g. sexual division
of labour, gender) are reinforced and reproduced in successive
generations. A critique of educational content, thus, is one of the
essential steps toward deconstructing the dominant structure, laying
bare its mechanism and initiating change.

In the next chapter I will present the findings of the content
analysis of school text books vis-a-vis female images and interpret
the data within the conceptual framework discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER III

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE SAMPLE AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents the findings of the study (data high-lighted in tables) and its interpretation. To make the presentation clear and well-focussed in terms of female images found subordinated to male images in a variety of ways, I have divided content analysis into three main areas:

1. **Invisibility and Non-Recognition**
   This section deals with findings which indicate under-representation or exclusion of female images from textual content. The implications of the overall invisibility of women, non-recognition of their work and devaluation of their con-tribution are discussed vis-a-vis: a) sex-ratio of human characters; b) sex-ratio of characters according to theme; c) sex-ratio of the subjects of biography; d) sex-ratio of leading characters.

2. **Sexual Division of Labour**
   This section focuses on imagery which reinforces the tradi-tional division of labour on the basis of sex. The effects of restrictive female images on educational and career aspirations and on future employment opportunities for girls are analysed. The discussion is based on the findings:
   a) occurence of occupations assigned to females and male; and
   b) occurence of activities associated with each sex.

3. **Images of Femininity/Masculinity**
   This section analyses images of personality traits associated with females and males in the study sample. Stereotyped portrayal of women as passive, docile, and emotional, and of men as active, strong and rational is viewed as a manifestation

of gender ideology which serves to maintain the existing patriarchal relations.

Poems were excluded from content analysis because of the different levels of meaning and elasticity of interpretation inherent in poetry. I further excluded those lessons which did not either contain human characters or depict social situations. The lessons were divided into four categories: biography, essay, story and play. Of the 122 lessons analysed, 26% were biographies, 35% essays, 30% were in the form of stories and 9% were categorized as plays.

1. Invisibility and Non-Recognition

a) Sex-Ratio of Human Characters

To find out the proportion of images allocated to each sex, I counted male and female characters . As shown in Table 1, 83.13% of the characters were male while only 16.87% were female.

Table 3.1 Frequency of Characters by Sex

Male	793	83.13%
Female	161	16.87%
Total	954	100 %

'Perhaps the most important image is, in fact, a non-image' (M. Gallagher, 1981, p. 72). In a population which constitutes 48.4% women (1985), 16.87% female images in educational content indicates a gross under-representation of women and amounts to a distortion of demographic reality. The absence of female images from textbookscorroborates the overall invisibility of women from Pakistani society, an invisibility which is operationalized by territorial demarcation for the sexes. As discussed in the previous chapter, the practice of sex-segregation is rooted in Muslim ideology, an ideology which conceptualizes female sexuality as endowed with disruptive power, necessitating control over women's sexuality in order to maintain social order. This patriarchal control is instituted by the device

of 'purdah'. 'Purdah', which literally means 'curtain', is not just a veil but a much more elaborate and complex set of regulations. 'Purdah' constitutes

> a comprehensive system of rules, codes of conduct, folk-ways, the principle of which is the most radical form of sex segregation and seclusion of women.
>
> (M. Mies, 1980, p. 65)

By demarcating the public and private domain, women are literally and figuratively confined to the domestic sphere. Figuratively in the sense that even where women are actively involved in non-domestic economic activities in areas like agriculture and cottage industry, they are not counted in the labour force and their activities are rendered invisible by under-reporting or by dismissing them as unpaid family helpers. Through territorial demarcation, women's sexuality as well as women's labour are controlled by patriarchy.

Not only is women's non-domestic labour ignored but their contribution in reproduction, the important tasks of the maintenance of daily life and child rearing, is also not valued. In the sample text books we find no images which signify women's contribution even in the domestic sphere, images which highlight the intrinsic value of child rearing and domestic services. Instead, the image we come across vis a vis household tasks is invariably in relation with men: women perform these tasks to serve and please their husbands. For example, in the lesson 'Tauseef ka Khwab' (Tauseef's Dream) in Urdu textbook for grades IX and X, the woman, Tauseef, is portrayed as performing household duties, keeping the house in perfect order and harmony, serving her in-laws, rearing her son, with only one aim: to please her husband, to keep him happy and to serve him selflessly because he was rich and she was poor and ordinary looking! Woman's work is portrayed, at most, as a means to achieve an end: to win husband's love.

The invisibility of women, non-recognition of their work and the implied devaluation is evident from the following:

> The power of a tribe depends upon the number of its
> menfolk. The birth of a son is, therefore, regarded as a
> great blessing for the family. The proud father announces
> the birth of a son by rifle-shots.

(Secondary Stage English, Book 2 for Class X, p. 115)

The woman who gives birth to the son, it appears from the text, is not at all worthy even of being mentioned; her feelings or condition at the birth of the child are not important (who cares if she is dying, happy, sad, proud, anxious), it is the 'proud father' who dominates the scene. The implied message is that females do not contribute to the strength of a tribe and when a girl is born, it is not a blessing for the family.

The explicit images and the implicit messages contained in educational material are incorporated by girls and boys. Though socialization and indoctrination of gender ideas begin early at home (0-5 years) and continues at primary school level (5-11), the secondary school level is also significant in the sense that this is the age (12-18) when concepts about woman and man and their respective positions, as defined by society, are crystalized in young minds. This is the time when the majority of females and males are about to enter the practical world, to assume the tasks assigned to them by the society. By making women invisible in text books, and by not recognizing the value of their work, the implicit lesson is that the world is a men's world in which women do not participate, that women contribute little, if nothing, in society.

> And once this message has been learnt, the children
> reproduce inequality. Boys begin to extend their
> horizons, to grow in self-esteem. Girls, however, learn
> to reduce their expectations, to lower their self-esteem.
> They have been persuaded to distort their own being in
> order to be consistent with the distortions which sur-
> round them.

(D. Spender, 1980, p. 20)

b) Theme of Lessons

The lessons were categorised according to their themes in order to investigate the predominance of certain themes (religious, historical, fictional and general) and the distribution of female and male images in each theme.

Table 3.2 Theme of Lessons

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Religious	23	19%
Historical	35	29%
Fictional	34	28%
General	30	24%
Total	122	100%

Table 3.3 Sex Ratio of Characters in Themes

Theme	Male	Female
Religious	89.53% (94)	10.47% (11)
Historical	80.22% (150)	19.78% (37)
Fictional	67.11% (153)	32.89% (75)
General	85.10% (97)	14.90% (17)

According to Table 3.2, religious and historical themes together constitute a substantial portion (48%) of content of the study sample. In lessons with a religious theme, the frequency of male images was 89.53% in contrast to only 10.47% female images (Table 3.3). In lessons categorised as historical, 80.22% of the images were male and 19.47% female. The occurence of twice as many female images in historical themes as in religious themes is due to only one lesson titled 'The Role of Women in the Pakistan Movement' (p.45, Secondary Stage English Book 1 for Class IX) which contains 15 female images out of the total 37 images found in 35 lessons. This lesson is atypical of the 122 lessons analysed in the seven textbooks. Excluding this lesson the distribution of female images in historical lessons is 7.4%, which is even lower than the frequency of female images found in lessons with a religious theme. Theme-wise, the highest number of female images was found in the

category of fictional (32.89%). In the lessons categorized as general (pertaining to general knowledge, scientific information), 14.9% of the images were female.

Out of eleven female images in religious thematic lessons, only two are significant: Ayesha (Prophet's wife) and Fatima (Prophet's daughter). Though the prominent women in Islam are always mentioned in relation to men, they were women of strength, wisdom and character in their own right, and some of them pursued activities outside the home. To name but a few, besides Ayesha and Fatima: (from early Islamic period, 7th-8th Century AD) Khadija, a 40-year-old widow, proposed to and married the Prophet, and was a successful business woman of Medina; Umm Salma was 'an astute political advisor to Mohammad and acted as Imam for women'; Umm Umarah, Zaynab and Safiya were warriors of great valour; Saudah was famous for her skill in fine leather work; (9th-11th Century) Queen Khayzuran wielded great power in the Arab empire; Al-Fadl established herself as a poet; Rabia Al-Adawiya of Basra achieved fame as a Sufi (Naila Minai, 1981). In 16th century India, 'Razia Sultana was a famous stateswoman who commanded her own armies in battle... Queen Nur Jehan...was renowned for her statecraft and the Emperor deferred to her rulings' (R. Morgan, 1984, p. 531).

Exclusion of women from religion and history is a manifestation of male control over knowledge.

> It is not that women have not played an equal part in history, but that men have written the history books and have focused on the problems of men: it is not that women have not generated religious thoughts, formulated political philosophies, explained society, written poetry or been artist, but that men have controlled the records for religion, philosophy, politics, poetry and art and they have concentrated on the contributions of men.
>
> (D. Spender, 1982, p. 16)

Keeping women off the record serves to maintain patriarchal control. By obliterating women's achievements, their perspectives and their strength in school curricula, the meaning is created that

women are not capable of achievements outside the domestic sphere, have no perspective of their own and are weak. This particular representation of reality, and the consequent production of meaning, in turn affect the girls' motivational level: they get little in-spiration, if any, to venture into the male territory, to realise their creative potentialities outside the realm of reproduction.

As discussed in the introductory chapter, education policy has put a lot of emphasis on religious and historical themes in the content since they aim at developing "...a living consciousness of their spiritual and ideological identity". It appears that when the policy makers talk of 'their' (referring to the students) identity, they only have in mind male students' identity. Since lessons with religious and historical themes are dominated by male characters, which may give a sense of identity to Muslim males, it is not clear how Muslim women are going to imbibe a sense of identity from these lessons. The implied message seems to be that there is no need for women to develop a sense of identity.

c) Biography

Biographies play an effective role in projecting the 'ideal human' in terms of personality behaviour, life style and achievements. By highlighting a person's life and work in textbooks, the youngsters are induced to emulate the model, inspired to follow the principles lived by the protagonist and to contribute to society in a significant way.

Table 3.4 Sex Ratio of the Subjects of Biography

Male	26	83.87%
Female	5	16.13%
Total	31	100.00%

As shown in Table 3.4, out of 31 biographies, only five were about women. From Muslim history only three women were found worthy of biography: Ayesha (Prophet's youngest wife), Fatima (Prophet's daughter), Zubeidah Khatoon (a ruler during Abbaside period). The

other two were from Western history: Florence Nightingale (nurse), Helen Keller (teacher/social worker who devoted her life to the cause of the handicapped).

The male subjects (26) of biographies appear as political leaders (Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Kamal Ataturk, Khwaja Nazimuddin), rulers (King Faisal, Caliph Umar), prophets/saints (Prophet Mohammad, Shah Abdul Latif Bhitai, Khwaja Bahauddin Zakaria, Baba Farid Ganj Baksh), soldiers (Khalid Bin Waleed, Major Aziz Bhatti, Capt. Sarwar Shaheed, Nur Khan), social reformers/ educationists/ writers/poets (Syed Ahamd Khan, Altaf Husain Hali, Allama Iqbal, Akbar Allahabadi, Syed Suleiman Nadvi, Allama Daudpota, Maulvi Abdul Haq, Raja Saheb Mahmoodabad, Pir Illahi Buksh), scientist/philanthropist (Henry Noble).

As noted in the earlier section, there have been many talented women in Islamic history who achieved prestige and fame for their accomplishments. There is no dearth of women achievers either in the later part of Muslim history or in the 20th century. Similarly, in the history of western civilization and in the contemporary West there have been innumerable women who established their names in different fields. By reproducing an abundance of positive male images, images of men who contribute in the public domain (politics, history, science, warfare, art and literature), and totally ignoring women's contribution, the ideology of territorial demarcation and the sexual division of labour is reinforced. The implied devaluation of women is internalized by the students through the process of socialization, which in turn reproduces the existing patriarchal relations.

d)   Leading Characters

The frequency of the sex of the leading characters in the lessons was counted. A leading character is defined as the figure who was most prominent, who took the decisions, dominated the situation and around whom the plot revolved. Males emerged as leading characters in 66% of the lessons while females occupied the lead in 15% of the lessons. In 23% of the lessons the situation was neutral:

it involved either both female and male as lead characters or there was no leading character.

Table 3.5 Leading Characters

Male	80	66%
Female	19	15%
Neutral	23	19%
Total	122	100%

To begin with, out of a total of 122 lessons, only 22 lessons have significant female images. In the remaining lessons, either there is no female image at all or else women are mentioned in passing, as shadowy, unknown figures. For instance in biographies of male subjects, female images appear in one sentence as mothers who reared their illustrious sons.

Out of 22 lessons (with significant female images), only 18 lessons show women as playing the leading role. Among these lessons, five are biographies of women and five lessons contain exclusively female images. The kind of situations where women play the lead are simple, homely situations. For instance, in 'Sabun Sazi' (Soap Making) a woman teaches another woman to make soap at home because it is economical; in 'Hamaray Hamsaey' (Our Neighbours) a mother teaches her daughter to help her neighbours and treat them kindly; in 'Aqwaal-e-Zareen' (Precious Quotes) a girl arranges a party for her class and the teacher asks the girls to tell quotes (words of wisdom of famous men) if they remember; in 'Hamdardi' (Sympathy) a teacher along with her pupils helps a girl whose grandmother is sick.

The remaining 12 lessons depict both female and male images out of which in three lessons men play the key role and in nine lessons women have the leading role. The titles of these lessons indicate the situations in which women take the lead: 'Shopping' where mother goes to buy groceries with her children; 'Making a Cup of Tea' where a girl who was doing her home work has to get up and make tea when some guests arrive; 'Arranging a Party' where two girls arrange a

party; 'Birthday Invitation' where a mother helps her son to write invitation letters to his friends for the party; 'A Clever Wife' where a farmer's wife was clever enough to get him (and her family) out of a dangerous situation; 'A Poor Queen' who does nothing but cry, and a magician appears to help her out of the situation; and 'Tauseef ka Khwab' (Tauseef's dream) where a wife wins the love of her husband through serving him selflessly. Except in one lesson ('A Clever Wife'), women are depicted as taking a lead in domestic situations. In 'A Clever Wife' the situation is not directly domestic, though what is at stake are the family assets, bullocks for ploughing and a cow. However, the woman is mentioned throughout as nameless 'wife' of the farmer though she plays the key role in the story: through her intelligence, ingenuity and bravery, she controls the situations and emerges as victorious.

While men invariably are the central figures in non-domestic situations (public sphere), women are not always portrayed as exerting influence in domestic situations. Of the nine lessons which depict a family situation involving parents/elders and children - situations relating to the upbringing and transmitting values, guiding the children - men dominate the scene in five lessons. In 'Achchay Kaam' (Good Deeds) it is the wise grandfather who advises the boy on good deeds, purposeful life, etc.; in 'Dignity of Work', it is an uncle who points out the dignity of labour to the boy and teaches him to respect all human beings; in 'Children and the Mirror' it is the father who tells his children that it is not physical appearance but goodness which matters; in 'Shopping', father takes the children out for shopping and tells them facts about the market place. Thus, we find that even in the household there is sexual division of labour at yet another level: women (mothers, wives, daughters) do home chores, cook, make tea, serve the family, once in a while help children with homework ('Tehrik-e-Pakistan'). Men (fathers, grandfather, uncle), more than women, assume the responsibility of moral advising, spiritual guidance, teaching higher values, transmitting knowledge/information.

Portraying men as the guiding force in children's lives totally ignores the traditional power and influence that women, being the main socializers, have over the personality and behaviour of their children. This representation of reality also does not take into account the changing role of women due to socio-economic changes taking place in the traditional patriarchal family. An important causative factor, besides industrialization, has been the massive manpower export, a phenomenon which started in the early 1970s. Around two million Pakistanis (1985) from all over the country, but mostly from underdeveloped areas, are working abroad. For instance, in Potohar area of northwest Punjab,

> which is a region of fragmented and bankrupt farms, massive numbers of men of working age have left the villages for jobs in the army, in factories all over Pakistan and, not least, as migrants initially to work in Britain and later in the Middle East.
> (H. Alavi, 1988, p. 1328)

Out-migration of men has led to an increase in decision-making power of women within the household. In an investigative article which I did for a magazine in 1984 in Mirpur, Azad Kashmir where female-headed households in middle and lower-middle class families have suddenly increased in the last decade, I found women who had never set foot outside the four walls doing the errands (associated with the male territory) traditionally done by men in Pakistani families, e.g. money transactions with the bank, paying the bills, household maintenance, and making important family decisions on issues such as budgeting and children's schooling. These examples are only to indicate that women do hold and exercise definite power within the household, and this power is increasing due to the changing socio-economic structure of the family as a result of industrialization, out-migration of men and increasing participation of women in wage-work (as will be discussed in the next section). Yet these substantial changes in women's position are not at all reflected in textual imagery. Instead, the educational content presents an insipid, lacklustre version of women's role which fails

to capture the positive attributes of mothering, the role of the mother in the making of the human being, the influence and the power of woman in child rearing and in the family affairs, much eulogized in traditional Muslim ideology and folklore.

2. Sexual Division of Labour

Learning of the tasks that are considered 'appropriate' for each sex begins early in the family when children observe what adult male and female members of the family do: father goes out to work and mother stays at home, cooks, cleans and takes care of everybody in the family. Territorially confined, women are allocated the task of the socialization of children while the provision of their material needs is considered solely the duty of the adult male. In Pakistan, girls from an early age are encouraged and often compelled to help mothers/adult females in daily chores while boys are exempted from these activities and encouraged to venture out into the male territory. This socialization into sex-ascribed tasks is reinforced in schools through textual imagery.

> The ideology of women as homemakers and men as breadwinners comes to the surface much more directly when secondary school pupils have to make their subject choices... It is at this point that the links with the sexual division of labour can be most clearly seen.
>
> (I. Payne, 1980, p. 36)

It is mainly through school text books that youngsters get an idea of various occupations of the adult world. Though factors such as individual aptitude/interest, socio-economic status, economic indicators of labour market (i.e. supply/demand) influence the realisation of vocational goals, text book content induces the pupils to aspire for a particular vocation (N. Kalia, 1979, p. 90). Occupational aspiration serves as a pre-requisite for acquisition of technical and professional skills required by the rapidly industrialising material base of a society. In order to determine to

what extent the educational content inspires girls and boys dif-
ferently vis-a-vis occupational choices, I listed the occupations
assigned to females and male.

Table 3.6 Occurrence of Occupations Assigned to Males

Occupation	Frequency	Occupation	Frequency
Prophet/saint	36	Landlord	4
Ruler/chief	23	Philosopher	3
Student	18	Minister	3
Political leader	16	Ambassador	3
Poet	15	Architect	2
Soldier/warrior	13	Merchant	2
King/prince	12	Driver	2
Educationist	11	Police	2
Scholar	8	Governor	2
Judge/lawyer	8	Astronaut	2
Scientist	8	Musician	2
Teacher	8	Guard	2
Author/editor	8	Guide	1
Director	7	Postman	1
Physician	6	Calligrapher	1
Advisor	6	Scout	1
Farmer	6	Woodcutter	1
President	6	Fisherman	1
Traveller	5	Ironsmith	1
Magician	5	Carpenter	1
Shopkeeper	4	Gardener	1

As is evident from Table 3.6, the range and diversity of oc-
cupations assigned to men is quite broad. A total of 42 different
occupations are associated with male images. The work ranges from
mental activity, combining the use of intellect and imagination
(i.e. scientist, philosopher, writer, poet), to the work which
requires physical prowess, manual skill and dexterity (e.g. woodcut-
ter, carpenter, ironsmith). Most of the occupations assigned to men
rank high on prestige and power. These images of a broad spectrum of
occupations available to men in the adult, practical, world, give
boys a better foundation to build up, to dream, and to aspire for a
future career plan. The different alternatives for work available
give them a sense of freedom to choose, and a better control over
their future life even though later they do face frustrations and

various socio-economic constraints which may not let them materialise their goals. Still, these images help the boys broaden their horizon about the world and about their own selves.

In contrast to the diversity and range of work available to men, only the following eight occupations were assigned to women:

Table 3.7 Occupations Assigned to Females

Occupation	Frequency
Social worker/activist	8
Student	5
Nurse	5
Spiritual leader	4
Advisor	3
Teacher	2
Ruler/queen	2
Secretary/typist	1

In contrast to the range and diversity of occupations assigned to men, women are seldom portrayed as involved with non-domestic, economic activities. The range of occupations assigned to women is extremely limited. Excluding ruler/queen, spiritual leader, the occupations listed above assigned to females, rank low in power and prestige. These occupations are essentially relational rather than operational, involving services to others. Vocations of social worker/activist (voluntary), advisor (moral, spiritual), do not require special training and neither are they paid. The occupations of nurse and secretary/typist have little, if any, social prestige in Pakistan and are low paid. The teaching profession is considered respectable for women, but is low-paid and has limited prospects.

Compared to the limited range of occupations assigned to females, women are portrayed more in their social roles of mother, daughter and housewife. Out of the 22 lessons which have significant female images, in 12 lessons women are portrayed either as mother, daughter or housewife, engaged in reproductive (child-rearing, life-supporting tasks). In contrast to women's predominant identification with family roles and reproductive tasks, male images have seldom been categorised as father, husband or son.

The portrayal of women mainly as mothers and housewives, or else relegating them to the low-valued, low-paid service-oriented occupations, has two important aspects. Firstly, it reinforces the existing sexual division of labour. Secondly, it reflects social reality as unchanging, petrified rather than reflecting the reality as fluid, and a dynamic process. Though the images of women as mothers and housewives in Pakistan is a reflection of social reality in the sense that the majority of women do get married and bear children, yet what is amiss is the change, the transformation which is taking place in contemporary Pakistani society. Besides being mothers and housewives, an ever increasing number of women are getting involved in paid economic activities. In addition to the reproductive tasks, women are engaged in a variety of work.

The official statistics do not give an accurate picture of female labour because of the biased and insufficient measurement criteria. According to the 1981 Census, female work participation rate was 3.2 per cent. Of the total female labour force, 39.34% were engaged in agriculture, 29.65% in services, 15.27% in manufacturing, 6.14% in retail trade and hotels, 2.39% in construction, 1.70% in transport and communication, 0.53% in business and finances (Federal Bureau of Statistics, Women in Pakistan: A Statistical Profile, 1981). Special surveys, however, give a relatively better picture of female work participation. The Labour Force Sample Survey 1983-84 indicated 11.56 per cent of female labour force, in 1984-85 it was 9.43 per cent (ILO, UN Yearbook of Labour Statistics, 1987). A much more realistic picture of female participation in labour emerges from the Census of Agriculture 1980 which shows 54.4 per cent female participation in agricultural work.

In recent years there has been an increase in rural female participation in non-agricultural 'invisible' economic activities such as weaving and handicraft production. Meanwhile, in urban centers women are entering the organised sector in increasing numbers. In one study (1979) on female work participation, 32% of all primary school teachers, 20% of all university teachers, 24% of all registered doctors, 12% of the regular employees of Pakistan

Television Corporation, 3% of all government servants in grade 16 or above, were female (N.M. Shah, 1986, p. 296).

Beside the entry of women into paid labour outside home, an increasing number of women in marginal areas of urban centers are taking up home-based work under a putting-out system:

> The continuous inflation in the cost of living in Pakistan over the last four decades has brought about a situation where a man's wage is no longer sufficient to keep the family. There was, therefore, a continuous pressure to broaden the basis of the family economy. Gradually, but steadily more and more women found their way into the urban labour force.
> (H. Alavi, 1988, p. 1329)

Since women's gradual entry into the paid labour force as a consequence of capitalist development is now a reality in Pakistan, education the girls receive must aim at preparing them for a variety of occupations according to their individual potentialities. By limiting female images to the domestic realm and to the occupational roles of nurse, teacher and social worker, the school text books do not inspire girls to pursue occupational goals. This discriminatory treatment puts women in a disadvantageous position. Once they finish high school, it is likely that they enter the paid work force. But the lack of skills, which in itself is an outcome of the lack of motivation, push them into low-hierarchy, low-paid jobs. The studies indicate that women who are engaged in paid economic activities in trade and industry are concentrated at the bottom layer of the work hierarchy. For instance, a study conducted on women in the in-dustrial sector (textile, food processing, pharmaceuticals, tobacco, etc.) in the four provinces of Pakistan showed that women were mainly involved with packing, sorting, filling, cleaning, i.e. jobs which require less training, no specialization and little contact with the machinery (S. Hafeez,1983, p. 8). The lack of skills and adequate training have severe implications for females. The role of school is important in the sense that it does not only impart (supply) the skills, but it is also the site where demand for skills is generated. The school should create motivation (demand) for

particular skills in both boys and girls by providing them with positive occupational images without discrimination.

Table 3.8 Occurrence of Activities Assigned to Males

Activities	Frequency
Advising/guiding	24
Receiving formal education/seeking knowledge	19
Helping others	16
Writing	15
Travelling	14
Political leadership	14
Administrative/managing	13
Establishing/initiating	10
Fighting wars	8
Extracurricular activities	7
Religious activities	6
Discovering/inventing	6
Teaching	5
Selling/buying	5
Farming	4
Nursing	1

As indicated in the list, the activities assigned to men are power-oriented (acquisition of power/exercising power over others). They mobilize the masses, unite the people, lead the nation, strive for freedom (in lessons with historical themes), fight wars to spread Islam, risk their lives and uphold the truth (in religious themes), solve the problems, invent things, discover beneficial ideas, explore territories, venture into space and to the moon (in lessons with general theme); overcome adversities, protect and help others, dispense justice (fictional theme), and all the while they seek knowledge, receive formal education or strive to get education and succeed. In contrast, as shown in Table 3.9, activities associated with women are service-oriented, i.e. domestic help, cooking, nursing, activities which are uninteresting, valued little by society, require no intellectual/imaginative exercise, and have no recognisable dimension of power.

Table 3.9 Occurrence of Activities Assigned to Females

Activities	Frequency
Domestic help	8
Cooking	7
Helping others	7
Child rearing	5
Advising	6
Nursing	6
Receiving formal education/seeking knowledge	4
Mobilising (socio-political)	3
Selling/buying	2
Religious activities	2
Travelling	1

The restricted range of activities assigned to females in text book content reinforces the existing sexual division of labour with its implication on career aspiration and employment opportunities. It also reflects the difference in opportunities for education. While men are frequently portrayed as receiving formal education or seeking knowledge (F=19), girls are seldom (F=4) shown involved in that activity. Biographies of men (26) put emphasis on the protagonists' efforts and desire to acquire formal education and to seek knowledge.

Eight lessons depict a teacher-student relationship, i.e., a situation indicative of formal education. Out of eight, six lessons have only male images. In three lessons boys are shown interacting with a male teacher. In 'Some Suitable Careers' the teacher discusses with the boys their future careers and gives useful information. In 'My New Class' the boys get lessons in English language and drawing. In 'Mustafa Kamal Pasha Ataturk' the teacher tells the boys about the famous leader and the boys ask questions. In the remaining three lessons, the male teacher takes the boys out for a picnic ('The Picnic'); boys visit a farm ('A Visit'); in 'Lata-if' (Jokes) the teacher shares jokes with the boys. In contrast, only one lesson depicting a teacher-student situation contains female images (lesson 'Hamdardi') in which the female teacher inquires about the absence of one pupil whose grandmother is sick. The teacher and a few girls then visit the grieved student,

call the doctor, nurse the ailing grandmother, and help in household tasks!

The absence of female images from class-room situations is conspicuous and may implicitly convey the message that girls do not go to school and that they do not necessarily have to be in schools. This image reinforces the traditional attitude towards female education (i.e. education is not important for girls) in both female and male. In addition, this discriminatory message limits educational aspirations of girls. Though an all-male class-room situation is not contrary to Pakistani reality where education is sex-segregated, particularly at secondary school level, the image is biased: girls do go to school and the schools for girls do exist. The facilities for female schooling are being upgraded, albeit slowly, and the enrolment of girls is on the rise, particularly in urban areas.

3. Stereotypes of Femininity/Masculinity

From the earlier discussion we come to know that in school textbooks women and men are portrayed in stereotypes in terms of their roles. Women, in general, are stereotypic housewives: they raise children, do household chores; men invariably are engaged in a variety of important and interesting tasks.

> ... stereotypes present interpretations of groups which conceal the 'real' cause of the group's oppressed position. Secondly, stereotypes are selective descriptions of particularly significant or problematic areas and to that extent they are exaggerations.

(T.E. Perkins, 1979)

Thus, the stereotype of housewife hides the fact that the housewife does not only raise children and perform domestic services but may also have a paid job in the labour market. The stereotype also does not give any indication of the state of dependency and powerlessness which often goes hand in hand with the status of housewife. The stereotype images in the text books not only relate to what women and men do but also to what kind of persons they are, and what their personality traits are.

To find out the character attributes, I listed the images assigned to women and men under three broad categories: intellect, character and feelings (N. Kalia, 1979). The frequency indicates the number of times a particular image was found in the text.

Table 3.10 Attributes Assigned to Males

Images	Frequency	Images	Frequency
Intellect		**Character**	
Wise	24	Brave	25
Intelligent	16	Devoted	22
Educated	14	Commanding	15
Studious	13	Perserving	15
Innovative	13	Helpful	15
Scholarly	12	Hardworking	14
Skillful	12	Honest	12
Inquisitive	11	Pious	12
Resourceful	7	Determined	10
		Popular	10
Feelings		Witty	9
Compassionate	21	Humorous	9
Loving	14	Respected	8
Kind	14	Self-sacrificing	8
Gentle	6	Strong	8
Emotional	5	Heroic	6
		Confident	5
		Just	5
		Generous	5
		Handsome	5

As is evident from the list, men do not lack in the qualities of intellect. They are wise, intelligent, educated, studious, innovative, scholarly, skillful, inquisitive and resourceful. A broad range of positive character traits are also associated with males. They emerge as brave in all kinds of dangerous and difficult situations; they are devoted to their work, principles or noble, grand causes; they are commanding, determined, strong and confident, pious and honest. They are witty and humorous and handsome too! They don't lack in feelings either: they are compassionate, loving, kind, gentle and, at times, even emotional.

In contrast, the range as well as the frequency of attributes assigned to women is narrow, as shown in the following list:

Table 3.11 Attributes Assigned to Females

Images	Frequency	Images	Frequency
Intellect		**Character**	
Educated	5	Brave	5
Intelligent	5	Helpful	6
Resourceful	5	Self-sacrificing	4
Wise	4	Confident	4
Studious	2	Generous	4
Scholarly	2	Pious	3
Skillful	2	Honest	3
		Respected	3
Feelings		Perserving	1
Emotional	19		
Loving	7		
Motherly	6		
Compassionate	6		
Kind	6		

The four most frequently found attributes of female images are in the realm of feelings. Women are portrayed as emotional (19), loving (7), compassionate (6), kind (6), in descending order, while the most frequent traits attributed to men are related to intellect and character. Thus men are brave (25), wise (24), devoted (22), intelligent (16).

> The greater number of male than female characters must have provided an edge to males in the possession of such qualities. Nevertheless the gap is too wide to give an allowance for the negligible proportion of females portraying these attributes.
>
> (M. Anwar, 1982, p. 47)

In contrast to the males' quality of intellect, the prominent attribute of female images is emotionality. Women are often portrayed as highly emotional, giving in to tears very easily in most of the situations. In lesson 'Sachchi Hamdardi' (True Sympathy), Urdu book for Class IX and X, a poor woman whose husband was being taken by the police for non-payment of bills, cries helplessly; In 'Bint-e-Bahadur Shah' (Bahadur Shah's daughter), the destitute daughter of the Mughal emperor and her 2 female companions cry off and on during their escapade; in 'Tauseef ka Khwab'

(Tauseef's dream), a poor woman whose child was taken away by a landlord cries hysterically all the time; in 'Qurtaba ka Qazi' (Judge of Qurtaba) the nanny is shown as crying throughout the play. In Urdu book for class VII, 4 lessons contain images of crying women; in book 2 for class 7, in 'A Poor Queen', the farmer's daughter bursts into tears every time she is asked to do something she cannot do.

In the portrayal of women, the images zoom in on one aspect of human personality (i.e., feelings), ignoring and undermining the attributes related to intellect and character. These images which put too much emphasis on feelings, and that too on the negative feelings of helplessness and loss of control, are internalised by the female students, creating psychological dependency. It subtly works towards lowering their self-esteem in their own eyes. The contradiction inherent in the stereotypic traits of femininity is that these ideologically desirable traits in reality handicap women, put them in a disadvantageous position in today's socio-economic context which demands confidence, achievement and problem-solving skills rather than passive-dependency and helplessness. Also, another contradiction is that the feminine characteristics assumed to be suitable for women are, in fact, considered by health care experts as mentally unhealthy!

> The stereotyped characteristics of femininity, including passive-dependent characteristics, were rated by clinicians of both sexes as less mature, less healthy, and less socially competent...
>
> (I.K. Broverman et al., 1970)

Besides the attributes of emotionality and helplessness, another characteristic of female images, which is implied rather than explicitly stated, is that of dependency. Female image in the text books are invariably portrayed in relation to men: they are either wives, mothers, daughters or sisters, a status implying socio-economic dependency. The text book images imply that women are psychologically and economically dependent beings.

The personality traits assigned to women and men in the sample study fall under the clusters of the stereotypes of femininity and masculinity. Potraying women in stereotypes (emotional, motherly, loving, kind) facilitates the socialising of girls in domesticity since these are the qualities required for dependent, homely roles. Highlighting men as wise, brave, intelligent, commanding, socializes the boys for outside activities related to economic production and positions of power. In this way, the content serves both as the site of the reproduction of gender ideology, as well as reinforcement of the same ideology ascribing specific behaviour patterns with masculine categories which are valued over feminine.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In view of the importance of education as a site of cultural production and distribution of knowledge, the study has investigated sexual discrimination against women in education by content analysing text books used for class room instructions at the secondary school level. The underlying assumption is that educational content plays a crucial role in reflecting, reinforcing and shaping the society's values, norms, expectations and aspirations concerning the position of women and men.

The text books analysed portray a world view in which men occupy the centre stage and women exist on the periphery. Only 16.87% of the human characters are found to be female. Similarly, 16.13% of the biographies have females as their subjects and in only 15% of the lessons are women shown as taking the lead. The content indicates a rigid territorial demarcation and division of labour based on sex. Men are generally portrayed in the public domain as bread-winners and women within the confines of the family as home-makers. Men have been assigned a wide range of activities; the work associated with male images involves intellect, imagination, organizational and problem-solving skills. Female images are found to be associated with nurturing, service-oriented work (e.g., housewife, teacher, nurse).

Within the family, men are shown as the main guiding force, and as the important socializing agent for children while women cook, do home chores and serve men. In the public sphere men occupy prestigious jobs and positions of power while women, when portrayed outside the home (which is rare), have access only to a very narrow range of occupations.

Personality attributes assigned to male images include qualities of intellect, character and affect. Men are portrayed as wise, intelligent, skillful, brave, determined, as well as compassionate, loving and kind. In contrast, only the qualities of affect

(emotion) are attributed to female images. Qualities of intellect and character, like wisdom, strength, bravery, and determination, are rarely found to be associated with female images. Thus, men are shown as having an integrated, fully developed personality while woman's personality emerges as fragmented, with an over-development of affect (heightened sentimentality), and no indication of intellect and character.

The discriminatory images, internalised by the students through the process of socialization, affect females in terms of what they do and what they think of themselves. The implied devaluation of women and non-recognition of their contribution in society produces a lower self-esteem in females. The stereotypic feminine traits of sentimentality and dependency portrayed as desirable for females subtly encourage women to become incompetent human beings which in turn helps to justify their inferior status, creating in them a fatalistic and deterministic approach about their own selves and about their position in society.

Exclusion of positive female images from domestic situations, such as not highlighting the mother's role in the development of the child's personality, gives a message contradictory even to Muslim ideology. In Muslim ideology the role of mother has been put on a high pedestal: it is the mother who lays the foundation for the child's moral and emotional character; the mother who teaches the child the guiding principles of life. In the text book content there are few images to substantiate this ideology. Instead, the role of woman as mother/housewife is associated only with the drudgery of housework. By omitting positive female images the content, by implication, produces an image of woman whose existence has no value, who has no power even within the household, who exercises no influence in the socialization of children, who contributes nothing either to the realm of production or reproduction. Common sense and clinical experience suggest that contradictory messages, conflicting demands, lack of information (e.g. likelihood of working outside the home) and the incorporation of a devalued image are likely to hamper the growth of female personality.

It seems that the educational content aims only at educating males, developing male personalities maximally, equipping men with skills to make the most out of their potentialities and the opportunities available to them. The content, thus, serves the interests of patriarchy by reproducing and reinforcing the ideologies which help sustain patriarchal control over women. Central to these ideologies linked with women's subordination is the ideology of human sexuality in Muslim tradition. Conceptualized as powerful, female sexuality is considered threatening to the social order, justifying control over women which is instituted through territorial demarcation and allocation of tasks.

However, the ideology of a traditional Muslim woman, confined to the four walls of the home and domestic services, is no longer a reality lived by a substantial proportion of women in Pakistan today. Besides reproduction of the labour force (child rearing and regenerational services to adult members of society) and their contribution in subsistence economy (unpaid agricultural labour), women in Pakistan are increasingly getting involved in paid economic activities both in rural and urban areas as a result of industrialization and social change. In the organized sector, women are entering non-traditional jobs, stepping into the territory which was exclusively a male domain several decades ago. The rigid, ideological territorial demarcation to segregate the sexes is corroding under the impact of socio-economic forces.

The findings show that the educational content does not reflect the emerging social reality. There are no images of women involved in productive work outside the home. Out of 122 lessons, there are only **two** images of a woman teacher! It does not reflect the real situation. Teaching is the profession where the highest number of women are to be found in Pakistan. According to the 1981 Census, of the total teachers up to the age of 25 years, 57.6% are female and 42.4% are male. (Though in the age bracket 25-59, the proportion of female teachers is 26.8% compared to 73.2% male teachers [the decline is due to the fact that women tend to leave their jobs after marriage]). In the sample text books, there is **no image** of a woman

doctor which also does not corroborate reality. Medicine is considered to be the most prestigious and desirable profession for women in Pakistan. An increasing number of female doctors and gynaecologists are found to be working in hospitals, clinics, and health care centres in urban areas. The demand for woman doctors exists due to the segregated nature of the society; women do not want to consult a male physician for health problems.

The content does not reflect the changing socio-economic role of women, a role which is no more only that of a housewife doing unpaid domestic work but a role which is expanding into the realm of production and wage work. Also, the economic forces are breaking down the traditional family structure, and the hold of the patriarch is loosening under the impact of urbanization, male-outmigration and increasing participation of women in the paid labour force. The educational content denies this reality by producing an abundance of positive male images exaggerating the power of men and undermining women's influence and contribution by restricting female images to stereotypes of housewives and passive-dependency. Thus, the content is serving essentially a conservative role, reflecting, reinforcing and conserving the decadent, patriarchal values.

As noted in Chapter I, the State in Pakistan provides constitutional guarantees for equality of law and opportunities to both sexes. The State has explicitly spelled out its objective to pursue a policy towards ensuring equality of opportunity to women in education and employment. The State's implicit interest is also to induct women into its work force, as required for capitalist development. This need can only be met by making women literate and skilled. In the area of education, it has a specific policy to reduce the enormous gap that exists between male and female literacy. The Report of the Pakistan Commission on the Status of Women in 1984 pointed out educational content as one of the key factors that perpetuate the subordinate images of women and reinforce their secondary status.

Despite the constitutional guarantees and policy objectives, the analysis of the sample text books indicates that the educational

content discriminates against women by reinforcing the sexual division of labour, which has grave implications on career aspirations and consequently on employment opportunities for females. By restricting the range of activities for females, the content fails to inspire girls to pursue occupational goals. Due to a lack of motivation, girls do not acquire the requisite skills. Later, however, they find themselves pushed into the labour market. But because they do not possess the skills, they end up in low-paid, low-hierarchy jobs. Thus, there is a big gap between policies proclaimed on paper and policies in practice. To ensure equality of opportunities to women, the policies to eliminate discrimination need to be implemented in all areas. The implementation of egalitarian policies in the area of education requires a thorough revision of the content of school text books.

The educational institutes serve not only as sites to distribute knowledge but also as sites for the production of knowledge. Knowledge is a human creation in the sense that it is human beings who give meanings to phenomena, acts and events. Just as life itself is a dynamic process, knowledge is also fluid, forming and transforming. The moment knowledge is treated as static, monolithic body of meanings, the society stagnates: its progress is halted.

Though progress or social change, when we talk in terms of relations between the sexes, is a painfully slow process requiring fundamental transformation in many areas (institutional structures, social attitudes and norms etc.), production of knowledge and the creation of meanings is one area where change can be initiated at hand, immediately and concretely. In the area of production of knowledge, besides content there are various aspects or structural determinants, e.g. administrative set-ups, hidden curricula, which need active critiquing and challenging. However, a beginning can be made at the basic level of textual content. It involves deletion of those passages from school text books which explicitly or implicitly devalue women, incorporation of positive female images, highlighting

women's contribution in both the areas of reproduction and production (family and wage work), associating a broad range of occupational activities with females.

Instead of reproducing a body of knowledge, a set of values, which have become redundant, which no longer serve to promote an egalitarian society, a new set of meanings can be generated through textual imagery. The dissemination of new, bias-free images needs to be facilitated through the creation of reading material, i.e. story books for children, fiction and comic strips for adolescents with positive female images and an egalitarian world view. Textual imagery need not conserve and reinforce the existing gender inequalities. It can reflect the changing norms by incorporating the emerging values, creating new meanings and helping to reshape the social reality.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alavi, H.   1973   'The State in Post-Colonial Societies:
                                 Pakistan & Bangladesh', Imperialism and
                                 Revolution in South Asia, K. Gough &
                                 H.P. Sharma (eds.), Monthly Press Review,
                                 London.

                       1988   'Pakistan: Women in a Changing Society',
                                 Economic and Political Weekly, India, June
                                 25.

Alrabaa, S.   1984   'Sex Division of Labour in Syrian Text
                                 Books', Prospects: Quarterly Review of
                                 Education, Vol.XIV, No.3.

Ali, M.   1988   'Bahishti Zewar and the Image of Muslim
                                 Women', South Asia Bulletin, Vol.8

Anwar, M.   1982   Images of Male and Female Role in School
                                 and College Text Books, Women's Division
                                 Government of Pakistan, Islamabad.

Bardwick, J.M.   1977   'Ambivalence: The Socialization of
Douvan, E.   Women', Women in Sexist Society: Studies in
                                 Power & Powerlessness, Gornick,V. & Moran
                                 B.K. (eds.), Basic Books Inc., New York.

Barrett, M.   1986   'Ideology and Cultural Production of
                                 Gender', Women's Oppression Today: Problems
                                 in Marxist Feminist Analysis, Verso, London.

Berelson, B.   1952   Content Analysis in Communication
                                 Research, The Free Press Publishers,
                                 Illinois, USA.

Broverman, I.K.   1970   'Sex Role Stereotypes and Clinical Judgment
et al.   of Mental Health', Journal of Consulting
                                 Psychology, 34, pp. 1-7, in A.S. Julia,
                                 'Social Values, Femininity, Development of
                                 Competence', Psychology of Women: Selected
                                 Readings, Juanita, H.W. (ed.), 1979, W.W.
                                 Norton & Co., New York.

Butler, M. &   1980   Women and the Mass Media: Source Book for
Paisley, W.   Research & Action, Human Sciences Press,
                                 New York.

Chhachhi, A.   1986   'Concepts in Feminist Theory: Consensus &
                                 Controversy', Paper presented at the
                                 Seminar: Gender in Caribbean Development,
                                 University of the West Indies, Trinidad.

	1987	'The State, Religious Fundamentalism and Women in South Asia: Conceptual Issues and Trends', in Beyond the Decade - Women's Studies & the Women's Movement: International Perspectives, ISS/Gower Publications.
Callagher, M.	1981	Unequal Opportunities: The Case of Women and the Media, UNESCO.
Chodorow, N.	1981	The Reproduction of Mothering, University of California Press, Berkeley.
Chucchiari, S.	1981	'The Origins of Gender Hierarchy', Sexual Meanings, Ortner, S.B. & Whitehead H. (eds.), Cambridge University Press, London.
Edholm, F. et al.	1977	'Conceptualizing Women', Critique of Anthropology, Vol.3, 9/10.
Eck, D. L. & Jain, D.	1987	Speaking of Faith: Global Perspectives on Women, Religion & Social Change, New Society Publishers, USA.
Eichler, M.	1980	The Double Standard: A Feminist Critique of Feminist Social Science, Croom Helm, London.
Farani, M.	1986	Manual of Family Laws in Pakistan, Lahore Law Times Publications, Lahore.
Gerbner, G.	1964	'On Content Analysis and Critical Research in Mass Communication', in People, Society & Mass Communication, Dexter, L.A. & White, D.M. (eds.), Collier MacMillan Ltd. London.
Goldberg, S. et al.	1966	'Play Behaviour in the Year-Old-Infant: Early Sex Differences', Child Development, No.40, pp.21-23 in The Longest War: Sex Differences in Perspective, 1977, Tavris, Carol & Offir, Carole (eds.), Harcourt Brace Inc., USA.
Hafeez, S.	1981	Metropolitan Women in Pakistan, Royal Book Company, Karachi.
	1983	Women in Industry, a publication of Research Wing, Women's Division, Islamabad.
Jeffery, P.	1979	Frogs in a Well, Zed Press, London.

Kalia, N.   1979   Sexism in Indian Education: The Lies
                                  We Tell Our Children, Vikas Publishing
                                  House, India.

Mackintosh, M.   1981   'Gender & Economics: The Sexual Division
                                  of Labour and the Subordination of Women',
                                  Of Marriage and the Market, CSE Books,
                                  London.

Mernissi, F.   1974   Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in a
                                  Modern Muslim Society, Schenkman
                                  Publishing Co., Massachusetts, USA.

Mies, M.   1980   Indian Women and Patriarchy, Concepts
                                  Publishing Co., New Delhi, India.

                         1982   'The Dynamics of the Sexual Division of
                                  Labour & Integration of Rural Women into
                                  the World Market', Women and Development:
                                  The Sexual Division of Labour in Rural
                                  Societies, L. Beneria (ed.), Praeger
                                  Publishers, New York.

Millet, K.   1970   Sexual Politics, Ballentine Books (1978
                                  edition), New York.

Minai, N.   1981   Women in Islam: Tradition & Transition in
                                  the Middle East, Seaview Books, New York.

Ministry of   1981   Pakistan: An Official Handbook.
Information,
Govt. of
Pakistan

Mitchell, J.   1971   Women's Estate, Penguin Books Ltd., UK.

Morgan, R.   1984   Sisterhood is Global: The International
(ed.)   Women's Anthology, Penguin Books, U.K.

Mumtaz, K. &   1987   Women of Pakistan: Two Steps Forward,
Shaheed, F.   One Step Back?, Zed Press, London.

Myrdal, G.   1968   Asian Drama: An Inquiry to the Poverty of
                                  Nations, Vol. III, Random House Inc.
                                  Toronto.

Payne I.   1980   'Sexist Ideology and Education', Learning to Lose: Sexism and Education, Spender, D. & Sarah, E. (eds.), The Women's Press, London.

Perkins, T.E.   1979   'Rethinking the Stereotypes', in 'Feminism and Ideology: The Terms of Women's Stereotypes', Feminist Review, No.22, Feb., 1986.

Rassam, A.   1984   'Toward a Theoretical Framework for the Study of Women in the Arab World', Social Science Research and Women in the Arab World, UNESCO.

Roberge, G.   1978   Mediation: The Action of the Media in our Society, Indian Social Institute, Ahmadabad, India.

Govt. of   1984   Report of the Pakistan Commission on the Pakistan, Status of Women. Islamabad.

Shah, N. M.   1986   Pakistani Women: A Socio-Economic & Demographic Profile, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics.

Shalaby, A.   1952   History of Muslim Education, Indus Publications, Pakistan (1979 edition).

Spender, D.   1982   Invisible Women: The Schooling Scandal, Writers & Readers Publishing Co., London.

                     1980   Man Made Language, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

                     1980   Learning to Lose: Sexism and Education, The Women's Press, London.

Simon, R.   1982   Gramsci's Political Thought: An Introduction, Lawrence & Wishart, London.

Weiler, K.   1988   Women Teaching for Change: Gender, Class & Power, Bergin & Garvey Publisher Inc., USA.

Weitzman, L.J.   1979   Women: A Feminist Perspective, Freeman, J. (ed.) Mayfield Publishing Co., USA.